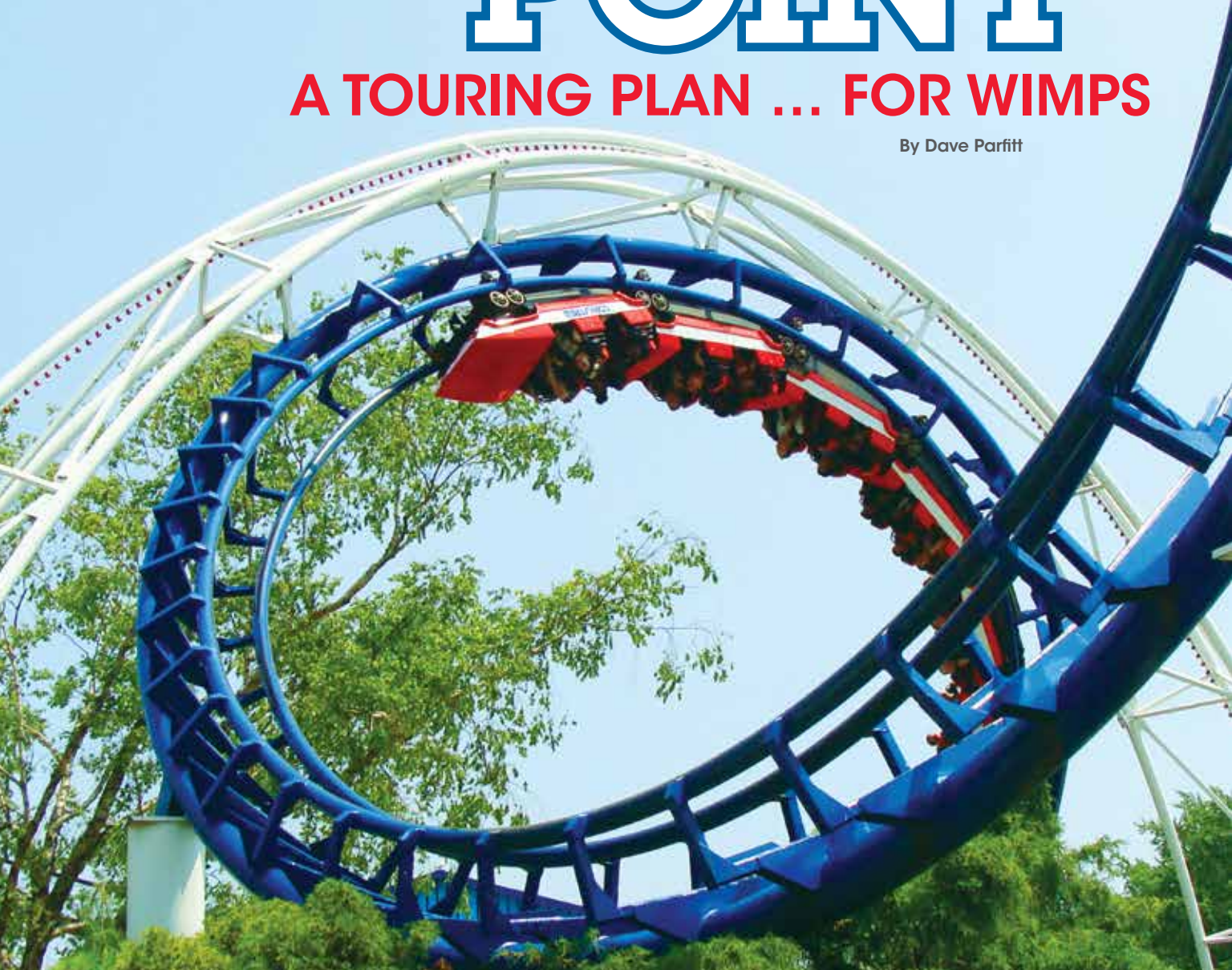


CEDAR POINT

A TOURING PLAN ... FOR WIMPS

By Dave Parfitt



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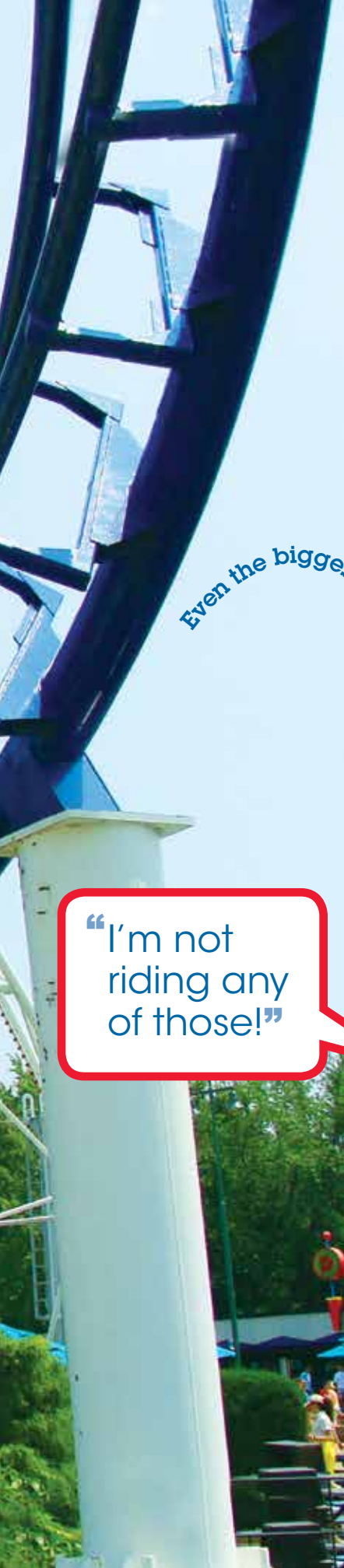
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Even the biggest 'fraidy cat' in your family will find something to love at this roller coaster mecca

"I'm not riding any of those!"

Growing up in this part of the country, Cedar Point has always been spoken of in epic proportions. Well, maybe less like Homer the poet, and more like Homer Simpson: "Dude! The coasters are AMAAZING!" It wasn't until after high school when I finally made the pilgrimage to this roller coaster mecca in Sandusky, Ohio. After one visit, I was hooked. I couldn't get enough of the coasters and fun: the speed, drops, twists, flips and the arcade game Whac-A-Mole too (I had an undefeated streak going for years!).

As I grew older, my Whac-A-Mole reflexes slowed, and I eventually lost to a random 12-year-old. My love of coasters, however, never diminished. I couldn't wait to introduce my two daughters to "America's Roller Coast" – named Best Amusement Park in the World for 16 consecutive years by Amusement Today. As we drove up the Cedar Point peninsula and glimpsed the colorful steel tracks arching into the sky, I heard squeals from the backseat. But ... as I listened more closely, I realized those were most definitely *not* the squeals of teenage anticipation. I distinctly overheard something that sounded like ...

"I'm not riding that in a million years," my daughter Maggie announced, with the stubbornness that only a 14-year-old girl can muster. "I'm not riding any of those!"

And with that, my Cedar Point touring plan for wimps was born.

OUR WIMPY DAY BEGINS

Now don't misunderstand: I'm not calling my daughters wimps. I'd read the *Parent's Handbook*, and I wasn't name-calling to get them to attempt the big coasters. Those towering hills and multiple inversions are really intimidating to them, but all in all they like roller coasters. Really, they do. Even if we never sat in the seat of a Giga Coaster, there were still plenty of smaller coasters and other rides for us to enjoy at Cedar Point.

We grabbed a park map, hopped on the **Sky Ride**, and sketched out our day. With the 420-foot **Top Thrill Dragster** and the 310-foot **Millennium Force** out of the equation, first up for us was **Iron Dragon**, a 27-year-old suspended coaster that gently glides through the trees and over a misty pool. This was always one of my favorite attractions, and – even better – there was no line.



Next, we jumped onto the 50-year-old steam train of the Cedar Point and Lake Erie Railroad, and made our way to **Mean Streak** – a wooden roller coaster with an inferiority complex next to Cedar Point’s steel titans. Despite the fact that it attempted to buck, jar and rattle the teeth out of our heads, my daughters put Mean Streak right near the top of their list.

Throughout the afternoon we caught the **Summer Daze** show, rode **Gemini** and the **Cedar Creek Mine Ride** before leaving the park for the afternoon. We were staying at a hotel just down the road, and the girls needed to keep their manicure appointment there at the spa (I know ... rough life). Plus, we all needed a break from an unrelenting summer sun. We would be back.

A WIMPY NIGHT

After dinner we returned to Cedar Point for more rides, including the **Corkscrew** and **Witches’ Wheel**, and the Luminosity celebration and dance party. Luminosity is a stimulating wonder that should not be missed; a 40-minute show filled with singers, musicians, dancers, aerial acrobats, lights, lasers and pyrotechnics, all wrapping up with a DJ dance party. Whew! It is an over-the-top spectacular that ranks among the best shows I’ve ever seen in a theme park.

As we headed toward the park exit, I suggested to the girls that



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we give the **Magnum XL-200** a try. There was no line! Even after all our coasters throughout the day, they were still not interested. Still, I'd say our Cedar Point Touring Plan for wimps was a success, and everyone left with big smiles on their faces.

However, I gave a little sigh as we exited the park gates, the **GateKeeper** coaster whooshing over our heads. Hey, maybe this dad can get his daughters to be his coaster buddies next year. ■



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