



Kalamazoo Bicycle Club

Volume 1 Number 4 Fall Issue 1972

NOTE: The following is an imitation of the K.B.C. Newsletter that you are used to receiving . . . do not be fooled, but READ IT . . . it's all you'll be getting.

The November meeting (Nov. 8th) is going to be the "biggie" of the year, for in November, very much like the U.S. and A., the K.B.C. indicates, by electoral means, the direction it would like to take during the next term. Unlike the U.S. and A., the K.B.C. has a chance to redeem or repledge itself every year. This past year we have been lead progressively and dynamically by President Tom Higgins, who would now like to step down and turn the reins over to another charismatic and responsible chief executive. In addition to filling this awesome role, K.B.C. members have the pleasure during this November meeting of choosing the rest of the official posts of the Mall City cycling body. A vice-president, treasurer and secretary will also be elected after wide-open nominations by and of K.B.C. members.

After the excitement of the election of officers is over, the appointive posts of the K.B.C. will be up for grabs. Members interested in becoming Publicity Chairman, Membership Chairman, Ride Captain, Program Chairman, or any other post they can dream up are urged to immerse themselves in petty club politics in order to capture the position of power for which they lust. The appointments to these posts will be made by the new president and his "team".

Other lively issues to be confronted at the meeting include a proposed system for next years events, of riders points for mileage ridden with the club with a trophy to be awarded to the rider with the most number of points at the end of the season. Another "meaty" issue begging for consideration is the club's reaction to the new ride schedule and the new style of rides for November and December.

All in all, the November meeting of the Kalamazoo Bicycle Club promises to be more than just a-biggie. So plan now to be there when the presiding officer asks, "Do you think we should start yet?"

That's November 8th at the West Main branch of the American Nat. Bank at 7:30 P. M. If you need any further reasons to be there, just call John Lacko (he's the one who writ this article) (Editor's note) - As usual, the Kalamazoo Bicycle Club welcomes even the faintest of interest on the part of the general public, so if you are interested in bicycling in Kalamazoo or in exciting parliamentary procedure (?), feel free to show up - in fact, for just one more reason, it's FREE. (another note by Scotch Editor)

Remember, NOVEMBER 8th at West Main Branch, American National Bank, 7:30 P.M.
(West Main at Drake Rd.)

The case of the SINUSODIAL DRAIN

Before you get the notion that your editor has gone off his clinchers with this opening statement, the title refers to those treacherous iron monsters that lay in waiting near curbs and gutters for the next unsuspecting bicyclist with a slim tire, only to grasp it firmly and hurl its oblivious owner in to a horrendous heap that can be described only in words far too gross for this respectable column.

In case you haven't understood a word I've said so far, the "monster" is that peculiar type of curbside grating with the open curved design. As bicyclists concerned for safety and safe riding, we feel that the abandonment of this type of grating should be strongly presented to our city officials of bicycling interests, and the cause carried to other cities and other clubs.

If any reader knows of an accident caused by such gratings, please pass on the details to your editor, who will forward them to Joe Williams, Michigan Bicycle Federation Safety Director. Joe is carrying on a running battle with state highway officials to have this type of grating outlawed. Let's give him our support, for if you don't personally know of an accident caused by them, then surely your imagination will give you a vivid picture of the possible results.

And now for some of our recent history: Tuesday, September 5th turned out to be a day of infamy . . . just 4 days prior to the "Great Race", we learned that 8th Street, the site of the "Alamo Hill", had just been freshly graveled - a bicyclists scourge second only to dogs. We cursed silently for a few moments, choked a couple of times, and than set forth to make the necessary changes, to our master map, Marshalls' positions, announcements, and added 2 miles to the 17 mile course - all to avoid the treacherous gravel.

Friday evening before the race, a crew of us swept and sweat; we swept gravel off the intersections of the route, and "sweat bullets" that the race would go well Saturday.

The day dawned beautifully - light and variable breezes with lots of that wonderful cyclists' favorite commodity - sunshine. The registration went well, or at least as well as it could considering this was our first venture into the racing field. . . . The total field of entrants numbered over 200 (more than the Olympics, would you believe) . . with the largest number, almost 100, in the mens' and boys' 19 mile event.

The start was something to behold (as those of us who participated later saw at the Nov. meeting in Lester Weiss' movie of it) . . . and the girls' (old and young) and midget starts were equally exciting. As in all racing events, the start, however, was nothing compared to the finish. The biggie, to be expected, was the mens' finish for at least five of the racers. This rider, also to be expected, was some 8 minutes behind, sweating out a few of those small mountains that MORE than made up for the singular Alamo Hill really a GREAT race, and one that we surely want to repeat next year.

by R.B.

G.L.E.E.P. a personal view by R.B.

The years go by fast (naturally at my age) but I can't help thinking that it was just yesterday that I was reporting on the 1st annual GLEEP festival, and now it is the 2nd. The credit for its success (as you learned of elsewhere in this mailing) goes to Hugh and Dorothy Acton and their marvelous crew. The day's events went remarkable smooth, although I did catch an occasional glimpse of that red beret darting in and out of the crowd, trying to pick up one or another "loose end".

The festival is billed as a "social event", and we all held true to the title, for if it wasn't for our enthusiastic show of this sociability, I believe most of us would have covered MORE laps of the 12.5 circuit of Gull Lake than we did. However, with 600 some cyclists on the scene, sociability and comraderie were difficult commodities to avoid if you happened to be trying for the "most laps". Credit for that feat goes to Brian Chappell with his 10 laps. The Davis family figured high, as usual, in all events, while Dawn Barker, on her one-speed Schwinn, caught this editor's fancy (no bias, of course) with her five laps for a total of 62.5 miles. Lester Weiss was beat out by 1 year on being the oldest rider, but he put in the most mileage by far, with 4 laps. The weather couldn't have been nicer (that makes 3 out of the last 3 major events to be blessed thusly), so I am sure that Hugh is already planning for next year's event.

"A L.A.W. patch for completion" - - that was the promise that lured some 58 riders out for our 2nd Annual Tour of Kalamazoo County on Sept. 17th. We had, perhaps, the largest age span of any of our events since last May's Four Lakes Century Run . . . from 11 year old Steve Davis to 69 year old Fenley Collins from near Lansing. . . and BOTH were among the 48 who completed. This 83% completion figure was a far cry from last Fall's 47% or last Spring's 7.7% (our friend the wind gets all-the credit for this statistic.) It showed a great will on the part of most riders, and a determination to make the grade, even though (now get this) 43% of them had completed no prior century runs . . . how about that?

For the first time we had no "sag wagon", and to our embarrassment our one need for it occured with a couple from Grand Ledge, Mich. . . but our shortness of preparation seemed to be due to an expending of our energies on the "Great Race" the previous weekend. This, however, didn't stop John Lacko and Brian Chappell from spending all of Sat. A.M. driving two of those hours in pea soup fog, marking all of the intersections with directional arrows, a feature that was one-up on our prior century runs. In fact, if one wishes yet to take advantage of our beautiful Fall weather, I've seen a number of those arrows still showing on the pavement, puzzling unknowing motorists, waiting for that moment when some adventurous cyclist decides to follow the arrows on his own private "century" - sorry, no patch, but a self-pat on the back can be just as rewarding.

In the past couple of months, we've had two requests for one or more of our members to speak before scout troops - a great opportunity to urge safe bicycling (as well, naturally, to plug the Club). For any members who should receive such requests, please follow up on them. If you can't, even if just for fear of public speaking (we all suffer that), call one

of your officers to arrange for someone else to speak. If you can draw up the courage to handle it yourself, call Ross Barker at 327-3684 . . . He has a typed outline with adequate coverage of self-maintenance, safety equipment, riding and touring rules-of-the-road. However you choose to handle it, PLEASE don't pass up any opportunity to further the cause of safe and fun bicycling.

And speaking of safe bicycling, you must know by now that the BIKE LANES (or at least the trial one) are closer than ever. The projected first lane will start at Drake Road (the South end) and proceed toward the city - both sides of the street, of course, meaning both directions - through the W.M.U. campus, thence to the Mall following South St. Eastward and Lovell St. Westward. While our group hasn't been receiving any of the credit for instigating these, we're all pleased that some action is definitely being taken Good work, all of you who aided in the push.

And even more currently, the Parks and Open Space proposals that are on the Nov. 7th ballot include some attractive plans for bicyclists. The two proposals, numbers 3 and 4, will provide bicycle trails in some of the larger county parks, plus a system of bicycling, hiking and horseback riding trails connecting the parks and linking up with Kalamazoo's city Bike Lanes and some of the state and federal trails planned for our area. The major aim for the two proposals is to expand our county park system by adding on to some of the existing facilities, and acquiring, developing and maintaining new facilities for almost every form of outdoor recreation.

So remember, when you vote Tuesday, that a vote FOR Proposals 3 and 4 is a vote for bicycling and the enjoyment of nature. (the previous announcement was an UNPAID-for solicitation for your vote, but WELL WORTH IT.)

By this time, you are probably tired of hearing comments on our feature page in the Gazette October 15th . . . (at least we HOPE you have been hearing them). It's the best boost we've had since last year, when, on a ride to Three Rivers, we were "shot" by the Gazette upon leaving, and returned to find our photo splashed across page 1

Thanks again to John Lacko (our outgoing (?) Publicity Chairman) for his time spent in providing the necessary information to the feature writer Margaret Thompson, but I just can't imagine WHAT he was thinking of when he gave his name as "Brian Lacko" (for all you budding proofreaders who have been having a ball with this issue, look at the last line of the Gazette article)

and once you figure out who the "Brian" is supposed to be, this is a "goodbye" to the fellow who started all this for you Brian Chappell and family have moved to Battle Creek, nearer his place of employment. We hope (and we know) that we'll still see some of Brian - (truthfully, all we have to do is schedule another racing event and that will do it). But seriously, he has been a great asset and motivation to our club and on numerous occasions, when he has volunteered to help only "behind the scenes", he has been forced to take hold and do the brunt of the work involved there will be a void, and we need help in filling it

The View from MY Saddle...

A selection of commentary from our members

WHY 10 - SPEED ? by Ross Barker

How many of us, from time to time, have been approached by a stranger, aware of our involvement in a bicycle club, and full of questions? One of the first questions is, quite often, "Do you have a 10-speed bike?" To this query, most of us answer in the affirmative and just as often, after the enquirer replies with "Oh, I have just a 3-speed", the conversation rapidly disintegrates ANOTHER lost potential bicycle enthusiast! If, however, this hypothetical conversation lasts long enough for us to present this person with a copy of our newsletter, or obtain his name for our prospective mailing list, or get him to attend one of our meetings, how encouraged can he possibly feel when all he hears is "10-speed, 10-speed, 10-speed"!

In this period of the phenomenal growth of bicycling, when 10-speed bikes in the popular \$90 to \$150 price range are very difficult, if not impossible, to obtain, many would-be riders are either buying the 3-speed as a compromise, or re-activating the old family 3-speed from the junk pile in the garage, in sheer desperation. At any rate, there IS a place for these bicycles, and we should welcome them and their owners as enthusiastically as we would welcome the visitor sporting a Schwinn Paramount, for example.

Many of our familiar club routes are over relatively flat terrain, where a 3-speed would be equally as acceptable as a 10; for example, the ride to Three Rivers, or to Vicksburg, or Plainwell, or even the route of our recent Century Tour of Portage's four lakes. While many of our members extol the virtues and benefits of the modern 10-speed (which, I agree, are many), many riders are more "at home" on the English-style 3-speed with its upright handlebars and mattress saddle.

The biggest objection to this type of bicycle, preferences aside, is the range of gear choices available as the bike comes, "out of the carton". Most are geared rather high, and while they are terrific on down-hill runs, they can be murder on the upgrade. This deficiency can easily be changed by most do-it-yourself bike owners, by means of a simple rear sprocket change.

When discussing "gear values", we are speaking of the following formula:

$$\text{WHEEL DIAMETER} \times \frac{\text{NUMBER OF TEETH ON CHAIN WHEEL (front sprocket)}}{\text{NUMBER OF TEETH ON REAR SPROCKET}}$$

An example of this in numbers relating to 3-speed bikes is : $26 \times \frac{48}{18} = 69$

To decide on a ratio of front sprocket to rear sprocket that suits you, you must make the compromise of giving up the fast cruising gear in favor of a hill-climbing gear. For example, a low gear in the 50's is very much unsuited for steep hills (unless you are fortunate to have legs of iron!); a gear somewhere between 38 and 42 is preferable. Some typical present combinations give you these gears:

FRONT	REAR	HIGH (3)	NORMAL (2)	LOW (1)
48	18	93	69	52
46	18	89	66	50
44	18	85	63	48

With a new rear sprocket costing about \$1, you can obtain the following possible gears:

FRONT	REAR	HIGH (3)	NORMAL (2)	LOW (1)
48	22	76	57	43
46	22	73	55	41
44	20	76	57	43

For the most part, the rear sprocket can be easily changed. In some cases, the chain may have to be lengthened by 2 or 4 links to accomodate this larger sprocket.

When the hills cease being the major obstacle to the 3-speeder, then you have have bicycling at its best!

FACT SHEET
KALAMAZOO COUNTY PARK AND OPEN SPACE MILLAGE PROPOSAL

1. Why is there a need for more park areas?

According to a recent county-wide park and open space study, Kalamazoo County should acquire approximately 4,000 acres of park land by 1980. The need for additional park land is supported by standards developed by the National Park and Recreation Association. These standards are based on the County's population.

2. How much money is required to acquire and develop the needed park areas and facilities and what is being proposed to finance this program?

The entire program would cost an estimated \$2.9 million. A local $\frac{1}{4}$ mill property assessment is proposed for five years (1973-78). This millage would raise approximately \$255,000 per year.

3. Would an attempt be made to use state or federal funds for acquiring and developing county parks?

Yes, local governments must have matching local funds in order to be eligible for state and federal grants.

4. How much would this $\frac{1}{4}$ mill assessment cost me?

Based upon the assessed valuation on the average home in Kalamazoo County, the average estimated cost per year would be \$2.50 per home owner.

5. What will money from millage be used for?

The money will be used to acquire more park lands. Thirteen areas have been identified as possible locations for county parks. Facilities for swimming, picnicking, day and overnight camping, snowmobiling, shooting, canoeing, tobagganning, boat launching, outdoor roller skating are being considered for development. Other type facilities being considered are band shell, dance pavilion, museum, nature trails, hiking, horseback riding and bicycle trails, etc. Money from the millage would also be used to operate and maintain park facilities.

6. What if land is not available at proposed park locations?

If some or all of the proposed 13 areas are not available for acquisition or development in the five year period, then alternate areas will be considered. An attempt will be made to keep the parks geographically distributed throughout the county.

7. Would revenue provided by the proposed millage be used to condemn land for public park purposes?

No.