

AEROBICS

September, 1991

(Handle) Bar Wars— To Geek or Not to Geek

by John Howard

I remember a time not so very long ago when serious cyclists looked pretty much the same. By the early '80s however, triathletes were changing forever the generic appearance of the dyed-in-wool biker. Type casting soon became popular, labels such as *Tri-Geeks* and *freds* stuck like glue. In those days most triathletes were easily distinguishable from other cyclists by their jogging shoes, gym shorts, tank tops and slightly awkward stance on their bikes.

Times have changed though, and so have triathletes. Stiff-soled cycling shoes have replaced the joggers, lycra has pushed aside the baggy shorts and tanks. Still today, though, there are idiosyncrasies that divide us. Of those characteristics that make triathletes unique, none sets them apart (at least for now) from those aloof cycling purists like the new fangled handle bars. These new bars have done for triathletes what the pneumatic tire did for cyclists in the 1890s. As with the early tires, the bars are a direct link with performance. Forget the shape of frames and components; compared to the shape of the rider, they are like lemonade by the pool. Our new bars allow us to assume a thinner, more aerodynamic profile into the wind — which you will recall is our greatest adversary to going fast. Of course traditional theories about respiratory limitations and stem length and height have been unceremoniously booted, but who really cares?

Do they work for everyone? During my SCHOOL OF CHAMPIONS series, I have observed numerous triathletes with entry level skills struggling to find happiness on the new bars. Most of them are neither comfortable nor efficient, yet they continue to use the bars, mimicking the pros like sheep. Such reasoning is not only foolish, it's downright dangerous. A few personal considerations such as spinal flexibility, climbing leverage and bike control need to be considered. A logical compromise for both amateur and professional could be the simple bolt-on adapter such as the Sark Bars. These allow the rider to assume the same thin, wind cheating shape without giving up the use of the brakes and drops for climbing and pack riding. Such a system comes on and off in seconds.

Stem length and height: When mounting the new Aero 1, Scott or other bars, a shorter, higher stem seems to be the rule if one is to maintain any substantial degree of comfort. According to Boone Lennon, inventor of the Scott DH system, hands need to be kept high to assist in shielding the head and improving aerodynamics. The downhill skier is our prototypical model. Some of us have even resorted to using mountain bike stems to achieve this effect and improve comfort. The actual length of the stem is determined by the length of the top tube. For regular drop bars, most men

need 7-13 cm stems, while 4-8 cm are the norm for woman. For the new type bars, you can cut those figures in half. To find the correct length stem for drop bars, I begin by placing the rider's elbow against the tip of the saddle, and extending the arm and hand fully. The tip of the middle finger should line up with the center of the stem if proper weight distribution is to be achieved. Another rule of the thumb or should I say nose, is to drop our old friend the plumb line from the tip of said nose; when you are comfortably seated in the tuck position and your elbows are bent at around 110 degrees, that line should intersect the middle of the bars. In this position the bars should obscure the front hub. To avoid neck strain, your stem should be no more than 4-6 cm below the top of the saddle. Young riders especially have a tendency to lower the stems too much. The common misconception is that a low stem improves aerodynamics. The chances are the only thing you will

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Free Beer at Next Three KBC Meetings!

Not really. But now that I've got your attention—the next few meetings *will* have some fun programs and activities: take a minute to read the next two columns and mark your calendar.

September:

When: PLEASE NOTE: Due to labor day, the meeting will be held on the second Monday, September 9 at 6:00 p.m.

Where: Scotts Elementary School on QR Ave. just east of 36th street in downtown Scotts.

Program: A SHORT meeting followed by a ride and then ice cream at Scooter's Malt Shop in downtown Scotts.

October:

When: Monday, October 7, 7:00 p.m.

Where: Scooter's Malt Shop Meeting room, in Scotts.

Program: Winter Training. Houston Peterson, who spoke early in the season about getting fit will provide a program for a Maintaining your fitness level over the winter. Don't let all this year's hard training go down the drain. You don't *have* to start over at zero in the Spring. Houston is an exercise physiologist, cycling coach, and accomplished Category II racer. His talk in the Spring was one of our best-received programs EVER.

Business: We'll nominate candidates for the following Club Offices:

- President
- Vice-President
- Secretary/Treasurer.

November:

When: Monday, November 4 at 7:00 p.m.

Where: Scooter's Malt Shop Meeting room, in Scotts.

Program: Give your bike a winter tune-up. Chandler Garrison, owner of Village Cyclery, will provide a condensed talk on how to use the winter doldrums to get your bike in PERFECT condition for the first hint of spring. Chandler will show you how to evaluate each part of your bike to develop a checklist of maintenance that your bike needs. Once you have your list, you can complete small items over the course of the winter, rather than finding a HUGE repair job to be done on that first sunny day in April. Even if you have your bike maintained at one of the fine area bike shops, come find out what you should have *them* do. Besides, you might even find a job or two in the list that you can try on your own.

Business: Election of new officers.

December:

What: HOLIDAY PARTY!

When: Monday, December 2, at 7:00 p.m.

Where: Not sure yet.

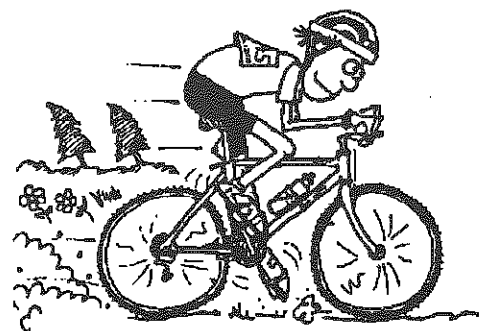
Program: The December meeting will be the now-infamous KBC holiday party. We can only hope for a repeat of last year's night-long soiree. Anyone who's anyone will be there. Come see what your riding companions look like with their (street) clothes on.

Bar Wars (cont'd. from pg. 1)

notice from having the stem too low is strain in the lower back and neck.

Brake levers: With any type of new bar system, always arrange your brakes so that you can get to them quickly should you need them. Practice braking drills and panic stops in a parking lot devoid of traffic before taking the new system to the street. Safety should always be your first priority. With conventional drops, we use a straight edge to line up the tips of the brake handles with the bottom of the bars. This should allow you to assume a low, arms bent profile while comfortably perched on the hoods.

Conclusions: Although bars and stems have little to do with the production of power, they are critically important in terms of presenting an aerodynamically clean profile into the atmosphere. Sure, your performance can be enhanced with the new bars, but of equal concern to any of us who have ever spent more than an hour on the bike is the issue of comfort, and comfort on the bike is directly related to upper body support. We may do it with our legs, but we will feel it with our backs. You should be walking a tightrope between comfort and peak aerobic power. Keep your oxygen expense payments to a minimum, and don't be afraid to experiment with your shape and posture using the guidelines outlined in these articles.



Spike Bike #3, Part 2: The Beginning

by Bob Fishell

[Synopsis: Pinned down behind a dumpster by armed security guards, Spike recalls his past: his privileged childhood as Spiro Bikopoulos, son of a wealthy Greek importer, his tour with the Marines, his college days at Caltech, his bike racing career, and the Economic Holocaust — the emergence of a consortium of giant corporations, known as The Twenty, who control the Government and nearly every aspect of American life. He recalls the passage of the Bicycle Act, which, in essence, gave America's "rednecks, hotheads, and hell-raisers" a license to kill, and how he became an armed, two-wheeled guerrilla, who would purge the roads of mechanized murderers and strike terror into the corridors of power in Detroit.

In the year 1998, one man fights the tyranny of the automobile. Now, he fights for his life...] —

Bullets rained against the heavy steel of the dumpster and chipped away the concrete of the wall next to it. I was in-between, in a two-by-six foot pocket of cover which would be my coffin when my ammo ran out. I lobbed one of my three remaining grenades over the top of the dumpster at where I thought the fire was coming from. I must have gotten lucky, for the onslaught broke up. I took advantage of the lull to slip a peek around the corner. Through the smoke, I counted seven bodies, two of which were moving some, and spotted two more men diving for cover behind parked cars. Perhaps six more of the grey-uniformed goons received them there, crouching with pistols drawn.

My situation seemed hopeless. I'd taken out almost half of them with just two grenades and a few rounds of ammo, but they wouldn't be foolish enough to try a frontal assault again. They were too far away for me to get a grenade behind their cover without exposing myself, and I could not slip away unseen. They would wear me down, or keep me besieged, awaiting reinforcements armed with something heavier.

CFGM — The Chrysler-Ford General Motors Corporation, was the largest and most powerful of The Twenty, and the most ruthless. They controlled all transportation in America, including cars, trucks, rails, ships, barges, and airlines. Their CEO was also President of The United States, and lately, I'd been on his agenda. I'd been hitting bigger and bigger stuff, like that fleet of construction trucks back home, and I was a huge embarrassment to CFGM and the Government. Last week, a group of demonstrating Anticorporatists rode bikes around the White House, and no one had touched them. Iacocca must have given the word to get me at all costs.

That must have been how this bunch had trapped me. I suspected that CFGM Security forces all over the Country had been instructed to lure or chase bicyclists onto CFGM property, where they could be apprehended and held for questioning. This bunch just got lucky — or so they must have thought. Luck had run out for a truck driver and seven security guards when they'd tangled with me. It was the remaining eight, watching my dumpster through the sights of their pistols, that I had to deal with now. A thought occurred to me: they wanted me alive, if they

could get me that way, although I'm sure they'd been told to get me any way they could. Perhaps I could parlay that into an advantage.

I tore a sleeve away from my white jersey, and waved it gingerly past the edge of the dumpster. I heard a voice ordering the goons to hold their fire. An instant later, the same voice came over the squawk-horn.

"THROW OUT YOUR WEAPONS AND COME OUT WITH YOUR HANDS UP," he intoned. Didn't he have anything else to say? He was beginning to annoy me.

"Stick it, Butt-brain!" I shouted back, "Just come and get your wounded. I'll hold my fire!" A few moments passed in silence. "Come and get them, they're bleeding to death!" I insisted, and added, "Just leave that bike where it is!"

My bicycle, its back wheel collapsed after a stray round had fractured the hub, lay near the top of the ramp, among the fallen men. There were eight more grenades, a .44 magnum, and several magazines of ammo in the panniers, one of which had ripped open to partially display its contents. If I could get to it, I could hold out much longer, maybe even blast my way out. But if they got to it first, they could take me out with my own grenades.

After a moment, two men emerged, empty-handed, from behind the row of ugly grey Plymouths the guards drove. They made motions toward the wounded man nearest them, but then quickly darted for my ruined bike. One man scooped it up while the other produced a gun from behind his back and opened fire on my position. As they retreated, the others fired to keep me pinned down. The wounded men lay unattended on the asphalt. The two who'd ventured out ducked back behind the

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From the *Just As We Suspected* File:

The following memo was intercepted as it was being passed via cellular fax-modem from the County-provided Mercedes Benz 500E driven by one of our own Kalamazoo County Road Commissioners...

MEMO

To: Karl Koldpach, Chair, Anti-biker committee, KCRC
[Kalamazoo County Road Commission]
From: Penny Pothoal, President, KCRC

Karl:

Just a quick memo to thank you for your fine job on the roads around Gull Lake. Until your efforts with the gravel, there were a number of pesky cyclists enjoying incredibly smooth road surfaces.

Of course this is only one example of your tireless work this summer, searching out the last smooth roads in the county and using tar and gravel to make them useless to bicyclists. This effort, along with those of Commissioners Dewey, Cheatham, and Howe, spending tax money cutting down trees along Portage Road, have assured that there will be no funding available for fixing or repaving roads that really need it! Now we'll have at least a half-baked excuse for ignoring bomb-cratered stretches of pavement like "V" Avenue.

Once again, thanks, Karl, and let's keep up the good work by rooting out the last few feet of smooth road in this County.

By the way, a "heads-up" for next year: they may increase our budget again, so go ahead and look into the suggestion by Commissioner Butz about using up all that pesky funding by tearing up concrete roads and returning them to their pristine gravel condition.

Sincerely,

Penny

Kalamazoo Bicycle Club Rides - September 1991

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	LABOR DAY - No ride	Sprints @ Kalamazoo Speedway (Mike Teel)	Kalamazoo Central High School (Dan Dupree)	Ice Cream Ride from Scotts Elementary School (Wilma Long) • MTB Ride @ Kellogg Forest (Bill Fischer)	Billy's Bike Shop In Galesburg (Mike Gacki)	O.D.R.A.M.
1	* Sunset @ 8:14	3	4	5	6	7
• Vinyard Classic - Paw Paw	• KBC Ride/Meeting in Scotts	• Sprints @ Kalamazoo Speedway (Mike Teel)	• Kalamazoo Central High School (Dan Dupree)	• Ice Cream Ride from Scotts Elementary School (Wilma Long) • MTB Ride @ Kellogg Forest (Bill Fischer)	• Billy's Bike Shop In Galesburg (Mike Gacki)	
8	* Sunset @ 8:02	10	11	12	13	14
• Cereal City Century Battle Creek	• Texas Drive Park on Milham Rd. (Jim Wyrick)	• Sprints @ Kalamazoo Speedway (Mike Teel)	• Kalamazoo Central High School (Dan Dupree)	• Ice Cream Ride from Scotts Elementary School (Wilma Long) • MTB Ride @ Kellogg Forest (Bill Fischer)	• Billy's Bike Shop In Galesburg (Mike Gacki)	
15	* Sunset @ 7:50	17	18	19	20	21
	• Texas Drive Park on Milham Rd. (Jim Wyrick)	• Sprints @ Kalamazoo Speedway (Mike Teel)	• Kalamazoo Central High School (Dan Dupree)	• Ice Cream Ride from Scotts Elementary School (Wilma Long) • MTB Ride @ Kellogg Forest (Bill Fischer)	• Billy's Bike Shop In Galesburg (Mike Gacki)	
22	* Sunset @ 7:37	24	25	26	27	28
	• Texas Drive Park on Milham Rd. (Jim Wyrick)	• Sprints @ Kalamazoo Speedway (Mike Teel)	• Kalamazoo Central High School (Dan Dupree)	• Ice Cream Ride from Scotts Elementary School (Wilma Long) • MTB Ride @ Kellogg Forest (Bill Fischer)	• Billy's Bike Shop In Galesburg (Mike Gacki)	
• Apple Cider Century Three Oaks	• Texas Drive Park on Milham Rd. (Jim Wyrick)					
29	* Sunset @ 7:25	30				

PLEASE NOTE:

Because of earlier sunsets, road rides start at 6:00 p.m.

Kalamazoo Bike Club

Ride Descriptions

Mondays

- *The Deep in the heart of Texas recovery ride:*

Recover from your weekend race or century ride with an easy 20-30 miles from Texas Drive Park near the corner of Milham and 8th Street. Look for the softball field. Led by Jeff "Big Bunny" Wetters.

Tuesdays

- *The KBC Track Series:*

Race Team ride at the Kalamazoo Speedway near the corner of Ravine Rd. and "D" Ave. Organized by Mike Teel.

Wednesdays

- *The Wednesday Night Mountain March:*

OK, so there's no real mountain in Kalamazoo, but this ride is usually pretty hilly. Pioneered years ago by Don "Mondo Dondo" Povendo, this ride goes 20-35 miles from Kalamazoo Central High

School on Drake Road about two miles north of West Main.

Thursdays

- *The Ice Cream Cruise:*

The now-famous ride and feeding frenzy in Scotts. Meet at the Scotts Elementary School for the ride, and stop in at Scooter's Malt Shop on the main drag in Scotts after your ride for great ice cream and socializing. Routes from 15-30 miles are usually offered. These rides are normally very well attended, so they're a good place to meet up with lots of Club members. Also a good start for first-timers. The school is on QR Avenue, just two blocks east of 36th Street in "downtown" Scotts. In September, led by Wilma Long.

- *The Thursday MTB Bonanza*

MTB Ride at Kellogg Forest. Quite hilly, extra fun, way cool! Come see what would have been the #1 MTB race course in Michigan if the race hadn't

been vetoed by Kellogg Forest upper management. Ride organized by Bill "Billy the Boinger" Fischer (Bill just got a new suspended Cannondale MTB). Sometimes people meet earlier than 6:00. For details, call Bill.

Fridays

- *The Tour de Gull Lake:*

Ride about 25 miles from Galesburg, usually around Gull Lake. The pace of this ride is hard to predict; usually the group splits in two, with the sane group enjoying the scenery around the lake, and the young punks (of any age) using the hills for oxygen-debt orgies. The ride leaves from the parking lot behind Billy's Bike Shop in Galesburg, just east of the five-way intersection in downtown Galesburg. Ride led by Mike "Gear Masher" Gacki. Free Billy's Bike Shop water bottles to all participants (while they last).

**For more info on rides or on KBC, call the
KBC ride line at 327-7767.**

Planned Parenthood *Ride For Choice* 9/21

The first annual Kalamazoo Planned Parenthood *Ride for Choice* will take place in Richland on Saturday, September 21, beginning at 12:00 noon. The start location is the Bayview Gardens parking lot at 12504 "D" Avenue.

This is a ride to raise funds for Kalamazoo Planned Parenthood. The cost is \$8 pre-registration, and a minimum of \$12 in pledges or additional donation on the day of the ride. The route will be a loop around scenic Gull Lake. Participants can

complete the 13-mile loop as many times as they wish to accumulate mileage. There will be maps, sag stops, repair vehicles, T-shirts (free with registration), and awards for the most moeny collected, the highest mileage, etc.

For more information, for sign-up sheets, or to volunteer to help on the day of the ride, call Judy Markusse at 616/372-1205.

--Submitted by Shelly Virva

Spike Bike (cont'd. from pg. 3)
cover with their prize.

Long ago, I'd vowed I wouldn't be taken alive, and that I'd get whoever and whatever got me. To that end, every bike I built had a little extra weight: two pounds of plastique in the down tube, with an electronic detonator linked by radioto a monitor strapped to my chest. If my heart stopped, the bike became a bomb. I had flipped the arming switch during my encounter with the delivery truck. All that remained was to make the bike think I was dead. I drew as far back into my hole as I could, put my head down, reached under my jersey, and ripped the monitor away from my chest. Within seconds, a powerful blast shook the ground, and debris rained down all around me. There was no gunfire as I emerged from the filthy hole that had nearly been my tomb.

I surveyed the havoc I'd wreaked. The row of cars my adversaries had used for cover lay twisted and blazing in a disorderly array around the smoking crater the bike-bomb had made. One of the wounded men

who'd been abandoned by his comrades was still alive. He groped weakly towards his fallen pistol, but I sprayed it with a burst from my MAC-10, driving it away like a leaf before a garden hose. The man looked at me with terror in his eyes. I looked at him with pity in mine. He was a conscript, no doubt, some poor, dumb slob who couldn't get an honest job. I holstered my weapon, removed his belt to make a tourniquet for his leg, made him comfortable, and picked up a small object from the ground to stick in his shirt pocket. It was the hand-tooled silver head badge of a bicycle, twisted and charred, but still intact. It was inlaid with the caricature of a bulldog with a steering wheel clenched in his teeth. The name on his collar was "Spike." "Give this to your boss," I told him softly.

Sirens approached from the south. I found an undamaged security car and made my getaway. 30 miles away, I rendered it to scrap metal and walked the rest of the way to the airport. I would go back to Illinois, rest up for a few days while my road rash healed, and outfit another bike. I had much to do.

Ride Line Needs A New Home

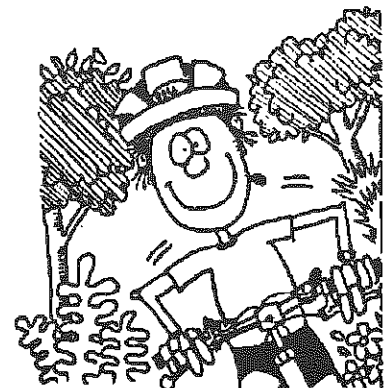
The KBC Ride Line needs to find a new home within the 327 telephone exchange. The phone line currently resides at Steve Clarke's house. Since Steve has taken a new job in Colorado (congratulations Steve!) and will be moving there this month, the Ride Line desperately needs a new location. If we keep it within 327, we can keep the same phone number. So, all you Portagers, PLEASE give me a call so we can have the ride line installed before Steve leaves.

Keeping the ride line at your house involves the following duties:

- Once per week, read new rides, if any, onto the message of the answering machine.
- Every second day, check messages, referring any calls as necessary. This is usually as simple as sending out a Club membership form or adding a ride to the next week's message.

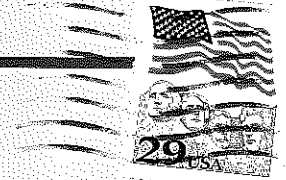
Remember, KBC assumes ALL costs involved in relocating and maintaining the ride line. All we need is a little bit of your time, perhaps and hour per week.

CALL ME AT 778-3565 if we can relocate the ride line to your house.





Kalamazoo Bicycle Club
P.O. Box 527
Kalamazoo, MI 49005
Address Correction Requested



***** expires 92/01
Phil & Jini Caruso
2301 Fairfield Ave.
Parchment MI 49004

