

Attack of the IceWomen!

This year's race was
a mudder to remember

For five Cycle Club members, this November's Iceman mountain bike race should have been called the Icewoman. **Tami Stagman, Connie Zoutendyk, Darcie Pickren, Taffy Hutchinson** and **Kelly Guswiler** all managed to finish with smiles on their faces after taking on one of the toughest, muddiest races in years.



Tu much! Tami Stagman rocked the finish line in her tutu.



Darcie Pickren was on the winning track for her 8th Iceman Cometh race.

More than 5,000 cyclists took off along the forest trail from Kalkaska to Traverse City only to find that a long section of single-track was mired a foot deep in mud, which an announcer at the end of the race characterized as being "greasy." For hundreds of riders the "mudpocalypse" meant that finishing times were extended by up to an hour.

Continued on next page...

President's Letter

Rolling out 2020 and another great season!

Welcome to 2020, a New Year and a new decade! Your Club Board is looking down the road for new ideas to improve benefits for being a Club member and to promote cycling in our community. We held a mini-strategic planning meeting this past November and delved into four major topics; cycling advocacy, improving the Club's volunteer experience, on-line bike route maps for Club rides, and promoting bicycle tourism in northwest Michigan. The Board will be working on specifics for each of these topics this winter. Please stay tuned for more information in the spring as we work out details.

As we move into the New Year, we need to thank several outgoing Board members, **Dave Drake** and **Pete Danly**. Dave, as our



Vice-President, took on the role as lead merchandise coordinator these past two years and did a great job delivering on a new popular jersey and vest. Pete as Membership Director, has kept our membership numbers strong. We currently have over 440 Cycling Club members!

Replacing Dave and Pete on the Board are **Merry VanderLinden** as Vice-President and **Jim Pecott** as Membership Director. Please take the time to thank Merry & Jim for their service to our Club. Also, please take the time to send your input to any Board member as we take steps to improve our Club.

Lastly, with winter upon us, there are no excuses to get outside and bike, ski, snowshoe, or otherwise get some fresh air. Please check out several opportunities as described in this newsletter. While you're outside, please take some pics and email them to Bob Downes at communicationsdirector@cherrycapitalcyclingclub.org. Our next newsletter will highlight members' outdoor activities & winter getaways. Get out there and enjoy!

A mudder to remember...

Here's how the race went down for the CCCC's fearless five female riders:

TAMI STAGMAN

Out of 52 waves of riders in the race, Tami took on her fourth Iceman in wave 32.

"I got out on the trail and the mud was so bad that you had to get off your bike and push it," she says. "There was a big crowd on the single track and a long line with nobody moving, so I pushed my bike through the woods for a bit. The mud meant it took everybody longer to finish, even the pros."

Tami says she can ride the Iceman's 28-mile trail in 3 hours, but owing to conditions, she finished in 4:22. "That's a long time to be on a bike! My arms were as sore as my legs from pushing my bike."

Tami wore a ballerina's tutu on her ride and says she got at least 100 comments. But she says this year's Iceman seemed as tough as the half-Ironman she did this summer and doesn't think she'll do the race again.

"Personally, I think 5,000 riders in a mountain bike race is too much. The only way to get through that race was to keep pushing and keep smiling."



Can't stop Kelly!

KELLY GUSWILER

Kelly almost dropped out of the race even before it began.

"I got to the start of the race and saw that I had a flat tire with a broken valve stem," she says. "I was going to drop out but Tami wouldn't let me quit. We had trained very hard for the race and she said there was no turning back - we were going to finish no matter what."

Kelly and Tami walked about a mile to a SRAM bike repair station where the stem on her tire was repaired. Good enough, she



Got mud?
Connie's bike
had plenty to
share.

started the race, but then she got another flat early on.

"I made it to the first aid station with my front tire completely flat and I think there were some Boy Scouts there, but none of them had thought to bring a tire pump. Fortunately, I had a cartridge and was able to keep going all the way to the end.

She used her water bottle to clean off her bike after going through the "mud conga line" and feels that all of her training and the four other bike races she's done this season pulled her through.

"I felt pretty good after I got out of the mud," she notes, finishing 18th in her age group with a time of around four and a half hours.

"What's so profound about this race is how much support I got from volunteers and other riders. That was the most surprising thing about the race - it was just amazing."

CONNIE ZOUTENDYK

This was the fourth time Connie has done the Iceman, and even though it was tough, she says the first time she did the race was even tougher.

"I think the first time I did the race was tougher because I didn't know what I was doing back then," she says. "This time I was better prepared."

Connie rode a fat tire bike, switched out with her slimmer summer tires.

"The mud on the trail was so deep and you have to deal with the Type A riders who cut in front of you, but I met some really nice people during the race, too."

Will she do the Iceman again?

"Maybe. I like the training part of it. I train with Taffy and that's what gets us out and motivated to race."

TAFFY HUTCHINSON

For Taffy, the muddy, snowy conditions at this year's Iceman took the pressure off trying to race it.

"It was tough, but that made it easier too because I just wanted to finish the race; I didn't feel like I had to try beating my time from last year," she says.

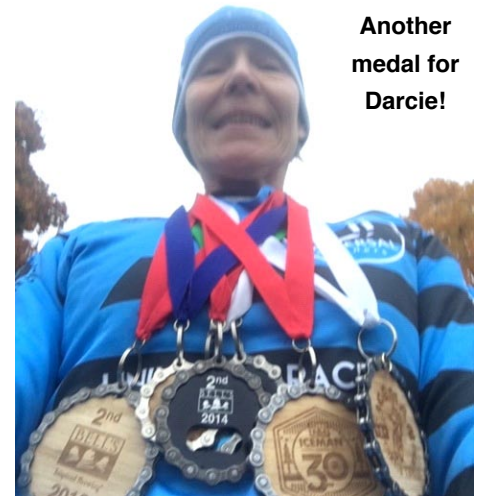
"It was hard on your bike," she adds. "My chain came off probably six or seven times and I kept thinking - where is this mud coming from? It was mud after mud after mud!"



Taffy on
the home
stretch...

But Taffy is planning a third shot at the Iceman next year.

"I'll do it again. I really enjoy training for it - it gets me out there."



Another
medal for
Darcie!

DARCIE PICKREN

Darcie is well known as a strong contender in both road racing and mountain biking and this outing was no different: she finished second in her age group. In fact, this was the seventh time she's done the Iceman and the seventh time she's earned a medal.

But she concedes it was rough going.

"It was brutal," she says, "I had to walk over two miles. There was a bottleneck on the new singletrack and eight inches of snow. Once we hit Williamsburg Road the race completely changed, but by that time I felt out of energy and had nothing left."

She also reports seeing lots of riders dropping out due to broken chains, exhaustion and other technical problems.

But even though the going was tough, Darcie still finished in 3:30, placing in the 60-69 age group. "This was going to be my last race, but now I'm thinking of signing up again," she says.

Darcie's record of achievement:

- 2019 - Second Place
- 2018 - Out of State with family
- 2017 - Third Place
- 2016 - Second Place
- 2015 - First Place
- 2014 - Second Place
- 2013 - Fourth Place
- 2012 - Crash (broke 7 bones while training - clavicle, scapula & 5 ribs)
- 2011 - Third Place
- 2010 - First year cycling.

GUYS TOO: Congrats to club members **Roger Raehl** and **Tim Duff**, who also raced the Iceman.

The Devil Day Ride...



Five intrepid Cycle Club members got in what may have been the season's last road bike ride on "Devil's Day," Oct. 30. It was a beautiful sunny day, but chilly. The fall colors were stunning as we rode around Lake Leelanau for a total of 61 miles. Joining me that day were Dave Drake, Ann & Bud Huber and Ben Laird. - Darcie Pickren.



What "off season"? Bill Danly, Pat Bearup and Merry Vander-Linden have moved the cycling action indoors... when they're not out XC-skiing, that is.



Norte's Bike Mas Project

The Cherry Capital Cycling Club helps fund Norte's Bike Mas project, which gets upper elementary & middle school kids out to explore their local streets, parks and neighborhoods. Norte instructors review rules of the road, trail etiquette, bike safety and the "ABC's" of bike maintenance. In 2019, about 60 kids from 12 different schools participated in this program. Each ride group is kept small, between 4 and 6 kids, and includes a lead instructor and a second adult volunteer "sweep".

CCCC has obligated a minor grant for the Bike Mas project at the New Campus School through May 2020. This TBAISD school teaches kids with emotional issues. Last fall, they rode around The Commons, Buffalo Ridge trail and the Central neighborhood, and worked on mountain bike skills. If you'd like to help out as a volunteer sweep at any of the 12 schools in the program, please go to the volunteer link on the Norte website, at <https://elgruponorte.org/school/bikemasproject/>

Tips for safe winter cycling

Too many of us hang up our bikes at the first signs of snow, but if you do, you're missing out on a bunch of benefits from riding through the winter. As your body struggles to keep warm in the cold, you not only burn more calories, but your body also learns to use oxygen much more efficiently. Plus, riding around in the snow can be incredibly fun. If you do decide to go out this winter, here are some things to keep in mind.

Layering: Start with a warm base layer. Your body is making decisions about what to do based on your core temps so keep your core toasty. Add layers as needed for the conditions, but you should be a little bit chilly when you start riding; you'll warm up as you go. Don't over-dress.

Bikes: Fat bikes are awesome, but you don't necessarily need 4" tires to have fun in the snow. Try running the widest tires that will fit on your bike and for some added stability, run the lowest tire pressure possible without getting pinch flats. Depending on your weight, 15 psi or lower might do the trick. Also winter can be rough on your bike so you might not want to use your primary bike. Opt for that long ignored mountain or gravel bike sitting in your garage.

Washing: Riding in the slush and snow kicks up a lot of salt, sand and dirt, which can damage your frame and drive train unless you make sure to clean your bike. A good wiping or rinse after each ride plus using a thick lube on your chain such as NixFrixS-hun, will do your bike wonders.

Extremities: Your hands and feet are the most vulnerable part of your body when riding in the winter and are usually the first to get cold. Keeping those extremities toasty is the key to an enjoyable winter ride. A few ideas for warm fingers include wearing a pair of surgical gloves under your normal winter cycling gloves. This adds an additional vapor barrier from the cold. Also using heat packs inside your gloves or shoes will help keep you comfortable.

Carry Extra Gear: Consider carrying another pair of gloves (heavier or lighter than the ones you start with). An extra pair of wool socks can come in handy in case your feet get wet during the ride. You might also raid your ski closet and consider wearing your insulated ski helmet and ski gloves as alternates to your usual bike helmet and gloves.

Stay Hydrated: This is one that is often forgotten in the winter, as you do not feel like you are losing water. It is important to maintain your hydration and also keep warm, so taking hot broth, coffee or hot chocolate in a thermos will both keep you hydrated and warm inside. If you bring water, keep it in your back jersey pocket to keep it from freezing.

Fenders: Fenders keep slushy road spray off you, your bike and more importantly, off the people you are riding with. There are many options for add on fenders. If you don't want to spend any money, you can fashion makeshift fenders out of 2 liter soda bottles – you can easily find directions online.

Protect Your Skin: Even though it is winter, don't forget to protect your exposed skin from sun, wind and cold. Winter riding can seriously dry out your face and lips. The use of sunscreen, moisturizer and lip balm will protect you from the elements.

Be Seen: Motorists are not used to seeing cyclists this time of year, so it is even more important to be seen. Winter also means less daylight and more cloudy days, so good front and rear lights as well as wearing bright clothing is even more important this time of year. Consider carrying a spare light just in case.

Sources: 10 Expert-Backed Tips for Winter Cycling; by Robert Annis and Jessica Coulon (Bicycling Magazine Sept 3, 2019); The Rules of Winter Cycling (from bikewinter.org)



Safety Corner By Steve Mitton

Bicycle Shorts

RECEIVED: A thank-you from TART for the Club's "pass-through" contribution of \$1,000 from the Ironman organization for our volunteer effort in last summer's race.

AND THE WINNER IS... Social Cycling Flint was named Club of the Year by the League of Michigan Bicyclists at their annual meeting this fall. The CCCC was a finalist for that distinction, along with clubs in Detroit and Ann Arbor.

BIG AWARD: Norte and their partner schools have received a \$130,000 grant from Rotary Charities for a three-year program that will help implement their Safe Route to Schools project. The grant will improve bicycle accessibility to schools and neighborhoods across Traverse City.

INTERESTED in biking the length of South America from Cartagena in Colombia to Ushuaia in Tierra del Fuego? An outfit called TDA Global Cycling is planning a five-month trip from July to December, 2020. Sign up now for only \$25,000.

ROLLING: TART has received a \$300,000 grant from Michigan's DNR for the long-awaited extension of the trail from Bunker Hill Road to Lautner Road in Acme. The two-mile extension is expected to be completed in 2021.

THE GROUNDHOG CLASSIC rolls out on Feb. 1 at Devil's Lake near Alpena. It's a fat tire bike race, with 10, 20 and, depending on conditions, 30-mile loops in expert, sport and beginner classes. The event is hosted by the Alpena Cycle Club. See www.groundhogclassic.com for details.



North American Vasa Weekend

Winter Blues have you stuck indoors?

Get outside and ski, fat-tire bike, snowshoe or watch the kids race at the North American Vasa.

On February 8-9 at Timber Ridge Resort (4050 E. Hammond, @ Six Mile Road), there will be a multitude of ski tours, XC ski races, fat tire bike races, a snowshoe race, kids races and an adaptive skier tour.

The North American Vasa features a variety of freestyle/ski and classic ski events, including combination events for those who want to enter multiple races or tours. Fat Tire bikers can in ride the 13K or 42K events. Both races feature some of the best NMMBA trails along with plenty of Short's brew at the after party and awards ceremony.

The SkiFatalon will take on a new twist this year as it will be a two-person team event (25K Freestyle Ski and 42K Fat Tire Bike). Yes, you can be your own team if you choose to not include a co-conspirator. The Vasa is also excited to announce the addition of a 6-8K snowshoe race to the Sunday lineup. The goal is to make Sunday more festive and fun. The "Vasasaurus Stomp" will be on ungroomed snow, and guaranteed to be family and fun.

The Event Tent provides a heated space where you can enjoy a selection of craft beers from cosponsor, Shorts Brewing Company. You will also be able to munch on goodies from our official snack sponsor, Cherry Republic, crunch on Great Lakes Potato Chips, and slurp hearty hot soups from Blue Tractor for your post-race recovery and celebration.

Volunteers are needed for all these events. All volunteers and wannabes are invited to the Annual Volunteer Dinner Meeting on Sunday, February 2, in the Peninsula Room

at the Jolly Pumpkin, 5-7 pm. You will sign in and receive your warm, styling volunteer hat, have a brief meeting, meet with your crew chief and fellow volunteers, and munch on yummy JP appetizers. Vasa volunteer sign-up begins on January 2. Visit the North American Vasa website on or after that date for a link to the sign-up list.

Check out the Vasa website at www.vasa.org for more details and registration info.

Photos courtesy of North American Vasa.



The Bicycle: Your Miracle Machine

By Jim Datsko

Now that cold, snowy weather has overtaken the warm cycling season, many of us can take a break from our saddles to reflect on our sport. We often take our “wheel” for granted, as it was called during the glory of the 1890s High-Wheeler Era.

Bicycling emerged from the fog of the French Revolution around 1790 when an adult-sized version of a child’s wooden hobbyhorse was fashioned, including adding a front wheel to match the existing rear drag wheel. Sitting in your velocipede’s saddle you simply scooted your feet along the ground. If you were a proper gentleman, you joined one of the riding clubs that became fashionable on both sides of the Atlantic.

Various mechanical devices were added to the velo in an attempt at constant propulsion in the mid-1800s, resulting in a blacksmith adding cranks and pedals directly onto the front wheel’s axle. This version, affectionately known as the “bone shaker,” soon morphed into the high-wheeler for the same reasons the modern 29er mountain bike evolved bigger wheels – for a better ride over bumps and to go faster in races.

By 1890 the new “safety bicycle” having wheels of equal size and chain-drive to the rear wheel began to replace the Ordinaries as the high-wheelers became known as.

INNOVATIONS

The high-wheeler was the first machine to be mass-produced for personal transportation, though Henry Ford is often mistakenly given credit for that accomplishment.

After ushering in the era of mass-production, the bicycle figured prominently in the early development of the automobile, and to some extent, early aviation, with the Wright Brothers Bicycle and Flyer Shop. The tires on your car came from John Dunlop, the Scotsman who, in 1888, patented the air-filled pneumatic tyre for a smoother ride than the solid bicycle wheels of that day.

In modern times, a hybrid of the bike and the airplane in the form of the Gossamer Condor cyclist-powered airplane won England’s £50,000 Kremer prize for maneuverable flight in 1977 spinning around a figure eight-8 course with pylons a half-mile apart. Two years later, the Gossamer Albatross became the first human-powered aircraft to cross the English Channel.

In addition to its impact on society, the high-wheeler was indirectly responsible for substantial social and economic changes.



Skylarking on a penny farthing high-wheeler in the 1870s.

It is ironic that in the 1890s the League of American Wheelmen (LAW) formed a powerful political force that was to influence local government to pave the very first streets. The LAW pressed state governments to pass legislation creating The Good Roads Movement from the two-track horse and buggy trail days of often impassable roads of soggy clay.

By 1894, *Harper’s Magazine* reported that 90% of the expert road builders and fighters for better roads in the U.S.A. were to be found among the ranks of the LAW, recently renamed the League of American Bi-

cyclists. The irony being that shortly after our paving of roads, Henry Ford’s Model T soon forced us off them, and one spin-off from the L.A.W was AAA.

SUPER EFFICIENT

During the 10-speed bicycling boom of the 1970s, *Scientific American* magazine devoted its March 1973 issue to bicycle technology. Author S.S. Wilson was impressed that such an apparently simple device had such a major effect on the acceleration of technology. He said the answer lay in the sheer humanity of the machine. “Its purpose is to make it easier for an individual to move about, and this the bicycle achieves in a way that quite outdoes natural evolution.”

Wilson’s article compared the energy consumed in moving a given mass of body weight over a certain distance for a wide variety of animals and machines. His chart showed that an unaided walking man does fairly well consuming about 0.75 calories per gram, per kilometer. A horse, a salmon, a Greyhound bus, and a jet airliner are all more efficient than our hiker. With the help of his bike, however, the walker’s energy consumption is reduced to about a fifth of what it was without the help of his “wheel.” Therefore, apart from increasing his unaided speed by a factor of three to five, the cyclist improves his efficiency rating to rank first among all moving creatures and machines.

The next time you see this miraculous machine parked in your garage thank God for this divine gift, or at least accord your “wheel” the respect it deserves.



Doug Woods from Norton Shores, aka “Driftwood Doug,” on a roll in Vermont.

Bike Touring Workshop

Several Cycling Club members will be putting on an informal workshop early next May on how to plan your own bicycle tour.

Topics covered will include what kind of bike to ride, what to pack, suggested routes in the U.S. and Europe, organized tours vs. going it alone, and where to sleep at night! (camping, motels, Warm-showers, etc.).

There will be a slide show from member trips plus much discussion. Please stay tuned for more details, and contact Bill Danly if you have any questions or comments in regards the workshop (wbdanly56@gmail.com).