

# The Cog

Spring  
2004

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The Official Newsletter of the Franklin Hampshire Freewheelers

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## 2004 WINTER BANQUET And a good time was had by all!



Marion Gorham Happy 80th!



Rob Young, Leslie Powers, Sandra Waller, Irv & Dian Friedman, and Dale Lougee



Bob Kowaleski, George Drake  
and Ray Fontaine



Russ Loomis, Joe & Patti Pitchko,  
and Julie Miles.

(More photos on page #3)



Julie Miles & Bob Andrews

Car Up!!  
2004 Greetings from Your New FHF Co-Presidents

No one was more surprised than I when my wife suggested in December that we volunteer as “co-presidents” for our struggling Franklin-Hampshire Freewheelers. Knowing her to be an excellent and orderly “behind the scenes” manager, I agreed to be the stand-up at meetings. The FHF dynasty of Fitz-Gibbons officially ended with Suzanne graciously stepping aside during February’s winter banquet and we, Joyce and Fred, along with our new administration, stepped in:

<u>Position</u>	<u>New</u>	<u>Former</u>
Treasurer(s)	Steve & Ann Schwartz	Al Shane
Secretary	John Gustin	John Gustin
Rides Chair	John Gustin	Sally Peters
Membership	Sally Peters	Sally Peters
Newsletter Editor	Ray Fontaine	Marion Gorham
Banquet Co-Chairs	Irv & Dian Friedman	Joe & Patti Pitchko
Century Chair	Mike Vinskey	Mike Vinskey
Nominating	Pat Vinskey & Irv Friedman	Pat Vinskey & Irv Friedman
Web Publisher	John Gustin	John Gustin

A couple of years ago, Bicycling Magazine identified the environs of Happy Valley as the 6<sup>th</sup> best bike-riding region in the USA. We are, indeed, lucky. Why do we ride, anyway? From the sheet John Gustin handed out to open our first 2004 meeting and containing the email responses to his unofficial survey you’d think there is no club consensus. We ride too fast and too slow, don’t leave at appointed times, too many stops, not enough stops, rides are too long and too short, etc. Whatever.

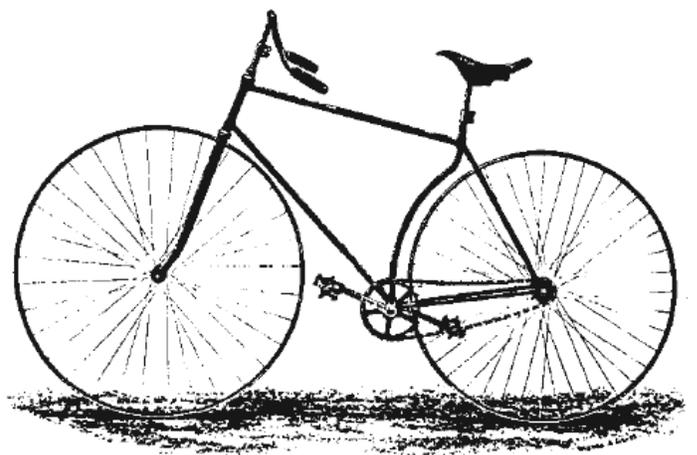
In a word, we ride because it’s “fun.” Can I get an “Amen” to that?? After 30 to 50 rolling or hilly Happy Valley miles and you wheel into the parking lot, that natural high is dominant. The feel-good endorphin rush is often accompanied by the illusion that no ride is bad, all rides are good.

Standing around the parking lot schmoozing before and after riding is one thing; another persona and agenda takes over for many of us once we begin to roll. Your co-presidents suggest we think about our individual agendas when we’re about to disconnect from the peleton, (especially when riding with newer riders).

Let’s make every effort to welcome new riders, introduce ourselves and, if possible, determine what level rider they may be and try to hook them up with one of us who rides at their level.

Ultimately, it’s not just the ride, but our connections to each other that make the ride really good and more than an illusion. While watching for “car up” and “car back,” let’s try to connect up. Even though Mother Nature keeps trying to convince us otherwise, spring is just around the corner, and we’re looking forward to a resumption of the reason for being of FHF.

Car back!



The Columbia Racing Safety.

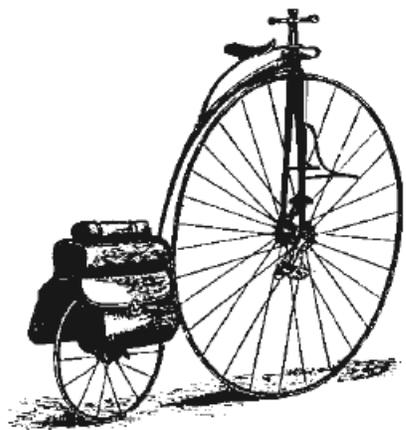
# COVAC Update

By PAT & MIKE VINSKY

Planning for COVAC 2004 is underway. The date for this year's COVAC is tentatively scheduled for September 11, 2004. This is dependent on our being able to rent the Hatfield Lions Club pavilion. As soon as we have the pavilion locked in, we will firm the date. Once again this year we will contract with Active.com for our pre-registration needs. Registration fees this year will remain the same as last year: \$5.00 for FHF members, \$10.00 for non-members, and \$20.00 for day of the event walk-ins. (For those pre-registering there is an additional \$2.00 fee that goes directly to Active.com).

We are looking at changing the location of the 25-mile sag. We had several biker/motorist conflicts in this area last year. Moving the sag from this location will reduce potential conflicts. Additionally, we were renting two Port-A-Potties for \$140.00 for this site. Hopefully we can find a location that already has restroom facilities. A couple ideas include the area near the restrooms in Old Deerfield, Yankee Candle, the Greenfield Fairgrounds, Greenfield Community College, or the park/swimming area on Nash Mill road. If anyone has any other potential areas around the 25-mile point, please let Mike Vinsky (70422.3055@compuserve.com) know about them.

The Vinsky's, Schwartz's, and Pat Pitchko are going to be riding a century on June 5, 2004 during a fund raising event for the Jimmy Fund in memory of Katelynn Battista. If anyone is interested in riding with us (or doing a shorter ride) register at [www.kride.com](http://www.kride.com).



Charlie Meyers, Steve & Ann Schwartz, Pat & Mike Vinsky and Elaine Stafford



John & Karen Gustin

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOYCE MORRIS

## EDITORIAL COMMENT

Greetings from the Cog! As you can see the Franklin-Hampshire Freewheelers Bicycle Club has initiated a new format for a Newsletter, one that is completely "on-line"! With this new format we will now be able to fill the newsletter with color photographs and eliminate the cost of postage.

As this is the premiere issue, it won't be perfect. I will be upgrading my skills with Adobe Pagemaker in the upcoming issues and hope to develop The Cog as a high quality, informative publication over the next few issues, but ...I need your input and materials: Articles, photographs, opinions, letters, etc.

My primary expertise is technical and I plan to do a series of technical articles for future issues. But I'm sure that's not that's what the majority of the Freewheelers want to read about in their newsletter, so send in stuff that your fellow members might want to look at or read about! E-mail is preferred, fontaine@stcc.edu, (For photographs please send them in the jpeg format, approx. 4"x 5"x 150 dpi. For text I prefer MS Word, but can probably deal with other formats). For those of you who want to send me hard copy, my postal address is Ray Fontaine, 17 South Road, Westhampton, MA 01027-9661.



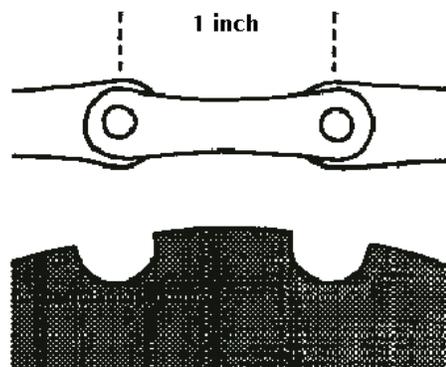
## CHAINS:A Basic Guide

For many bicyclist chains are at best not very exciting, but they are an essential part of what makes a bicycle a bicycle, and have been for over 100 years! Prior to the adaptation of Hans Renold's roller chain to bicycles, the single-speed, fixed gear "high wheeler" was the primary form of bicycle. It was both inflexible (your only gear choice was 1:1 with the wheel diameter!) and dangerous to ride on (because that big front wheel kept wanting to throw you over the handlebars!). Making the (front) drive wheel smaller (and equal in diameter to the front wheel) would reduce the safety issue, but it meant that you would have to spin a lot to get nowhere fast as a 27" wheel size @ 1:1 is equivalent to what most of us consider a "granny" gear today. Driveshaft, gear, and other forms of drives were tried, but the resultant loss of energy through friction severely compromised the design. It wasn't until the roller chain was tried that a workable "safety bicycle" could be produced.

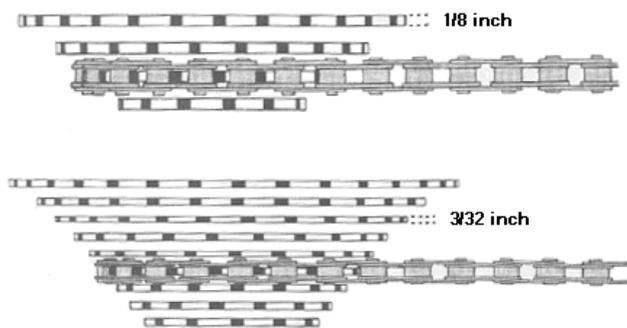
Over the years roller chain links have become shorter and narrower. Early roller chains had a pitch (the distance between



rollers) of over 1", but nearly all subsequent bicycle chains have a pitch of  $\frac{1}{2}$ ", with the space between the link plates (where the sprocket teeth engage) being  $\frac{1}{8}$ " for single speed and fixed gear bicycles, and  $\frac{3}{32}$ " for multi-speed derailleur bicycles.



With the introduction of the SunTour Ultra-6 and Ultra-7 freewheels in the late 1970s new, narrower and more laterally flexible chains had to be developed to accommodate the reduced space between the rear cogs. At that time the SunTour Ultra and the Sedisport were the only “narrow” chains available, but now this width chain is available from nearly all manufacturers and considered the industry standard for all 5,6,7 & 8 speed rear clusters. An even narrower chain had to be developed for 9-speed clusters, and hence 10-speed clusters required an even more narrow chain!



Technology always has a double edge, and with each progression of narrower chain widths came new service problems. The first generation of “narrow” Shimano Uniglide chains was prone to breakage. Shimano solved the problem by developing a single use rivet, advising all users never to re-use a rivet when taking apart a chain. They began selling special (single-use) replacement rivets to be used whenever one of their chains was taken apart.

This added a new wrinkle to regular chain service. The standard procedure to clean and lube a chain had been to remove the chain from the bicycle. To do this you had to “break” a derailleur chain by pushing out one of the link rivets with a special chain tool. Replacing the chain was accomplished by pushing that same link rivet back into the chain with the tool. But even with the correct single-use chain rivet, replacing a chain was more of a pain as the replacement rivets needed to be broken in half with pliers once they were set. Moreover, with the jump to 9-speed chains, manufacturers began to shave width by reducing the actual thickness of the side plates

and making the ends of the rivets set flush with the side plates. This made setting the pins correctly with a chain too much more difficult. For those that didn’t want to deal with needing extra link rivets, a special “master” link was developed for derailleur chains (Usually an adaptation of Lickton’s original design from the late 1970s). Thankfully, many chain manufacturers now include these master links with their chains. And if you really don’t want to bother removing your chain for cleaning, the Park Tool Company (A large manufacturer of specialized bicycle tools) now has a device on the market that lets you clean your chain without removing it.

So why do you need a clean chain? Well, a chain will wear out much quicker if it’s dirty. The dirt acts as an abrasive, wearing out the rivets and rollers, actually making the chain longer. And a worn chain soon starts to eat up your cassette cogs - and eventually even your chain-wheels! Even worse, a stretched chain seems to work fine, never giving you an indication that it’s wearing its longer pitch into your cogs (and chain wheels). It’s only when only the chain is replaced with a new chain that the full scope of the damage becomes apparent. The new chain will skip because it cannot engage the old, worn cogs correctly. So now you have to replace the whole cassette (and maybe even the chain-wheels) as well – significantly increasing the total cost of the repair! And a dirty chain will also transfer its greasy dirt onto everything that it comes in contact with, including the rest of the drive train, the frame, and you!

Lack of lubrication will also cause a chain to wear out pre-maturely. Between all the links, rivets, and rollers, chains have a lot of moving parts, and they all need to be lubricated. Without proper lubrication, these many moving parts will all suffer from the maladies of friction; not only will they deteriorate quickly; they will cause the chain to become noisy and less efficient. So what’s the best way to clean and lube a chain? Well nothing beats removing a chain and soaking it in a solvent to clean it. A good bath in a constant-flow, hot-solvent tub is best, but for

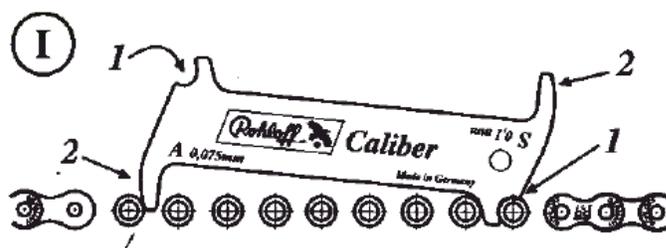
most people (myself included) this isn't practical. Usually soaking a dirty chain for several hours in a solvent such as kerosene or paint thinner works well. For a really dirty chain, a scrubbing with an old toothbrush and a re-soaking in solvent should follow this. But, frankly, if a chain is that dirty, it's usually not worth the effort. The dirt has probably already done its damage, and unless it's a real expensive chain, your time isn't worth the extra effort. Get a new chain!

A chain should only be lubricated with a paraffin based dry lubricant. Never, never, never use an oily wet lubricant such as a motor oil, gear oil, or WD-40!!! These lubricants will work fine for a while, but soon attract dirt and grit, transforming them into very efficient vehicles for spreading abrasives throughout your drive train. And they will make a mess of your bike! I recently spent considerably more time cleaning a dirty bike that I was tuning up for a friend than all of the other tasks combined, including overhauling all the bearings! He had used WD-40 to lube his chain for several years and the whole bottom of the bike was coated with a greasy black sludge. And yes, his chain had stretched considerably.

I recommend a lubricant such as Boshield T-9 Drip Lube or Pro-Link for your chain. You simply drip the lubricant into the chain and let it set a couple of hours until it dries to a waxy film. These paraffin-based lubricants pick up very little dirt and really minimize having to clean your chain. Re-lube when the chain gets squeaky.

For a new chain, I would recommend an initial cleaning in solvent to remove whatever lube the manufacturer packed the chain with. Usually this is also a paraffin-based lubricant, but not always. You want to make sure that whatever came on this new chain isn't incompatible with the lubricant that you will use.

If you ride several thousand miles a year, it is generally recommended that you replace the chain once a year. And with these paraffin-based lubricants, you can probably get away with never having to remove and clean your chain within that interval. On the other hand, you can monitor chain wear with a special gauge, such as the



Rohloff "Caliber 2" Chain Wear Indicator, and discard the chain when the first sign of noticeable wear becomes apparent. This would be my recommendation if you use expensive chains. Whichever way you choose to go though, the most important things for long chain life (and hence long cassette & chain-wheel life) is that the chain remains both clean and lubed.

### REGIMENT FOR THE OBSESSED

Although I recommend annual chain replacement, I have a trio of Shimano (wide) 600 EX Uniglide chains that I have used on one of my bicycles for the last 15 years! For lubrication, I dip them in a double boiler of melted paraffin for 15 minutes each (Paraffin has a low flash point so use of a double boiler is recommended rather than heating paraffin directly). After each "dip", I hang them to dry, wiping off the excess wax with a rag. I then install one of them on my bike and ride until it begins to squeak. When that happens, I simply replace it with a fresh chain. Ditto for when that chain begins to squeak. Usually I can get through most of the season on one chain. To further insure a long cog life, I change the orientation of each chain when its rotation comes around again (This is real easy with conventional wide chains because the rivets change orientation whenever you "break" the chain with a chain rivet tool). The 3-chain rotation is supposed to be compatible with the wear on a cassette (or freewheel) – once the chains begin to show signs of stretch, the cogs probably should be replaced as well. I carefully monitor these chains with a Rohloff chain wear gauge and have yet to notice any stretch.