



OFF-ROAD RIDER

The official publication of the Minnesota Off-Road Cyclists

AUGUST 2003

The MORC MISSION:

The Minnesota Off-Road Cyclists (MORC) is a non-profit volunteer organization dedicated to safeguarding the future of mountain biking in Minnesota through the promotion of responsible mountain biking, the establishment and maintenance of mountain biking trails, and the preservation of Minnesota's natural resources.

Next Board Meeting

Tuesday, Sept. 9th at
7:00 p.m. at REI
Bloomington

Trail Conditions!

Always check trail conditions at morcmtnb.org before you ride!

Message from the President

This has been a tremendous summer for mountain biking trail access. One event that we will be able to use to continue to build momentum towards greater access was this summer's IMBA HotSpot visit. Lora Wollner and Mark Schmidt, IMBA Trail Care Crew, spent 10 days here in late May and early June. During that time they conducted 3 trail building schools. Two of the classes were basic trail building and the final school focused on building advanced technical trail features.

This HotSpots was one of the most successful schools that has been held. We had over 90 people attend the classes. Individuals from DNR, Tree Trust, city and county parks departments, National Parks and individuals that just wanted to learn how to build sustainable trails attended the training sessions.

I would like to recognize those organizations that helped to make the IMBA HotSpots program successful. Our major cash sponsors were **REI, Gravity Labs, Minnesota Off Road Cyclists (MORC), Valley Bike and Ski and Cliff Bars. Quality Bike Products** provided a tour of their facility, dinner as well as a guided ride where they furnished bikes for those of the class attendees that did not have a bike of their own.

MORC individuals also helped with logistics, planning and acted as in the field trainers for the construction portion of the trail building classes.

The contacts made at the HotSpots session will help us to build relationships with land managers throughout the metro area. We are in discussions with several parks departments that may lead to new sustainable trails being built in other areas throughout the metro.

Mountain biking is in a good position in the metro right now. Access is becoming easier, MORC is an exceptionally strong advocacy organization and we have a dedicated group of volunteers that are concerned about and are involved in building mountain bike trails.

We have tremendous momentum right now but more effort is still needed. If you are not a member of MORC you have to ask yourself, "Why Not?" If you are like me you spend more on a pair of bike tires than you would on membership in MORC.

24 Hours of Afton

A local classic, The 24 Hours of Afton endurance bicycle race, is just around the corner. This annual event happens the 22nd and 23rd of August, beginning at 5 PM on Friday and continuing through the night and into the next day, ending at 5 PM Saturday. It is held at the Afton Alps Ski Area in Afton, just 15 miles east of St. Paul. This is a low key, fun endurance race that is designed to challenge even the toughest cyclist, but at the same time provide fun for first timers. Racers can participate as individuals, or in teams of 4. Registration is open through the beginning of the event and on-site camping is available.

This event is also one of our major fundraisers, as all proceeds after expenses are donated to MORC. In return for this substantial contribution, MORC has agreed to provide volunteers to help run the race throughout the entire 24 hours. To fill our end of the deal, **we are in need of roughly 25 volunteers** spread across the 24 hours to make things run smoothly. If you are interested in helping out, contact Scott Thayer by email at sthayer@qbp.com, or by phone at (952) 270-6329. For more information about the event, see <http://www.24hoursofafton.org>.

MOCA—Minneapolis Off-Road Cycling Advocates

As another edition of the MORC newsletter hits the mail, we're on the final draft of the official agreement with the Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board to establish a demonstration project in the area of Wirth Park near Sweeney Lake and the golf course. The purpose of the demonstration project is to show the park board and community what we can do to make mountain bike trails sustainable and provide user satisfaction at the same time.

We're also in the process of contacting the neighborhood groups in the areas around Theodore Wirth Park to discuss any concerns they may have. The Kenwood Neighborhood Association has offered their support for the trails! We're looking for mountain bikers in the Bryn Mawr and Cedar-Isles-Dean neighborhoods to attend their neighborhood association meetings.

If you are interested in helping us out, please contact us at: info@mocatrails.org.

About a month and a half after the agreement is finalized, we'll present it to the community at an informational meeting. Most of the trail is already there and, if all goes smoothly, we may be flagging any necessary trail reroutes and putting signs up in this area either late in the fall or first thing next spring! As soon as we've gotten the demonstration project established we will start the process of expanding the trail system.

Miriam Taylor—miriam@mocatrails.org

Minnesota River Trail Update

It's the time of the year at the River Trail when you learn to ride narrow. The stinging nettles are making their presence known. If you happen to slightly move off the trail you'll know quickly. Good thing they are not poisonous. That being said a few people from QBP did a morning trimming session in late July. Anyone is welcome to take a weed whacker down to the trail and do some trimming on their own. Here are a couple of tips. You only need to cut about a foot in on each side. Before trimming look down the trail 15ft – 20ft you should be able see the areas that need trimming, this minimizes unnecessary trimming. Also, keep an eye out for a notice for another organized trimming session soon.

Also, MORC is working with the City of Bloomington to do some trail re-routes on some sections east of Lyndale. We are hoping that re-routing some of the eroding areas can convince the other land managers that manage the area about good trail design. This will take some time because government just works that way. We'll keep you posted.

On another note, Buck Hill will be the place for the MORC membership and supporting bike shop end of the season party on September 20th from 12:00noon until 9:00pm. More details are coming so, mark your calendars.

While I've got your attention it's time for a big thank you to a few people that deserve it. They are....

- Don McClure from Buck Hill for allowing us to hold our party and continued support of mountain biking.
- Pat Sorensen from Penn Cycle for hold the Thursday night races and always offering help on the River Trail.
- Erik Saltvold from Erik's for the Spring Cup and sponsoring many MORC activities.
- REI helping and sponsoring trail work sessions
- Matt Johnson for BoKoo for support and helping in MORC's evolvement into what it is today.

There are always more that could be mentioned and I'm sure they will be. These above people are the one that I've worked with this year and in the past. Please do your part to support them.

Dennis Porter

Murphy-Hanrehan Sprint Series

Wednesdays: August 20th, August 27th, September 3rd, and September 10th.

Registration begins at 5:30 PM, Race at 6:30 PM (Mass Start) Each race is only \$10. Parking is free!
Murphy-Hanrehan Park, Savage, MN

REI has teamed up with Three Rivers Park District to offer a mountain bike race series at one of the metro area's premier off-road courses. Prizes will be awarded in all divisions and plenty of swag will be given out. Come out and race! See www.ThreeRiversParkDistrict.org for further directions and map, or call recreation staff at **952-474-4822**.

Lebanon Hills Regional Park Trail Update

John Lundell, a MORC board member and webmaster, has taken on the official position of Trail Steward #2 for Dakota County Parks. He joins me on the team that represents MORC with the County, and both John and I will be spending dozens of volunteer hours behind the scenes getting the approvals and permits necessary to allow MORC to do all the things it does building and maintaining trails in the County Parks. Remember that when the volunteers (like you) come out to help build a new bridge, or drop-in, that the trail stewards have spent an average of 6 months getting engineering drawings and trail alignments developed and approved with the land managers. It's this constant communication with land managers and up front planning work (which is invisible to everyone) that that keeps things moving and allows MORC to keep busy building new trails.

Those of you who have been to Lebanon Hills in Eagan during the past two months, have seen the new 1.5 miles of expert trail that opened in June. Since opening this new trail section, MORC volunteers have been adding new trail features like step-ups, log rides, berms, and more rock gardens on almost a weekly basis. This trail will continue to evolve as new features are added.

There is a section of the double-track that leads back to the parking lot, that is eroding badly. This is a XC ski trail alignment that isn't sustainable with heavy summer use. MORC flagged a half-mile singletrack reroute for this short eroded section last January (yes, we do trail work and planning all year long) and after many meetings with land managers and XC ski trail experts, we are closing in on a new alignment for the ski trail, which will allow construction of the new half-mile of singletrack. With luck, we might begin construction in September, just 8 months after the initial flagging. The planned trail alignment is fast and flowing intermediate level singletrack with fast sweeping corners. The trail begins at the exit of the expert loop, and will connect into the middle of the beginner loop. Plans are for a Spring 2004 opening.

The volunteer crews at Lebanon are taking the month of August off. It's a good time for a break, its buggy and hot, and we all need more time on our bikes after spending the last three months working on trail improvements. We'll re-start the Tuesday evening work sessions September 2nd at 5:30. Expect a new 16-foot long teeter-totter to be first on the list for new trail features on the expert loop.

Finally, the Pioneer Press sent an sports editor and photographer out to do a feature article on MORC and its work at Lebanon Hills, so keep an eye out for the article.

That's all for now.
Dale Gundberg

NCMBP—North Central Mountain Bike Patrol

The North-Central Mountain Bike Patrol is raffling off an '02Trek Fuel 80 generously donated by Penn Cycle. The drawing will be held towards the end of September and you do not need to be present to win. Tickets are only \$2 and you may enter to win as many times as you can afford.

The odds of winning are dependent on how many tickets are sold but will not be less than 1 in 2000. Proceeds from this raffle will go to help support the North-Central Mountain Bike Patrol. To purchase tickets watch for a Mountain Bike Patroller in a yellow jersey on the trail or at events, or email Tom Schoewe at Tom@blackstars.biz.

Twin Cities Bicycling Club—Group Ride Leaders Wanted

As MORC's TCBC affiliate board member, one of my tasks is to organize group mountain bike rides. Previously I have scheduled these rides on the TCBC ride schedule and also on the TCBC-MTB e-group, which I will continue to do. See www.biketcbc.org

In addition, we would like to increase the number of group rides and are looking for MORC members who would like to lead rides. These rides can be anything from a casual ride at your favorite trail to an organized weekend. These rides would be listed on the MORC website under group rides. I can also forward the ride info to the TCBC-MTB e-group. Anyone interested can contact me for more information at 952-926-8848 or bobbk@aol.com

Bob Bryan

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MORC Web Update

There haven't been any major updates on the web site this summer, but the online forums are really picking up! We are getting a few new riders registered online every day. There are many great discussions happening right now in the forums, so if you are not yet active please browse on over to our web site and sign up. Registration is free, and the level of discussion and expertise available is priceless. Be sure to check out the trail conditions page before you ride, and browse on over to our trail reviews area which continues to grow as we get more reviews done throughout the summer. See you online!

MORC Jerseys For Sale

How do you spot fellow MORC members on the trail? Besides a pair of cool MORC socks, you will soon be seeing flashy new MORC jerseys out on the trail as well! After some research and preliminary design work, we finally have MORC jerseys available on the web site. We need 16 jerseys ordered before we can put our deposit down and continue with our order. We also need 25 minimum to place our final order. Please check the web site for a few sketches of what the jerseys will look like as well as pricing information. You can also place your order by going to the following link: <http://www.morcmtb.org/morcpages/merch.htm> We hope to have more merchandise available to order soon.