



Manitoba Cycling Association Club Affiliation

The Manitoba Cycling Association depends on a strong club network for the continued growth of cycling in the province. The local cycling club is the first contact most cycling enthusiasts make with organized cycling, and this contact can determine the future of the relationship of the individual and the sport. In addition, cycling clubs continue to organize most races and tours across Manitoba, and are valuable local members of the recreation community. For these reasons it is clear that strong clubs are vital to growth of cycling.

The strongest clubs are well organized with consistent leadership and a clear idea of their role and aims. Many other clubs seem to struggle along, apparently lacking the interest and commitment of their members. This guide offers a few simple methods and rules for improving club organization which can help any club operate better.

WHAT IS A CYCLING CLUB?

A cycling club is simply a group of people who have banded together to either enjoy the sport, teach and learn things, or to answer a particular need. Some clubs are interested in racing, touring, and recreation as well, while others are more specialized. Some exist to support elite teams while others are loose collections of friends who enjoy riding together. All these clubs have valid reasons for existing, but they may have different needs and require different levels of organization.

A group can become a "club" in a number of ways. Usually the founding members make a conscious decision to open the group to new members, hoping that the expansion will benefit both the group and the outside community. The next step may be affiliation to the Manitoba Cycling Association, which is required if the club members wish to participate in races for licensed competitors. Affiliation to the M.C.A. is valuable to non-racing clubs as well, for it establishes communication between the members and the cycling community, and allows the club coverage under the M.C.A. insurance plan. This coverage protects the club leaders from liability claims arising from club-organized events; contact the M.C.A. for current details about this coverage.

WHO RUNS A CYCLING CLUB?

Most clubs make decisions democratically, with members voting on proposed actions at club

meetings. As meetings cannot be called to settle all the minor issues which the club faces, several members are elected by the club to handle these affairs. These representatives are referred to as the "club executive".

The club executive usually consists of the following people; the club president, who runs the club meetings and represents the club to other groups; the vice-president, who stands in for the president when necessary; the treasurer, who is in charge of the club's finances; and the club secretary, who looks after the records of the club and its correspondence. There may also be other elected or appointed club leaders, depending on the needs of the club; a club coach, or racing director for example, or a touring director, or a social director.

Although the club executive are thought of as the club leaders, they do not set the direction of the club alone. Major issues must be decided by the club members at a general meeting. The executive simply "looks after" the interests of the club between meetings.

THE CLUB CONSTITUTION

A constitution is simply a written document outlining how the club is to be run. It should begin with a "mission statement", which is the agreed definition of the club's reason for being. Then, the following items should be addressed:

Which people may become members? What procedure is followed for becoming a member?

How does the club control members? Under what circumstances may a member resign or be expelled?

Who will the executive members of the club be? (ie. what positions?)

How and when will these people be elected?

What are the qualifications for the executive members? What jobs will each be responsible for?

Who will have the power to make payments (sign cheques) on behalf of the club?

What is the regular procedure for calling a members meeting? Who may call a special meeting? Who may call a special meeting? How many persons (or what percent of the membership) needs to be present at a meeting for the decisions made at the meeting to be valid?

There are other areas which a constitution may address, depending on the needs of the club. Often, it is best to examine the constitution of another organization and adapt it to your needs. A copy of the M.C.A. constitution is available from the M.C.A. office.

THE CLUB MEETING

The club may have several different types of meetings. At an Annual General Meeting (AGM) the actions of the club executive and the progress of the club are reviewed, and elections for the following year take place. This is the time to examine the direction and goals of the club, and to consider new programs.

On other occasions, the club will have regular meetings to consider ongoing business and make short-term plans. These can be held as often as necessary, but it is most convenient to establish a set time and date well in advance, such as "second Tuesday in each month, at 7 p.m.". This reduces the need to contact all members each time a meeting is needed. At these meetings, the executive members are expected to report briefly on their recent actions, and then the members resolve the continuing and new business of the club.

A third possibility is the "special meeting", which is called in case of an issue which is too

important for the club executive to decide alone, and is too urgent to wait for the next regular meeting. While the annual and regular meetings are scheduled and the dates agreed to in advance by the members, a special meeting must be called by one or more individuals who have the power to do so (see "The Club Constitution").

HOW TO RUN A CLUB MEETING

A well organized, efficiently run club meeting permits the club to carry on with its programs and gives the members a positive feeling about their group. A poorly run club meeting discourages members from attending in the future, and lowers morale in the club. For these reasons the organization of the club meeting is critical to the success of the club. Fortunately, formal meetings have been taking place for hundreds of years, and a number of rules for conducting meetings properly have been established.

The first step is preparation. All members should be reminded of the upcoming meeting, even if the date is regularly scheduled. This can be done by letter or telephone. A plan for the meeting, called an "agenda", should be drawn up by the executive members and in particular by the president and secretary. Copies of the agenda should be available for all members attending. All agendas have the same basic structure:

AGENDA

Meeting Date, Place, Time

1. Meeting called to order
2. Roll call - list of persons attending
3. Errors or omissions from previous meeting minutes
4. Adoption of previous minutes
5. Business arising from previous minutes
6. Reports of executive members
7. New business - various items as listed
 - 7.1 New item number 1
 - 7.2 New item number 2, etc.
8. Other business - as proposed by members at the meeting
9. Time and place of next meeting
10. Adjournment of meeting

The "roll call" is important to establish that a sufficient number of members are present to transact business. Items 3 and 4 simply promote good record keeping. Item, "business arising", examines issues carried over from the last previous meeting, with a brief report being made on the progress of each. The important new business of the club is done under items 7 and 8.

When the members arrive for the meeting, it is important to begin on time, regardless of who has not yet arrived. When people learn that the meetings begin promptly, they will make the effort to be on time.

In order to run the meeting smoothly, one person must be in charge, with power to decide (within limits) who may speak and what may be discussed. This is the meeting chairperson, or "chair". As the chair is expected to be neutral, he/she only votes on issues in the event of a tie. A good chairperson follows meeting rules fairly, allowing people a chance to speak but cutting off discussion that wanders away from the issue or becomes heated or "personal". The club president is usually the meeting chairperson, but if the club president feels strongly about an issue and does not want to be neutral, or if the president's

personality does not suit the role, a chairperson may be appointed.

The most important rule for the meeting participants to follow is that no issue can be discussed until a formal resolution, or "motion" has been made by one member and agreed to or "seconded" by another. This rule is important because many issues may seem worthy of discussion, but discussion is worthless unless the group knows what decision will be made to resolve the situation. A good motion recommends a clear action; once it is made, the group can decide whether it is action which they wish to follow. A typical motion could be, "I move that we spend \$200.00 on the club banquet".

When the motion is made and seconded, the chairperson calls for discussion, and recognizes those who wish to speak. It may be necessary after a period of time to stop debate, and this may be done either by the chair or by a motion from a member. If a motion is made to stop debate or "call the question", it must be voted on immediately; if successful, the vote on the main issue follows immediately.

There are a number of other rules for conducting meetings which cover specific situations. A common guide to these rules is "Roberts Rules of Order", which can be obtained at many bookstores.

During the meeting, it is important to keep the following questions in mind, and to be sure the answers are recorded in the meeting minutes:

- ◆ What action is proposed by the motion?
- ◆ Who will carry out this action?
- ◆ When will the action be completed?

WHAT ABOUT LEGAL LIABILITY?

Liability means legal responsibility for an action. As a club, you will collectively make decisions, the executive will make decisions on behalf of the club, and in certain situations, individuals will make decisions on behalf of the club. If these decisions are incorrect and lead to damage to another person or property, who will be held responsible?

In general, the person who makes the decisions will be personally liable unless the club is incorporated as a legal entity. This means that if the president of an unincorporated club makes a decision at a club event and is later sued, he/she may lose personal money or property controlled by the club may be used for compensation. The procedure for incorporation involves filling out various forms supplying information to the provincial government, along with payment of a fee. A lawyer need not be involved, but you may find it useful to obtain legal advice about setting up the corporation's by-laws, records, and meetings, as well as about the obligations of the directors of the corporation.

More information can be obtained from:

1. Minister of Consumer and Corporate Relations
Corporate Branch 405 Broadway
945-2500

WHAT ABOUT FINANCIAL ORGANIZATION?

Clubs usually give the Treasurer the responsibility for looking after the bank balance, writing cheques and reporting to the members as necessary. Even the smallest club may wish to

set up 2 bank accounts so the signatures of two club officials are needed on a cheque, as a precaution to ensure club funds are spent correctly.

When a club becomes larger, a higher level of financial organization may be needed. A simple ledger system may be used to keep records, and more comprehensive financial statements will be prepared. Here are the basic elements of a small bookkeeping system:

- A Cash Receipts Journal, in which a record of all incoming funds is kept.
- A Cash Disbursements Journal, to record all outgoing funds.
- A small filing system to keep monthly receipts, invoices issued to and by the club, and bank, statements.

These will allow the Treasurer to keep a running account of the bank balance, and will make it ease to keep track of the information needed to prepare reports.

There are a number of publications which tell you how to set up a small accounting system.

DOES IT NEED TO BE THIS FORMAL?

No! your club can follow as many rules as the members wish to. Club meetings can be as informal as a group discussion, if you wish. In general, however, a larger club or one which faces controversial issues will need a more formal structure to keep running smoothly. Financial records can also be as organized as the needs or your club demand.

HOW CAN WE GET MORE VOLUNTEERS?

Many clubs find that only one or two members get involved with the organization, while the remaining members take advantage of club programs without helping out at all. There are always a few people who are rewarded by the act of helping and building a club, but many are not. The club needs to recognize this fact and find suitable rewards to keep the others involved.

Rewards can be of many kinds. One way is for the "traditional workers" to say, "We will not run the club ride next week. If you want to go out, you'll have to organize it yourself". In this way, the continuation of the enjoyable club program becomes the rewards. A more obvious way is to give the helpers something tangible, like a crest, trophy or discount off club membership.

Simply giving volunteers a reward when they participate is only a small part of a successful volunteer system. Attention should be paid to the jobs the volunteers are asked to do. It does little good to leave a course marshal out in the rain alone for four hours, and then promise a nominal reward in return; if the job is unpleasant enough, there will be no volunteers to look after the others standing out on the course or at the registration desk.

Another good idea is to appoint a club member to be in charge of volunteers. This person can attempt to find jobs that suit the members, look after the rewards program, recruit new volunteers and so on. Obviously, the volunteer Coordinator will need excellent social skills.

Finally, think about setting up a progression of jobs which club volunteers can rise through. Let the members progress from course marshal to registration worker to event coordinator to event chairperson. This can encourage members to volunteer, knowing that they will not be stuck at the lowest level indefinitely, and at the same time provides them with an

"education" so when they progress to the top jobs they will have experience at all the smaller ones. To facilitate this, make a rule that the people currently in the top jobs can only hold their positions for a given term, thus making sure that spaces open for those rising within the system.

Program - At first this should be concentrated on a weekly run basis, with Saturday, Sunday, or mid-week events. Make the meeting place the same each time. If you have a mixed group of riders, some stronger than the others, organize two runs, one for the "hard riders" and one for the "easy riders". With good planning, both groups could meet for lunch or mid-day break. Publish a runs list and make sure each run is mentioned in the local press.

Touring Runs - Organize weekend runs on Saturdays or Sundays. If there are youth hostels or Bed and Breakfasts in the area, write them for accommodation information.

Assistance - A cycling club is a community project providing a service, and most municipalities will recognize this. Establish a good relationship with them and find out whether any assistance is available for use of a meeting room, either free of charge or at a nominal fee. Some municipalities assist clubs with postage, duplications and dispatching club news through their recreation departments.

Other activities - In most parts of the country, cycling is a 7 - 9 month activity. In the non-cycling part of the year, social activities such as film shows, club banquets, skiing and outdoor winter activities should be organized. They keep members together and are often a means of raising revenue.

Provide members with a regular club newsletters. This need only be a duplicated sheet or two, but it is a necessary contact providing club runs and meeting dates, news items, etc. Club identity can be provided by supplying T-shirts and crests bearing the club name and logo.

PUBLIC RELATIONS FOR THE CLUB

As a club, you may simply wish to enjoy riding together, or you may want to attract new members, organize cycling events, and so on. If you are interested in expanding your membership or programs, public relations and publicity will be important to you.

Here are a few suggestions to assist your public relations efforts:

- ◆ Appoint or elect a public relations officer for the club. Ideally this will be a person who enjoys meeting and talking to people, and who already knows a number of contact people in the community. A club member who happens to be a member of a municipal committee or service organization could be a good choice.
- ◆ Make good use of free publicity, such as that offered by the community television station, radio station or newspaper. The media often supplies "public service" time or space at no charge.
- ◆ A little organization goes a long way when dealing with the media. Don't forget to supply a brief written outline or your project which lists the who, what, when, where and why of the program or event.

- ◆ Exposure in the media is valuable when contacting potential club sponsors. Remember, sponsors don't give money for nothing; usually, they want publicity. Newspaper clippings from previous events can persuade sponsors that you can offer that publicity. Keep all such clippings, photos, and programs in a binder to show prospective sponsors.
- ◆ When you have a successful contact with the media or sponsor, or a municipal authority, never forget to say "thank you". A letter after the event is good, but a small award from the club may be even better. Why not invite sponsors and helpful contacts to the club banquet or a prize presentation at your annual meeting?
- ◆ If you are organizing an event, don't forget to inform the people along the route. Nothing creates more ill-will than a surprise event that hinders traffic movement and prevents people from reaching shops. A little pre-event publicity can both prepare local residents and "sell" them on the advantages of your event.
- ◆ Last of all, remember to start early. Media and municipal permission deadlines may force you to start month before your scheduled date. Even a simple club meeting in a local school or library may have to be arranged well in advance.

We hope this guide will help you develop a strong club that can boost the development of cycling in your community. Don't forget, the M.C.A. can provide you with a variety of resources for your club - just ask!

Other resources you may wish to contact:
Volunteers in Public Service
114 Gary Street - 945-3591

RACING CLUBS

The club profile was developed from the C.C.A.'s Athlete Development Model, which is the

model illustrating the profession of riders development from level to level. Attached to this model are five "Sport Systems:"

1. Coaching
2. Competition
3. Officiating
4. Organization
5. Sport Science
6. Training

The C.C.A. club profile is a cross section of all the sport systems which describes the activities the club should be involved with in order to provide the best support for riders that the club is best suited to assist with.

The following assumptions are made about clubs for this profile:

1. Clubs are the main provider of races, coaching, officials, and organization for the bulk of current and future licensed racers.
2. Provincial associations are the main provider of coordination for the provincial calendar, team selection, team coaching, assignment of officials to provincial events and other provincial team programs.
3. The C.C.A. is the main provider of coordination for the national calendar, national team selection and program and for the development of programs for implementation at club and provincial level.

C.C.A. recommended standards for club activities.

1. COMPETITIONS (N.B. locally refers to an 80km radius)

Each club should:

- ◆ Organize or assist other clubs in the locality to organize an individual or team time trial 10 - 30km in length, once per week. The distance and terrain may vary. Team entry of 2-4 riders should be permitted in all events.
- ◆ Organize, or assist other clubs in the locality to organize a massed start road race, handicap road race or criterium of 40-60km, once per week. Terrain should vary, but this is not critical.
- ◆ If a track is available, organize or assist other clubs in the locality to organize a track league with racing once per week.
- ◆ Organize, or assist other clubs in the locality to organize a weekend event on the provincial calendar for each of the following groups (and minimum distances) at least once per year.

Group 1

Pee Wee (boys) 5km Pee Wee (girls) 5km
Minime (boys) 5km Minime (girls) 15km
Cadet (boys) 0km Junior (women) 30km
Junior (men) 0km Novice (girls under 17) 15km

Group 2

Novice Men (over 16) 20km
Novice Women (over 16) 20km
Senior Women 50km
Senior III (or equivalent) Men 0km (with vets)

* Vets should ride the category appropriate to their ability.

It is recommended that races for the two groups be organized separately to avoid overloading the race organizers in your club. Each group requires about 6 1/2 hours on a criterium circuit or 3 1/2 hours on a road circuit of 10km where two categories may be run concurrently, 5 minutes apart.

◆ Ensure all races meet provincial safety standards.

2. OFFICIATING

Each club should:

- ◆ Organize one, one-day technical assistant course per year to train race volunteers.
- ◆ Organize one full road or track commissaires course per year to train race volunteers.
- ◆ sign two trained commissaires to officiate each time trial.
- ◆ Assign two licensed commissaires to each club event to ensure the races are run safely and fairly, and to provide race experience for officials.

3. ORGANIZATION

Each club should:

- ◆ Elect a club executive of president, secretary-treasurer, racing director, mid-week organizer or provincial level race organizer to direct the respective programs.
- ◆ Raise funds to help pay travel costs for qualified riders to attend provincial selection events.
- ◆ Coordinate travel to weekend events for qualified riders.

4. COACHING AND TRAINING

Each club should:

- ◆ Find and assign certified Level I coaches to direct recruitment, training and racing programs for the following categories: boys and girls under 14, junior women, junior men, senior women, senior men.
- ◆ Organize two workouts/rides per week year round for each group under the supervision of Level I minimum certified coaches.
- ◆ Provide seasonal training programs for all riders.
- ◆ Organize and run two Learn-to-Race programs each year, under the direction of a Level I certified coach, who may be assisted by other coaches with experience in racing.
- ◆ Organize one Level I coaching course per year to prepare future coaches.

5. SPORT SCIENCE

Each club should:

- ◆ Organize and run field tests consisting of individual time trials over 200m, 1km, 3km, (for junior men and women, senior women), 4km (for senior men) and 15km, once per month.
- ◆ Keep records of times for all riders.
- ◆ Recommend local sports oriented physicians to riders, require checkups according to Sport Medicine Council of Canada recommendations.