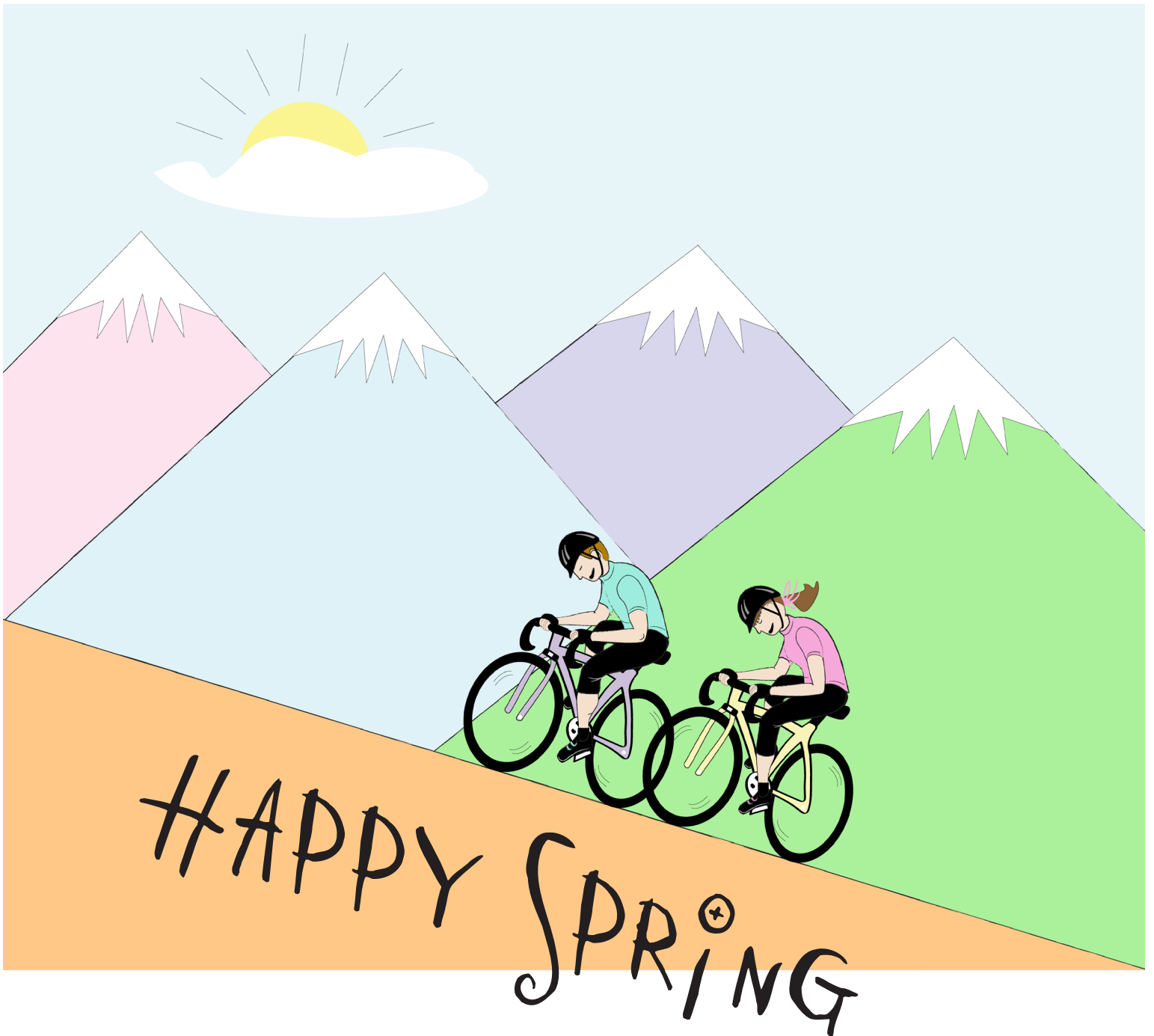


CHAIN REACTiON

SPRING 2020



A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE ORANGE COUNTY WHEELMEN



OCW CLUB LINKS

HOME PAGE: www.ocwheelmen.org

CALENDAR: www.ocwheelmen.org/page/show/418357-calendar

OFFICERS: www.ocwheelmen.org/page/show/419328-officers

DIRECTORS: www.ocwheelmen.org/page/show/419332-directors

SUPPORTING MEMBERS: www.ocwheelmen.org/page/show/424483-supporting-memberships

MONTHLY BOARD MEETINGS

Held the first Sunday of each month starting 11am at Carl's Jr., Newport Beach. Take the 405 Freeway to the MacArthur exit. Go south 0.8 miles and turn left on Campus. Go 0.3 miles and turn right into Carl's Jr. (at Von Karman). All Officers and Directors are expected to attend to conduct business. Other interested members may also attend.

GENERAL MEETINGS

Held typically the first Thursday every other month at Irvine Ranch Water District, Sand Canyon Ave. in the city of Irvine. Light dinner starting at 6:30pm with meeting starting at 7pm. Different speaker each meeting.

REGISTRATION FOR OCW EVENTS

All Registration for OCW events require the registrant to be logged in. Be sure to always check for discount codes. You will only see the discount code if you are a current member of OCW. The discount code if applicable will be located on a separate page in the specific event area. To confirm if you are current, check the membership data base. If you do not see the link for the membership data base, your membership has expired by at least a month or more.

The new website, registration code, and discount codes are only visible to current members. The website functions are different and I have learned new ways within this site logic, to apply new and different ways of maintaining privacy for our members from email skimmers and other nefarious internet hacking. I am continually upgrading the website when there are better ways to protect your personal information, but have it available for our members to connect to each other.

Thank you for your continued support and membership to OCW.

events@ocwheelmen.org

Editors Musings



Michelle Vester

This is really trying times. In all my 60 years I have never seen anything like what we are all going through.

Paper products aside most everyone is trying to do their part. I say MOST everyone because there are some that take things either to the extreme, such as the above mentioned paper products, or they are indifferent to the situation and hike the trails in large groups.

Amazon Prime is now taking longer than usual because of the overload. Good news is they are hiring, along with Target, Walmart and most all the big grocery chains.

Cooper, our mini Aussie, is overjoyed to have me home 24/7. I only go out to take him for a daily walk or to go to Trader Joe's once a week. Fortunately I do have a N95 mask so I now wear that to Trader Joe's and use hand sanitizer before getting back into my car.

I'm fortunate that my daughter is a children's hospital critical care nurse in the pediatric cardiac unit. So I get lots of very good information and ideas.

The good news is I've never seen so many people walking the neighborhood!

Stay safe and take care.

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Steve Loughran

The President

Well, my first president's message and I have already changed it. Due to the current pandemic, we have had to make immediate changes to our schedule. The situation is very fluid at this time and there is no guarantee that, by the time you read this, it may all be a bunch of rubbish. To cut to the chase, I was going to talk about the Spring Metric in this message. However, as you know, this has been cancelled due to the COVID-19 virus pandemic. While some would say there is an overreaction, this is clearly a dangerous new virus that cannot be taken lightly. Unfortunately, we also cancelled the remainder of the scheduled rides for the remainder of March. This preceded by a matter of hours, the County of Orange issuing strong language about prohibiting such group activities. It is my hope that, with strong measures, we can halt this pandemic and get back to some sense of regular life. We will keep you updated as changes occur. Remember, the health of the membership is the underpinnings of all actions we take.

After many years in the roll of secretary for OCW and attending board meetings, I find it odd to sit up in front in the President's chair (stool actually). Thankfully, I am surrounded by officers and directors who have been conducting the operations of the club for years and are well versed in what needs to happen to keep OCW moving forward.

First off, I would like to thank Joe Bernhardt for leading the club through a very difficult time. We found ourselves at a crossroads in terms of financial decision making. We had lost Amtrak

as a major fundraising event and needed to make immediate changes to our spending habits. He, along with many others, especially Terry Kessler and Lee Stebbins, as well as the rest of the board, put together an alternative ride on short notice that was well received by our riders. While the party on the train was gone, a festive atmosphere was created that, in many ways, allowed for more socialization among all the riders, rather than those only on your train car. We plan to make it even better this year so stay tuned.

Thinking of new directions, I believe we can improve our social media presence to encourage younger riders to join OCW. As an "older guy", I am not a social media specialist and would enjoy input into what would be the best approach to enhancing our social media usage. I remind everyone that we do have Facebook pages that are well used and have many members. We can use this to communicate upcoming events, ride reminders, asking for volunteers, training rides, etc. So feel free to visit these pages. The pages are: Orange County Wheelmen and Friends of OCW. Let us know what you think.

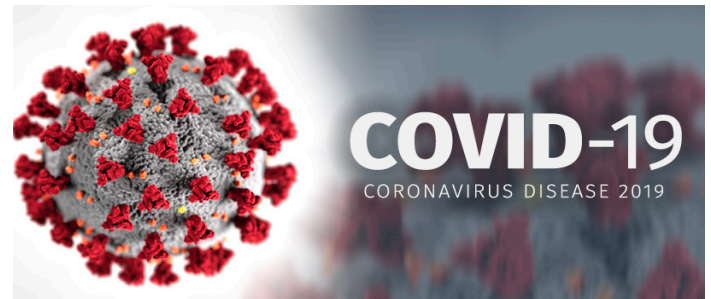
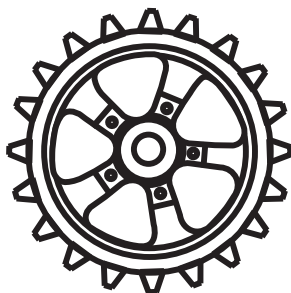
I also think it is time that we design a new look for our club kit. With new rides and our trusty sponsors; Whole Foods and Smart & Final, who always come through for the club in supporting those rides, Harry Gunther has put together, what I think is a professional and visible kit for the club. Watch for this in the near future. We have the assistance of a great artist, Gina Sample, who designed the PC 100 jersey, the most

popular jersey ever for OCW and has designed a super jersey for Breathless Agony. Hopefully we can get this available in the club store soon.

Next on the hit list is Breathless Agony. Joe Bernhardt will once again lead the charge to put together a very challenging ride, some say one of the top ten in the nation in terms of difficulty. But don't let that scare you off. There are options to the full ride. Remember however, to earn the jersey, you have to climb to Onyx summit. Start training now with Randy Profeta (see the website and the Facebook page for details) and you can do it!!!

Lastly, I think it is time we invite the E-bike community to join OCW. While there are some issues to consider, I think this could be an enjoyable part of our club. I would like to put together a task force to develop guidelines for this group, although safe cycling on the road is clearly the same for all users. We already have a tandem team, Tom Sinclair and his wife, join us on group rides and it has been most enjoyable, especially sucking his wheel on the downhill sections. I believe the important thing is seeing more people enjoy the sport as we all do, getting outside (after all, isn't that one reason we live here?), and being healthy.

Hoping everyone enjoys the lengthening daylight. I know I will, now being able to ride after work. So, invite friends to join some of our rides. Maybe even socialize after rides. Any ideas for new routes are appreciated and any ideas for "social rides" such as brewery rides, after work ride/dinner rides, etc. All ideas are welcome that get butts on saddles. Feel free to share and invite your friends. See ya soon I hope.



Given the recent Covid-19 virus outbreak and concern for the health of our members, all club rides have been cancelled

Given the recent Covid-19 virus outbreak and concern for the health of our members, Breathless Agony is cancelled





the *VICE* President's Message

By Bruce Campbell, Vice President

As you read this I am certain that we are still knee deep in coronavirus challenges and worries. Please keep positive and heed the medical advice that has been provided to protect yourself and help stop the spread of the virus that can be so devastating to elderly folks and those with compromised health situations.

The OCW Board is doing everything we can to minimize our coronavirus footprint including the cancellation of our annual Spring Metric. If members have additional ideas or concerns on this subject please reach out to a Board member and let us know your thoughts.

Thanks to all that took the time to attend the OCW Annual Banquet and what a good time everyone had. I received plenty of really positive feedback regarding the venue, the speaker (World Champion Women's Cyclist - Amber Neben) and the buffet supplied by Yorba Linda based Blue Agave.

In fact, I got the most enthusiastic feedback about the 3 dinner entrees supplied with the big winner being the cheese enchiladas...quite a value for \$10 per person especially considering the multiple flavored cheesecake desserts were also available.

There was lots of recognition for members in multiple categories and most of all Terry Kessler made sure to recognize every banquet attendee that volunteered during the year with a special certificate. Of course, the night ended with the announcement of the OCW Member of the Year.... Joe Bernhardt.

Joe really deserved this award for his many contributions to OCW ranging from his participation in many weekly club rides, extensive volunteer-

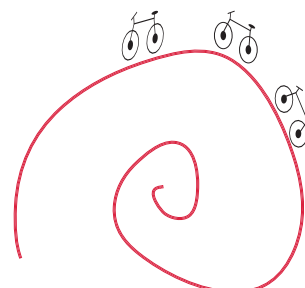
ing, years of OCW Board duty and his always accommodating and outgoing personality. Please congratulate Joe next time you see him on a ride.

We also had a very successful General Meeting, March 5th, thanks to speaker Tim Pfeiffer from Two Wheeler Dealer in Brea. Tim brought in Cannondale road and mountain bikes for our audience to view. He also provided a well-thought-out PowerPoint preso on bike frame size selection and fit. Tim and the Two Wheeler Dealer team have also supported OCW events in the past. His team set up a mechanic stand at our PC 100 start location at Irvine Amtrak station this past September so please support Tim with your business if possible.

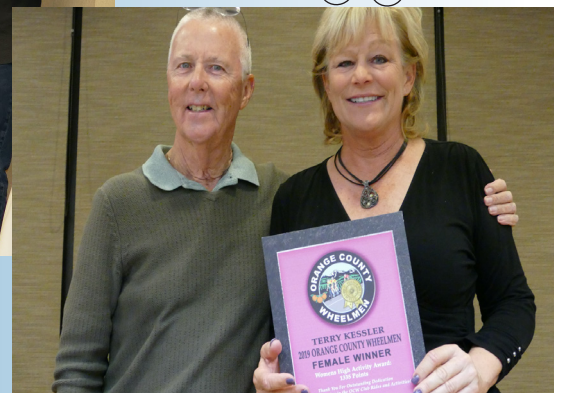
We were lucky to get the March General Meeting in because a week after IRWD closed the Community Room to outside groups like OCW thru the end of March and all of April !

Hopefully our May 7th General Meeting will not be cancelled because we have an excellent evening planned. The speaker is Claudia Wasko, VP and General Manager of Bosch eBike Systems. Her team will provide E-Bike test rides prior to the meeting start and also give a talk on the latest technology contained in Bosch eBikes.

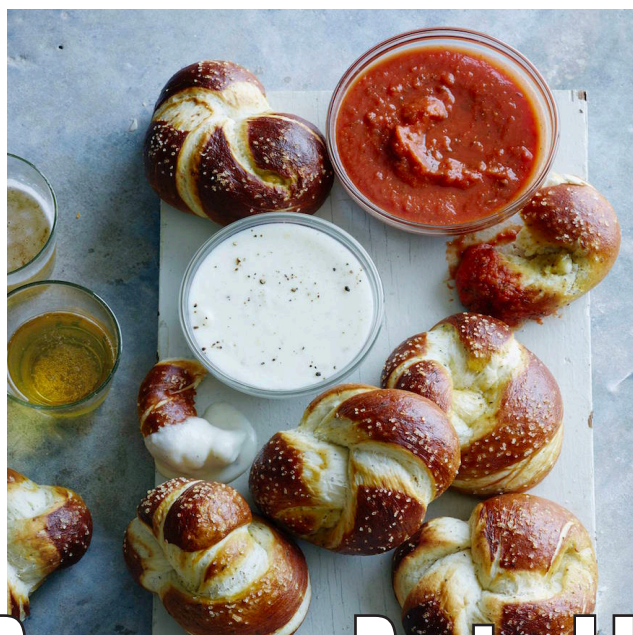
See you on the road and at the next General Meeting May 7th.



2020 Awards Banquet and Installation of Officers Featuring Guest Speaker Amber Neben







The Hungry EyeList



Parmesan Pretzel Knots + Cheese Sauce

Ingredients

For the Pretzel Knots

- 1 1/2 cups warm 110 to 115 degrees F water
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 2 teaspoons kosher salt
- 1 package active dry yeast
- 22 ounces all-purpose flour approximately 4 1/2 cups
- 2 ounces unsalted butter melted
- 2 tablespoons Italian Seasoning
- 1/2 cup grated parmesan cheese
- Vegetable oil for pan
- 10 cups water
- 2/3 cup baking soda
- 1 large egg yolk beaten with 1 tablespoon water
- Pretzel salt
- Warmed Marinara Sauce for serving

For the Parmesan Cheese Sauce

- 1 tablespoons butter
- 2 tablespoons flour
- 1 cup milk
- 3/4 cup freshly shredded Parmesan cheese
- Kosher salt and freshly cracked pepper to taste

Instructions

Combine the water, sugar and kosher salt in the bowl of a stand mixer and sprinkle the yeast on top. Allow to sit for 5 minutes or until the mixture begins to foam. Add the flour, butter, Italian seasoning and parmesan and, using the dough hook attachment, mix on low speed until well combined. Change to medium speed and knead until the dough is smooth and pulls away from the side of the bowl, approximately 4 to 5 minutes. Remove the dough from the bowl, clean the bowl and then oil it well with vegetable oil. Return the dough to the bowl, cover with plastic wrap and sit in a warm place for approximately 50 to 55 minutes or until the dough has doubled in size.

Preheat the oven to 450 degrees F. Line 2 half-sheet pans with parchment paper and lightly brush with the vegetable oil. Set aside. Meanwhile, bring the 10 cups of water and the baking soda to a rolling boil in an 8-quart saucepan or roasting pan.

In the meantime, turn the dough out onto a slightly oiled work surface and divide into 10 equal pieces. Roll into ropes, fold the rope in half around your finger, twist 2 to 3 times and then tuck the end into the hole where your finger was holding. Place onto 2 parchment-lined and sprayed half sheet pans.

Place the pretzels into the boiling water, 1 by 1, for 30 seconds. Remove them from the water using a large flat spatula. Return to the half sheet pan, brush the top of each pretzel with the beaten egg yolk and water mixture and sprinkle with the pretzel salt. Bake until dark golden brown in color, approximately 12 to 14 minutes.

Transfer to a cooling rack for at least 5 minutes before serving.

For the Parmesan Cheese Sauce

Melt the butter in a medium skillet over medium-high heat. Sprinkle the flour into melted butter and whisk for 1 minute until golden.

Slowly stream in the milk and continue to whisk until the mixture comes to a boil. Add the Parmesan cheese and season with salt and pepper. Stir to combine and remove from heat. Pour the cheese sauce into a bowl and serve alongside the pretzel knots.

Visit this recipe online:

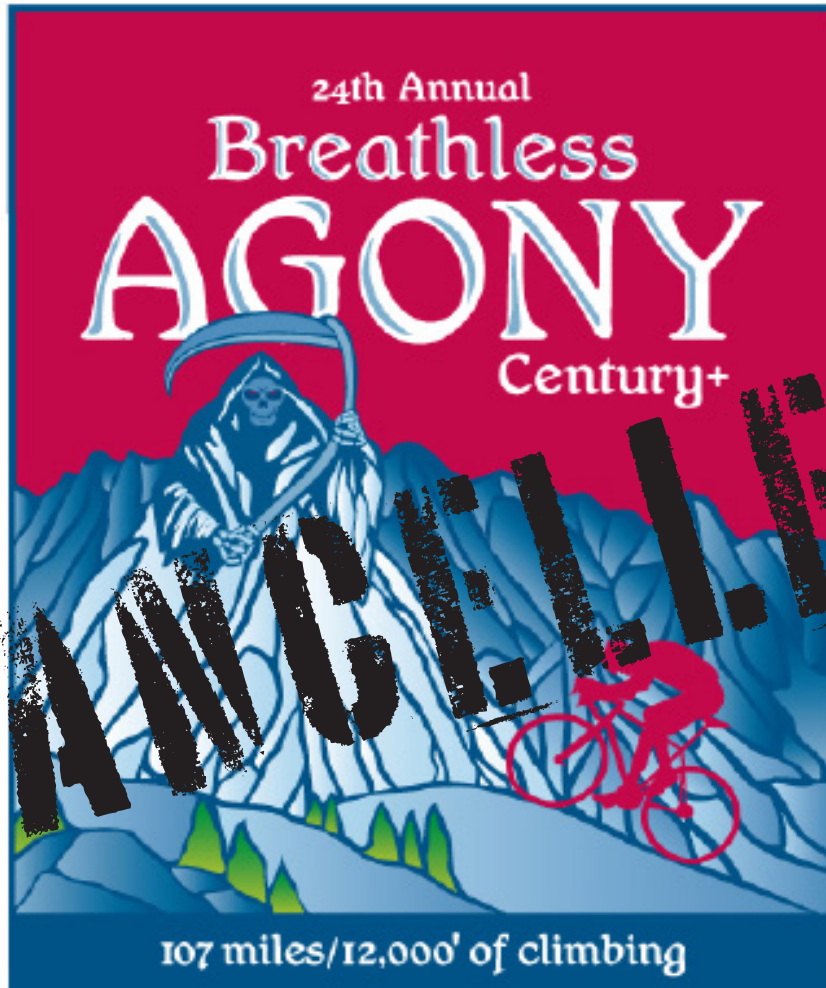
<https://whatsgabycooking.com/parmesan-pretzel-knots/>



Join or Renew Your Membership



↑
Just
Click



BREATHLESS AGONY CANCELLED FOR 2020

DUE TO THE COVID-19 OUTBREAK, OCW HAS HAD TO CANCEL OUR BREATHLESS AGONY CENTURY SCHEDULED FOR JUNE 6TH. WHILE OTHER BIKE RIDES HAVE RESCHEDULED FOR LATER IN THE YEAR, WE ALSO RUN THE LARGER PACIFIC COAST 100 ON SEPTEMBER 12TH. TRYING TO CONDUCT TWO CENTURIES WITHIN A MONTH OR TWO OF EACH OTHER IS SIMPLY NOT FEASIBLE. AS A RESULT, REGISTERED RIDER ENTRY FEES ARE BEING CREDITED BACK TO THEIR CREDIT CARD ACCOUNTS.

WE FULLY INTEND TO BRING BACK BREATHLESS AGONY IN 2021 BUT FIRST MUST HUNKER DOWN AND GET THROUGH THE EXISTING CRISIS.

THANKS GOES OUT TO OUR VOLUNTEER MEMBERS FOR STEPPING UP AND PLEASE KEEP THE WEEKEND OF **SEPTEMBER 12TH FREE AS WE WILL NEED YOUR HELP FOR **THE PACIFIC COAST 100**.**



WITH EVERYONE HAVING TO PRETTY MUCH SHELTER IN PLACE AND BEING BORED OUT OF OUR MINDS I DUG UP THIS 6-YEAR-OLD GOPRO VIDEO SHOT BY LARRY DUBOIS ON ONE OF OUR GOAT HILL RIDES JUST OUTSIDE OF IDYLLWILD. THIS VIDEO APPEARED IN THE SUMMER EDITION OF CHAIN REACTION 2014.

SIT BACK AND ENJOY!

OH, AND CHECK OUT THE MAJOR TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENTS THAT HAVE BEEN MADE TO GOPRO SINCE 2014.

[HTTPS://VIMEO.COM/96459473](https://vimeo.com/96459473)

ALAN VESTER, GOAT HILL MOUNTAIN BIKE DUDE



DETRAINING: HOW FAST DO YOU LOSE FITNESS?

BY COACH MICHAEL, KAHLER CYCLING ACADEMY

The fitness mantra, you must 'use it or lose it!' might be a bit of a cliché, but it turns out that this saying perfectly sums up one of the key principles of fitness and exercise - reversibility. At a time of year when it's tempting to leave the bike in the garage, it's even more important to maintain fitness.

So long as you train, you can maintain and (hopefully) build your fitness levels. However, stop training and your fitness levels will steadily decline. The obvious question that you might therefore ask is, "How much fitness will I lose if I decide to take a break, or if I'm forced to stop training because of injury or illness? And how rapidly will this fitness loss occur?" To answer this, it's important to understand that there are several different components of fitness, including muscular strength, muscular endurance and cardiovascular (heart, lung and circulatory) endurance. Stop training and the performance decline in each of these components will take place at different rates. So let's take an imaginary well-trained cyclist and observe what happens to their

body over a period of six months following the complete cessation of training.

DAY 0:

This is your last training day for the next six months. After today's ride, you store your bike away, hang up your cycling shoes and do no regular vigorous exercise whatsoever!

DAY 3:

After three days of inactivity, you might expect that your fitness has already begun to decline. In reality, however, the losses at this stage are very small. If you had been training hard prior to day 0, after three days of rest, your cycling fitness is now probably enhanced. That's because in those three days, your muscles have had time to fully recover; muscle carbohydrate stores (glycogen) have been topped up, muscle fibers damaged during hard training have been fully repaired, and favorable metabolic changes in the muscles have had time to occur. Indeed, this peak in performance after a few days of rest is exactly the reason why tapering works, and why

you shouldn't train right up to the day of a big event.

DAY 7 (WEEK 1):

After a week's complete inactivity, changes begin to occur in the body that result in fitness losses. For example, after three days, your blood volume can be reduced by five to 12 per cent. This means a decrease in the amount of blood your heart can pump, both in terms of amount of blood pumped per beat and total blood volume per minute.

The result is that your heart has to work slightly harder to maintain a given workload on the bike. There are some metabolic changes too. After six days or so, muscles begin to become less efficient at 'soaking up' glucose, the body's premium fuel for exercise, from the bloodstream. This means that during exercise, you need to place more reliance on your limited muscle glycogen stores, and also that you become less efficient at building up those glycogen stores after exercise. A third change is that your muscles start to become less efficient at coping with lactate accumulation during sustained efforts of hard cycling. The upshot is that you won't be able to sustain quite the same exercise intensity before having to back off, because of the burning sensation in the legs and labored breathing.

WEEKS 2 TO 3:

At this point, your maximal oxygen uptake (VO₂ max, the prime measure of your aerobic fitness) will have declined by anything from 4 to 20 per cent. Part of this stems from reduced cardiac output, not helped by the fact that the muscle mass in the pumping chambers of the heart can decrease by almost 20 per cent after three weeks of inactivity. It also arises because of changes in muscle physiology and biochemistry that are beginning to take place. For example, the fine network of muscle capillaries built up with endurance training begins to decline. As a result, oxygen uptake in the muscles can decline by up to 8 per cent.

1 MONTH:

All of the detraining changes outlined above continue to progress, but fundamental mus-

cle changes are now becoming prominent. By now, your muscle capillarisation will have returned to your pre-training baseline. However, it is still likely to be higher than that in people who have never trained. Alterations are taking place in your muscle biochemistry. The biochemical pathways that help your muscles burn fat for energy start to become less efficient, making it harder to burn while you ride, which in turn reduces your endurance capacity. On top of that, not only is your overall muscle mass declining (reducing your maximum power and strength), muscle fibers start to lose density, greatly reducing endurance capacity. In short, your ability to maintain a full-out effort, for example, a sprint to the finish line, diminishes dramatically.

2 TO 3 MONTHS:

After two months of inactivity, your heart is noticeably less muscular, the thickness of the muscle walls that comprise the pumping chambers reduced by as much as 25 per cent. The muscle mitochondria are also becoming less efficient at using oxygen to produce energy in your muscles. This efficiency can decline by 25 to 45 per cent up to 12 weeks after training cessation. After three months, you also begin to undergo 'hormonal detraining'. Hormones are chemical messengers that regulate the body's biochemistry, as you become detrained, more stress hormones are released during exercise, which basically means that the same exercise intensity becomes more stressful for the body, which in turn increases recovery times.

6 MONTHS:

By six months, your fitness declines have mostly stabilized. However, there are still undesirable changes taking place. For example, the actual volume of mitochondria per unit volume of muscle is declining, further reducing your ability to utilize oxygen during exercise. You've almost certainly gained body fat due to a lower daily calorie burn and a loss of muscle mass. So while you may not have gained weight on the scales, you will have almost certainly become 'fatter', with all the health risks that involves.

WHAT IF I WANT TO TAKE A SHORT BREAK? FITNESS TIP:

Keep your fitness in 12 minutes a week!

If you're a seasoned cyclist, don't worry about taking a training break of up to two weeks as your fitness losses will not be too significant. However, fitness losses for those new to cycling, or those with a low fitness base will be proportionately greater.

For breaks of more than two weeks, you'll need some kind of training stimulus to avoid a bigger decline in your fitness. For example, interval sessions consisting of just 8x30-second efforts, two or three times a week – just 12 minutes a week – can be very effective at preserving aerobic fitness. These bouts can be on a bike, or any other cardio-driven exercises you have at your disposal (running, stairs, etc.) During any period where you drastically cut down on training volume, remember you will also need to curtail your calorie intake in order to prevent the performance-blunting effects of increased body fat. If you haven't already done so, think about investing in a turbo-trainer or other training device for the long, dark winter nights and inclement weather.

BAD AND GOOD NEWS:

Stop training and your fitness begins to decline quite soon after, continuing to fall away the longer you stay off the bike, until after six months of inactivity, you'll be a long way behind in the fitness stakes. There is good news, however; although you'll lose plenty of fitness, you'll likely maintain a higher fitness baseline than someone who's never trained. Studies have shown that the muscles of previously trained people are better at coping with lactate accumulation, and have better capillarisation and mitochondrial density than lifelong couch potatoes. If you need to take a short training break, there's more good news as research shows that a relatively short break (two weeks or so), is not considered too disruptive, providing the previous training adaptations have been achieved over a period of at least 12 weeks or more. And if the winter months are a real struggle for you, there's ev-

idence that even relatively small volumes of the right kind of training can reduce detraining to a minimum (see Fitness Tips above). For example, research shows that reducing your training volume by two thirds won't harm your fitness, provided you include some very intense work, such as intervals, in the remaining one third. Indeed, just by doing a little bit of high-intensity interval work, 'all-out' bouts performed two or three times per week, may be enough to preserve the bulk of your hard-earned cycling fitness.

So whether your break is self-induced, weather induced or illness induced, take heart that with proper planning and knowledge, it won't be the end of your fitness world.



COACH MICHAEL MORRELL
KAHLERCYCLINGACADEMY.COM



HIKING CORNER

By Michelle Vester



Running Out of Outdoor Options

Running out of outdoor activity options in these trying times of Covid-19? With the National Parks closed, and most city, regional and state parks closing their parking lots and at this writing only allowing walk-in or bicycle ride-in traffic, what is a person to do?

All the recent rains haven't helped being able to use our hiking trails due to wet and muddy conditions. When we do have sunny weather and trails are open, as was the case on the weekend of March 21st and 22nd, the trails were dangerously overcrowded, which in turn caused Los Angeles County to close all trails and beaches.

Alan and I decided to try something different. Even though we live within a couple of miles from the Santa Ana River Trail, we loaded up the Explorer with our mountain bikes and gear and headed to Mercado del Rio in Yorba Linda to start a ride on the Santa Ana River Trail toward the ocean.

Now mind you, we haven't been on SART in

about 3 years due to the homeless population that once lived on and around the trail making it almost impossible, if not dangerous, to ride.

SART has a very nice dirt trail section that runs next to the paved section making it even more appealing for our mountain bikes.

It had rained a couple of days before our ride closing most of the favorite MTB parks due to wet and muddy conditions, canceling out hiking and walking the neighborhoods was getting boring.

Although we didn't make it all the way to the ocean, we did manage a nice 28 miles. SART was a little more crowded than usual but people were nice with most respecting the 6 foot rule.

For links to most OC and LA beaches, trails, and parks visit the Los Angeles Times story by Christopher Reynold and Mary Forgione:

[LA TIMES WHAT'S OPEN AND CLOSED](#)



MountainBike Dude

By Alan Vester

**Mountain Biking
Geared Toward
the 50+ Rider**

Goat Hill and Latest Trail News

It's March 29, 2020 and hopefully when you read this article the information will still be current. The re-launch of Goat Hill has gone well. We've ridden Black Star Cyn, Whiting Ranch Wilderness Park and Chino Hills State Park.

Due to the recent closures of some parks and trails and keeping in step with OCW, Goat Hill rides are on hold until life gets back to normal.

As of today, most all OC Parks are closed to vehicle parking, but most trails remain open as usual. I recommend you check the [OCParks](#) website for the latest information.

Today, we rode Santiago Oaks Regional Park and the trails are open and in great shape due to recent rains. The mountain bike community, based on my first-person observations, are doing a great job of riding responsibly and keeping a safe distance between themselves. Mountain bike riders tend to stay separated naturally when riding, because we don't need a peloton or lead-out rider when we ride. Every MTB and gravel rider we came across seemed to understand appropriate behavior and distancing from one another. We also encountered hikers and equestrians and I'm very impressed how well everyone is working together on the trails to safely co-exist.

Saturday, we checked out Chino Hill State Park, which is under the jurisdiction of the State of

California. We rode to the west entrance which is at the Discovery Center on Carbon Cyn Road and spoke to two of the park rangers. I was expecting them to turn us around, but they told us the park trails were open and welcomed us in. We did our normal 20-mile loop, keeping a safe distance and had a great time. We came across other riders, equestrians and hikers and we all were practicing safe distancing from one another.

Unfortunately, parking along Black Star Canyon Road has been temporarily closed due to COVID-19. Also, Irvine Park is closed to all vehicle traffic and parking except for those who are boarding horses, as the stables remain open. Bathrooms are also closed so keep this in mind if you happen to park your car elsewhere and walk into the park.

Also, keep in mind all this applies to Orange County as Los Angeles County has closed all trails and beaches. It's a good idea to check online or call before visiting any park.

I'll close with these comments. Use common sense and stay a safe distance from your fellow cyclists, hikers and equestrians. Don't ride on closed trails. If a park is closed, stay out. Always contact the park by website or phone to get the most up-to-date information.

Hopefully by summer, Goat Hill will back up and running and Covid-19 will be in check.

Be careful out there, see you on the trails.

You can get the latest update from Orange County regarding Covid 19 by logging onto:

<https://www.ochealthinfo.com/phs/>

Alan Vester
Goat Hill Mountain Bike Dude

Alan (Goat Hill and Mountain Bike Dude)
alanvester7@gmail.com



SANTIAGO OAKS



Tucson Cycling Experience

By Bruce Campbell



I wanted to share with you my experience on a recent Cycling Camp in Tucson the first week of March. The camp was an informal gathering of 12 cyclists and led by Tony Wang who lives in Los Angeles and works for Boeing. He brought along 4 additional Boeing cycling team members including the past Boeing CEO who told us he kept a spin bike on the company jet to keep in shape!

Tony is in his 5th year going to Tucson in March for cycling so he has very good experience. Tony made all the hotel and restaurant reservations and supplied the routes. He also led the rides each day. He even supplied bright green Tony Tucson technical tees for each of us to buy. BTW - we had near perfect weather with temperatures reaching 70-80F each day.

The City of Tucson has invested heavily in an

extensive bike path network and each of our rides started and ended on the bike path. There are a couple of terrific National Parks that you can ride to named Saguaro National Park West and East. At one of the parks we encountered the strangest road hazard warning sign I have ever seen....a cyclist doing a face plant into the steep downhill paved road descent.

Our base of operations was at the Holiday Inn Express in Oro Valley northeast of downtown Tucson. There was a bike path adjacent to our hotel so we could just meet in the lobby each morning and start our rides within minutes. The Holiday Inn also included hot breakfast buffet each morning.

We arrived Thursday early enough to get a 20-mile intro ride and then rode Friday thru Monday but Mark Denney and I skipped the last

short ride on Tuesday to get an early start on the return drive to So Cal.

The crown jewel was an ALL DAY ascent up Mt Lemmon which was a 45-minute car ride from our base of operations at the Holiday Inn.

If you are a trivia buff you might ask where did the name come from..."Mount Lemmon was named for botanist Sara Plummer Lemmon, who trekked to the top of the mountain with her husband and E. O. Stratton, a local rancher, by horse and foot in 1881."

Mt Lemmon is a 9,200' behemoth that requires a 32-mile one-way to climb to the summit. The first 30 miles is at a gentle 3-7% gradient but the last 2 miles averages 8% with a max gradient of 12%. Just a nice little fist in your gut after a very tiring 30-mile ascent.

There is an excellent restaurant just below the summit at mile 30 named the Iron Horse and it was warm enough at 8,000' to eat on their patio. I highly recommend the homage chili and cornbread.

The two memories I left Mt Lemmon with were the ice we encountered just before the summit which caused two of our camp cyclists to go down (nothing serious) and the awesome 32-mile descent.

I highly recommend Tucson cycling in the Spring!





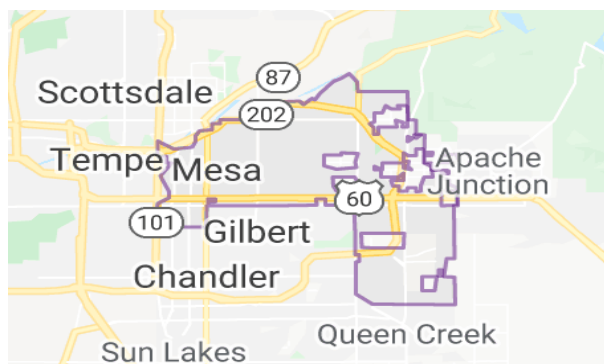
In the winter 2019 Chain Reaction we wrote about the wonderful cycling east of Phoenix, Arizona. We usually take our road bikes when we visit this area. On our latest trip we decided to take mountain bikes and explore new regions for a change. We were not disappointed. The Two Wheel Jones Bicycle Shop in Mesa, Arizona gave us a free map and talked to us about the best mountain bike routes. We decided on the Utery Mountain Regional Park. It was mid-week so there were not a lot of cars in the parking lot. After paying \$2.00 for parking we jumped on a gravel road that runs along the top of the levy. From there you have options to turn onto many connecting trails. The trails are rated for degrees of difficulty, technical terrain and distance. Green is for easier routes and progresses to blue and black for the most difficult. We rode the levy to the end before looping back towards the Utery Mountains. The trail was non-technical single track and fairly hard

packed with a few areas of soft sand, but nothing too sketchy. We weaved our way through the Saguaro, Ocotillo and Barrel cactus. There were a few places that had cactus too close to the trail. Watch for the downhills with a sharp turn. That is where they like to hide. This area has multi-use trails so we saw hikers as well as equestrians. Be sure to yield the right-of-way to the horses. We switched to and from several trails and ended a long loop back at the car. It was a fun day in the cool Arizona desert.

The next day we used the Park and Ride parking lot at Power Rd. and the 202 freeway. Parking is free. There are a series of routes that lead you to the Wild Horse trail, Hawes trail and Saguaro trails. We choose the Arizona Canal trail that runs northwest to Scottsdale. We saw several mountain bikers as well as a pack of 20 gravel bike riders that smiled and waved as they raced by kicking up a plume of dust.

There is a cut-off that goes to the McDowell Mountain Regional Park, but it is a long ride to get there from the Arizona Canal trail. It would be best to drive and start at the trailhead instead of riding there. The McDowell Mountain Regional Park is also linked to the McDowell Sonoran Preserve making it an enormous area to explore. The bottom line is that this area offers dirt riding for everyone. Anything from gravel roads to black diamond trails.

You will want to avoid the summer temperatures which are regularly in the triple digits. It is approximately a 7- to 8-hour drive from Southern California and well worth it for some fun cycling in Winter, Spring, and Fall. You may also like the apps called Trailforks or the MTB Project. They show full details of all the trails including ratings and parking lots and neither of these apps require internet connection. For more information on mountain biking near Mesa go to: <https://www.alltrails.com/us/arizona/mesa/mountain-biking>.





Mas Allá del Horizonte (Beyond the Horizon)

By Lee and Cathy Painter

Last July, Cathy and I joined a group of 9 Norteamericanos and 6 Colombianos doing a 9-day tour starting in Medellin, Colombia. It was a commercial tour, operated by Carlos Carvajal of Pedaleando Alma (Pedaling Soul).

Why Colombia? Partly because we didn't have to do much planning. A friend had Carlos set aside spaces on the tour, and arranged for an AirBnB in Medellin before and after the tour. Carlos arranged transport to and from the airport, led a tour of Medellin before the tour



started and provided storage for bike boxes and luggage while on tour. Carlos developed the route, led the group and had a friend sweep. He also booked the hotels and restaurants, and the excursion on the rest day. So all we had to do

was get us and our bikes to Medellin.

Why Colombia? Because it was safe, the people were friendly, the countryside was beautiful, and the food enjoyable. A few years ago, Medellin was one of the most dangerous cities in the world, with 6,000 murders a year. But now that Colombia's civil war is finally over, we never felt unsafe, even in the poorest parts of the city.

Why Colombia? Because it was very inexpensive. We were advised to budget \$30 per day for three restaurant meals and lodging. For everything except airfare (airport transit, three nights AirBnB before and after, tour of Medellin, nine-day bike tour, the rest day excursion, meals, souvenirs and lodging), we spent \$850 each.

Since the trip was to South America, part of our preparation was a 20-minute phone appointment with the travel nurse. Based on that, we had blood tests to verify we had antibodies for measles, and had vaccinations for Yellow Fever,

Hepatitis A, and Typhoid. We also had pills for Malaria to take while in Colombia. Plus we got both over-the-counter and prescription diarrhea medicine. Fortunately, we didn't have any health issues on the trip. And we're happy we got away with ignoring the standard advice on how to avoid diarrhea - don't eat fresh fruit and salad (since they're washed in the water that we wouldn't drink).

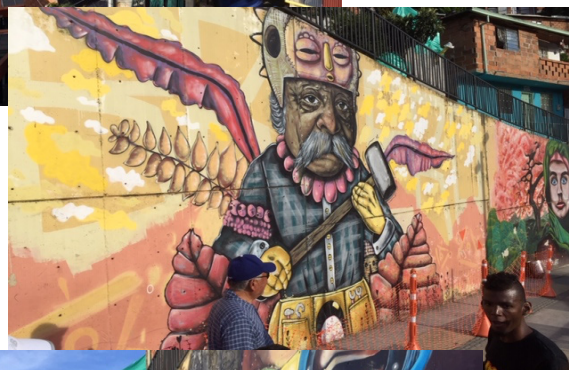


While Carlos had hard-tail mountain bikes available to rent, we chose to take our touring bikes. The bikes are rigid 29er mountain bikes with drop bars. On pavement we normally use 700 x 32 tires, but since this trip was 40% on dirt roads, we used 700 x 40 cyclocross tires. The dirt roads were a lot rougher than we expected; in retrospect I would have added suspension forks to our bikes.

We took our bikes in soft cases, since this meant we'd be within Aeromexico's limits for size and weight of checked baggage. Unfortunately, we didn't read the part of Aeromexico's website that said that there was a \$150 charge for bicycles, regardless of how they were packed. Two of the riders in the group brought bikes with S&S couplers, which meant they could break the bikes down small enough to fit in a suitcase. Didn't matter, they had to pay \$150 as well. Bah humbug.

One of the first things we did after arriving in Medellin was to go to the ATM. The exchange rate was roughly 3,000 Colombian pesos to the dollar. It was hard to deal with such large numbers - we got 600,000 pesos - about \$195.

The day before the tour started, Carlos led a tour of Medellin, which included a tour of the Hincapie clothing factory, and a visit to Comuna Trece, the poorest part of the city, but also a tourist destination to see the graffiti.



The table below shows the daily mileage, elevation change and time.

Destination	Miles	Ascent/Descent (ft)	Time
Medellin/Cocorna	56	5340/5961	10:20
Rio Claro	44	3830/6148	8:51
San Miguel	27	1444/1729	5:36
Norcasia	37	4255/2336	9:42
Termales	21	1630/4314	5:07
Narino	14	3660/500	5:47
La Ceja	44	4110/5053	8:23
Medellin	27	2270/4070	4:10

would be warm enough that I wouldn't need it. On a three-mile descent, I realized that was a bad choice. At least I had a black plastic trash

bag for a jacket and a plastic shower cap for a helmet cover.

The rooms at the lodge at Rio Claro didn't have windows or screens, which I suppose works in this climate. We were at high enough altitude there were no mosquitos, though other bugs wandered through.

Why were we so slow? Since there was no support vehicle, everyone had panniers or bikepacking bags to carry our gear (clothes, snacks, tools). Each day we had one or two restaurant meals on the road. We would regroup several times during the day. As a group, we would average three flats a day. And the dirt roads slowed us down.

Outside Medellin, we were advised to not drink the tap water. So a typical riding day would start with a visit to a local store to buy water, typically in a five or seven-liter bag to share among several riders.

While in Medellin, food could be fairly adventurous - for example fish tacos on blue corn tortillas with kimchi. But as we got out into the countryside, things were more basic. Every breakfast included arepas, a flatbread similar to a tortilla but thicker. The arepa was served with a mild white cheese similar to mozzarella. Most days we had scrambled eggs. For lunches we often chose soup since it seemed easy to ride on. One soup used all of the chicken, including the feet. A special treat - whole deep fried fish with rice, plantains and salad.

We had only one day of riding in the rain. I had decided not to bring rain gear, thinking it



While there was no support vehicle, there were always buses. On what would have been the most difficult day of riding - 45 miles of dirt road with 7500 feet of elevation gain - we decided to load all our bikes on top of the chiva (goat) bus. Riding it to the halfway point made the day a lot easier. Or if you got tired along the way, you could flag down a local bus and put your bike in the trunk. And we had one rider who had an issue with heat exhaustion. Carlos managed to find a driver in a pickup truck to take the rider to the hospital in exchange for a tank of gas.



We enjoyed staying in small villages of perhaps 1000 people. The hotels were old, but clean and comfortable. And probably the best place in town. It was amusing that if the Colombian riders got to town after the Norteamericanos, all they had to do to find us was ask any local "Donde esta los gringos?"

Finally, I'd just like to thank Carlos for having done such an outstanding job.



The route, the towns, the local knowledge made a wonderful tour that I couldn't have organized myself.



COME RIDE WITH US!



SATURDAY RIDE LIKE A PRO

Please check out the opportunity to ride the Saturday short ride with one of our friendly League Certified Instructors (LCIs).

We are fortunate that we have a dedicated group of LCIs that volunteer to head this ride every Saturday.

This ride is for those who would like to have a bit of personalized training, like learning to be a bit more comfortable riding on the road. Our LCIs cover many topics, and you can ask all the questions you want.

The Saturday Ride Like a Pro is a slow “no drop” ride to sharpen your skills. So come on out, learn to ride safer and have some fun!

For more information go to: www.ocwheelmen.org/page/show/419732-ride-like-a-pro-rides

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