



On One Wheel

Volume XVI

Number 1

1989/90



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To foster social and athletic interest in and promote the healthy, wholesome sport of unicycling among youth and adults of the country by establishing voluntary standards of performance and sponsoring and overseeing local and national meets.

To disseminate knowledge and information on all phases of the sport to all interested parties throughout the country via a newsletter and information service

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COVER:

The vivacious young lady on the cover of this issue is U.S.A.'s own CONSTANCE COTTER. She has served as Vice-President since 1986. At that time she took on the responsibility of providing address labels for Society use. She has now updated the information on the label to include each member's expiration. What a help for both officers and members of the Society!!

In addition to her dedication to duty, she is also a talented rider. The cover picture was taken at the 1989 NUM during her exciting individual routine. In her "spare" time she directs the Hutchinson (MN) Unicycle Club.

Below is a greeting from USAm TOM McKAY. It is representative of the wishes of many Society members to other unicyclists.

Send news about yourself or your club; articles about unicyclists, unicycling, or related arts; or previously published material (with written consent for reproduction with credit) to:

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ON ONE WHEEL

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TREASURER

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Official publication of the Unicycling Society of America, Inc. Membership fee of \$10.00 per year (\$15.00 - foreign with Air Mail delivery) includes four newsletters.

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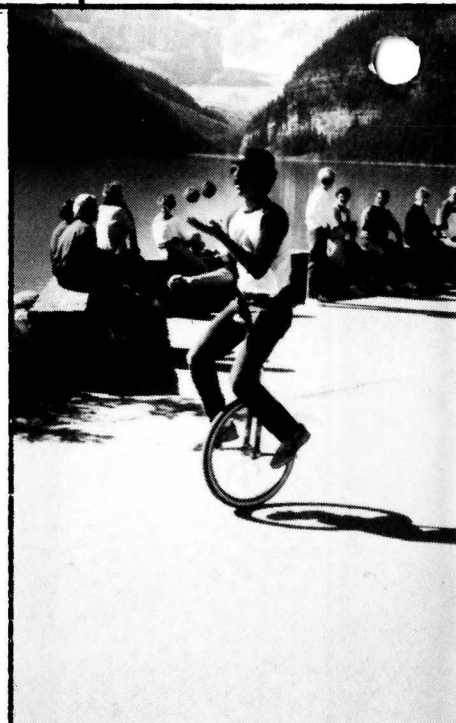
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Tom McKay

C L U B S



OXFORD "WONDERWHEELS" UNICYCLE CLUB

by Bob Eliasson

We have had an active unicycle club for the past several years at our school. Unicycling is a part of our P.E. program. Here are a few pictures of the group performing at a recent P.T.A. meeting.

The address of the Oxford "Wonderwheels" Unicycle Club is:

Oxford Elementary School
Rt. 1
Claremont, NC 28610

Contact: Bob Eliasson, P.E. Teacher

(U.S.A. Treasurer, KAREN MESSAMER, taught unicycling in a Chariton, IA, school through the Physical Education Department for many years. She also presented a seminar on the teaching of juggling and unicycling in the school system at the state level several years in a row. Her article, "Launching A Unicycling Program," which she wrote for OOW will appear in Vol. XVI, No. 2.)



MISCELLANEOUS

Did you notice? . . .

That the address label on the order form accompanying this issue is marked with the last issue you will receive (unless you renew your membership). Check this information, if it is not correct, write U.S.A. Treasurer, % PO Box.

The response to the ballot in the last issue was 100% in favor of making the Membership Period "12 months from receipt of dues."

The MINNESOTA UNICYCLE TEAM made the front page of the COUNTRYSIDE newspaper. The picture was in color and must have caught the attention of many in the area. Shown are USAm DUSTIN KELM, BRETT BERNARD, and MATT GALLAGHER.

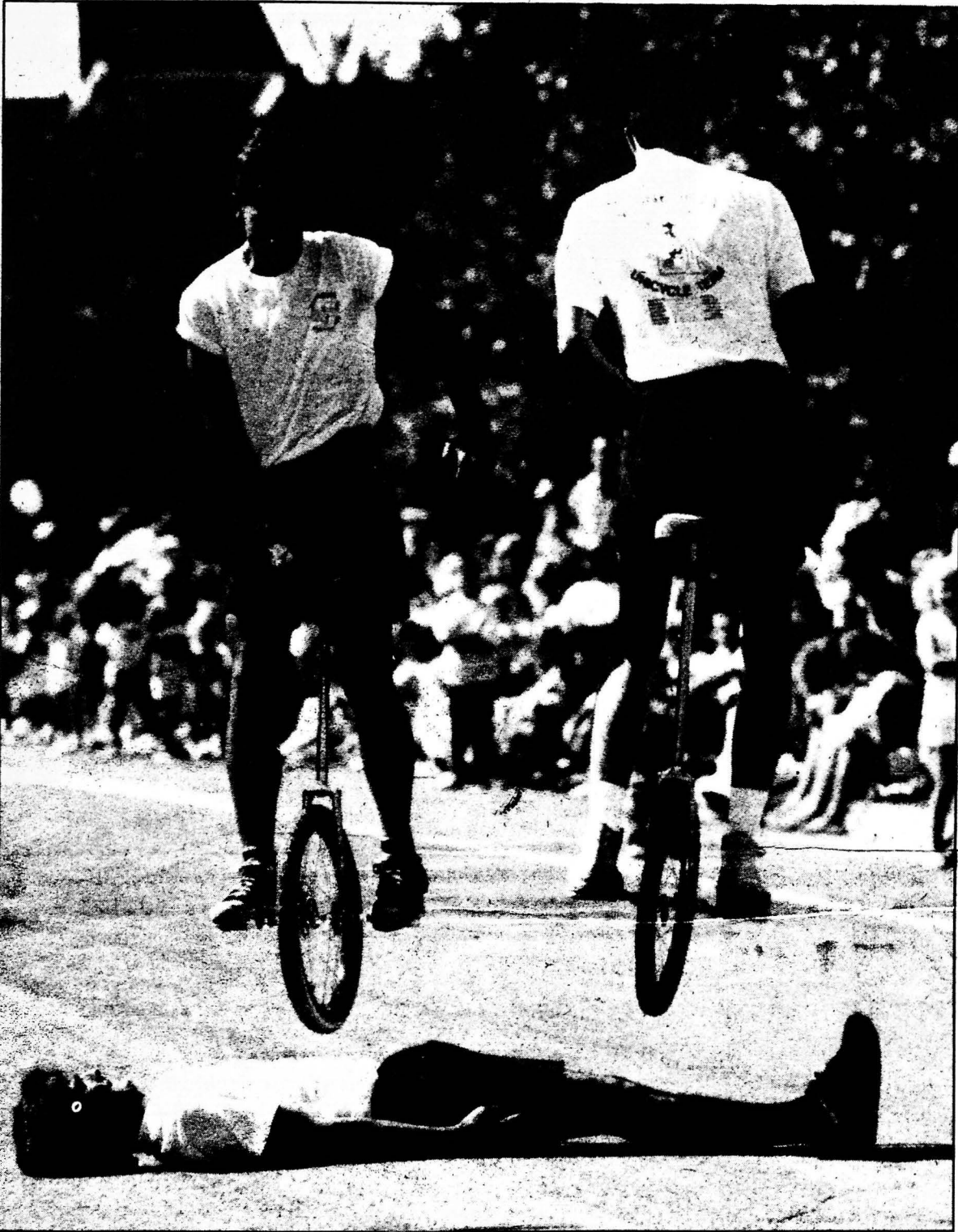
Thanks!! to Brett for mailing the picture to OOW and for procuring the necessary permission to have it reprinted.



For the first time in thirteen years the Mini-Meet sponsored by the REDFORD TOWNSHIP UNICYCLE CLUB had to be "called because of rain." Held in a parking lot, this annual event is at the mercy of Mother Nature, and she was not kind this year.

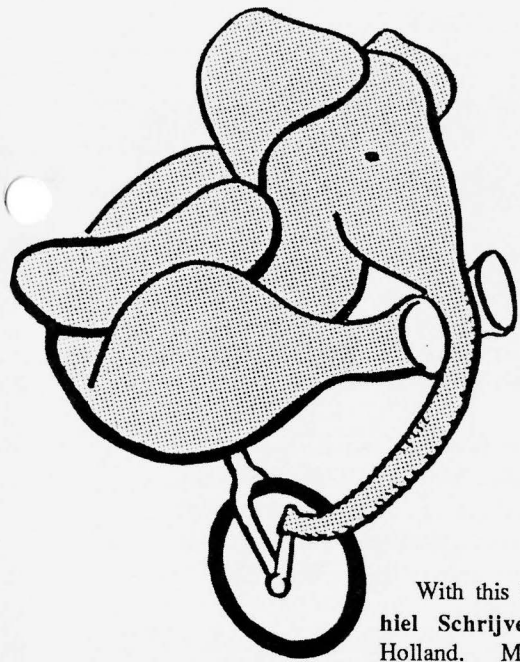
However, in spite of the morning drizzle, all of the races were completed and a lunch of hot pizza consumed by the 80 riders and their parents. The artistic riding competition had to be canceled when the drizzle turned to a downpour.

The sketch (above) is of WENDY BAHORICH who took top honors in the 25m walk-the-wheel race with her umbrella held high.

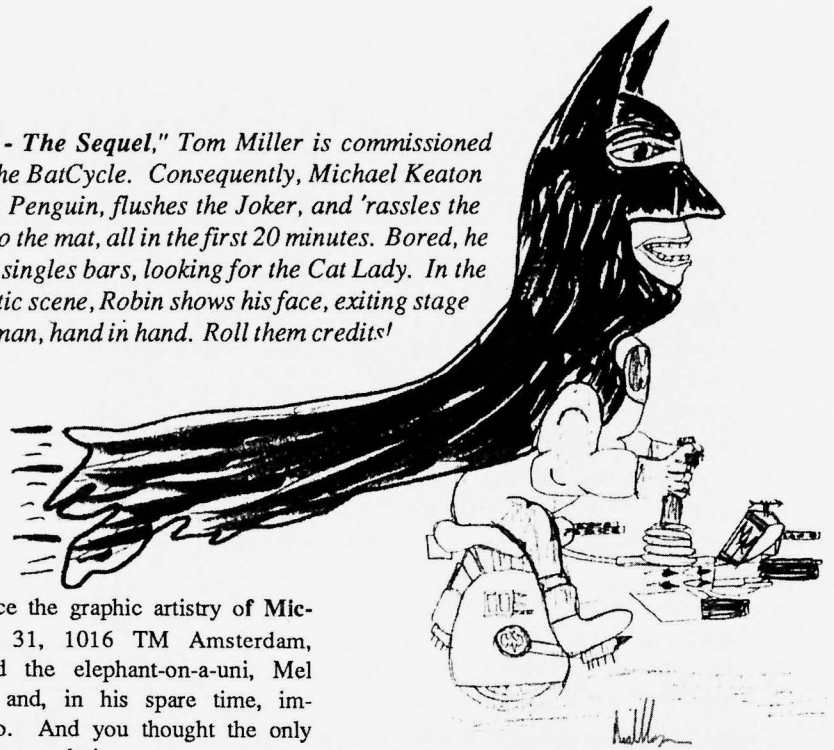


Leaping cyclists

Members of the Minnesota Unicycle Team leap over a teammate in Sunday's Burnsville Fire Muster & Community Celebration community parade. (Photo by Bill Jones)



In "Batman - The Sequel," Tom Miller is commissioned to produce the BatCycle. Consequently, Michael Keaton entombs The Penguin, flushes the Joker, and 'rassles the Riddler flat to the mat, all in the first 20 minutes. Bored, he hangs out in singles bars, looking for the Cat Lady. In the final, climactic scene, Robin shows his face, exiting stage left with Batman, hand in hand. Roll them credits!



With this issue, we introduce the graphic artistry of Michiel Schrijver, Elandsgracht 31, 1016 TM Amsterdam, Holland. Michiel contributed the elephant-on-a-uni, Mel Hall free-mounting a giraffe, and, in his spare time, improved the "Spoke Speak" logo. And you thought the only Dutch unicyclist was ... you-know-who!

Winter 1989-1990

Free *Cyc*ologist



Newsletter of the International Unicycling Federation

If This is 'Free'
Mounting
Why Can't I
Buy One?!

Hey, this looks soooo eeeeeasy, I'm grabbing my giraffe and I'm out the door...gonna do it Sem Abrahams' way from now on. So what if I mess up and wind up speaking in a falsetto?

And who's this mad-hatter guy free-mounting in front of some cyclops? (Could be the start of another Cycologist tell-me-who contest!)

Finally, here's Stephanie Sauer's method of "free-mounting." Stephe sez, "Just keep looking till you find the handicapped parking zone."

Photos of Sem by Tom Tarrant, Hunt, TX.



An Apple a Day Keeps the Doctor at Home (You Eat the Apple and I'll Pad the Bone)

by Paul A. Getty, M.D.
Cycologist Medical Consultant

Three fractures occurred at the 1988 National Unicycle Meet in Ypsilanti, Michigan: a fractured clavicle in a fall during a race, a fractured forearm while stunting on a unicycle, and a fractured ankle falling with a three-wheeler.

When serious injuries occur which involve loss of consciousness with head injury, lacerations requiring sutures, fractures or serious sprains, a trip to the Emergency Room is necessary.

Obviously, no unicyclist is going to wear all the protective gear mentioned here: he would look like a well-padded football player or properly padded skateboarder.

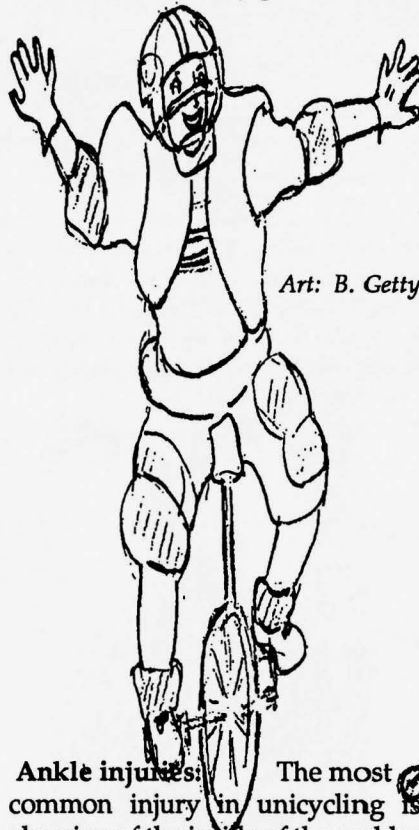
However, when one is learning new tricks or taking risks, use appropriate protective gear. Break skills to be learned down into separate parts, which should be mastered before putting them all together. Learn how to fall. Remember, you will enjoy unis more if you can ride safely without injury or pain. Prevent injuries before they occur!

About the author: Paul Getty is a 57-year-old general surgeon and organizer of the ten-member Kingwood, WV, Unicycle Club. He rides a variety of unicycles as well as an ultimate wheel and a uni on a tight rope act. He also uses a bike in the act, as well as a cycle rim that he walks inside of.

Presently, he uses a 20' long balancing pole, and is working toward doing without the pole. Previously, he suffered a fall from an 11' uni. Result? Some severe heel bruises and an ankle sprain; he hobbled about for 3 weeks.

(Avoid by wearing heel cushions, Doc! Learn how to fall! Don't take risks! - Ed)

Head injuries: rare, usually occur in backward-riding races. Helmets are the only protection.



Art: B. Getty

Ankle injuries: The most common injury in unicycling is abrasion of the inside of the ankles from the crankarms. Avoid by wearing neoprene ankle brace or high top tennis shoes.

Shoulder injuries. Fractures and abrasions from falls. Avoid taking risks. Learn how to fall. Avoid landing on shoulders.

Hand injuries: Abrasions or lacerations from falls on rough ground or grabbing a sharp edge on the unicycle seat during dismount. Cover bolt ends with rubber protectors or using caps on nuts.

Groin abrasions: Common in early uni riding and long distance riding. Wear padded bike pants; use contoured seat. A patch of leather can give great protection if sewn into pants in the crotch area.

Forearm injuries: Fractures and abrasions from falls. Avoid taking risks. Wear elbow neoprene braces or skateboard pads when trying something new.

Back Bruise: Usually from falls in early learning to ride or backward riding. A life jacket would protect upper back, and padded bike pants would protect the sacrum.

Calf abrasions: Common in early ultimate wheel riding. Avoid with neoprene brace around calf.

Shin injuries: Being struck by an uncontrolled pedal in the shin area of the lower leg can cause severe bruises or abrasions. Avoid this injury by using shin guards as worn by soccer players.



Knee Injuries: Abrasions or lacerations from falls on rough surfaces. Avoid by wearing neoprene knee braces. Learn how to fall to avoid hitting knees.

Foot Injuries: Fractures and bruises from falls. Wear heel cushions when riding giraffe unis. Avoid landing on heels.

Unicycling Big Wheels Breeze into 'Windy City' Set Fire to Lake Front, Escape to MI, IN, IL, TX

by Tom Miller, Kokomo, IN

A Unison of Unicyclists wheeled up and down the *fabulous* Chicago Lake Front hike and bike path late last August, simultaneously making merry...and discovering an unrecognized optical deficiency affecting Chicago natives.

But first, we one-wheelers had to survive a frisking by the fearsome Chicago Police Dept. Seems that Frank Birdsall, the master of comedy on one wheel, carried his act overboard in front of the Lincoln Park Zoo, our group's jump-off point. A squad car *squealed* up, lights flashing. An armed and uniformed trooper stormed out of the car. In this city of Armour and Swift, was our Frank just so much *dead meat*?

Turns out biking' Birdsall (he manages a bike shop week-days) was *not* the object of the officer's rath. Instead, it was nearby Tito, the ice cream pedlar. Shakey-legged Frank beat a quick retreat; Tito got 5-to-10 in the Big House.

Taking the Yellow Brick Road

Our unicycling party zipped 'round the Zoo, down the street from *Wizard of Oz* author L. Frank Baum's former homestead. Drawing raves from families on their way to lions and tigers and bears (oh my!), we peddled past paddle boats, leaped Lake Shore Drive on a fly-over, and rode onto the World's *Greatest* Unicycling Path.

While waves in Lake Michigan and sweaty Chicago bikers both turned laps, we headed south, into the soaring Second City skyline.

Abruptly, our party was pulled up short. Our path was blocked by Chicago Police (*yup*, them again) barricades, emblazoned "*Dismount and Walk Your Bike.*" Frank-ly inspired, Rachel and Clair Ojala, Sara and Jay Strom and others stayed atop their unis, "walking" their wheels, feet on their tires, across the forbidden territory. *Yuk, yuk!*

Shortly, we succeeded in identifying Chicagoland's optical defect I alluded to earlier.

Speakeasy City natives are inherently incapable of looking at something as outrageous as a uni head-on. No, they either stared at us hard from a safe distance, then turned to check out the ozone layer as we got close. Alternately, they marched straight ahead, but eyeballed us fiercely from the corners of their eye sockets.

There is the occasional humanoid who smiles, yells "far out!" and gives the thumbs-up gesture...but these strange folk can be dismissed out of hand as obvious out-of-town tourists.

Windmilling Through the Surf

Reaching the shadow of the "Big John" Hancock Building, we parked our unis, stripped down to our bike shorts, and plunged into the refreshing surf. While the Lake

doesn't offer the excitement of "Jaws," non-Illini natives did fret about the cleanliness of local water and the possibility of "AIDS." Chicago water is "only dangerous if you drink it," Frank assured us. An unconvinced Dutch boy stayed high and dry on the dyke with Dad-in-Law Al 'Old Ordinary' Hemminger, thumbs at the ready.

Walk Your Wheel ...or Your Ferret

On our return trip, we briefly consorted with orange-haired skateboarders. It was the one time all after-

noon we were *out-wierded*. Sem and Frank did put on a little show, hopping 24" curbs and then each other. Tame stuff, really, where strollers walk their pet ferrets and life guards sport gold chains in their noses.

Along the way, *Cycologist* Editor Curt Morgan snapped a full roll of fab photos...only to find later that *nothing* came out. Not me and my boy T.J. prying apart our collided unis, not the three kids (plus one) in the fountain, not the unicycle tattoo on Frank's groin - nothing. And when Pam refused to show us *her* tattoo...what *despair!*

Fortunately, Sem and Teresa's video on unicycling skill levels was fresh fresh from the camera. We repaired to Chicago 'burb Oak Park to view first-hand their filming accomplishments. And *no one* watched it out of the corner of their eyes.



Enjoy
Chicago

"Mad Unicyclist" blue day-glo design on white T-shirts are available for \$12 ppd. from The Cycologist, 5109 Vera Cruz Dr., Garland, TX 75043. Sizes: Children's M, L; Adults S, M, L.



I *honestly* don't know why I find unicycling over, around and through boulders, gravel washes and big-time Mother Naturized terrain so fascinating. All I can say is, it consistently intrigues. I suppose it's the combination of good exercise, a good challenge, and the elation of continually meeting - and surviving - these challenges.

by George Peck
Seward, Alaska

More Armor than Ft. Hood
I wear *all sorts* of padding: a large, armored backpad, armored elbow and knee pads, and gloves with padded cycling gloves underneath. I am in the process of fabricating a light, earband-like helmet for the big stuff.

There are two basic ways to get through rough terrain. You can *hop* (or jump).

Breaking this down further, there are *three* kinds of hopping. You can hop "on" the saddle with a hand on the saddle; you can hop "on" the saddle with both hands free; and you can jump while off the saddle.

This last technique is very powerful, as it allows you to suck the bike up underneath you for clearance. So far, I have only managed 18" jumps, but someone with a little smarts could easily get it to two feet,



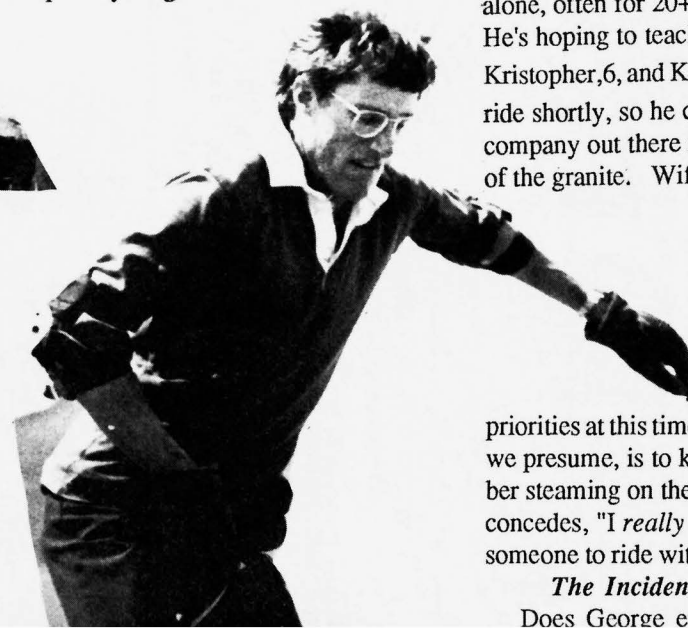
ballistic on a foul-up. But there is a delicate and tantalizing beauty to freestyle and, in spite of its limitations, it is *very* potent.

I can freestyle roll a 7" curb. Translating this to combat conditions means, I can freestyle a rock lip of six inches or so, depending on pedal position and surface traction. I try to freestyle whenever possible. It's like a dance or a ballet. It demands great energy and concentration. Pulse will go 160.

These photographs (taken by Scooter Knudtson, also of Seward) are unretouched. Incredibly, George Peck *really does* go unicycling through fields of boulders. Where the average hiker would likely suffer a sprained ankle (or worse) George finds the challenge of his middle-aged life.

How came George to ride 'mongst the rocks?

"I was looking for a way to stay in shape for my first love, windsurfing, during the off-season," he recalls. "It also gave me something to do when I couldn't go sailing. So, in 1983, I took up unicycling."



wind, your face freezes, and if your back is to it, it'll hurt your control of your wheel."

Splendor in the Granite

The Chugach coastal mountains in the background also provide a track for mountain-climbing road-runners. George received *some* inspiration for his unicycling style by hearing about the freestyle mountain bike trials in the lower 48, where riders put their two-wheelers through much the same sort of punishment to which George subjects his one-wheeler.

For the moment, George unicycles alone, often for 20+ hours a week. He's hoping to teach his children, Kristopher, 6, and Katie, 3 months, to ride shortly, so he can have some company out there midst the splendor of the granite. Wife Carol "has other

priorities at this time," (one of which, we presume, is to keep the whale blubber steaming on the campfire). She concedes, "I *really* wish he had someone to ride with."

The Incidental Cyclojist

Does George ever consider taking

Peck Rolls, Gronks, Catapults Downslope Gerber, Beech-Nut Rush to the Rescue

and there are some who could get it to 36". This would make a unicyclist very competitive at a trails bike contest, where they jump all over rocks and ditches and such.

Roll, Rock and Gronk

The other way to get over rough terrain is to "roll". Rolling is reserved for smaller rocks where the net vertical to be overcome is less than seven inches.

A simple example would be a 6" curb. This can *easily* be rolled, but a 12" curb would have to be hopped. Rolling is divided into 2 categories.

A Ballet for Unis

One I call freestyle, where both hands are off the saddle. The other has one or both hands on the saddle. I call this "gronking".

Gronking is extremely powerful and generally safer, since it tends to prevent the rider from going wildly

Mix, Match, Crash

Of course, you can mix the various methods. This in itself is a high art form because they each require a different mindset. To shift instantaneously from one to the other is harder than it might appear. Blending the styles, however, is very rewarding, especially where it lets you keep a ride going that might otherwise be a dismount.

The only thumps that have approached being clinical have been to chin.

This happens when you fall downslope after being catapulted off the saddle. I simply don't have the reflexes or arm strength to completely stop myself sometimes, especially in rock terrain.

The last body part to hit is my chin, and man, I've cracked it a good one. *Baby* food for a week. I *don't* jump downslope much anymore!

Do Need a Weatherman

Shortly, a change in the prevailing wind conditions around Seward made 'surfing impractical. "To windsurf, you need *at least* a 20 knot wind. Below that, you really can't do diddly squat. I'd have to travel to Anchorage now to find the winds I need."

George shifted his interests over to unicycling, which he did "every weekend last year. Of course, when the wind chill factor is 50 below, it's *not* a lot of fun," the physicist-turned-Alaskan-magistrate concedes

"At that temperature, if you face the

"A tourist did spot me on my wheel recently," he recalls, laughing. "He jumped out of his motorhome and ran up to me." (Here George assumes his best pushy-tourist-in-a-loud-shirt tone of voice). "Yoa, boy. I'm from Venice, Florida, y'know, where Barnum and Bailey have their winter headquarters. I bin watching you, and you could come down there, set up your own act, and start performing for them *anytime*."

Two Feet in the Air

For the moment, George appears to be in *no* hurry to turn Toby Tyler and move to Florida, however. "The BMX-ers I've seen do things that are *so much* better than what I can do," George sighs.

"For example, I hear a trick biker can clear a 46" bar. He could do 48" on a uni, I believe. Myself, I'm approaching 24" on my wheel. I imagine many could do twice that."

Flipping His Rig

George has set his sights even higher.

"What I'd *really* like to try is a vertical 360 degree flip in the air with a uni. You'd start by learning to do a flip without a wheel. Then, you'd do it with the equivalent weight of a uni. Finally, you'd graduate to doing it with the vehicle itself."

Right, George. Just remember to bring your *helmet* when you start turning flips among all those boulders.

- Curt Morgan



T.C.& the Septuagenarian: A Unicycling Mystery

"Can you teach a 73-year-old man to ride a unicycle?" asked the voice over the telephone. "I just bought a used unicycle at a flea market, and I'd like to ride it in parades," continued the caller, identifying himself as "Jim."

The I.U.F. member, a Texan who's sometimes known as "T.C.," was doubtful. The oldest first-time rider he knew of is W. V. Combs, who'd learned to ride at the age of 65.

"We'll give it a try," T. C. replied. "Come over at 7."

When Jim pulled up in his camper, T. C. was even more dubious. Jim was short, unathletic in appearance, and looked *every one* of his 73 years. His girlfriend, who introduced herself as "Eleanor," was no spring chicken either. When T. C. noticed a brightly colored clown sticker on a window of his camper, Jim explained, "I like clowns!"

Win on a Schwinn, Party on a Miyata

The party walked around to the garage where T.C. stores his unicycles on ceiling hooks. "Here's the 24" Miyata I learned to ride on," he said. "But, you really want to start on a 20", like this Schwinn. The smaller wheel is easier for you beginners to control.

"This is my 40" big wheel.

I fell off it 6 weeks ago, and broke my foot. Today's the first day I've been riding in 6 weeks, and I'm a little rusty.

Jim and Elinore blinked wonderingly and murmured pleasant words about the unicycles. T. C. knew much of this was going right over their heads, but, he thought, you have to start *somewhere*.

"Now, these are my giraffe unis," T. C. announced. "I'm pretty good on this six-footer. I've even turned a backward circle on it," he boasted. "If I were really good, I could mount it 'freestyle,' that is, without using anything but the uni itself for support...but, I can't quite do that yet.

The Yellow Giraffe is a Pink Elephant

"The yellow uni over there is an 8-foot giraffe," T. C. proudly noted. "I use the fence around a nearby tennis court to get up on it. Fell off it the first time I rode it -- landed right on my *butt*. Couldn't get up for a full five minutes."

Again, the old couple politely admired the unicycles and commiserated with T. C. over his injuries. He imagined they were hoping he would get around to the unicycle lesson soon.

"By the way," T. C. expounded, "the best unicyclist who *ever* rode lives somewhere nearby, over in Grand Prairie, I've heard. This may sound impossible, but he could freemount a *TEN* foot giraffe! This legend's name is Mel Hall, and I've been trying to get in touch with him. In fact, I wrote him a letter just last week. He's in his 70's, too, and he still rides, people tell me. Of course, he learned how

many years ago.



With this bit of unicycling history Jim's eyes sort of glazed over. Was the uni lesson never to begin?

"Why don't you get your flea-market uni out, and we'll try to get you up on it?" T. C. finally suggested. Eleanor scurried over to the camper, rummaged about, and pulled out...a *\$5 special!* T. C. examined the one-wheeled horror-story. It had been marked down from \$10, for *good* reason! The tire itself was OK, but the rest had seen its heyday many years ago.

T. C. showed Jim the basics of mounting a uni. "Here, hold on to this pole. Put the left pedal down and try to get up on the seat and get the feel of your wheel." Jim tried several times to mount it, but appeared confused. Clearly, his case was hopeless. "I think the problem is, this seat's too high for your legs," T. C. diplomatically concluded.

Jim wandered over to the middle of the driveway, and tried again. He reached over and gripped the front of the tire, trying to pull himself up on the tall seat. "*No, no,*" advised the exasperated T. C. "I do that to get on my big wheel, but that'll *never* work for you!"

A Second-Guessed Fool's Fest

With a little hop, *somehow* Jim found himself on top of the "fleece" market bargain. With an uncontrolled lunge, he pedaled forward a half-revolution. "Here's where he pitches off and *splatters* his head on the pavement," muttered T. C. to himself. But no! Jim managed yet another half-revolution. "This guy has some real innate ability," T. C. marvelled to himself, "but now he's got to fall, and fall *hard*."

Jim then straightened up in the saddle, faultlessly executed several skilled maneuvers on the uni, then rode up to T. C. and clearly dismounted. Clearly, the old coot had mastered the unicycle many years before. T. C. had been cleverly strung along by a *super* showman.

"My name's not 'Jim,'" the old gezzer confessed, offering his hand to T. C., The Cycologist. "Actually, it's Mel Hall. I got your letter and thought I'd stop by." - Curt Morgan

Can You Ride an Ultimate Wheel? On Your Hands? Mel Hall Could...and More!

by Ken Woods
Minneapolis, Mn

Probably our best break was our association with the legendary Mel Hall, far and away the Grand Master of every nuance the unicycle is capable of.

We were just breaking into the game and we were enthralled with Mel's seemingly effortless ability and innovative acrobatics.

A point: we were standing in a filling station, a pile of truck tires standing almost shoulder high to Mel. He clambered down and disappeared inside...then came out like a rocket and cleared them without touching a hand.

Giving to Greenhorns

He helped us immensely, smoothing out our rough edges, showing us what had crowd appeal, and what to avoid. He showed us a number of difficult moves that he did not normally use in his set, as the degree of difficulty was done so quickly, it did not receive a response from the audience.

He had an innate, unparalleled sense of showmanship. Such a generous and warm-hearted person who gave of his expertise to a couple of amateurish greenhorns like my partner, Dick Larsen, and me.

Mel was always reaching out for something new and difficult.

We watched in awe at his undiminished tenacity as he pursued his objective.

Clap Your Feet

As an acrobat, non pareil, he could walk around on his hands as comfortably as we would use our legs to walk with.

The Cycologist is the quarterly newsletter of the International Unicycling Association. Jack Halpern, Pres., Al Hemminger, Sec-Treas. Curt Morgan, Editor. Membership: \$15/year to 16152 Kinloch Rd., Redford, MI 48240 USA. Editorial matter to 5109 Vera Cruz Dr., Garland, TX 75043 USA. Editors emeritus: John Foss, Jack Wiley.

He developed what we now term the "ultimate wheel," but instead of pedals on the crank arms, he affixed hand grips.

When perfecting the ability to



About the author: Incredibly, Ken Woods' favorite means of locomotion is *not* a unicycle...but, a 6500 lb. 1931 Pierce-Arrow Model 32, purchased off a used-car lot in 1951. Such was its well-worn condition that wife Marguerite promptly "arranged with a local florist to have it filled with potting soil, ready for the coming spring to plant flowers." In its day, the Pierce was the Semicycle of prestige automobiles.

ride inverted to the nth degree, he then proceeded to master the difficult part. We were then privileged to watch the trials and tribulations of a Master at work.

It took months and he accumulated broken fingers, shoulder separation, fractured clavicle, and numerous headaches.

But...Ripley Believed

Holding the "ultimate" head high while riding a standard unicycle, he would dive head first, land in the inverted position, and ride around the stage on his hands.

I was backstage one of the first times he included it in his act. I can remember the stage manager with saucer-shaped eyes saying, "God, that's impossible! I've seen it but I don't believe it!"

I could go through an unending litany of his exploits, but I will end with this.

When our paths crossed again, Mel had a ten foot giraffe, fitted with padded U-shaped supports for his shoulders. He astounded everybody at his dexterity while whipping about the stage upside down. You want spectacular!

Now For the 'Hard' Part

The really hard part was the free floor mount.

He would place his toe between the fork and the tire...then a suspenseful moment while he placed in perfect juxtaposition his Psyche and muscular readiness. Time stood still, for one frozen breathtaking instant all motion and gravity was suspended as he literally flew up in one superb fluid movement to accomplish this seemingly impossible endeavour. Having seen that, you knew you had just observed the epitome in acrobatic accomplishment.

These two "turns" have never been accomplished by anyone else. His kind will come our way but once.

Letters to the Editor

Spoke Speak

To the Editor:

Thanks and congratulations on the job you are doing as the new editor of the IUF publication. I know that is no easy job, especially considering that few people will devote time to write articles and send information. Your work will no doubt contribute to promoting the wheel.

Jack Halpern
President, IUF
Saitama, Tokyo, Japan

To the Editor:

I laud your efforts for the Cyclogist, but I take issue with your desire for cartoons or experiences involving injury.

To me this is not a laughing matter. Hitting your head on granite is potentially vegetablizing. Not a pleasant prospect. Nor are any of the other possible injuries that are to be avoided.

I do it by lots of padding and a common sense approach to risk. I think this attitude should be constantly stressed with both practicing and beginning riders. Lampooning injury runs the risk of glorifying to the point of acceptance or terrorizing to the point of avoiding the activity altogether. Neither is desirable. Kids need to know that the activity is fun, but requires proper equipment to be injury free as possible.

George Peck
Seward, AK

To the Editor:

I'm looking forward to the next issue of (The Cyclogist). Natalie's article looks real good. Tom Tarrant mentioned that he really enjoys the puns....Actually, I think your writing style is right for the newsletter. (Tom Miller) has certainly added to the craft of unicycle design and building. I enjoy his creative spelling, too.

Jack Wiley
Lodi, California, USA

To the Editor:

I was very pleased with the article (on Wheelie the Clown, Summer Cyclogist). Please extend my appreciation to Melody (story) and Neal (drawings). I envy anyone who can draw and he shows promising talent.

Your contact with me was just the stimulus I needed to buckle down and learn to idle and ride backwards. I set aside a few minutes every day for a couple of weeks, and it came around for me.

Now, I think I'll be able to juggle while riding in parades, and that's something I've wanted to do for a long time

Willet Miller
Clermont, IA

**Takyuki Conquers Hokkaido,
Halpern Champ Age Groupie**

by Jack Halpern
President, IUF

**Sapporo, Hokkaido, Japan,
July 30** - Approximately 800 avid 'cyclists participated in the 12th annual All-Japan Unicycle Meet held in this Olympic city. As expected, Shigeru Takayuki rode off loaded with first-place medals. Occidental Jack Halpern was "delighted" to cop all four first-place medals in 40-50 age group.

Pg 8, The Cyclogist.
Winter 89-90

For the first year, this meet was not held in Tokyo. It's anticipated that next year, the event will be staged in Osaka. The meet is not limited to Japanese nationals; unicyclists from any country are welcome to attend Japanese national and regional meets.

In related news from Japan, a member of the Diet (the Japanese parliament) has suggested that Japan take the lead in spreading unicycling in Southeast Asia, by forming a unicycling training/education center.

In Japan itself, 65% of elementary schools have taken up the sport in one form or another. Estimates are that there are between 800,000 - 1 million riders in the Land of the Rising Yen.

Japan UA, Inc.

Finally, the Japan Unicycling Association became officially incorporated in July under the Ministry of Education. This difficult feat required years of hard work, funds supplied by sponsors, and heavy borrowing.

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held its Annual 8-Week Beginners Unicycle Class last Winter (January and February). It was not only one of the largest classes (32) but 21 of the beginners were 8 and under. All but 4 learned to ride (2 gave up and 2 are still trying). Nine of these "8 and unders" joined W.O.W. giving the Club a total of eleven 8-and-under riders. Of these, the only boy is 7-year-old BRADLEY HARTMAN, who has ridden with W.O.W. for 2 years.

These riders are too young to be official 4-H members (Wood One Wheelers is affiliated with 4-H and must abide by the national rules.) but they would like to be known as the W.O.W. SPOKES. The "Spokes" pictured below are (l. to r. front row) KAREN JACKSON, TRACY DIETRICK, BRADLEY HARTMAN, KELLY DIETRICK, (l. to r. second row) CARRIE NORRIS, JANE ARROWSMITH, SUSIE NORRIS, NEALY SARVER, BRITNI STRICKLAND.



Four of the Spokes rode a total of 35 miles in a "Bike-Hike" for the mentally retarded. Seven-year-old ABBY CERNKOVICH rode 15 miles, 7-year-old NEALY SARVER rode 10 miles, 6-year-old KELLY DIETRICK rode 8 miles and 5-year-old TRACY DIETRICK rode 2 miles!

Since learning to ride the Spokes have performed in 3 elementary school shows, a mall

show, a Boy Scout show, a nursing home show, The Indianapolis "500" parade and The Miss Ohio Pageant Parade. W.O.W.!!! and this is being written in June!

by Jan Layne,
W.O.W. Director and U.S.A. 1990 NUM Director
(Ed. note: W.O.W. was planning a class for adult riders in the Fall of 1989.)

Another Club that has regularly held fund raisers for those less fortunate is the UNILIGHTS 4-H UNICYCLE CLUB. They have participated in a number of "rides" for various causes and in November, 1988, they raised \$200 for Cystic Fibrosis by staging a Basketball Game "Wheels vs. Feet." Unfortunately, feet won. But the real winner was the Cystic Fibrosis Ass'n.

The Unilights' latest accolade came when the Club was a First Place Winner in the 1989 Balduck Park Parade. For this honor the Club received a letter and award from Michigan State Senator, John F. Kelly.

More recently the Unilights were featured in a P.B.S. program called Club Connect. The cameras came to a Unilight practice and the program host interviewed some of the riders and the Director, JAMES GREEN. James is also a U.S.A. Director and regularly contacts the media whenever he feels unicyclists can be highlighted. After returning to Detroit from Puerto Rico in 1988, James was instrumental in seeing that the t.v. news included coverage of those riders in the greater Detroit area who had participated in that IUF event.

Because so many U.S.A. members have written for information on starting a club (such as JUSTIN HOLL, 11201 Santa Teresa Dr., Cupertino, CA) these pages have been included to let members know what some clubs do.

OOW XV. no. 3 included a list of unicycle clubs active at that time. If your Club was not listed - or if that information is no longer correct, please write IMMEDIATELY to U.S.A., in care of the post office box.

I'LL NEVER LEARN TO RIDE
yes! you can! and Jack Wiley's HOW TO RIDE A UNICYCLE can help you. It's available through U.S.A. for only \$6.95 plus postage.

6' Unicycle Mounting Techniques

By: Ima Klutze

Having read about several different ways to mount in a recent OOW, I feel compelled to share with you some of my techniques. These introductory techniques are simple enough to be used by beginning riders. I was a level 1 rider at the time.

First the principles of mounting and riding a 6 footer are the same as a standard unicycle. Therefore, the method of using a board behind the tire and two spotters on each side works well. A 2 by 4 does a fine job.

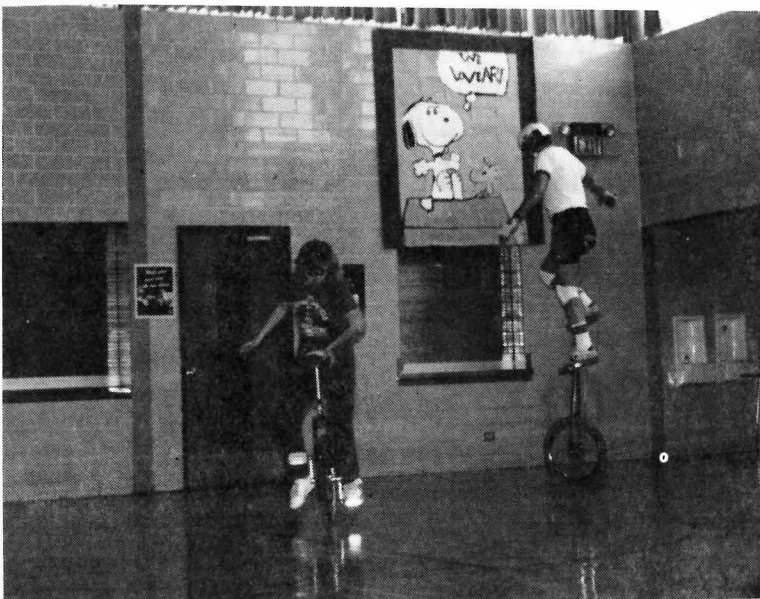
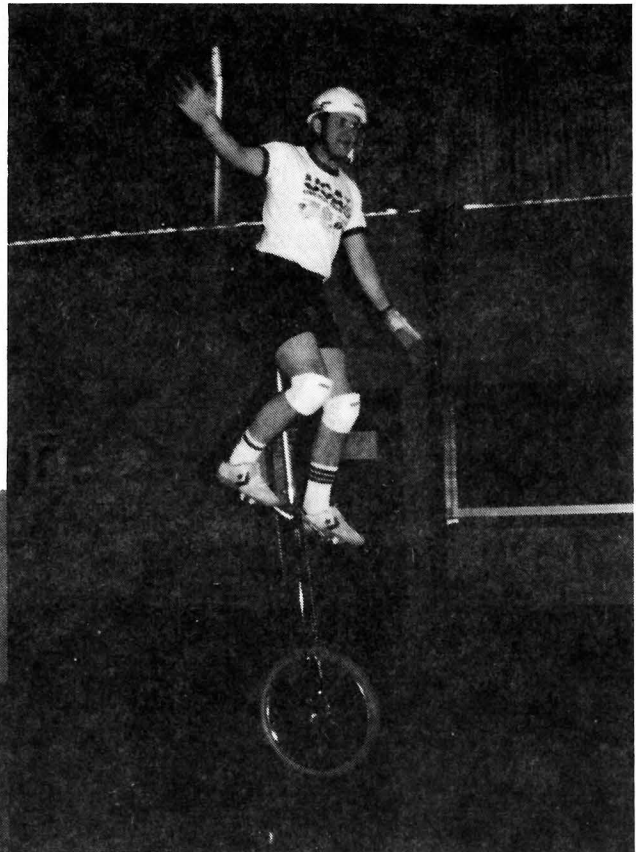
Spotters need not be unicyclists. They just have to hold you up. I selected my brother inlaws as spotters from a bunch of relatives who were attending my son's birthday party. Now they already thought I wasn't too bright. (Something about how could anyone be dumb enough to marry their sister.) But I was out to prove and extend my new found skills.

Proper clothing is essential. So I chose to wear a bicycle helmet, gloves, and knee and elbow pads. Since it was hot, I was wearing shorts.

Position the crank back at a 45 degree angle. Now the moment of truth. Put one foot on the wheel. Hmmm? Try to figure out how to get your other leg up to the pedal with all those arms in the way trying to hold the unicycle up. Once accomplished, climb the wheel and put your other foot on the pedal. Whooooo! Steady. Okay now keep climbing putting all your weight on the pedal.

Remember that 2 by 4. And remember the angle of the crank. Well if you have followed these directions perfectly to this point, you are in for an unexpected surprise. The the downward force of the pedal will cause the wheel to turn and climb the 2 by 4. It happens suddenly. You will find your self totally out of control and even 2 strong (smelling) brother-in-laws won't be able to hold you up. As you begin your decent find the chain with your inner thigh. It leaves a beautiful bloody pattern as it scrapes off half the skin. As you limp toward the bathroom, pretend you don't hear them as they comment, "What a fool." You'll show them next time.

Everyone out of the Way!



If by some chance you do manage to get up, learn how to turn before you are up against the wall.

Stay tuned next month for Klutzes article on nonstandard standard unicycle mounts and dismounts.

(This article, submitted to OOW by IMA, alias BILL GILBERTSON - Director of the TWIN CITIES UNICYCLE CLUB, was originally written for the newsletter that goes to all Twin Cities' members. Bill has also written a tri-fold handout with pictures and information about the Club that is used for both advertising and prospective members.)

UNICYCLISTS IN ACTION !!

There have been a number of interesting inquiries recently:

MORTENHOEJBERG came to the States from Denmark where he has been riding in USAm JEAN ASCHER's circus. He is an exchange student living with Paul Damon, 112 Whittemore St., Concord, MA 01742. He is looking for other unicyclists in the area.

PER AKESSON, Stockholm, Sweden, writes: "I am a 'newborn' unicycle buff in a city where nobody seems to be interested in this . . ."

And STEVE LATHROP, 0-123-2 Linden Dr. NW, Marne, MI 49435, wrote: "I recently found my unicycle in my Dad's barn, where it has been buried under a lot of junk for about 25 years. Sure enough, I can still ride it. I'm not going to quit riding it this time."

TOM MCKAY, Calgary, Alberta, Canada, rides his unicycle daily to work.

BOB BORTON sent his appreciation to USA Treas. KAREN MESSAMER for ". . . your work getting the video levels tape turned into a reality. Enclosed is a check to purchase one." Bob is just one of many who have ordered this fine video. If you have been just thinking about it, ORDER IT NOW!!! (total cost including packaging and shipping = \$22.50) It would make an excellent Christmas gift for a unicyclist no matter what his degree of excellence.

KATHY SKINNER BROOKS wrote:

I recently rode my uni in our local town's parade. It was great! It was a little scary riding by myself after so many years with all those buddies from the PONTIAC UNICYCLE CLUB; but I used a hand puppet and it worked out super!!

EILEEN WHITNEY (c/o Washington Middle School, 3100 Cain St., Olympia, WA 98501) is starting a unicycle unit in her P.E. classes (6th, 7th, and 8th graders). She is looking for whatever help any USAm can offer her.

Congratulations!!! DEBORAH SARVER. While knowing how to ride is not a requirement of membership in USA, Deborah did not join until she had mastered the art.

She is now a family member on her daughter JENELIA SARVER's membership.

From 915 S. Division St., Barrington, IL MARY C. TOWNSAGER writes:

We gave our son a unicycle this summer, and it truly was one of the best investments we have ever made. Mastering it has given him a big boost in self-confidence and he continues to derive much pleasure from riding it. Now he would like to know if there are other unicycle enthusiasts in our general area.

If any USA member lives near Barrington, please give the Townsagers a call.

IOWANS INDUCTED INTO MICKEY'S HALL OF FAME

AMY (10), KATIE (13) and BECKY (15), daughters of U.S.A. Sec. VICKY EDWARDS and DAVE, from Chariton were inducted into the Mickey Mouse Hall of Fame this fall. The induction was shown on the Disney Channel on November 17.

How did this happen? It was the result of Amy's being named a semi-finalist in the Bill Riley Talent Search at the Iowa State Fair in the summer. Bill Riley requested a video tape of Amy's unicycling routine, which he passed along to Terry Rich, the Vice President of Promotions for Heritage Cablevision in Des Moines, who in turn passed it along to Walt Disney Productions who were on the lookout for unusual acts.

All three girls are well known to unicycling competitors for they regularly take top or close-to-top honors at National and International competitions.

For the induction Amy performed a 2-minute solo routine using a 20" standard unicycle, an ultimate wheel, and a 3-wheeled giraffe unicycle. Amy was then joined by her sisters in a routine done entirely on giraffes.

Over 5000 people try out for 11 Mouseketeer positions, so U.S.A. members can be justly proud that 3 of "their own" made the finals. It took 55 hours of taping to produce the one-half hour show of the induction and at the end the girls received the coveted "Mickey Award," a 12" Mickey Mouse on a walnut base with gold engraved plate.

Congratulations!!! Amy, Katie, and Becky



CALENDAR:

19th NATIONAL UNICYCLE MEET * July 27 - 29, 1990 * Findlay, Ohio
 The Wood One Wheelers Unicycle Club of Wood County, Bowling Green, Ohio will host this event at The University of Findlay, Findlay, Ohio. The Meet is sanctioned by The Unicycling Society of America, Inc. and includes workshops, unicycle racing, individual, couple and group routines and a unicycle parade on Saturday afternoon.

Anyone who can ride a unicycle is invited to participate regardless of skill level. A registration fee will be charged and a rider must be a member of U.S.A., Inc. to participate. Rooms and meals are available at The University. Deadline for registration is June 22, 1990. Spectators are welcome and free of charge.

For more information or to register (Registration forms will be included in future issues of OOW) send a S.A.S.E. to:

1990 National Unicycle Meet
 % Jan Layne
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