



Why is it called the Best Dam Bike Ride?

In the year that saw the first Apple Macintosh, welcomed the Summer Olympics to Los Angeles and asked TV audiences “Where’s the Beef?”, Bike MS: Best Dam Bike Ride debuted.

What would grow to become one of the most successful bike fundraisers in the country took its name from the town of Beaver Dam, which was the overnight stop for the two-day ride in those early years. Back then participants rode 75 miles each day, slept on the floor of a local grade school and snacked on “gorp,” a mixture of raisins, nuts and sesame seed sticks.

The focus then was as it is now: to create the best bike tour experience possible.

1984	Today
Milwaukee to Beaver Dam to Milwaukee	Pewaukee to Whitewater to Madison
75 miles each day/150 miles round-trip	50-, 75- and 100-mile route options each day
No mode of communication along the route	Ham radios and cell phones
3 volunteers and 2 staff members	450 volunteers and staff members
Lunch was peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, dinner was fried chicken and brownies from Irma’s Catering Company	Lunches are pasta, subs and burgers and chicken sandwiches served by a local caterer and dinner is served by UW-Whitewater’s catering services.
156 riders	More than 1,700 riders
Route maps made by hand	Computerized mapping
\$40,745 raised*	\$1.5 million raised*

*includes sponsorship and in-kind support