The Newsletter of the Kalamazoo Bicycle Club, Inc., March, 1999

President's Letter

Riding season is close and I am really looking forward to it. The Club has a great year planned with lots of events, both new and old. Of course there will be the usual Monday, Wednesday, and Friday rides. But take note of what else we have planned.

In March we will have a presentation by Dr. James Souers telling of his trip across the country. He did this when he turned 50 years old! If he can pedal across the US at 50 I should be able to make it to Lawton, and I'm only 42. In April is a follow-up to Dr. Souers. In conjunction with the Portage District Library, KBC is making presentations as part of the Wanderlust series. We will have three speakers describing some different tours that each has done. And if the weather cooperates, we start the weekly rides in April.

In May we will be part of the Safe Kids Coalition bicycle rodeo. This is a wonderful opportunity for us to get out and help kids learn proper cycling habits and make a contribution to the community. Also in May will the be KBC and Portage Library bicycle maintenance clinic. This will be a public event designed for the newer riders in both the Club and in the area to help them get familiar with basic repairs and maintenance jobs. Got questions on how to keep your bike in tune? This will be the place to ask them.

Of course in July is the Flowerfest Bicycle Tour. Preparations are going well and the event should be better than ever. We are hoping for a turnout of close to 400 people this year. The Saturn riders will hopefully be back and we are going to add a true century route. Start spreading the word.

We will also have the usual variety of weekend rides like the Ride Captain's Special and South Haven ride, the Fort Custer Time Trial series, and a host of other rides. I hope members will come up with more rides or events that we can publicize. The new year should be fun. Let's all have a great time riding and playing.

- Richard Walter

Coming Events

March 16th. KBC Board Meeting Tuesday March 16, 6:00 p.m., United Way Building, 709 S. Westnedge Ave.

March 24th. Cross-Country Travelogue Tuesday March 23, 6:30 p.m., United Way Building, 709 S. Westnedge Ave. (See story on page 3).

New KBC Jerseys

In this *Pedal Press* you will find a black-and-white proofs (front and back) of the new KBC jersey (color copying is just too expensive—ed.). KBC commissioned a well-known local artist, Paul Sizer, to produce the design. We think it's great, and we hope you do too.

The four-color jerseys are red, purple, yellow and white, and have no advertising or sponsor logos other than the KBC logo on the sleeve. They will be ordered through Voler, a company specializing in bike jerseys.

Voler jerseys—both the material and the color sublimation—are as good as any we've seen anywhere. Delivery has been promised for the end of April. Many KBC members have personal knowledge of Voler jerseys, since Dalmac jerseys have been by Voler the last three years.

KBC members can order directly through KBC, with payment in advance, no later than March 31, 1999, for \$50.00 each in sizes small through XXXL.

KBC will take orders until March 15. For people who want to wait and see the jerseys in person, they will become available through one or more local bike shops, which also should receive them near the end of April. Jerseys WILL cost more if you don't order before March 15.

You can try sample jerseys on for size before you order—see article on page 2. Your order AND your payment go to Kathy Barrett or Doug Kirk, 1525 Merrill St., Kalamazoo, MI 49008 before March 15, 1999. You can call us at 388-5045. Sorry, we don't take credit cards, just cash and checks.

Come Try On A Jersey For Size!

Worried about just what size would be best for your new KBC jersey? Afraid you'll have an extra fold or two instead of the skinsuit look you crave, or that a size too small might restrict your breathing in when doing your repeats on 6th Street hill?

Just come on over to Kathy Barrett and Doug Kirk's house, 1525 Merrill St., Kalamazoo, on Saturday, March 6th between 7:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. and try on the sizing jerseys Voler is sending us, and you'll know exactly how they fit.

Yes, we want you to love your new jersey, and Voler does too, since they are sending the samples for our benefit. So come on over, it'll be a good time. It will be sort of an open house, we'll have a few snacks and drinks, but dinner is NOT part of the plan.

Merrill Street runs north from Howard St, a block west of Crosstown Parkway, and across the street from the big field next to South Junior High School. The Montessori School is on the corner. Our house is a beige Cape Cod about a block north of Howard St. Look for the three-car garage, you can't miss it.

Call Doug or Kathy if you have questions, 388-5045.

Major changes to DALMAC Route

The February, 1999 Tri-County Bicycle Association newsletter, Chainwheel Chatter, includes an article outlining big changes to DALMAC, and since TCBA has been sponsoring this Labor Day weekend tour for over twenty-five years, they ought to know!

There will be five routes this year, including an all-new Four Day East route. There's also a partly-new Five Day East route to go with the Four- and Five Day West routes, and the quad-century route.

Central Michigan University, which has been the first day's destination for years on most routes, is gone, and the first three days are much altered, since the second day misses the Cadillac area for the first time in memory. It sounds like day four, a truly monumental ride, is largely unchanged, with the return of "The Wall" after a one year hiatus due to road construction.

Most of you know we are big fans of DALMAC, to the point that we feel it's a stretch to call yourself a serious Michigan bicyclist until you've done it. But we nearly knew all the turns of a four hundred mile route by heart, so are happy to hear they have found some new roads.

Staffed by volunteers, DALMAC generates a big profit even thought the four or five day ride only costs about \$100. As a result, the DALMAC Fund has awarded over \$330,000.00 to various bicycling-related organizations since 1975.

If you want to know more about what DALMAC is like, read Randy Putt's DALMAC documentary in the December, 1998 and January, 1999 Pedal Press. DALMAC entry forms generally get sent out in March. If you need one, call TCBA at 517-676-0873 or give me a call at 388-5045.

- Doug Kirk

March Birthdays

Adrienne Barker John Brady Kim Cameron Dan Degen Ron Doering Rebecca Gaff Jeanette Holm Roscoe Kennedy Susan Kissinger Arielle Mack Rose McKenna Juliette Mott Robin Muller Andrew Price Hope White Robert White Jim Wilson

New Members

Michael Louisell Beth Davis Jeff Davis

Membership questions?

Jeanette Holm, who does a great job as KBC's membership database manager, reminds us all that anyone who has questions about members, membership status, expiration dates, etc. should feel free to contact her at the phone number or e-mail address on the back page.

KBC To Auction Mountain Bike

At its February meeting, the KBC Board of Directors discussed what was the best use for the Giant mountain bike which was donated to KBC in January by Village Bike Shop in Schoolcraft. This is a brand new 1997 front suspension, aluminum frame, Shimano-equipped \$750 retail price machine which was described in detail in last month's *Pedal Press*.

Ideas such as a raffle, or simply using the bike as a prize at Flowerfest or another event were discussed, but the desire to directly benefit someone in KBC and also generate income to KBC resulted in an auction being selected.

Rules are simple enough: You must be a KBC member to bid, but we encourage non-members to join KBC in order to be eligible to bid. Phone in your bid to the KBC Rideline/Infoline: 343-2288. Our peerless Prez, Richard Walter, will keep track of bids, and periodically update the message on the rideline so members will know how the bidding is progressing. If you want up-to-the-moment information, give him a call at 649-1944.

We already have an opening bid of \$100 from a KBC member who attended the Board meeting. KBC will keep bidding open long enough to post an update here in the *Pedal Press* next month. We plan to announce the highest bidder in the May *Pedal Press*.

KBC Renews USCF Affiliation,Cyclocross To Be October 16th

Also at its February meeting the KBC Board voted to renew KBC's USCF (United States Cycling Federation) Affiliation for 1999. This step is necessary if KBC is to sponsor any USCF-sanctioned races this year.

The Cyclocross at the Cathedral race we put on last October was very well received, and both the KBC Board and the powers that be at the Cathedral (on Angling Road just south of I-94, by Oakland Dr.) are definitely interested in repeating this race.

We at the *Pedal Press* think KBC should support as broad a range of bicycling events as possible—tours AND races, not to mention kids' rodeo and such things. We definitely view KBC's affiliation with the USCF as a good thing.

Need Inspiration?

Dr. Jim Souers, an orthodontist from Three Rivers is a serious bicyclist. So serious, in fact, that he bicycled across the Uniteed States in six weeks between September and November, 1996. He did the trip with one other person, self-contained (with about 50 pounds of gear on each bike) at age 50, generally covering 80 to 100 miles a day.

If you've done any real touring, you know that it would be impossible to do such a ride without accumulating a few good stories to tell, and Dr. Souers has agreed to share his tales with KBC members Tuesday, March 23, 1999 at 6:30 p.m. at the United Way Building, 709 S. Westnedge. This should be a fun event, and all are encouraged to attend. Bring your friends!

Bicycle Touring Show April 8th

KBC is sponsoring a presentation entitled Bicycle Touring from the Shores of Lake Michigan to the Hills of England Thursday, April 8th, from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. at the Portage Library. Half a dozen or so KBC members will reagle those present with lessons learned and tales of inner peace, obstacles overcome, oneness with the universe and the occasional rainstorm gleaned from their touring experiences. Believe it or not, we are lucky to have quite a few KBC members who done some big-time rides in some pretty exotic locations. We thing you'll enjoy what they've got to say.

- Doug Kirk

Same Roads, Same Rights

The League of Michigan Bicyclists is selling a new bumper sticker that reads *Same Roads*, *Same Rights*, *Same Rules* for \$2.00 each. The yellow and black stickers also have LMB's phone number and website (www.lmb.org). Proceeds benefit LMB. Send your money and a stamped, self-addressed envelope to LMB, Box 16201, Lansing, MI 48901-6201.

KBC Volunteer Needed

KBC is still looking for a volunteer to man the Ride Line. It only takes an hour or so each week to pick up phone messages from our Ride Line, mail out stuff to prospective new members, and pass messages around. This would be a great task to help out KBC. Please call Richard Walter at 649-1944.

Be Cool; Be a Ride Leader

ven if Mother Nature says it is winter, think spring. When the weather cooperates, impromptu rides will materialize even in March and April. Sunday rides from KVCC at 1 PM have started when weather permits. These rides can be pretty fast and 40 to 60 miles in length. Riders of other abilities are welcome to start impromptu rides also.

If anyone would like to lead a weekend ride in March or April, give me a call or e-mail me a description of the ride. 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 you would like to be added to the e-mail list, send me your e-mail address (srbike@aol.com).

The weather looks like spring occasionally, and—trust me—it's just around the corner. So it's time to plan the upcoming 1999 KBC ride season and begin the annual search for ride leaders.

KBC had a great group of ride leaders last year and the 1998 ride season was the best one I can remember. Some of the ride leaders have been leading for many years and plan not to lead during the 1999 season, so we need some new leaders this year. Why not give it a shot? We will be happy to help get you started.

There was a large rider participation the 16+ mph ride groups and these groups are well established for the three weekly ride nights. Although there was a good 10-15 mph ride group on Monday evenings, participation on other nights has been limited for this group. In the past KBC has offered a Wednesday night fitness ride on the Kal-Haven trail, but this ride was poorly attended. The ride leaders stuck with it the whole season, but we were unable to attract any riders on a regular basis. In order make additional 10-15 mph ride groups a part of the KBC ride calendar KBC needs you 10-15 mph riders to participate and to help lead the rides. Once a group gets started it feeds on itself.

Late last fall KBC received a note from a member of the Portage Pedalers, a seniors riding group from Portage, expressing an interest in riding with a 10-12 mph group on Monday evenings. This group would be interested in providing some ride leadership for a 10-12 mph ride group also. KBC would welcome involve-

By Ride Captain Randy Putt

ment from the Portage Pedalers. More info about this group in future newsletters.

We plan to continue the Monday, Wednesday, Friday, and possibly a regular weekend ride for the 1999 season. KBC hopes to offer at least a partial weekly ride schedule in April as the weather permits. Look for more details in the April *Pedal Press*.

The 6:00 p.m. 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.

The 6:00 p.m. Wednesday ride meets at Kalamazoo Central HS. This ride consists of a 16-18 mph and a 19 mph group. It would be great to restart the fitness ride at 10-15 mph on the Kal-Haven Trail. We need ride leaders for these rides also.

The Wednesday night Hammerfest will start at K-Central HS at 6:00 p.m. when daylight savings time kicks in, or sooner if weather permits. The pace of the ride is typically greater than 20+ mph and the route goes to Bloomingdale and back (46 miles). Since the route is well known to most of the regular riders, no maps are available for this ride. This group can be large (more than 15 riders in nice weather) and consists of racers and other experienced riders. There is no designated ride leader. The group typically fragments into smaller groups and the riders often do not finish together. This ride is hard and some riders can be expected to be dropped from the main group.

The Friday Tour de Gull meets at Billy's Bike Shop in Galesburg and the pace varies depending on who shows up. We did have a 16-17 mph as well as the 20+ mph group last year. The route for this ride is well established so the ride leader job is easy. Give it a try.

If anyone is interested in leading road OR MOUNTAIN rides this year, please give me a call at 649-1814. I will be more than happy to discuss how to lead rides with you. In fact, most any experienced KBC rider would be happy to discuss ride leader responsibilities with you. You do not have to wait to be asked. No experience is necessary, just the willingness to ride with a great group of people who enjoy riding their bikes.

View from the Rear

hat's a stoker, a derailleur, clip-on pedals, panniers, drum brakes, and spinning? Three years ago I didn't have a clue. Now I am an expert stoker with knowledge of all these things.

I was a very casual biker when I met the love of my life. He happened to be a former bike racer and still enjoyed the sport as an avid cyclist. How do you share a sport with someone with such different ability levels? Enter the tandem.

While biking up north one hot weekend, battling the wind, and the fact that my significant other was three miles up the road in front of me, a tandem passed by. Later the couple offered to loan us their tandem for a test ride. We were hooked.

We have biked over 6000 miles on our Cannondale tandem in the past two years. It is the great equalizer and communicator. Surging over hills and down the other side at 45 - 50 miles per hour is a real adventure. Biking a century and averaging 20 miles per hour was a feat that seemed impossible, but we did it together. Biking 650 miles in seven days around Lake Michigan was a great vacation last summer and gave us many memories to share. The great friendships we have developed with other avid bikers would not have been possible for me without the tandem.

By Jill Stewart

While biking with KBC people, many guys will say to me that they wished their mates would try a tandem. Let me tell you ladies, it is definitely the way to go. I am the "stoker," the one in the back, so I do not contend with bugs in the face. I make major decisions all week so it is wonderful to give the "captain" in front the decisions of which gear to use and which turn to take. I have gladly given up that power, and I am enjoying the journey.

The scenery is great. My Captain has a terrific tush, and the rest of the scenery isn't bad either. It is fun to notice all the houses, flowers, and gardens that you miss when you have to concentrate so hard on the other facets of the ride.

Some suggestions:

- Borrow a tandem and see if you like the experience.
- Buy a tandem from a dealer that will allow you to test drive it over a weekend.
- Check out the used tandem market.
- Don't buy a low-end tandem.
- Make a commitment to ride it every weekend.
- Listen to each other—the first downhill will be scary—guys, go easy so she'll have a chance to build her courage.
- Try some longer rides, especially bike rallies or tours.
- Don't get angry when non-bikers yell, "She's not pedaling."
- Take plenty of food and water along and ENJOY.

1999 LMB Calendar/Posters Are Available Now

If you are a member of the League of Michigan Bicyclists (LMB), you should have received the 1999 ride calendar/poster. This poster by itself pays for an LMB membership, if you ask me.

Printed on a big, 17 x 22 inch page that hangs just fine on the wall near your bike stuff, it lists chronologically all bicycling events that are sent to LMB.

The poster does NOT include races, although the Grattan road race series (Thrusday evening road races on a genuine road race course May 8 through August 26) and the Fisk Knob Time Trial (March 21) are listed. Virtually every tour in Michigan is listed.

There are rides, often several rides, most every weekend from the first of May, through mid-October.

Besides lots of regular rides, like Flowerfest (July 18) and the Vineyard Classic (Sept. 12), you'll find all sorts of interesting rides like the Michigan Recumbent Rally (May 12) and the 24-Hour Challenge (June 19).

Join LMB, get a dandy poster and event list, and support our only state-wide organization (that lobbies for our rights with the government in Lansing), by sending \$15.00 to LMB, P.O. Box 16201, Lansing, MI 78901-6201. Call 888-MI-BIKES. Or you can get just the poster for \$2.00.

A Fast Blast From The Past Leaves Me Gassed

By Chris Barnes

went out for a ride today. I played hooky from work to take advantage of one of those strange 60-degree days in February. Just wearing shorts and a long sleeve jersey, I was riding west of town when I spotted another rider up ahead. He was going just fast enough that I could catch him if I worked really hard.

I caught him on 8th street, and we introduced ourselves. He was a good rider, just getting back into the sport after a couple of years feeding babies and changing diapers. I could relate to that, and we rode side by side into the gale force headwind out of the south. "Did I ride a lot? Did I race?" He asked, "How long have you been in the area?" We exchanged common acquaintances to establish that all-important bond among cyclists, namely, "I don't want to ride with another group of riders that would ride with a guy like me in their group."

He knew all of the "usual suspects" and every one of their peculiar habits (this newsletter's editor excepted) so I guess we both passed the test. Soon we got to talking about bikes and steel verses carbon fiber verses titanium verses aluminum verses unobtainium and so on. "Did I really think that a new titanium bike would cause me to lose 20 pounds?" he questioned.

"You know bikes just don't have the character and class that they did before technology came to town," I replied. When we turned back with the tailwind, the talk turned to training. He was getting into shape to race again.

"How fast are the cat 2-3 races nowadays? What were the local rides like now?" he wondered. We got to talking about the way riders train now. "They don't do the basics anymore do they?" he asked.

"No, each ride is pretty much a free for all, not a lot of systematic training," was my reply.

He said, "A couple of years ago, we would go out to train together, you know, spin the little ring, work on suppleness. Now it's 'put it in the big gear in February' and ride yourself into the ground. The mountain bikers are taking over the road rides, and

ruining the careful clockwork of a paceline that the roadie boys had developed over time."

We talked about training. Boy did we talk about training. Tuesday night power intervals in a 53 \times 17, anaerobic threshold training, lactate tolerance training, spinning the 42 \times 17, step intervals through the spring with a 53 \times 16, and on and on and on.

He knew his stuff, knew his weekly schedule for hard efforts and rest days, and knew enough that hammering without a plan would lead into a fitness dead-end. "24 mile a hour Charlies," he called them, meaning riders that could hold a steady pace all day long, but lack the power to close a gap or win a sprint.

Finally, we neared town and he turned off into his subdivision. The sky was getting dark and starting to spit rain. I had about 3 miles to go, and my tongue was dragging down the middle of Texas Drive. One final question to me. "So what type of training program are you on"? he asked. "Oh me?" I replied, "I just like to ride".

Michigan Bicycling e-mail

Readers familiar with cyber-space might want to subscribe to MichBike, a cyber biking news source noted in the latest LMB quarterly magazine.

To check it out, send the following message to Majordomo@mail.msen.com

(skip the "subject" line in your e-mail form)

Subscribe MichBike (return)

End. (return)

Then send the message. Shortly thereafter, you'll receive a confirming message from Majordomo about MichBike and how to use it. I just subscribed myself and have only seen a couple of items related to the Detroit area (after all, it is winter yet), but it still was fun to have biking e-mail to read.

- Doug Kirk

Drama Class

by Axel Kleat

ust be twelve years ago now, but I still remember. Riding northwest of town with Paul, the Sultan of Spin. Pretty early in the spring and a cloudy day. The roads were still a bit damp, the air was cool and chilly, faintly foggy with humidity, and it was just the two of us, around midday.

I can't remember exactly where anymore, but we were in the woods. It was too early in the year for leaves on the trees. Low, swampy land spread out from each side of the road, which was built up on dirt trucked in decades earlier.

Anyway, we were on our way out, heading west. As was generally the case back then, I was hanging on the back, trying to suck Paul's wheel, and not doing too well at it because I simply hadn't drafted enough to feel safe riding within range of a decent draft.

So Paul's up there three or four yards ahead taking it easy and spinning like crazy, and I'm three or four gears higher, getting practically no draft, spinning pretty good by my heavy-legged standards, and barely keeping up. I'm working hard, and so have tunnel vision, looking straight down the road and no place else, when some critter the general size and shape of a muskrat scurried into the road from right to left a few yards ahead of Paul.

Paul's oblivious to much of what goes on around him—even cars—when he rides. He seems to be in his own private reverie much of the time. Something as inconsequential as a muskrat at the edge of his vision wasn't going to intrude upon Paul's meditations that day. But I had an excellent view of the scene, which was happening far too fast for me, an out-of-breath observer, to do anything about besides watch in shocked surprise.

The muskrat's short legs were a blur as he darted, with his own tunnel vision, straight across that pavement. Suddenly I was front row for a little, real-life tragedy. That muskrat's bad timing and Paul's speed added up to one flattened furry beast,

and maybe a new fur hat, courtesy of Paul's wheels. Then I realized the impact could take Paul down right in front of me, a development which I fervently desired to avoid but seemed powerless to affect, for I was too mesmerized by the scene to react.

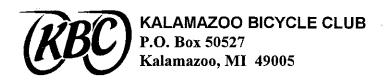
But at the last possible moment, not an instant to spare, the muskrat reversed course, doing a U-turn literally under Paul's pedal. I have no doubt that Darwinian theory, at that very instant, elevated that muskrat to a higher order, one with greater likelihood of surviving and breeding smarter offspring, better equipped to handle the complexities of our modern world. That critter came SO close to being roadkill.

As it happened, an instant later I too graduated to a new, though not necessarily higher, level of consciousness when I learned that upon observing real life drama up close, you can get drawn into the action yourself. In an instant, as I silently cheered for that muskrat and before I even had a chance to consider what my role might be, I hit him dead center myself, with both wheels. Whump! Thump! I watched in shock as I T-boned that muskrat right in the middle of his body, right in the middle of the road, dead straight. So straight that I just kept right on rolling. Bounced up hard. Bounced down hard. Didn't fall, didn't even come close.

I still feel stupid about my role in this little tragedy. I failed to anticipate what that little creature might do. Worse, I failed the prime directive—look out for number one. Might just as easily have been a dog or a deer.

After the impact, I looked back, a bad idea which supplied appalling evidence the muskrat would never again employ the danger avoidance skills he'd exercised moments earlier. On the other hand, I would get another to chance use my head and think about accident prevention. The muskrat used his head and died, I was dumb and kept right on riding, hopefully a little wiser for my lesson that day. There is no justice.

Don't expect you'll be treated better than a rat just because you're further up the evolutionary ladder. Paul kept spinning right on down the road, just like any driver would. He never knew anything happened till I caught up and told him.







ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Expires 2000/02

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SIDE PANEL: CYCLISTS WILL BE POSITIONED ON JERSEY

50 THEY WILL BE GOING FORWARDS ON

EACH SIDE.



