

Pedal Press



The Newsletter of the Kalamazoo Bicycle Club, Inc.
February, 1998

President's Letter

I love bike shops. A few years ago I was hanging around Portage Schwinn so much they let me work weekends. It was a terrific experience and believe it or not a great way to spend a Saturday. Thanks Gerry!

Fact is, I still spend a lot of time hanging around the local bike shops and have had the pleasure of meeting most of the owners. The past couple of weeks I visited all the shops and invited these people, my friends, to the KBC recovery party.

Unfortunately it was not to be this year. Many of them had other commitments. But one thing they have in common is that they support the Kalamazoo Bike Club.

Every shop I contacted generously donated products for door prizes at our party. They all allow us to put KBC club and ride information in space that could be used to display products.

Many of these people have volunteered their time, materials and staff to help make KBC events a success. I cannot say I have heard of any bike shop in town turning down a request from KBC.

So I truly believe each of us should personally thank these fine people for their continued support, patronize our favorite shops, and tell our friends.

I have an idea. Bike shop owners, could you (or your staff) contribute an article for this publication sometime this year? It can be almost anything—as long as it's not advertising. I have it on excellent authority that the *Newsletter* Editor would welcome your submissions.

—Tom Cross

(Send your scriverings to Kathy Barrett/Doug Kirk at 1525 Merrill, Kalamazoo, MI. 49008 or call them at 388-5045. —Ed.)

Upcoming Events...

February

Hey, there's nothing planned right now, We're temporarily partied out, the Board is bored, and no one's foolish to schedule a ride in advance in February!

But you can help—see page 4!

Lance Armstrong Crashes KBC Jan- uary Recovery Party

Hey! It coulda happened! The KBC Recovery Party was again held at the University Roadhouse. The place was packed wall to wall with enthusiastic bikers having a great time. The food and service from the Roadhouse was top notch.

If you missed this party, you missed a great opportunity to start out the new year on a high note. The local bike shops went all out with tons of donations for prizes. Nobody went away empty handed. Nuke Pruf hubs, Ultegra derailleurs, T-shirts and a jersey were just some of the goodies.

As the outgoing President I had the pleasure of picking the Volunteer of the Year. This year's recipient was none other than our very own Newsletter Editor, Kathy Barrett. Kathy has been Editor of the Newsletter for over two years and has done an outstanding job. She's responsible for bringing us those Pedal Press newsletters that we like to read on those cold winter nights when we can only think of biking.

So the next time you see Kathy tell her congratulations and that she's doing a great job.

And make it a point to mark your calendar for next year. You just have to make the next Recovery Party. It was a really great time!!

THE 6TH STREET MONSTER

Heading back towards home,
The monster yet to beat.
Thoughts of finishing, I roam,
But goals yet I must meet.

Aroma of food I can smell,
And thoughts of hunger come near.
Stop for a bite?...I won't tell!
No, lets move on and face my fear.

Nearing the start of the incline,
I look up, and all I can see,
A path with a endless of time.
Man!....A top there must be!

The pulling effect starts on the hill,
Its fighting, trying to keep me down,
Down shifting low and pedaling at will.
Why do I ride this part of town?

The breathing becomes unstoppable,
And the heart rate reaches its peak.
The muscles?....Are they capable?
Sweat starts running down one cheek.

Slow moving, but still in a climb,
Seeing less and less upward path.
I know its just a matter of time,
The monster will end it's wrath.

The end of the path is in sight!
Indeed there is a top to this bump!
Why was I in such a fright?
Thoughts, make me feel like a chump.

Making it was everything at that,
Shifting back up, increasing my rate.
The monster, I look back on at,
See you again my friend, soon in '98.

Happy New Year
The Pedaling Poet

(Your Newsletter Editor welcomes prose or poetry submissions. Please be brave and send us your stuff. You aren't going riding this time of year anyway, so why not write about biking and get famous?)

February Birthdays

Brian Betz
Jacquie Bradford
James Bradford
Jose Luiz Ferraz de Camargo
Vinicius Camargo
Jay Campbell
Zolton Cohen
Terry Crow
Judy Gapp
Jean Gemrich
Mona Gronert
Terry Hutchins
David Jarl
Chris Jones
Greg Miller
Nick Morin
Rebecca Pearce
Angela Schultz
Mary White

New Members

Christopher Barnes
Mary Ann Barnes
Stephen Barnes
Betsy Barnes

Axel Kleat

(Continued from page 3)

14) If you like to climb seated, you'll climb hills better with your seat back and your heels low. Watch those guys in the Tour on TV.

15) *Never* move saddle placement more than a quarter inch or so without going for a ride or two to allow your body to adjust.

16) By now you've noticed the above is full of contradictions, so ignore as much of it as you want and go figure out what works. When you do, give me a call and we'll go drink beer and argue about it.

Saddle Up

by Axel Kleat

No, this isn't about horses, it's about your bike seat—which those in the know call a saddle. Let's face it, saddles and one's related anatomical parts make a fragile partnership.

As long as everything's working right in the saddle department, you'll likely be comfortable on your bike. But if anything down there is even slightly out of kilter, you'll almost certainly be unhappy, and might just be miserable.

What I really want to talk about is saddle position. Even though the attaching bolts might fail on occasion, the best thing about saddles is that they're adjustable. If you read much about bicycling, you've doubtless run across some treatise or another about how high your seat should be, how it should be tilted, and how far back you should push it. Formulas abound, and I've tried them enough to know that it's tough to accurately measure your own inseam!

One constant I've learned from my years of pedaling is that the perfect height just isn't constant. Heck, it changes during the riding season, and even from bike to bike. Sometimes what was perfect yesterday feels all wrong today. Conclusion: formulas just don't get it.

Trial and error may not be high tech, but it's the only way to get things just the way you want them. So, beginning from the old standard that your bare heel should just touch the surface of the pedal when sitting evenly on the saddle when the pedal's at the bottom, I hereby submit in no particular order Axel's Rules of Saddle Adjustment:

1) Jam that seat all the way back. Seat rails and seat tubes make it almost impossible to hang your butt too far behind the pedals. But if you manage to, the inside of your knee caps will let you know.

2) *If you ride a lot* on aero bars, ignore paragraph one. Shove that saddle way forward. Then raise that seat somewhere between a quarter and a half inch (and lower its nose too, unless you like numbness, pain, and visits to the doctor for complaints best not discussed in this publication.)

3) If you're a guy, the seat should be pretty darn level front-to-rear. Some guys (the ones with higher voices)

even prefer the nose a bit higher. Grab a carpenter's level and check it out. Women generally want the nose a half inch lower than the back.

4) Mountain bike saddles should be lower than road bike saddles. Maybe a good quarter inch. Maybe more.

5) If you ride more than one bike, get a plumb bob (a weight tied to a string), and hang it directly over your bottom bracket (crank bearings) and be sure that the seat for each bike is the same distance behind the string. This is important, and will do more than you'd imagine to make the bikes feel alike. If one bike causes you leg or joint pain and another doesn't, this is most likely the reason.

6) Don't be timid about fooling around with your seat. It's easy to adjust. And with a level and some tape to mark the seatpost, it's easy to keep track of where it was.

7) Figure out which leg is shorter (usually your non-dominant leg,) and adjust the seat height for your short leg.

8) If you have chaffing problems even with good shorts and some ointment, lower your saddle.

9) Spinning fast is easier if the seat is further forward. Whether easier is actually better is open to question.

10) Spinning fast is easier if the seat is lower. But see number 9. Again, whether spinning faster is better is unclear. Your knees will last longer, but the higher the saddle, the more power you have.

11) Keep your seat as high as you're comfortable with, but don't let your butt rock, a cardinal sin. God help you if Paul sees you. I wash my hands of the whole thing.

12) The higher you keep your ankle (pedaling tip-toed), the further forward you'll like the saddle. Heel draggers should slide that saddle back.

13) If the backs of your knee joint hurts, move the seat back. If the front (especially your knee cap) hurts, move

Create Your Own Tour

Why not invent your own ride? Figure out all the details, and we'll publish all the information about it here. You'll probably have a dandy turnout and everyone will thank you and tell you what a great idea you had. Well over 150 bicyclists read this *Newsletter* each month. They'd love to hear about a ride that you are putting together. What's more, they'll tell their friends. You'd be surprised at the results you can get.

I know this from personal knowledge. Last year Kathy and I planned a ride I named The Celery City Century. I got out some maps, did a little driving, and figured out the flattest, fastest out-and-back 100 mile course I could. We set a goal of doing the ride in less than five hours, *including* stops. In other words, a really hard, fast ride. Not a ride for the faint of heart, and not a whole lot of people would even be interested, you'd think. We sent out written invitations to about 15 people we thought might give it a try. About ten of them could make it, *but* another ten or so heard about it one way or another.

Those twenty or so people thought the first Celery City Century (last May) was a hit, so we repeated it last September. We invited the same people, but this time almost thirty riders showed up. We never even mentioned the ride in the *Newsletter*.

We all know that group rides are a blast. So why not create a group ride that fits your idea of what a great group ride would be. Need some suggestions? How about a ride that includes stops at select restaurants (Calorie City Century)? A ride on the most deserted roads you can find? A group mountain bike ride? A ride to some lake for a swim? A ride that ends by a bar? Who knows what might be a good time???

You know, that's who knows! And there are people—probably lots of people—who'd agree with you and make it a point to show up. Just think: it's *your* ride, so you get to pick the pace, the food stops, the start/finish, date, time, name, and anything else you can think of.

We provide the publicity via the *Newsletter*, and before long if things go as planned, by the KBC website. So get out the map and the calendar, and start planning Joan's June Jaunt, Sherry's September Sprint, Paul's Pedal, Chris' Cruise, or Marty's March Madness. You tell us, and we'll tell everyone else!

—Doug Kirk

Rants From Ride Captain Randy

Not much outside riding at this time of year for me, but after having spent a few hours on the wind trainer in the past few weeks, I've had fond thoughts of riding outside again.

Although the calendar says it's the middle of January and the weather is *cold*, Spring is just around the corner (okay, so the corner is still down the block a ways!) and that means it's time to begin thinking about the upcoming 1998 KBC ride season again.

Which means it's also time to begin the annual hunt for ride leaders for the coming riding season. KBC had a great group of ride leaders last year and the 1997 ride season was the best I can remember for years.

If anyone is interested in leading rides this year, please give me a call at 649-1814. *Please* don't wait to be asked. No experience is necessary, just the willingness to ride with a great group of people who enjoy riding their bikes.

We plan to continue the Monday, Wednesday, Friday, and possibly Sunday rides for the 1998 season. If you'd like to captain a ride another day or time, please give me a call. We hope to offer at least a partial weekly ride schedule in April as the weather permits. Look for details in the April *Newsletter*.

The Monday Recovery Ride at Texas Drive Park will provide three ride leaders which should provide a pace (15-20 mile group at 10-15 mph, 20-25 mile group at 16-18 mph, and the 25-30 mile group at 19+ mph) to suit riders of all abilities. We need ride leaders for all three ride groups. The more volunteers the better.

If the weather cooperates, impromptu rides will most likely materialize in the next couple of months. Wear the appropriate clothing and let's go for a ride. If anyone would like to lead a weekend ride in February or March, give me a call or send me a description of the ride via e-mail. If the roads are dry, there will be riders ready to ride. I have a lengthy e-mail list of riders, so the ride information can be transferred quickly and on short notice. If any of you would like to be added to the e-mail list, send your e-mail address to me as soon as possible. (s.randy.putt@am.pnu.com).

—Randy Putt

A Ride of Your Own

Okay, no one's doing much riding this month, except maybe Joan Orman and Richard Neumann, and we know how *banzai* they are.

But for the rest of us mortals, now is the perfect time to cogitate about where you'd *really* like to ride once things warm up a little bit. Why not dream up your perfect ride? Go ahead, right now, take a few minutes and imagine the rides you'd really like to do this year.

And since it's February anyway, go ahead and plan things out. When, where, how fast, what you'll need, what you'll do if it rains, where you'll eat, all the logistics.

It's fun to dream and it's fun to plan it all out. Right now, the sky's the limit. Maybe it's a particular place you've always wanted to bike to. Or maybe it's somewhere you want to take your bike to go exploring. Maybe it's with friends that you're too busy to meet up with unless you plan ahead.

Maybe it's an organized ride like the 24 Hour Challenge or the Apple Cider Century, or a multi-day tour far, far away. We can give you help locating all sorts of tour companies that offer tours for every skill level. Or just look in the back of *Bicycling* magazine or on the web.

One type of ride we really enjoy is biking to a Bed & Breakfast somewhere (Quincy, Coldwater, Battle Creek, or Hastings, for instance) and biking back the next day. A miniature vacation.

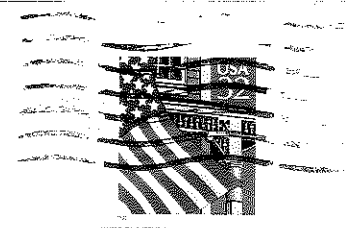
In the summer, you really don't need to take much more than a credit card, shorts, sandals and a T-shirt for an overnight trip like this.

The point is to start planning now. You may have noticed that time (to plagiarize the Steve Miller Band) keeps slipping, slipping, slipping into the future. A little planning now can make this summer the most fun you can imagine on two wheels.

—Doug Kirk & Kathy Barrett



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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

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 Portage Schwinn 327-3393
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KALAMAZOO BICYCLE CLUB MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Dues (Check One)

- Adult Membership \$15.00
- Family \$17.00
- Senior (60+)..... \$13.00
- Youth (17 or younger)..... \$13.00

Please Print

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State ____ Zip _____
 Phone _____ Birthdate _____
 E-mail _____

Family Member Names Birthdates

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Signature _____
 Parent's Signature (if under 18) _____

Interested in working on KBC Events? Yes No

Registered Racer: USCF NORBA

SEND TO: KALAMAZOO BICYCLE CLUB, PO BOX 50527, KALAMAZOO MI 49005