

# Charlie Davis

Dean of Rock County Cyclists



Charlie Davis was born in rural Rock County, near Union. Always an athlete, Charlie won a local Golden Gloves Championship. With the outbreak of World War II he became employed by Uncle Sam. His assignment, with the Military Police, found him stationed in New York City. For many years Charlie was a card carrying Teamster working as an over-the-road driver. While living in Evansville and in his 50's he started biking as a hobby.

Accompanied by his son he traveled many local roads. "I always found when biking I did not like getting passed by other bikers and would often chase after them." Putting this desire to use, he trained five days a week on the hills between Evansville and Monticello. He competed in his first race at age 54.

When asked what cycling was like in those days Charlie points out that you would never see other riders on the road – there simply were not people riding bikes. His races were often done with cutoff shorts and tennis shoes. He remembers being real impressed if he met a cyclist wearing gloves. They were the sign of a serious cyclist. Local cyclists tended to gravitate to the Blackhawk Bike Club in Rockford. Charlie remembers being so impressed with four riders at a club event, they had gloves and matching jerseys.

After moving to Janesville in 1991 Charlie rode with the Stella Bike team, later becoming Rocky Road. Wanting a different speed ride Charlie organized the "B" team ride out of Haacks Cycles. With early riders like Helen Kaiser, Kris Koeffler, Randy Hurd, and a host of Janesville attorneys the group continues today. Current rider ship of Tuesday rides can run as high

as 26 riders on the “A” team and 24 riders on the “B” team. Always looking for a ride, Charlie started a Saturday morning group with a breakfast stop. Frequently riding 25 miles before breakfast and finishing off a century ride by 2:00. Pancakes were the main goal of these rides and rural restaurants were carefully analyzed for the quality of their cakes.

Florida was attractive to Charlie and he soon started wintering in the Winter Haven area, this allowed time and weather for many miles. His claim was a 9,000 mile season; the significant part was he was 70 at the time. In 1999 he competed in the Florida Masters and won the time trial event setting a course record that held until a new course was created in 2003. Now age 81, he moved permanently to Florida in 2003 but still returns occasionally. He rode with the club in August of 2008 and still rides regularly in Florida.