



BIKIN' THE DIRTY MITTEN—DOUG KIRK

I Just returned from riding my gravel bike from Kalamazoo to Sault Ste. Marie with two bike buddies. Our plan was to ride the least traveled, most rural roads we could find, using our gravel bikes. What a great ride!

I'm totally sold on using a gravel/cyclocross/all-road bike for touring on unknown roads. About 165 miles of our 600+ mile ride was on dirt of one kind or another—gravel, dirt, rail-trails or not-too-deep sand. I'm only a moderately skilled gravel rider and rode on lightweight, foldable 33 mm treadless tires—less than half an inch wider than skinny race tires. They worked fine in the dirt and rolled smoothly and silently on pavement. Despite plenty of sharp rocks and loose gravel, the 3 of us had one flat tire the entire ride.

The capability to ride dirt allowed us to travel mostly deserted roads without worrying about having to turn back, and also allowed us to explore roads we'd be unlikely to attempt on skinny tires when we: 1) were hundreds of miles away from home, 2) had no idea where a bike shop might be, 3) didn't necessarily know how far it was to the next town, and 4) were sometimes completely out of cellphone range. As a result, we rode very few miles on busy roads—a really big plus when touring on completely unknown roads. Traffic simply wasn't an issue most of the time.

We didn't camp (which would be easy in such rural areas—either in campgrounds or stealth-camping) because as old farts, we wanted a warm shower, a good dinner and a nice bed after riding all day. Since all

three of us know northwest Michigan pretty well, we decided to take a look at the northeast side. We stayed in Hastings, Greenville, Mt. Pleasant, Standish, Tawas, Alpena, Onaway, St. Ignace and the Soo. We averaged just about 65 miles a day—not all that far riding skinny tires on pavement, but plenty when a decent chunk of it is dirt—and some of it is REALLY challenging dirt).

I mapped out our routes in advance on Ride with GPS. If you're familiar with this program (available through your KBC membership and also accessible either on a smartphone, smart bike computer—Garmin, Element, etc., or a computer) you know that your device will call out the



Paul Wells, Doug Kirk and Dave DeBack on Sugar Island



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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- Do you take pictures? Send some cycling pics for inclusion in future PedalPress issues!

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KBC MEETING NOTES—JULY 9, 2019

Finance report, Mike Boersema:

Treasurer's Report:

PNC Bank Checking: \$8210.53

PNC Bank CD: \$6180.25

PayPal: \$6195.07

Jeremy Smith: \$560

Dalmac/Donations: \$1925.43

Bike Camp: Total income: \$2591.08

Total expenses: \$1517.97

Net: \$1074.01

Notes: The Bike Camp budget was \$1000. There were 4 refunds totaling \$265, so we were over budget by about \$250. We purchased swag rather than receiving swag as donations this year.

NO MEETING IN AUGUST. TRY GOING FOR A RIDE INSTEAD!

KBC's regular meeting takes place on the second Tuesday of each month. The next meeting will be **September 10, 2019 at 7 p.m.** Enter Shakespeares and go to the back left.

The Kalamazoo Bicycle Club is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization and donations are tax deductible. You may donate by holding Ctrl and clicking [here](#).

You may also designate how you wish your donation be used: general KBC activities, 5 foot passing education, or the Tuesday Night Time Trial series. You may also donate by check by sending your donation to Kalamazoo Bicycle Club, P.O. Box 50527, Kalamazoo, MI 49005. Please write "Donation" in the memo line.

Thank you, Mike Boersma
KBC Treasurer

KBC MEETING MINUTES

Doug Kirk, President, was up north and had no report to submit.

Paul Sotherland, Vice President, thanked Mike Krischer for all of his work at KalTour.

Valerie Litznerski, Secretary also thanked Mike and mentioned that she'd be writing some thank-you letters for individuals and organizations outside of the club that supported the event.

Paul Wells, Education Committee — there has been little activity outside of Bike Camp. Paul has reached out to the members in the room to see who would like to be part of the committee. We need some fresh ideas for advocacy and new energy in the committee. Please reach out to Paul if you are interested.

Mike Krischer, Kal Tour — Schoolcraft and the first year that the event was held on a Saturday. It will probably be held on Saturdays moving forward. The gravel ride was new this year and worked out well with the Schoolcraft location. The gravel route was in the southwest part of the county. 23 riders started at 8:00 am for the ride. A few may have started later. Doug and Kathy managed the route and the SAG stop. The route was very hilly and challenging for some riders. We plan to include the gravel ride in the future. Instead of printing information about groups ahead of the ride, Mike let the riders organize groups themselves, mostly on Facebook. This was good for members on Facebook but not as convenient for non-members and people from out of town. The Richland SAG stop was new. There were about 280 riders. The finances are still being finalized and information will be released soon along with the AMBUCs donation amount. As always, there were several volunteers from the club and from AMBUCs. There was a lot of positive feedback from the groups and the riders appreciated the efforts of the ride leaders. Terry mentioned John Olbrot, Terry O'Connor and Gordy Vader were thanked for their efforts as ride leaders. Out-of-town guests really enjoyed meeting the club members as well. Paul Selden and Terry Butcher led a group of about 20 for the family ride. It was a

KBC MEETING NOTES CONTINUED — JULY 9, 2019

great turnout, and several riders also attend Terry's Thursday ride. There are lots of compliments on the route painting. There were some quick last-minute changes for flooding and construction. Mike asked for feedback. Gordy suggested a 50-mile route in the future. Mike was unsure about having lunch in multiple places and whether we should locate lunch at the school at the end of the ride. John Olbrot asked if the club thought about sending out a survey using Survey Monkey. John Knowlton asked about promoting Bike Camp and the club to the KalTour attendees. Dale has helped with the email blasts. Paul Selden asked what data we keep about the communities that tour riders come from. There will be detailed information in the KalTour ride report in the newsletter.

Gordy Vader, Ride Captain. There are lots of new riders who are bringing their friends. The Wednesday Night ride is growing and riders are joining the middle paces. Gordy will need help on 7/22 and 7/24 as he will be out of town. John Knowlton offered to step up and announce the rides. Julie Knowlton expressed some frustration that only a few ride leaders are leading a lot of rides. Val mentioned the Tuesday and Friday women's rides. They are well supported and growing. The rides are accessible and friendly.

Paul Runnels, Road Commission: there was an agenda item to complete the KRVT to 37th Street and later to Fort Custer. Parks maintains the trail, and the road commission constructs it. There are a number of road closures, including 22nd between X & Y and 42nd between C & D due to culvert failure. There are now 11 closed roads, most in Texas Township. The Road Commission is asking that cyclists respect closures as we never know what's under the water. Valerie asked if there was any information about what cyclists should do when they are routed onto limited access roads (like Sprinkle).

Paul Selden handed out a draft flyer for a weekend-long event on 9/20 to 9/22. There will a dollar per rider donated back to the club for KBC members that sign up for the ride and indicate that they are KBC club members. Paul Sotherland thanked Paul Selden for the gesture. The Anniversary ride was moved to promote participation in the Fall Celebration.

Paul Sotherland reminded everyone about the Tour for Teens this coming weekend. Terry reminded KBC members that they would receive a \$5 discount for pre-registering. Registration is open online and routes will be posted on Ride with GPS. There is a 15, 31 and 62 mile ride. The ride starts at Gull Meadow Farms in the NE corner of the county and in Calhoun County and Barry County. There are rolling hills but there is lots of new pavement and the Banfield store featuring ice cream is located on the longest route.

The executive committee has discussed canceling the August meeting because there isn't much to cover and many club members are out of town (or riding). There were no objections to cancelling the meeting.

Mike Boersma asked individuals to see him after the meeting to get reimbursed for KatTour expenses.

Barney Martlew, Saturday is also the third Pedalling for Pals so support the Susan Mast Foundation for families with ALS.

ATTENDEES:

Tim A. Stewart
John Olbrot
Terry O'Connor
Rick Whaley
Paul Runnels
Paul Wells
Michael Krischer
Julie Knowlton
John Knowlton
Jillian Howard
Barney Matlew
Andrea Melchiori
Paul Selden
Gordy Vader
Mark Jensen
Terry Butcher
Paul Sotherland

Your name could be here, too, if you attended the KBC monthly meeting!

AMAZING KAL - TOUR AND ALL STAR VOLUNTEERS!

In 2018 we made the big jump from I-94 & Ninth Street to South County changing all of our routes in the process. This change allowed the KalTour routes to begin on quieter roads with fewer hills. Because of the favorable traffic conditions in our new starting location, we decided to hold KalTour 2019 on a Saturday instead of our customary Sunday.

The 10 am departure of a short escorted family ride is one of KalTour's oldest traditions, but last year it failed to attract much of a crowd. However, in 2019 I am pleased to report that 20 riders including the two ride leaders lined up for their 10 am departure and subsequently enjoyed a rest stop at the Prairie View Park beach. *See photos at right, courtesy of Paul Selden.*

Two hours earlier, KalTour's newest tradition got started as twenty-three riders set off on the inaugural version of the KalTour gravel route. This route would not have been possible from our old starting location, but as you head west from Schoolcraft, gravel roads become more common and paved roads are the exception; furthermore, as you head south into St. Joseph County and then west into Cass County, hills also become much more common. The longer gravel route (64 miles) is quite challenging.

Group rides have become a KalTour fixture in recent years. This year using the KBC Facebook page and the club web site three groups lined up for 9:00 starts on the 62 and 31 mile routes at a variety of paces. Groups went out at 7:30 and 8:00 as well.

Regarding routes, our plan this year was to make only one change, moving the lunch stop on the 100 mile route to Richland Township Park in order to even out the distances between stops. However, plans sometimes have to be changed. Road construction forced a change in the 62 & 100 mile routes north of Fulton, and water on the road south of Vicksburg forced another change. The real fun took place on D Avenue west of Richland for the 100 mile riders. Road construction caused a last-minute change sending the 100 milers south on Riverview instead of west on D, adding about three miles to this route. Unfortunately, (and unknown to us) the detour was also under construction, leading to a detour from a detour!

Those of you who were there know that the weather was on the warm and humid side which explains why we went through more water than in past years. How many of you were at KalTour? I counted signatures on release forms, wrist bands used, and pre-registered riders checked in plus riders registering on the day of ride and came out with three different numbers. I can safely say that the total ridership was over 280, about ten or so fewer than last year.

What is your opinion of this year's KalTour? Please let us know. We particularly appreciate comments about the food, routes, and lunch and SAG locations as well as ideas for the future.

KalTour would not have been possible without many people who helped before and during the ride: I always knew that it takes a lot of people to put on KalTour; nevertheless, it is still a shock to see that there are thirty-four different individuals on the volunteer list including ten members of AMBUCS our partner organization which supports adaptive bicycles for children and adults. By Michael Krischer; Kaltour@kalamazobicycleclub.org

Big Thanks to all of our volunteers!

Dale Abbott -- publicity

Shaun Ballard -- registration & sandwich pickup for Schoolcraft

Mike Boersma -- registration & SAG driver

Thom Brennan -- registration & & SAG driver

Terry Butcher -- route supervisor, road painting, setup, family ride leader

Zolton Cohen -- school & Scotts Mill photography

Bonnie Conway -- Fish Hatchery SAG (CONT. on p. 4)



FALL BIKE CELEBRATION SEPT. 20-22

By Paul Selden

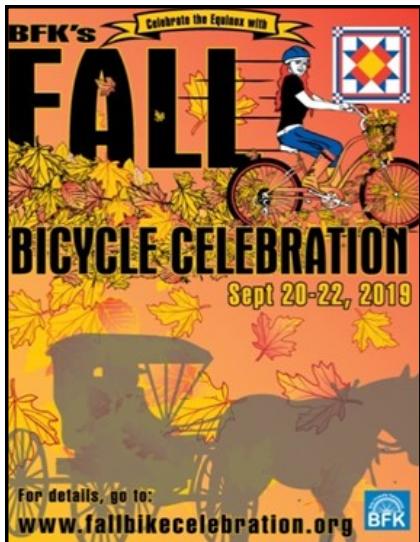
Kalamazoo Bike Week (KBW) promotes bicycling throughout the greater community, in addition to being a ton of fun. Last November Bike Week Organizers and volunteers from many clubs (KBC members among them) and civic groups began planning a way to ensure the future of Bike Week, while supporting goals related to bike safety, education and boosting the popularity of bicycling at the same time. They came up with the inaugural [Fall Bike Celebration](#) set for the third weekend of September.

If you love cycling and want to support support it locally, we invite you to join the party. It's a *bike-oriented* charity fundraiser with a fantastic seven-route Ride and fundraising Dinner (Saturday, Sept. 21), wrapped in a weekend of activities. What's more, we are participating in LMB's \$1/rider program AND pledging to donate \$1 back to KBC for each club member who declares their membership at our registration desk.

From the start, the vision of the **Fall Bike Celebration** ride was to offer cyclists a wonderful local ride in early fall--with a variety of routes and distances offering something for everyone. The ride venue subcommittee selected the Village of Vicksburg as the start/finish point. [Routes](#) include:

- **Shipshewana** - time-travel over the Langley Covered Bridge into this popular tourist destination
- **Scotts Mill Park** - historic flour mill in picturesque setting
- **Climax** - quaint destination with a curious name
- **Vicksburg Quilt Trail** - two loops taking in hauntingly beautiful quilt paintings, many on the sides of majestic barns
- **Family Trail route** - on the Vicksburg Trail, starting just across from Vicksburg's Historic Village
- **Kid's 'N' Cruisers Bike Parade** - a slo-mo procession of decorated bikes (can you say "cute"?")

Routes can be mixed and matched (within announced Latest Start and Close times) to create a personal route of many other distances and a variety of points of interest.



Plans for the Saturday night **Awards & Recognition Dinner** fundraiser at The Fountains Banquet Hall include a ceremony to acknowledge the contributions of Kalamazoo Bike Week Organizers and other community leaders, great eats (and drinks) and the chance to relax with friends who love and support bicycling.

But wait -- there's more (chuckle)! Friday (Sept. 20) features a ton of activities by day and an old fashioned **Ice Cream Social** and **Music** that evening. On Sunday (Sept. 22) a **Public Bike Art Prize Ceremony** will present awards for winners of a bike-themed street banner contest. The banners are intended for municipal display on lampposts throughout the area in 2020, starting with KBC's Bike Camp / Kalamazoo Bike Week through the next **Fall Bike Celebration**.

From a personal fitness perspective, the **Fall Bike Celebration** is intended to be part of a natural and convenient local cycling training program that starts with KBC's Bike Camp and continues on to popular KBC rides such as the KalTour. From there, the routes in the Fall Bike Celebration might motivate cyclists preparing for a century ride.

Many civic leaders are members of our **Fall Bike Celebration** planning committee. Since being selected as the ride start/finish, the Village of Vicksburg leadership has opened its arms, promising a warm friendly welcome.

To register, head over to www.fallbikecelebration.org -- and please Like and Share our [Facebook](#) page with your bike-loving friends!

PRESIDENT'S LETTER, CONTINUED FROM P. 1

turns for you as you ride, which makes map-checking almost a thing of the past (unless the road becomes unrideable—which, we learned more than once, happens). We followed the routes exactly the first 3 days, but got creative—using Google Maps since we had no paper maps—when the route led us to deep and loose gravel, dead ends, too much sand, or we got tired of slogging through mile after mile of loose stuff. Along the way, we figured out that the ground is generally sandy near the big lakes but much more solid and rideable a few miles inland. Continues on p. 5

Bike touring is just SO much fun! The trip pretty much takes over your whole life, so all you do is eat, sleep, and ride. But there's an extra bonus—you get to chat with people you meet along the way, which will remind you that people are generally wonderful, that we all have far more in common than the media and politicians would have you believe, and what a wonderful, beautiful country we live in and how much we all have in common with pretty much everyone else—even people who don't ride their bikes.

It's only early August, so you have plenty of time to plan a trip. Let your bike take you completely away from your normal life. Simplify everything and let riding your bike *become* the focus of your life for a while. This is the time to "Just Do It."

—Doug Kirk President@kalamazoobicycleclub.org

KAL-TOUR VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION CONT. FROM P. 4

Charlie Eaton -- registration & sandwich pickup for Schoolcraft	Stephanie Robinson
Marc Irwin -- group ride group leader & watermelon cutting	Fred Sammons
Marc Jensen -- U Haul driver	Nina Sammons
Tom Keizer -- registration	Denise Turner
Doug Kirk -- gravel route SAG	Donna Whitcomb
Kathy Kirk -- gravel route SAG	
Renee Mitchell -- registration	Road Painters
Terry O'Connor -- registration	Shaun Ballard
John Olbrot -- map printing	Mike Boersma
Paul Selden -- registration & family ride	Terry Butcher
Gordy Vader -- setup	John Idema
Valerie Vuk -- Fish Hatchery SAG	Marc Irwin
Paul Wells -- SAG driver	Doug Kirk

AMBUCS volunteers

Jeremy Burton	Terry O'Connor
John Burton	John Olbrot
Craig Eberstein	Ted Robinson
Lindsey Landeck	Rick Whaley
Rick Remysne	
Sarah Rider	
Barbara Rider	

COOL WOOL JERSEYS AVAILABLE! - MARC IRWIN

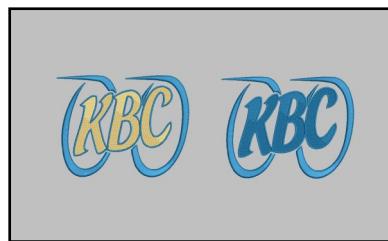
We have a new opportunity to buy high quality jerseys. I have had several wool cycling jerseys from Oregon Cyclewear for about 3 years. A few club members asked about them so we worked with their embroiderer to keep the KBC logo on file enabling any member to order whatever jersey they choose with the KBC logo in either a single color or two colors of their choice.

These jersey's are very high quality 100% merino wool which are supremely comfortable for cool weather. I've found them comfortable in temps ranging from 40-70 degrees. The sizing chart on their website is very accurate. I have a 45 inch chest, a very long torso and the jersey in the photo is an x-Large. They're easy to care for with an occasional cold/delicate wash and left over the shower rod to dry in a few hours. You can expect a little shrinkage but not much if you don't use hot water or machine dry them.

You can order from their website with Credit, Debit cards or Pay-Pal. It's a two step process, you can find directions on the website: first select the jerseys and payment and stipulate drop off to Spectrum Embroidery. When you receive an order confirmation, e-mail Spectrum with the order number and your shipping address requesting the Kalamazoo Bicycle Club logo for the front. They will confirm and bill \$16 +shipping cost when it is completed. It's easier than it sounds on paper, but the shop is a small one and gets overwhelmed. Expect 3-5 weeks before you receive the jersey. They're worth it, this is the fourth I've ordered.

Oregon Cyclewear is (ctrl+click) [here](#).

Spectrum Embroidery is (ctrl+click) [here](#).



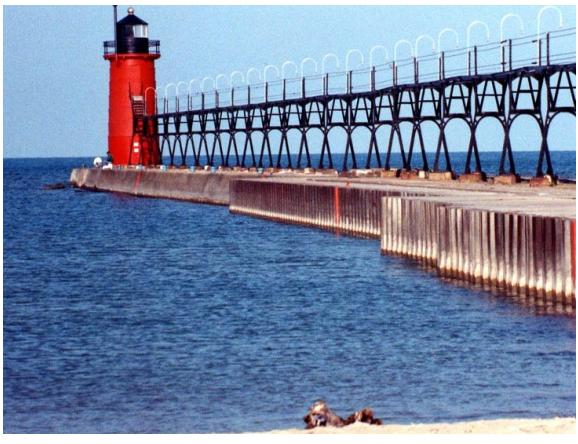
KBC STATS – CHECK FOR YOUR NAME HERE!

Total Memberships: 316

Total Individuals: 516

August Expiring Members: Adam Cefai; Paul Guimond; John Hayward; Mostyn Lumbard; Mike Mock & Mary Warren; Mike & Michelle Peterson; Bill Smyser; Philip Timko; Matthew Van-Middlesworth

New or Renewed Members: Deborah Bauer; Shari Dinneweth; Joao Graca Lobo; Andrew Graham; James Hemenway; Phil Isom; Bill Price; Donn Raseman; Paul Raynes; John Ryder; Benjamin Shields



Ride to South Haven

The Ride to South Haven will be held on **Saturday, August 17, 2019**. It will start at 8:00 A.M. from the southwest corner of the KVCC parking lot on O Avenue. We will then pedal, surprisingly enough, to South Haven. We will dine, as usual, on delicious subs. We will double dog dare each other to ride our bicycles to the end of the South Pier. And if we haven't been swept off the pier, we will then ride back to KVCC. (So, if you want to be picky, this is actually the "Ride to and from South Haven" unless you decide to take a taxi back to KVCC.)

The ride will be about 101 miles and there will be intermediate stops in Lawrence. A map of the 2018 course is located in the KBC Route Library and is labeled "SoHaven Century." The 2019 course will be similar. The Ride Leader's pace will be about 15/16 mph, but other groups of faster or slower riders are welcome to enjoy this possibly (or not) life changing experience.

South Haven *triple* dog dares you to ride to their community! So, if you ever want to show your face in public again, you'd better do this!

Rick Whaley, Ride to South Haven Ride Leader

Education Committee

The Education Committee is considering a number of one-day training sessions to add value to the cycling community in the Kalamazoo area. Later this month, watch your e-mail for a survey seeking your interest in attending and potentially helping to lead some of these events. We have several ideas as follows. If you have other suggestions, please pass them along to Paul at the e-mail below. Here are some of the current ideas:

- ⇒ CPR for first responders and first on the scene
- ⇒ Intro to gravel riding/gravel riding skills
- ⇒ Mountain Bike skills
- ⇒ Group riding skills
- ⇒ Endurance training
- ⇒ Strength training for cyclists

We look forward to offering some additional training opportunities in the fall. Your participation in the survey and the events will be critical!

Paul Wells, Education Committee
educationchair@kalamazoo bicycleclub.org

ABOUT KBC

Recognizing that Southwestern Michigan offers a rare combination of good bicycling roads and great scenery, several cycling enthusiasts got together in 1971 to form the Kalamazoo Bicycle Club. They wanted to support and encourage other riders in the area, to promote the sport of bicycling, and to have fun. As shown in the Club Mission, that tradition continues today in the Kalamazoo Bicycle Club.

Club Mission

The purpose of the Club shall be to promote bicycling; to encourage and facilitate touring, races, bicycle outings, and all forms of recreational bicycling activities; to defend and protect the rights of bicyclists; to secure a better understanding and recognition of the need for safer riding conditions; to encourage the allocation of facilities for bicycling on public lands; to cooperate with the public authorities in the observance of all traffic regulations; to provide an opportunity for members to socialize with others who have an interest in bicycling; and to recognize bicycles as vehicles used for pleasure, fitness and transportation. The Club will cooperate with other organizations with a similar goal and purpose. Hold Ctrl and click [here](#) to view the constitution.

Your Saddle Might Be Too High

You have heard and probably used the expression, "Pain in the neck." Recently I had a pain in the back. The lower, right side of my back in particular. I had been going to massage to try to relieve the pain, stretching, doing superman exercises, deadlifts, and anything else I could think of. What I didn't think of was changing my saddle position. One day on a ride in early July fellow KBC member Flint "Why Is your Leg Extended So much" commented that my seat might be a bit high. We were riding in the evening and when we turned to ride east I could see my shadow cast on the road ahead. I noticed that there was a lot of movement back and forth in my lower torso/abdomen area. "Huh," my little brain said, "Maybe all that extra motion is because my seat is too high. And maybe all that movement is causing lower right back pain."

So, guess what? I lowered the saddle and my back pain is going away. It isn't quite gone yet, but it sure is better than it was a month ago!

I have had conversations recently with a woman cyclist who was complaining about pain in her... well, where her body contacts the saddle. She had tried creams, lubes, new shorts, and new saddles, all to no avail. Without even looking at her position on her bike, I mentioned my revelation about saddle height and suggested that she might try lowering the saddle. She did, and at last report, the pain is gone!

Sure, you can try new shorts. Everybody likes to go shopping. And the saddles that came on some of my bikes we best described as A** Hatchets. Replacing those bricks is a no-brainer. And there are surely some saddles which fit one person perfectly but is extremely painful for the next person. Finding a saddle which works is a worthy challenge. And once you find one that works, you might want to buy one for every bike. I have three of the same saddle, and Julie has two of her favorite.

Of course, I am not a professional bike fitter. But lowering your seat a half inch or so is a pretty cheap test to see if you can be more comfortable on the bike.

John Knowlton, editor (ctrl+click) editor@kalamazoobicycleclub.org

