

SIXTY YEARS OF CYCLE RACING IN DURBAN, SOUTH AFRICA
A History of the Mayville-Kings Park Cycling Club from 1930 to the 1990s

Compiled by Bob Turk and Dave Hockett

Edited with additional notes by Geoff Waters, 2013

1952 SA vs. Great Britain 'Test' in Paarl, Cape

Official Club Badge i

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Bob Turk and **Dave Hockett** were both dedicated clubmen who gave freely of their time to Kings Park Cycling Club over many years.

Bob Turk joined Kings Park Cycling Club in 1969 along with wife Joan, initially to support their cyclist son, Barry. In his youth in England in the late-1930s immediately before World War II, Bob was a member of Gravesend CC in Kent and raced in traditional British road time trials. After the war the family settled in Durban.

In 1971 Bob began to produce a regular club newsletter which he called the '*Bullsheat*'. It was he who started to document the club's history, an endeavour which Dave Hockett later took over.

Bob was elected club president in 1979 and continued in this role until 1984, with Joan Turk being the club's long-serving honorary secretary. He was also a cycling official and race organiser. He preferred a background role but in his lengthy association with the club he made a huge contribution to the sport. Bob passed away in the early 2000s, having been predeceased by Joan.

Bob as seen by Leyden

Dave Hockett joined Kings Park Cycling Club as an active veteran cyclist in the early 1980s. In his youth in England he was a member of Lowestoft Wheelers in Suffolk. His wife Barbara was originally a road runner but she and Dave were also enthusiastic tandem partners. Together they travelled overland from Britain by campervan to the Middle East. They then motored from Ethiopia through Africa, eventually settling in Durban where Dave joined KPCC.

In June 1988 Dave took over the editing of the KPCC *Bullsheat*. He quickly developed it into a highly informative monthly newsletter distributed to all club members. His version of the *Bullsheat* combined columns written by the club president and club captain, local race reports and details, international cycling news, training and technical advice and quirky cycling cartoons (many by 'Helms' from the *British Cycling Weekly*). In his hands the *Bullsheat* became a professional publication with a series of distinctive covers.

Over a period of some eight years, from 1988 to 1995, Dave edited a total of 86 issues of the *Bullsheat*. In so doing he created an enduring record of the club's activities and personalities during this time. He also included occasional pieces on the club's history, penned by Bob Turk. In due course, Dave assumed the task of compiling the official history of the club. The result is a comprehensive account of the club's distinguished history from its modest origins in 1930 through to the 1990s. It is this historical account which is presented here. iii

Dave passed away in 2013.

In compiling both the KPCC *Bullsheet* and the associated history of the club, Dave created a lasting legacy and contribution to sporting history. Together these documents form an enduring testament to his dedication to the sport of cycling and to serving the club and his fellow club members.

Dave Hockett iv

EDITOR'S NOTE: THE ORIGINAL DOCUMENT AND ITS SOURCES

The document as presented here retains the original text in its entirety. Headings and sub-headings have been added for the sake of greater clarity. Footnotes enlarge on the text.¹ The images included come from a wide variety of different sources.

¹ No historical account is uncontroversial. Where I have felt it warranted, I have added footnotes to the original document which correct, elaborate or offer an alternative understanding of the circumstances. These are based on my own researches. I accept sole responsibility for these observations.

² The cycling achievements of Archie, Faggi and Dave all feature in the document.

³ Brian 'Tuffy' Boyd (also sometimes known as 'Taffy') was originally a member of the powerful Troyeville CC in Johannesburg in the early 1950s. He later moved to Durban where he was instrumental in forming the Durban CC in the late 1950s. He subsequently served as Kings Park CC honorary treasurer. A road and trackman in the early 1950s, he finished third in the first Durban-Johannesburg race in 1951 and was second in an epic stage race from Rhodesia to Mozambique in the same period.

⁴ Basil Cohen is one of the most influential figures in 20th century South African cycle sport although he remained largely behind the scenes. A keen amateur cyclist himself and a member of Northern Wheelers in Johannesburg as well as being the proprietor of Deale & Huth Cycles, Basil actively promoted cycle sport amongst people of all racial backgrounds. As a result, he has an encyclopaedic knowledge of the sport in South Africa in the latter half of the 20th century.

The document as I received it in its original form was described by Dave Hockett as being an unfinished work in progress begun by Bob Turk and passed on to him to take forward. The original document lists no sources and there is no indication of how it was compiled.

Barbara Hockett kindly loaned me Dave's cycling archive as a reference source. It is clear from the contents of this that the history in its draft form was based on a combination of contemporary newspaper reports, the *South African Cyclist* magazine, the club's *Bullsheet* magazine, club records, minute books and other memorabilia as well as on memories and oral histories as recounted by long-serving club members.

In editing the original document I have in addition referred to various further sources which are listed at the end. I have also been fortunate to receive recollections, photographic images and information from many people. Archie Barnwell, Garth 'Faggi' Thompson and Dave Wiseman, as cyclists all closely associated with the club, supplied much detail and many anecdotes.²

Relevant information on 20th century cycling and cycling clubs especially in Johannesburg was generously shared with me by Brian 'Tuffy' Boyd³ and Basil Cohen (formerly proprietor of Deale & Huth Cycles, Johannesburg)⁴ in personal communications.

I undertook the editing of this history of the Mayville-Kings Park CC as a tribute to the contributions made to the club and the sport by Bob Turk and Dave Hockett.

I was associated with Kings Park CC in the late 1970s and early 1980s and served briefly as the club's honorary secretary. Reading the Bob-Dave history of the club stirred many memories. In seeking to edit their work I have enjoyed the support and enthusiasm of numerous people who have been happy to contribute. The end product is thus very much a team effort.

Geoff Waters, Durban (December, 2013). 1

By 1930, when the 'Mayville Cycling Club' was founded, organised competitive cycling was an established amateur competitive sport amongst South Africa's white community. Racial segregation was then the norm in all spheres of South African life, including sport, and was to remain so until late in the 20th century. White cycling clubs had existed in all of the country's major cities and towns since the late 1800s, often combining both athletics and cycling. These clubs were linked through provincial bodies to a national body: the South African Amateur Athletics and Cycling Association (SAAA&CA). This, in turn, was linked to international sporting organisations like the International Olympic Association (IOC) and the Union Cycliste Internationale (UCI). As a result, white South African cyclists were eligible to compete internationally. This situation persisted until the 1960s, when the white South African Cycling Federation (SACF) was suspended by the IOC and the UCI.

Various cycling clubs had existed in Durban since the turn of the century, but by 1930 only the Albion Harriers Athletic and Cycling Club survived. Fierce rivalry had long existed between Durban cycling enthusiasts and those belonging to clubs in Pietermaritzburg, the provincial capital some 80km inland from Durban.

In Durban, the first cycle track was established in the late 1800s in the centrally located Albert Park. It encircled an oval cricket ground. Later, probably shortly before World War I, a dedicated hard surfaced cycling track was built around an athletics track and cricket pitch at Lords Ground/Old Fort to the north of the city centre. This was to remain the venue for track cycling until the 1950s.

This chapter describes the founding of the club and gives details of racing in the period before the outbreak of World War II.

1

THE EARLY YEARS

The Establishment of Mayville Cycling Club⁵

⁵ The Mayville area of Durban is situated behind the Berea ridge which overlooks the city. It straddles the original main road to the interior. In the 1930s it was a new suburb accommodating mainly white working class people with the local school being a central feature of the neighbourhood. Its later rezoning as a residential area for Coloured people in terms of apartheid laws was to influence the renaming of the club.

In September 1930, a group of schoolboys at the Mayville Government School became interested in cycling. They used to organise short road races on the roads in the Mayville or Tollgate area. None of these riders were members of any cycling club, except for Walter Jowett, who was a member of the then major club in Durban, the Albion Harriers and Cycling Club. Mrs. E.M. Zurcher was Secretary (later to become a Life Member of the Natal Cycling Union) and Fritz Zurcher (of motor cycling fame) was President of this informal group of cyclists. Fritz Zurcher was approached to help organise a race which was held one Saturday afternoon from the Mayville Govt. School gates to Coedmore Quarries in Bellair and return. Fifteen riders took part and it was a great success.

It was then agreed to form an official club and a meeting took place at the home of Ossie Blakey in Tills Crescent at which the Mayville Cycling Club was formed. The first President was 2

A.S. 'Touser' Robinson (who later became a city councillor) and the first Honorary Secretary was Walter K. Jowett (who later moved to Pietermaritzburg in 1932 where he joined Pietermaritzburg United CC, later becoming a Life Vice President of the Natal Amateur Athletic and Cycling Association, President of the NCU for a total of 10 years between 1956 and 1976 and a Life Member of the South African Cycling Federation in 1959). Others among the foundation members of the club were B.A. Ayers (who became a Comrades runner of fame), A.H. Pat Clarke, Stan 'Fatty' Westgate, Herby Fisher, Eddie Wells, Ron Wilson, A. Fabian (of wrestling fame), Jimmy Roberts and Guy Close.

At this stage the club decided to hold some track meetings but, as they were not then affiliated to the Natal Amateur Athletic and Cycling Association (NAA&CA), they were debarred from using the track at the Old Fort Sports Grounds. This did not dampen the enthusiasm of the club and they promptly held their events on the flat running track in the old Albert Park Grounds. These events proved popular and more and more riders joined the club.

Albert Park Entrance today. No trace of the original gravel cycle track survives.

In November 1930 the Mayville CC was accepted as an affiliated club by the NAA&CA and from then on the club grew in strength. 3

Cycle sport in Natal Province in the 1920s and early 1930s

W.A. McLaren (who was instrumental in introducing properly organised First Aid service by the St John Ambulance Brigade at cycle race meetings in 1922) was Vice President for a period. ⁶ W.R. 'Wally' McLaren served as a cycling official until well into his 90s in the 1970s.

⁷ Cyril Geoghegan proved to be a hugely influential if controversial figure in 20th century South African cycling. He raced in Australia in the early 1930s. His speciality was motor-paced long distance track racing at which he was SA champion in the 1930s. Thereafter he became involved in the administration of cycle sport at local, provincial and national levels. Serving as the SACF president in the 1960s when South Africa was excluded from the Olympics and the UCI, he was widely criticised in local cycling circles for not doing enough to prevent the sport's international isolation. As a result, he was ousted as SACF president in the early 1970s. In the 1980s, because of this earlier controversy surrounding him, there was strong opposition to the new Durban track being named the 'Cyril Geoghegan Stadium' but this was finally overruled.

⁸ This claim was made by Cyril Geoghegan in an interview he gave to the *Natal Mercury* (27 September, 1986). I have found no other evidence to support his claim of this event as having existed before World War I.

According to this same article, in the late 1920s and early 1930s, Geoghegan '... broke the record three times for the down ride improving from 2:43 to 2:41 and then 2:23.' Given both the road conditions and bicycle technology back then, his suggestion that some cyclists were 'flying down the hills at speeds of 100km an hour' is perhaps a little exaggerated.

James Cyril 'Go' Geoghegan (after whom the present cycling stadium in Durban is named) was a member of the Albion Harriers and Cycling Club but he resigned from there in 1932 to join Mayville CC. He was Secretary/Treasurer from 1932-39 and President from 1946-52. He was also on the Executive Committee of the NAA&CA (1928-56), a National Selector (1931-38, 1949-50) and President of the SACF for 12 years from 1961 to 1972.⁷

Starting before World War I (long before the Comrades marathon was run in 1921) an interclub cycling race for the Speedwell trophy took place between Pietermaritzburg and Durban, alternating as an up and down run each year.⁸ This was restricted to the Durban and Pietermaritzburg clubs, the Speedwell, Rovers and Lords cycling clubs. Cyril Geoghegan won this event many times, breaking the down record three times between 1926 and 1932. In those days they rode with just one gear, usually a small 74 or 78 inch gear because of the hills. Traffic authorities stopped the race in the early 1930s because they felt it had become too dangerous. Bikes were overtaking the very much slower cars of that period, some of the cyclists in the race flying down the hills at speeds of 100km an hour.

Cycle racing in the late 1930s

The 1938 season

In 1938 the Pietermaritzburg Wheelers were formed to join Pietermaritzburg United CC and Speedwell CC in the Pietermaritzburg area.

1938 saw the death of 18 year old Ernest Bishop from head injuries sustained in a fall in the 10 mile race at the Old Fort track. Ernest was a promising Mayville rider who had taken up the sport only a few months previously.

Although it is often referred to as Mayville Cycling Club, and possibly started as that, the club shirts, which were dark blue with a wide horizontal white band across the chest, had the letters MCAC in blue across the white strip in most photographs from that era and newspapers from at 4

least 1938 onwards refer to Mayville Cycling and Athletic Club as well as the Mayville Cycling Club. No reports have been found of any athletic activity, so it is possible that the name was merely in keeping with other clubs of the time. For instance, the Albion Harriers was strictly an athletics club until cycling became popular when they extended their title to the Albion Harriers Athletic and Cycling Club. Mayville put Cycling before Athletics in their name and possibly never even became involved in athletics itself.

At a combined Mayville and Albion track meeting on 4.12.38 the most important event of the day was the 10 mile scratch race (open) for the Clark Trophy. Young Ron Fairall set a fast pace from the start but could not hold the stronger riders who took over towards the end with S.A Moody just winning from A.H. Clark and Stan Chelin in a time of 12 min 6 4/5 sec, only 3 4/5 sec outside the Natal record. In the 1000m time trial Alwyn Sanders' time of 1 min 19 4/5 sec was enough to beat J. Lawrence and A.H. Clark while in the 1 mile junior scratch race R. Currie beat B. Olivier and Roy Denny.

Road and track rivalries in 1939

9 Throughout South Africa for much of the 20th century, the summer months (September through to Easter in the following year) traditionally formed the track racing season. The winter months were reserved for holding events on the road. In what follows the term 'time trials' is used to refer to both individual road time trials and handicap road races. The Snell Parade road circuit in the Durban beachfront area was a flat route of 5 miles which in modified form is still popular for road training today.

Time trials were run in two different ways. In the Natal events where the clubs would compete against each other, riders were sent off at minute intervals and the organisers usually separated the top riders with a few lesser cyclists so there could be no advantage given or taken. However, club time trials were usually run on a handicap basis with the slower riders starting first and, if the handicappers did their jobs well, a sprint finish between several riders would result. These time trials were run on a club basis with Mayville and Albion each running their own event on the same day.

In March 1939 there were 14 entries at the Mayville 25 mile time trial on the Snell Parade circuit. A.W. Sanders, starting from scratch, had the best time of 1:7:10 while C. Swanepoel, said to be an active cyclist a few years back and at present staging a 'come back' was 1st on handicap. In early April Vernie Mayers was fastest over the same course in a time of 1:5:30 while later that month, with 'an unusually large field of 17 riders' A.W. Sanders won in 1:5:40. When the Natal 25 mile race came up in June there were strong hopes that the glorious weather conditions would allow Andy Gibbs' record of 1:4:45 to be broken. It was smashed by the first three riders with Stan Chelin (Albion) doing 1:2:30, A.W. Sanders 1:2:55 and D. Radford (Pietermaritzburg) 1:3:54. Next came Vic Maynes, C.Swanepoel and Harry Fisher.

In those days road bikes were generally reserved for massed start road races and track bikes with a fixed gear of around 81" were used for time trials. However, 100 mile time trials were a different matter and road bikes with gears were used for these, witness the Natal champs on the Mountain Rise circuit in Pietermaritzburg in July 1939 where Ray Woodley (Pietermaritzburg) won, just breaking five hours in 4:59:55, from R. Temple (Johannesburg). Harry Fisher, Vic Maynes and R. Peterson. Stan Chelin hit a dog and retired while A.W. Sanders, the holder of the

trophy, surprised all by retiring after 80 miles while well placed. The winning time was well outside the SA record newly set on the Jhb/Potchefstroom road (from sixth to the 56th mileposts and back) in April by H. Krischker (Southern Transvaal) in 4:41:42.

October saw a 70-lap Continental Madison inter-club match between Mayville CC and Albion Harriers with each club represented by 4 teams of 2 riders, The Mayville pairing of Vic Maynes and Ron Fairall won the event from Albion's Moody and Stan Chelin with MCC's Mason and R. Peterson 3rd. The Durban Athletic Club held their 50th annual sports in November where 'good running and cycling, and colourful Highland dancing all went to make the meeting a success'. Intercity combined athletic and cycle matches between Durban and Pietermaritzburg were popular. The 1939 season started off in early November with a match in Durban that the home side won by 61 points to 32. At the return match in Pietermaritzburg at the end of the month, Durban confirmed its superiority by beating Pietermaritzburg by 52 points to 26.

The NAA&CA cycling championships were held in Alexandra Park in December with athletic events alternating with cycle ones. Ronnie Fairall won the junior mile but the Jowett brothers sewed up the open five mile race with Walter winning and his brothers second and third.

Cycle sport in 1940

The South African athletic and cycle champs were held in Durban at Easter 1940. Disaster struck in the 10 mile race when, coming into the final bend, Moody went a bit wide, his tyre came off and he fell, taking another rider with him directly and others as a result. A total of nine of the 13 men left in the race came down. Four of them stayed in Addington Hospital, one with a compound fracture of the leg, one with back injuries and two with concussion, while one removed two sections of the track side fencing and required treatment to his ankle and the others had merely cuts and bruises. Moody would have been hard to beat at the time.

Bernie Maynes had a great day on Easter Monday when he set a new South African record for the 1000m time trial (1:18:00), won the quarter mile event by the narrowest of margins and then helped the Natal pursuit team set a new South African record of 5:11:00 for 4000m with clubmate Ron Fairall plus Stan Chelin and Bill Behrens of Albion. This was the first time that the SAAACF had used a standing start for the 1000m so the new South African record was slower than the existing Natal record of 1:17:8, held by A.W. Sanders.

The South African championship 100 mile race was held as a time trial on Easter Tuesday on the 11½ mile circuit which started on the Durban North Hill, ran around the Beachwood circuit, back to Umgeni Road and round the Snell Parade and back to Durban North. Sixteen riders started at 90 second intervals but the course was so tough and the weather so hot that only seven finished. P.N. Swanepoel of Southern Transvaal won in 5:21:11 with the only Natal finishers being Stan Chelin (Albion) in 5th and Harry Fisher (Mayville) 6th. Stan Chelin had two punctures and three bike changes, one of which came after he was riding with a slack tyre and came across Eric Snowdon, who had stopped for a rest and offered to swop bikes and fix the puncture. 6

Fritz Zurcher and Walter Jowett: Key founding figures in Mayville CC

Fritz Zurcher and his wife were influential figures in the establishment and development of Mayville CC in the 1930s and contributed to the organisation of cycle sport in both Durban and the Natal province for many years. In the photograph above, Fritz Zurcher (centre) is the coach of the 1951 Natal junior pursuit team. The team members (left to right) are Jasper Steytler, Dick Ronaldson, Alan Elson and Terry Burrell.

Walter Jowett was a founder member of Mayville CC who moved to Pietermaritzburg where he ran a cycle shop for many years, edited the *SA Cyclist* magazine and served as an honorary cycling official and administrator. He died in 1983.

The sport of cycling went into limbo during the 1939-45 war. 7

A new enthusiasm for competitive cycling on both track and road was evident immediately after the war. Some pre-war riders like Ronnie Fairall returned to top competition to be challenged by newcomers like John Ramsay and Roy Denny. Transvaal riders from powerful clubs like Troyeville CC travelled to race for honours in Natal, and local riders reciprocated by entering Transvaal events. The stage was thus set for cycle sport to flourish in the post-war era and Mayville CC figured prominently in the sport's revival at local, provincial and national levels.

2

MAYVILLE CC IN THE YEARS AFTER WORLD WAR II

The end of the fighting saw a return of pre-war cyclists and organisers keen to get cycling back on its wheels again. In addition, a new crop of enthusiastic youngsters were out on their bikes, just itching for organised cycling to get underway. Equipment in all fields was in short supply, and anybody lucky enough to acquire a new or used frame and light wheels was the envy of all riders. No cash prizes or even vouchers were awarded in those days – more likely a vase or bowl to take home.

**Trio of keen young cyclists at Lords Ground/Old Fort track in the post-war era:
(left to right) Jasper Steytler, Dick Ronaldson, unknown.**

The revival of local cycle sport in the 1940s

At the beginning of June 1945 Durban cyclists swept the board at a cycle track meeting in Pietermaritzburg. The cycle track season was then closed until August or September when, it was hoped 'to open up with really first class track meetings at which it was hoped all three Pietermaritzburg clubs will be competing in strength'.

In July a group of ten Johannesburg cyclists took 45 hours to cycle to Durban. They left late the following afternoon to ride to Howick for the night before continuing back home.

In August 1945 Mayville and Albion Harriers held a joint 25 mile time trial on the Snell Parade circuit. John Ramsay had the fastest time (1:13:27) as well as winning on handicap with 8

Maurice Chelin 2nd and L. Musgrave 3rd. Bill Behrens, an ex-Natal champion and recently returned ex-prisoner of war, was riding very well and appeared likely to win when he took a wrong turning.

There was a Victory sports meeting at Alexandra Park in December organised by the Pietermaritzburg Wheelers, the Speedwell Cycling Club and the Pietermaritzburg United Athletic and Cycling Club. W. Behrens won the 5 mile open scratch race from Stan Chelin and K. Mason. Bill Behrens also showed well in December at the first post-war sports meeting held by Southern Districts Athletic and Cycling Association in Durban when he again won the 5 mile race (from K.G. Mason and N.N. Fisher) as well as taking the prize for most laps won in the race.

Alexandra Park, Pietermaritzburg: Sax Young Cycling Stadium today

Durban's second post-war track meeting drew about 1 000 spectators and a large entry of runners and cyclists in February 1946. In the 5 mile scratch race Stan Chelin won from K. Mason and Ron Fairall.

***New developments in road racing*¹⁰**

¹⁰ After World War II, mass- start road racing including stage races became increasingly popular in South Africa. This was undoubtedly under the influence of a similar trend in Britain, as South Africa was a member of the Commonwealth at the time and had close ties with British cycling. Nevertheless, road time trials and handicap road races, both common before WWII, continued in the post-war period.

In May 1946, Pietermaritzburg United ran their 25 mile team time trial and Mayville won both on fastest time (1:5:54) and on handicap. Guy Denny donated a trophy for a 35 mile handicap race along the popular Snell Parade, Blue Lagoon, Umgeni Road and Old Fort Road circuit. The first winner was the young Pietermaritzburg. Junior, D. Mckean. Eric Snowdon was one of the finishers.

In the Natal 100 mile race John Ramsay was second and Roy Denny 4th (Pietermaritzburg riders Ray Woodley and J. Thompson were 1st and 3rd).

The third annual 104.2 mile Ladysmith to Pietermaritzburg road race promoted by Speedwell CC of Pietermaritzburg on 3 August, 1946, saw an entry of 35 riders, almost half from Troyeville CC in the Transvaal. There was some rough stuff to cross before the race reached Colenso and some riders took to the fields in search of easier surfaces. The stiff hill out of Estcourt 9

proved too much for some who had to stop for a rest. First to reach the top was W.A. Rivers, the national track champion, George Estman, the national 100 mile champion, and Ronnie Fairall of Mayville. These three spun down into the next valley together only to be confronted by a longer and more formidable climb. Descending Town Hill, Fairall slipped his chain and had to stop to replace it, losing 15 seconds and finishing 3rd behind Estman and Rivers. Roy Denny was 6th with Harry Fisher 7th of the 21 riders that finished.¹¹

¹¹ The event was run on a handicap basis, with riders on the same handicap starting together in small groups. Estman of Troyeville CC, who won in a time of 5:22.40, was in the scratch group. Estman was the dominant SA cyclist of the immediate post war period on both road and track. He represented SA at both the 1948 and 1952 Olympics, winning a silver medal in the team pursuit in the 1952 Games.

¹² Fouchee's actual time for the 100km race was 3:1.25. Estman's winning fastest time was 2:43.53.

¹³ Jock Leyden was a celebrated cartoonist in the local *Daily News* newspaper noted for his sporting caricatures. The *Sunday Times* of 8 September, 1946, quoted Mr D. Margold of the Rand Roads Amateur Cycling Club as saying that there was:

...a tremendous post-war boom in cycling with members pouring into the various Transvaal clubs in great numbers. Proof of this heartening enthusiasm is the great number of entries received for the Jubilee race for the 100 Guineas Dunlop Open Race to be run on September 22. The event had drawn 69 entries so far. Although the entries had already closed, some eight or ten riders of the Troyeville Club have intimated their intention of competing. They will be given time until today to make their entries. This is the finest entry in the history of South African cycling. Riders from as far afield as Durban, Pietermaritzburg and Kimberley will be competing. This event was inaugurated in 1910, but in those early days it was ridden on sand roads, and it was not until 1939 that it was contested on a road that was tarred all the way.

Like most races, this one used a handicap system to determine the starting order, although prizes were also awarded on fastest times. In the past, the handicaps appeared to have been too stiff as the only man off scratch to have won the race was W.R. Smith who won it in 1911. The maximum handicap for the 1946 100km race was 30 minutes. John Ramsay, Harry Fisher and Roy Denny were on seven minutes, M. Orphan was on 6min 30 sec while Ron Fairall was one of four riders on scratch. The race started on the sixth milestone on the Potchefstroom road, just outside the gates of the Baragwanath Aerodrome. As this was a very flat course, most of the riders rode single fixed gears. Less than half the 72 starters finished the race (won by Andrew Fouchee of Southern Polytechnic CC off a 25 minute handicap with George Estman (Troyville CC, off scratch, the fastest in a new record time) and M. Orphan was the only Mayville rider to finish (in 21st place).¹²

Racing on track and road in 1946 and 1947

In October 1946 there were well over 2 000 spectators at the Mayville Cycle and Athletic Club meeting at the track ground. One of the spectators was Jock Leyden who recorded the running and cycling action in his inimitable way.¹³ At the end of November there were 10 000 spectators at the Durban Athletic Club (DAC) athletic and cycling meeting at the track when teams from Johannesburg Harriers and Krugersdorp Wheelers took part. 10

In March 1947, Ron Fairall won the quarter mile and one mile events but misjudged it in the five mile when the bunch allowed Roy Denny and N. Moreland to gain a lead that they gradually increased until they were uncatchable, Roy Denny taking the sprint for first place.

In Pietermaritzburg on 4 May the Mayville A team once again won the 25 mile team race cycle trophy in a splendid time of 1:5:35 with Pietermaritzburg United ACC second in 1:8:14 and Speedwell Wheelers third in 1:9:15. At the Pietermaritzburg Wheelers annual 25 mile time trial on the Mountain Rise circuit on 18 May, M. Orphan broke the course record with 1:9:38 with John Ramsay second, N. Gafney (MUCC) third and Roy Denny fourth. Roy Denny was second in the Natal 25 mile time trial on the Snell Parade circuit in 1:8:22 with M. Orphan third but they were trounced by Stan Chelin of Albion Harriers in 1:6:42.

The South African junior athletics and cycling championships were held in Pietermaritzburg at the end of May and, in the under 19 quarter mile events, R.W. Gafney, B. Thorne and L. Musgrave won their heats but didn't shape in the finals the next day.

In the Natal 100 Kilometre¹⁴ race on the Umbumbulu road Stan Chelin of Albion was first but John Ramsay was second with Roy Denny third. Mayville fared better in the 35 mile North Coast race when they took the first three places, Ronnie Fairall leading John Ramsay and Roy Denny. Mayville also won the team category in the Ladysmith to Pietermaritzburg race.

¹⁴ Probably 100 miles.

Road racing on the flat Snell Parade circuit in the post-war period. Riders are all using single fixed wheel machines 11

Both road and track racing flourished during this period. Notable features were:

- The racing tour by a six-man British track team in early 1948
- Establishment of the Durban Grand Prix match sprint title
- 1949 racing tour by Mario Ghella (Italy): 1948 Olympic and world amateur sprint champion
- 1950 racing tour by Jackie Heid (USA) top amateur trackman
- The racing tour by a six-man British track team in early 1952
- Establishment of annual 'Old Dutch' Breweries Durban-Johannesburg stage race (1951-1954)
- Separation of athletics and cycling administration and the establishment in 1954 of the Natal Cycling Union which in turn affiliated to the new South African Cycling Federation.

3

INTO THE 1950S: NEW RACING TRENDS

In 1948 Cyril Geoghegan organised the Durban Grand Prix, the oldest Grand Prix in South Africa and brought out a British team. British sprint champion Alan Bannister was the first winner. At the meeting 106 riders competed for prizes totalling £150. This meeting really got the public interested in cycling and lots of youngsters were attracted into the sport as a result.

1948 British team: (l to r) Alan Bannister, Lew Pond, Tommy Godwin, Ray Meadwell 12

In 1951 Johnny Ramsay of Mayville CC won the Durban-Johannesburg four day stage road race which started in Old Fort Road. In 1952 Bobby Fowler of Transvaal won the Durban-Johannesburg.

Mario Ghella (Italy): 1948 Olympic and World Amateur Sprint Champion toured SA in 1949

George Estman (SA) and Jackie Heid (USA): Heid toured SA in 1950

1952 'Test' SA vs. Great Britain in Paarl, Cape15

15 John Ramsay and Rudi Vorster (both Mayville CC) were chosen as the tandem team to represent South Africa in the two test matches against the visiting 1952 British team. They won the tandem event at both tests. Ramsay was also an accomplished roadman, having won the 1951 Durban-Johannesburg stage race. Vorster later raced in Germany for several years during the 1950s, much of which was in six day races on short indoor tracks. 13

Developments in the mid-1950s

In 1954 the Natal athletics and cycling administrators elected to go their separate ways. The NAA&CA was wound up and the cyclists formed the Natal Cycling Union. This separation was subsequently followed on a national scale.

Garth 'Faggi' Thompson beat Chris Venter in the individual pursuit at the last meeting at the Old Fort track on 11 December 1954, after which the track was demolished in order to make way for the City Engineer's Department offices. It wasn't until the new combined athletics and cycling track was built at Kings Park in 1958 that Durban had a cycle track. In the meantime, riders raced officially at Pietermaritzburg or unofficially on the Snell Parade, Blue Lagoon, Umgeni Road, Argyle Road circuit. This circuit was used for the Chev Trophy race (a 25 mile time trial) which Garth 'Faggi' Thompson won in 1954 in a time of 1:6:20. Chris Venter won the South African road championship in 1954.

Mass-start road racing inland from Durban in the 1950s

The 'Wingerd Fees' race from Johannesburg to Paarl (the forerunner of the Rapport tour) attracted Chris Venter and Ronnie Cressy of Mayville in 1955. They trained very hard for this event, at one point riding to Lourenco Marques and back over mainly dirt roads (they returned with a haul of fine Pirelli tubulars, rated as far superior to the Dunlop ones available in Durban) and then rode to Pietermaritzburg and back every night. Bobby Fowler (Transvaal) won but Chris Venter came fourth. Ronnie Cressy, unfortunately, was sick and finished third from last.

That year the South African track championships were held in Pietermaritzburg and Chris Venter won the sprint while Jock Young won the junior 1000m time trial. Bruce Potter came second in the junior South African championship road race (won by Benny Gelderblom of the Western Cape) which consisted of a 25 mile time trial. Faggi Thompson and Henry Bloem won the Double Harness race on the Snell parade circuit in a time of one hour, two minutes and a few seconds.

In the late 1950s the club was at its peak with riders such as Springbok Johnny Ramsay, Brian Thorne, Harry de Lange and Rudi Vorster. They won the Ladysmith to Pietermaritzburg road 14

race, including the team event, did exceptionally well in the Durban to Johannesburg race and were virtually the strongest club in South Africa, winning many provincial and national championships.

Racing up the hills in the early 1950s¹⁶

¹⁶ The front rider in the photograph is on a converted track machine with only one brake (rear) and deep track handlebars. The rider on the front left is using an Osgear with the jockey wheel located under the bottom bracket. The Osgear was the ancestor of the modern derailleur.

The new Durban cycling track

When the Kings Park athletics and cycling stadium was completed in 1958, Cyril Geoghegan was appointed president of the stadium and Brian Thorne secretary. Mayville CC made its headquarters there and had a well-used club room.

The South African champs were held at the new Kings Park track in 1959. Bruce Potter of Mayville CC gained entry into the three man match sprint final through the repechage and then proceeded to win the final by beating the Transvaal favourites Tommy Shardelow and Ray Robinson who were watching out only for each other.

On 29 January 1960 there was a record entry of nearly 50 riders at the Natal open track meeting at Kings Park with Mayville riders such as Harry de Lange, Brian Holmes and juniors Frank Irvine and Chris Hicks representing Natal. The *Natal Mercury* said that this was:

... reminiscent of the early post war years. This sudden upsurge in popularity must be attributed to the progressive attitude of the Natal Cycling Union in recognising the value of regular racing opportunities, and of giving its blessing to the current series of Friday night track meetings.

Considerable encouragement to local riders was brought by the visiting Pretoria team. The visitors expressed their surprise at the improvement shown by Durban riders since their last clash nearly 12 months ago, not only with regard to the state of fitness but by the polished track-craft shown. 15

NEW BEGINNINGS: MAYVILLE CC BECOMES KINGS PARK CC

In 1961 the club changed its name to the Kings Park Cycling Club, a decision that resulted only after much discussion and a determined push by Brian Thorne, who was then chairman. Although membership was open to all and was very cosmopolitan, Mayville was a 'coloured' area of Durban and it was thought that 'Kings Park' was a more racially neutral name as well as indicating the address of the club headquarters.¹⁷

¹⁷ Clearly, the decision to change the club's name from Mayville CC to Kings Park CC was one which was not taken lightly. The reality is that, historically, the Mayville CC was a 'white' club and as Kings Park CC it remained so until the late 1970s. In terms of the apartheid legislation applicable at the time, the Kings Park cycling stadium – built, maintained and administered with public funds by the Durban municipality - was reserved exclusively for use by white cyclists and spectators. The same was then true for all other sporting facilities in the Kings Park sports precinct.

¹⁸ This is incorrect. The British track team of Don Skene (captain), Barry Hoban, Joe McLean and Harry Jackson toured South Africa in late 1961. Barry Hoban later wrote: 'We easily won both internationals and set many new records. I was unbeaten in all the pursuits, my best time being 4:57.8 for 4000 metres. This was a South African record by more than 4 seconds.' (Hoban 1981:34). The Dutch team visited in 1962. (See: Jowett, 1982).

Kings Park CC in the 1960s

At the South African championships at Krugersdorp in 1961, Chris Hicks and Brian Holmes helped the Natal junior pursuit team to a new South African record and then, together with Kings Park CC clubmate Erling Henriksen, they cycled back to Durban.

Racing on the original Kings Park track

(1 to r) Frans Berghoff, unknown rider, Chris Hicks

In 1962 two international teams toured South Africa and both, in addition to cleaning up in their matches against South Africa, praised the Kings Park track.¹⁸ The British team (which included Barry Hoban) said this track was better than any in Britain and the Dutch team said it was equal to or better than most in Europe. However, the cycling was not always up to world standard, 16

witness one of the races in Pietermaritzburg that year in which Chris Hicks broke away and the other dozen riders failed to take up the chase, following which they were all disqualified! The Southern Natal junior team for the 1963 South African championships (Southern Natal meant Durban while Northern Natal comprised Pietermaritzburg and Ladysmith) was seriously depleted after Dave Geoghegan fell while training and broke his collar bone and Alan McNaughton was injured in a car smash. Stuart Donkin, D. Cremer, D. Berry and Freddie Gibson held the fort.

Jock Leyden presents the winner's sash¹⁹

¹⁹ Erling Henriksen is standing far right, behind Jock Leyden.

²⁰ This is incorrect. In 1955 the South African Championships were held in Pietermaritzburg. At that time Durban had no track as the Lords Ground/Old Fort track had been demolished in 1954. (See: Jowett, 1982).

In 1966 the President of the SACF, Cyril Geoghegan, predicted that cycling could become one of the major sports in South Africa. Drawing a comparison with other cycling countries, he said: We do not rate in so far as numbers are concerned, but comparing facilities provided by way of the number of first class cycle tracks in relation to cyclists, we probably rate in number one position, with one track to every 33 cyclists.

In 1967 Claude Volker won the under-16 mile race at the South African track championships. Not only was he the only Natal rider to win a title that year, he had been passed over for the Natal team and had entered as an individual Kings Park rider! Later that year he went on to win a 25 mile track event at Pietermaritzburg after breaking away with another junior and lapping the field of seniors. 1967 was also the year that Chris Hicks and Kevin Hart spent several months campaigning in Europe.

In 1968 the championships were again held at Kings Park, having previously been held there in 1955.²⁰ Jimmy Swift, Mike Adey and Gotty Hansen were the three 'survivors' from the 1955 champs who also competed this year, although none of them were KPCC members. A five-day, 800 mile, R10 000 sponsorship race was held in August starting in Durban and travelling via 17

Empangeni, Vryheid, Ladysmith and Greytown to finish in. It provided the sport with the biggest boost in many years.²¹

²¹ Curiously, no mention is made here of the 1962 Johannesburg to Cape Town 'Rembrandt Wingerdfees' stage race in which KPCC's Frank Irvine finished second overall to Transvaaler Eddie King, after holding the lead until the final day. According to Basil Cohen who followed the event, Irvine was a victim of the intense rivalry between Cape and Transvaal riders who were numerically dominant in the race.

²² The first 'Kokstad Race' was organised in 1958 by the Durban Cycling Club. Two experienced DCC club members, 'Taffy' Boyd and Terry Burrell, had first reconnoitred the route on their bikes as a potential race route. After the Durban CC was disbanded in the 1960s, organisation of the race was taken over by other clubs. (Information supplied by 'Taffy' Boyd).

The club had a very successful road season in 1969 with Claude Volker winning the Natal junior 25 mile time trial, having a faster time than the seniors! He was also voted the most outstanding junior at the South African Games. Erling Henriksen won the 'most meritorious ride' award in the Kokstad Race (three stages from Pietermaritzburg to Kokstad on the Saturday, one stage from Umzimkulu to Pietermaritzburg on the Sunday).²² 1969 was also the year that the Turks joined the club, Barry to ride, and Bob (of motor sport fame) and Joan to later become mainstays of club leadership and administration.

Ups and downs in the decade of the 1970s

In 1970 Chris Hicks captained the first interprovincial of the season against Eastern Province. Erik Hide and Eddie Rouillard of KPCC upset the top provincial riders at a Pietermaritzburg meeting. Ted Arundel was awarded Honorary Life Membership of the NCU in 1971. This was the year that Chris Hicks left KPCC to found the Highway Cycling Club, which provided much inter-club rivalry in the Durban area for several years until it folded and Chris returned to KPCC. The KPCC Best All-Rounder competition for this year was won by Barry Turk from Dave Wiseman with Erik Hide third, Eben Espach fourth, Dave Hoyer fifth and Keith Edwards sixth. In 1972 Eben Espach continued as President and was instrumental in the revival of the Durban Grand Prix, which had fallen out of favour in the late 60s.

KPCC Durban Grand Prix programme cover: 1974/75 18

Keith Edwards, Club Captain of KPCC featured in the *Sunday Tribune* in an article about the cost of road racing clothing and equipment:

Sweater R6; shorts R5.50; Shoes R5.50-R12; gloves R3; frame R70; brake levers and callipers R7; gear levers R5; rear derailleur R15; pump R1.25; saddle and saddle pin R10; pedals with toe straps and clips R5; chain set R50; wheels R20; tyres R13; water bottle R0.75 (Total: R217-R223.50).

Keith reckoned that a top cyclist had to ride about 350 miles a week with others putting in 140 miles a week. Said Keith:

It means that you have to be strict with yourself about training, and watch your pocket. Top cyclists like Mike Francis can pick up as much as R100 in some Natal meetings. For most of us, though, the pickings are not so much. We do it mostly for the thrills. I suppose we must do.

1972 was also the year that the Van der Merwe circuit at Camperdown was used for cycle racing for the first time. The most improved juvenile was Errol Swan who won the Natal juvenile and time trial championships. The SACF, after much agonising, finally agreed to allow ladies to compete in road and track races. But in ladies only races, not mixed events.

KPCC had only 16 licensed riders in May of 1973 but attracted a total of 60 entries for the Potgieter Trophy race, including the top men in South African road racing like Hugo Landsberg, Alan van Heerden, Barry Trivess, Robin de Bree, Dries Oberholzer and Raymond Hogg. KPCC organised a one hour race over the short dual carriageway circuit in front of the hotels on the Marine Parade for two days after the Potgieter. Both events were dominated by up-country riders but were well supported locally. However, in the September 100km Gallotone Trophy race only seven juvenile and seven open class riders pitched for the start of the race, won by Paul Hansen of KPCC.

The 'Bullsheet' newsletter appears for the first time

The first edition of a club newsletter had been produced in November 1969 but it came out infrequently until 1971 when Bob Turk took it under his wing. From being nameless it acquired the title of *Bullsheet* in July 1971 and has run under that title ever since. The circulation of *Bullsheet* was 75 copies in February 1974.²³

²³ According to a letter from Bob Turk which appeared in the *Bullsheet*, June 1991: '... the committee decided to put out a monthly newsletter (and) we proudly handed out a single sheet to each member ... I thought I heard one of our polite members say "it's a lot of bullsheat" and so the literary masterpiece was coined in July 1971.' It should be remembered that back in the day producing such circulars relied on 'old technology'. This involved cutting stencils (waxed sheets) produced on typewriters and then transferring these to hand-operated roneo copying machines. No photos could be included and it was a slow manual process.

1974 was the year that Erik Hide won the senior 1000m Natal title. Errol Swan was the winner of the KPCC Winter League with Erik Hide second, Ricky Thorby third and Barry Bester fourth.

Top lady was Hildegard Espach. There were 37 members who gained points in the league. KPCC beat Pietermaritzburg-based Clover Wanderers in a 'friendly' soccer match.

The 1975 South African track championships were held at the KPCC track. 19

SACF National Track Championships 1975: Programme Cover

KPCC sponsored by Olympic Motors

Olympic Motors, who had sponsored various KPCC races over the years, sponsored the club as a whole for a three year period, starting in 1976.

In the Clover Wanderers meeting in January Barry Bester won the McDuling Trophy for juniors after he had won four of the five events. In the Durban Grand Prix meeting Dave Wiseman was third in the sprint (won by Joe Billett from Ralph Smout) and David de Beer won the Johnny Olsen juvenile omnium. Dave Wiseman was also third in the sprint at the Pietermaritzburg Grand Prix.

The March 1976 edition of the *South African Cyclist* announced that the Durban Council had given approval for a new 330m cycling track to be built in Harris Park, Rosburgh, at an estimated cost of R175 000 which, when completed, would make Durban the cycling centre of South Africa.²⁴ During 1976 the Veterans Cycling Association was formed, based in Johannesburg. The SACF ruled that, with effect from 15 May 1976, crash helmets MUST be worn in all road races.

²⁴ This was never built. Later a 333m velodrome was constructed in the Kings Park sports precinct.

Erik Hide and Bruce Tonkin won the double harness race. Ron Thompson of Clover Wanderers won the MUCC 100km race with Bruce Tonkin second while Roy Tonkin won the juvenile event. The 2-day four stage Greytown race converted back to the old method of running it, namely a straight out and home race of 150km. No KPCC rider featured.

A revolution in South African cycling

In 1977 the racial divide was closed with the Amateur Cycling Union disbanding and three 'Coloured' cycling clubs affiliating to the NCU, including Durban's Liberty Wheelers and Bayview 20

CC.25 This followed agreements with the SAAA&CF (Bantu) and SACA (Coloured) whereby they would disband providing their clubs could be affiliated into the existing SACF (White) provincial bodies.²⁶

²⁵ These clubs were excluded from training and racing on the Kings Park cycling track until 1975. According to a report in the *Daily News* (28 January, 1975), 'History was made at King's Park Stadium on Saturday when Coloured cyclists held their first club meeting'. These meetings, organised by ACUNA (the Amateur Cycling Union of Natal) which was affiliated to SACA, continued to be held separately from those involving White NCU-SACF cyclists until 1977. Prior to this, Durban's cyclists of colour were restricted to using the multi-sport facilities at Currie's Fountain (a flat gravel track) and the Wema Stadium at the Mobeni African hostel complex.

²⁶ With this merger the SACF absorbed the other two national cycling bodies along with their provincial associations. The Durban-based ACUNA-SACA affiliated clubs who joined the Natal Cycling Union did not survive for long after the merger. A fuller exploration of the circumstances surrounding the merger and the consequences for the sport lies beyond the scope of this document, but see: Waters 'Cycle sport in apartheid's shadow' on www.classiclightweights.co.uk.

²⁷ Dave Wiseman's partner is obscured in the image and thus unknown.

²⁸ Shaun Thring was a talented member of the former SACA-affiliated Bayview Wheelers who continued racing successfully for some time after the SACA-SACF merger.

Dave Wiseman was the first KPCC rider to appear on TV when he featured in the South African championships at Cape Town by winning the tandem title with Ralph Smout of MUCC.

Dave Wiseman on the tandem²⁷

New KPCC member Bill van den Bosch won the Dunlop 5-stage race in Rhodesia after taking the second stage with 1½ minutes to spare. However, he could manage only third in the 90km Crouch trophy race on the Van der Merwe circuit behind Robbie McIntosh and Sean Thring of Bayview CC²⁸. The 30km juvenile event was won by Ricky van Staden. The Greytown race was back to a two day four stage event and Bill van den Bosch came second to Robbie McIntosh. Peter Tonkin won the juvenile section. ²¹

Bill van den Bosch was also second in the Panorama tour, third in the Il Campione, second in the Natal championship, 18th in the Rapport tour, second in the Mainstay East Cape tour and was awarded his Springbok colours - quite a good year.

New sponsor for KPCC

In 1978 money and sponsorships were tight. With the exceptions of Wanderers CC's Kokstad and KPCC's Potgieter races, all the events were run as a NCU road league where points only were awarded at each event

During the course of 1978, KPCC managed to obtain sponsorship for the club from Barlows' Oshkosh Division. This enabled road jerseys to be issued to actively competing members but remaining the property of the club.

Erik Hide won the Meat Industries trophy track race over 40km. KPCC did well at the provincial track championships with Gavin Cahill winning the junior time trial and 1500m and also taking third in the open sprint; Ricky van Staden won the 500m juvenile time trial; Peter Tonkin won the juvenile 1500m.

Dave Wiseman and Ralph Smout won silver in the tandem event at the South African track championships in Port Elizabeth.

Bill van den Bosch was 5th in the Dunlop stage race in Rhodesia and while he was away there was a 50km time trial which was won by Peter Tonkin with Roy Tonkin 2nd and Bruce Tonkin 3rd.

Bill van den Bosch beat Robbie McIntosh (MUCC) to win the Umkomaas tour and then teamed up together to win the KPCC double harness time trial by over two minutes. Peter and Bruce Tonkin were third. Bill van den Bosch gained second in the Il Campione and then returned home to win a 60km race on the Van der Merwe circuit.

Bill van den Bosch and John Lansdell were selected to ride the Rapport Tour and this caused much interest, especially as the race had a 148km stage from Margate to Durban followed the next day by the 87km stage to Pietermaritzburg. Bill was 5th into Durban with John 19th. Bill was 12th overall and John 25th.²⁹

²⁹ The 1978 Rapport Toer was won overall by Marco Chagas of Portugal. (See: Jowett, 1982).

In September KPCC had 31 licensed members. In November the SACF officially approved schoolboy racing, as opposed to turning a blind eye to what some provinces were already doing.

The Bob and Joan Turk era at KPCC

Bob Turk took over as President of KPCC from Eben Espach for 1979 and held this position until the end of 1984.

The first interprovincial track meeting held in Durban for several years was staged in January 1979 when Northern Transvaal, Free State, Border and Natal competed. Free State won. 22

KPCC did very well in their Durban Grand Prix a week later when Dave Dungan won three firsts and a second (and was in the winning pursuit team), Archie Barnwell one first and two seconds, Bill van den Bosch two thirds and Dave Wiseman, Shaun Thring and Gavin Cahill one third each. The KPCC pursuit team came out on top.

Dave Wiseman and Bill van den Bosch won the 100 lap Clover Madison in March.

The cycling track that was combined with the Kings Park athletics track was demolished in July 1979 so that the athletics track could be extended. A new R500 000, shorter (330m) steeper cycling track was supposed to be built opposite Windsor Park golf course adjoining Athlone Drive before the end of that year. But, as the year progressed, the building didn't.

Ted 'Mr Chips' Arundle gained the 'Honours for Service' award at the SACF congress but collapsed and died while officiating at the Kokstad race in September.

In June the NCU decided that the fuel crisis and the new speed limit necessitated drastic changes and that for the rest of the season there would be separate race calendars for Pietermaritzburg and Durban with joint meetings only once a month.

In August, Cyril Geoghegan was invited to a function in Pretoria where his name and photograph were hung in the Museum of Sport together with a list of his achievements as a cyclist in winning a championship in every province in South Africa, winning races in Australia, managing Springbok teams in Europe, holder of the coveted Springbok Honours for Service award and President of the SACF for 12 years (and honorary Life Member of KPCC).

1966 SA Track Championships: De Beers Stadium, Kimberley³⁰

³⁰ The SA 10 mile title event was discontinued after 1968 and replaced by the 20Km title race. Clive Mego was a member of Rand Roads CC. Cyril Geoghegan was the SACF President from 1961 to 1971. 23

DURBAN'S NEW VELODROME AND BEYOND KPCC into the 1980s

In 1980 Archie Barnwell won all four junior track titles on offer at the provincial track championships as well as being part of the winning junior 4000m pursuit team. Dave Wiseman and Eddie Rouillard clinched the tandem title. Dave Wiseman also won the match sprint at the Pietermaritzburg Grand Prix. At the national track championships in Pretoria Dave Wiseman, Eddie Rouillard, Peter Tonkin, Archie Barnwell and Vincent Lemiere all gained well deserved silver medals. However, Dave Dungan, Eddie Rouillard and Bill van den Bosch emigrated from Natal during the year, a great loss to KPCC.

But all was not lost as, by the middle of the year, KPCC membership was over 100 with 45 of them licensed (out of a total of 75 licensed riders for the five clubs in Natal). Peter Tonkin won the 40km Geoghegan Brothers Trophy race in a time of 1:6:16 with Errol Swan 2nd and Archie Barnwell 3rd. Errol Swan and Bruce Tonkin were selected for the Panorama tour and Errol was selected as reserve for the Rapport Tour. Bruce Tonkin broke his collar bone when he collided with a dog going downhill. (Well, Bruce was speeding downhill, but the report doesn't give the direction of the dog. Bruce survived, the dog didn't).

Construction of the 1500 spectator Cyril Geoghegan Cycling Stadium was progressing. Slowly. Construction started in May 1980 with a 9-month programme and was therefore due for completion in January 1981. The December *SA Cyclist* pictured part of the construction of the R1.5 million track saying it should be in use early in 1981.

New Durban velodrome finally completed

Archie Barnwell continued his successful campaigning in 1981 and gained his Junior Springbok colours as well as a gold (in the junior 10km) and a silver medal at the national track championships in Welkom.³¹ KPCC cleaned up in the provincial track championships. In the time trials Errol Swan won the senior, Archie Barnwell the junior and G Hulbert and Roly Isaacs shared the juvenile. In the match sprint Dave Wiseman won the senior, Archie Barnwell the junior and D May the juvenile. In the individual pursuit Errol Swan won the senior, Archie Barnwell the junior and Roly Isaacs the juvenile.

³¹ Archie Barnwell was the first cyclist of colour to be awarded national junior Springbok colours. He went on to gain many cycling honours. Originally a member of Bayview Wheelers, he later joined Kings Park CC and then was a founder member of Triangle CC.

Peter Tonkin was 3rd in the Bergville to Ladysmith race. KPCC continued to grow and in September had 138 members with 71 of them licensed. Andy Hogg won the Tour de Howick (and Dennis Gregory was 1st veteran), the Potgieter trophy race (where Sean Nel was 1st junior and G Hulbert 1st juvenile), as well as the provincial road championships (where Malcolm Samuels won the junior) and the provincial time trial championships (Sean Nel was 1st junior and G Hulbert 1st juvenile). However, Andy didn't have it all his own way – in the club championships he could manage only 3rd behind Dave Wiseman and Peter Tonkin (Archie Barnwell was 1st junior from D

Ronaldson and Malcolm Samuels; Neil Crosthwaite was 1st juvenile from R Leeuw and L Underwood).

The South African road championships were held in Natal but were treated by all riders as glorified club rides with sprint finishes.

The new Cyril Geoghegan cycling stadium was eventually finished and the first open track meeting held at 2pm on 20 December 1981, organised by Kings Park Cycling Club. Cyril Geoghegan was Director of Sports with Carl van Tonder as Referee and T. Robertson as starter. In 1981 Burg Wheelers CC was formed in Pietermaritzburg.

The Durban Grand Prix and SA championships at the Cyril Geoghegan velodrome

The 1982 Durban Grand Prix was dominated by riders from outside the province. Martin Stockigt (national sprint champion for the previous two years) won the match sprint. The South African track championships came to Durban's famous Cyril Geoghegan stadium in 1982. Stockigt kept his title while the only Natal rider to win a medal was G Hulbert who got a bronze in the juvenile time trial.

Cyril Geoghegan stadium 1982: Interprovincial (Natal vs. OFS vs. NOFS) Dave Wiseman leads the charge with Roy Peacock, Errol Swan, Alec Harris and Archie Barnwell 25

KPCC won all the gold medals at the provincial track championships with G Hulbert winning all the juvenile races, Archie Barnwell all the junior ones and Errol Swan, Dave Wiseman and Ernie Scheepers dividing up the senior races.

SA Transport Services built a cycle track at their Umlazi hostel complex.

In 1982 Neil Crosthwaite gained his junior Springbok colours while Natal colours were awarded to Dave Wiseman, Errol Swan, Roy Peacock, Archie Barnwell and G Hulbert.

Andries Scheepers was proving to be the rider that no-one could beat when he won both the juvenile section of the Potgieter race (Archie Barnwell won the senior event) and the club juvenile champs (with a margin measured in minutes in both cases). And on both occasions he had ridden the 30km out from Durban, won the races, then calmly ridden home!

Ralph Isaacs beat Andries Scheepers to win the juvenile provincial time trial (Sean Nel was 2nd in the junior time trial and John Lansdell won the senior race) but Andries won the provincial juvenile road race (Errol Swan took the senior, Neil Crosthwaite the junior and Dennis Gregory the veteran race).

New developments in the 1980s

In 1983 Geoff (the Missing Link) Waters took over the writing of the Bullsheat from 'Uncle' Bob (the Cotterless Crank) Turk.

Andy Hogg won the 40km Meat Industries Trophy race from Greg Bailey (BWCC) with Archie Barnwell 3rd despite Mark Beneke (Deale & Huth) and Gary Beneke (Defence) riding.

John Tonks won the junior omnium at the Durban Grand Prix from Neil Crosthwaite and Stephen Scheepers but Stephen excelled by taking 2nd place in the open 20km race.

Neil Crosthwaite, Roland Isaacs, Stephen Scheepers and John Tonks were awarded their Natal colours after they won the junior team pursuit at the South African track championships. John Tonks was selected to ride the Rapport Tour and, although he was one of the youngest riders in the tour, he finished 24th overall. He was awarded his junior Springbok colours.

Natal won the interprovincial track meeting against Border with KPCC providing the Manager (Dave Tonks) and five out of six of the riders (Errol Swan, Archie Barnwell, Neil Crosthwaite, Marek Marchewa and Peter Ward).

Club rides on Sundays at 8am from Dave Wiseman Cycles operated in two bunches, a Hardriders group and one for the less energetic.

KPCC riders made a clean sweep of the 1984 Natal road champs with Dennis Gregory the 1st veteran, Sean Jaffar the 1st senior, Neil Crosthwaite the 1st junior and Gareth George the first juvenile in the road races and Dennis (vet), Andy Hogg (senior), Neil (junior) and Dave McArthur (juvenile) winning the time trials. 26

KPCC riders also went hunting medals around the other provinces. Neil Crosthwaite and Marek 'Maverick' Marchewa rode the Tlokwe Tour in the western Transvaal; Marek and Archie Barnwell rode the West Cape Tour; Marek, Andy Hogg and Errol Swan rode the Mitsubishi Tour in the Eastern Transvaal; Marek, Neil and Bruce Tonkin rode the Traubisoda Two-Day in Port Elizabeth.

Marek finished off a successful year with the Rapport Tour (which came to Durban for a kermesse and a time trial before heading off to Greytown) where he earned 31st position and was awarded his Natal colours for his efforts.

Murray Spencer did so well in the Veterans 4-day stage race in Northern Natal that he was promoted to club President for the 1985 club year.³²

³² Murray Spencer came from a road running rather than a cycling background. He was one of a growing number of people who entered cycling as 35- year plus veterans. The proliferation of 'fun ride' events like the Argus Tour and Pietermaritzburg-Durban was a major stimulus to the growth of the veteran cyclist category.

Murray Spencer (right), club president in the 1980s

1984 was the year that triathlons really took off in South Africa. They were usually led by KPCC members, witness the national triathlon champs in Cape Town where Manfred Fuhs won, Nigel Reynolds was 2nd, Norrie Williamson was fifth and Moira Hornby won the women's title.

KPCC in the mid-1980s

The 1985 Beares Track League was won convincingly by KPCC when 47 riders participated, all but 9 of them KPCC members, with Neil Crosthwaite a clear winner of the open section followed by Stephen Scheepers and Wally Bodin, and Gareth George a clear winner of the juvenile section followed by Richard Cox and Sean Ogbourne.

In May, the *Bullsheat* got a new front cover, drawn by Jock Leyden, the cartoonist for the *Natal Mercury*. 27

Leyden's new *Bullsheel* cover

In July KPCC organised a kermesse up and down West Street as part of the Durban Carnival. Bradley Jaffar won the B-group with Wally Bodin 2nd but the A-group event was dominated by the professionals with Alan van Heerden 1st, Willie Engelbrecht 2nd followed by the Beneke brothers and Johnny Koen. Neil Crosthwaite was 6th. Neil Crosthwaite won the Natal senior time trial champs and Dave Hockett the veteran but the junior and juvenile categories were won by Erik Wynia and Roland Arendse of BWCC. Murray Spencer was the toast of the club when he won the Vets 4-day organised by the Veterans Cycling Association in the Transvaal.

Murray Spencer (the club President again) successfully organised the 1986 Durban Grand Prix (again) and the professionals (again) garnered the bulk of the wins and the TV coverage (again). Willie Engelbrecht took the sprint, Johnny Koen the 1500m, Gary Beneke the points race and Dave Street the 25km race.

KPCC riders shone at the SA road champs with Marek Marchewa 2nd, Peter Tonkin 6th and Gavin Mulvenna 8th.

The winners of the club champs were John Legge (veteran), Marek Marchewa (senior), Crispin Brien (junior), Raymond Ries (juvenile) and Wilma van Niekerk (ladies). Peter Tonkin (7th) and Neil Crosthwaite (9th) were the top two amateurs in the East Cape tour. Peter Tonkin was selected to ride the Rapport Tour.

The inaugural Pietermaritzburg-Durban National Classic was organised by KPCC in 1986 with the *Natal Mercury* and Pick 'n Pay Hypermarket as the main sponsors. Murray Spencer led the committee, which included Denis Braithwaite, Ray McArthur, Julian Cox and Dave Hockett. On the day, Murray was race director, Ray was a judge, Julian was commentator, Denis crashed and Dave missed gold by one second. Johnny Koen won the event, with the only amateur in the top 10 being Neil Crosthwaite who finished 10th. John Legge was first vet in 16th place overall and Wilma 28

van Niekerk was first lady in 67th place overall out of 118 finishers. Subsequent editions of the race have, so far, been run by Rave Sport Promotions.

Murray was a close second in the Vets 4-day tour. Provincial colours were awarded to Peter Tonkin, Marcel Keachie, and Murray Spencer.

KPCC in the late-1980s

Neil Crosthwaite, riding as a Professional, showed what a good rider he was by winning the match sprint at the 1987 Durban Grand Prix. As usual, the professionals won the big events: Gary Beneke in the 1500m, and Johnny Koen in the points race. However, KPCC had their most successful year ever at the SA track champs. Peter Tonkin won the 20km and Andrew Rich the 500m time trial; Peter Tonkin and Bruce Reynecke led the Natal pursuit team to a silver medal; Scott Richardson won a bronze in the 5km as did Raymond Ries in the 5km points; Andrew, Scott, Raymond and Peter Maskell (BWCC) won bronze in the juvenile team pursuit.

Jock Leyden cartoon: 1987 Durban Grand Prix

Interprovincial track racing moved to a new system in 1984 with all provinces attending a meeting once a year and competing within one of two divisions. Natal raced in the B-division but in 1987 the Natal team of Peter Tonkin, Walter Bodin, Archie Barnwell, Bruce Reynecke, Robert Bosch, Roly Isaacs and manager Alistair Richardson (all KPCC members) nailed the opposition to win promotion to the A-division. 29

1987 Natal track team

1987 saw the first cycle relay race in Natal with 150 teams competing in the inaugural Umhlanga Festival event.

In the Eastern Province Cycle tour four KPCC riders represented Natal with Peter Tonkin finishing 15th, Crispin Brien 23rd, Alex Burnett 24th and Manfred Fuhs 35th. KPCC riders dominated the Greytown 2-day Tour with Peter Tonkin claiming the overall win, the King-of-the-Mountains and the Points titles; Dave McCallum winning the B-section, Rodney Bishop the veterans and Lindy Bradshaw the ladies. Peter Tonkin was again selected to ride the Rapport tour where he finished in 14th place.

KPCC juvenile rider Raymond Ries had a great road season placing 2nd at the SA champs, winning the Western Transvaal tour, the Bergville/Ladysmith race and the Greytown 2-day tour as well as taking joint 1st place in the Eric van Enter Trophy race.

Natal road race: (left to right) Archie Barnwell, Neil Crosthwaite, Marek Marchewa, Manfred Fuhs (all KPCC) 30

During the year, Archie Barnwell and Marcel Bengtson founded Triangle CC³³ and John Legge founded Zululand CC. Also during the year, Graham Denny replaced a tiring Murray Spencer as acting President of KPCC.

33 Most of those who joined Triangle CC were disaffected former Kings Park CC members and most were Coloured cyclists. In this regard, Archie Barnwell states ‘... there was a distinct shift in the club purpose as the key committee members changed (I still have fond memories of the Turk’s era and then the shift that Murray Spencer brought). This was the single biggest reason for the formation of Triangle CC and the mass exodus of all those members. There was very little emphasis on youth and development cycling, and Murray and the new committee focused on the “new Yuppie” cyclist at the time.’ *Personal communication from Archie Barnwell (20/11/2013).*

In September 1987 KPCC assisted Durban Bay Rotary in organising the cycling leg of their 6-sport relay race titled the Durban Bay 100. The event never gained popular appeal and died after four stagings. Interest in cycling was rocketing and by September KPCC had over 250 members.

The final countdown: 1988-1989

Graham Denny, son of cycling stalwart Roy Denny and grandson of Guy Denny who donated the trophy for the Denny Handicap race in 1946, decided that he enjoyed being acting- President so much that he agreed to be President in 1988. However, by the end of the year he had had enough and stood down at the AGM.

Juvenile rider Scott Richardson was the KPCC star at the SA champs in Cape Town, placing in every event he rode: gold in the 1500m; silver in the 500m time trial and the 5km and bronze in the 500m sprint, the 1500m individual pursuit and the 5km points. Junior Andrew Rich won bronze medals in the 1000m time trial, the 1000m sprint and the 10km. Bruce Reynecke won a gold in the senior 10km points race.

1988 was the year that KPCC experimented with a masters category for the over 45s at the Geoghegan Trophy race as the number of veterans (over 35 years old) had grown so large recently that it seemed worth dividing. This suggestion was later approved as an official NCU category, although the SACF did not follow suit.

For 1989 Graham Denny was succeeded as President by Trevor Donald, who retitled himself as Chairman and brought in Rainbow Chicken as Club Sponsor. Trevor lasted three years before succumbing to Newcastle disease.

Added notes in the original document:

In 1992 we were led by Ian Hutchinson

In 1993 Mike Staphorst took over and was instrumental in starting the Tour d’Urban cycle tour.

In 1994 Terence Mitchell ruled the roost. However, Rainbow went through hard times and reorganisation, and decided not to renew their sponsorship of the club. Terence Mitchell succeeded in bringing in Royce Love Nissan to take over the fast lane and agreed to remain on as President for another year. 31

Kings Park CC has continued into the 21th century with new members. The same cannot be said for many of the other clubs that flourished in the 20th century. In response to my inquiry about powerful Transvaal cycling clubs like Rand Roads, Southern Polytechnic CC and Troyeville CC, Basil Cohen replied:

‘The clubs in question sadly no longer exist. They all had a proud heritage, but disappeared over time; more or less when “fun/recreational” clubs and professional cycling came into being. There were mergers with other clubs to try to keep “pukka” racing cycling alive, but to no avail. The recreational/fun clubs became stronger and stronger, backed with good sponsorships by business executives; in some cases members of these clubs joining and offering their expertise to grow the sport. At the same time they started to cater for the licensed riders.

Rand Roads became Velo Club Rand, Southern Polys joined up with Southern Suburbs Sports Club. All eventually folded!’

(Personal communication from Basil Cohen 19/11/2013)

Cover of the *Bullsheet*, January 1995.

This was the last year that the newsletter was edited by Dave Hockett.

It is over to a new generation of club historians to undertake the documenting of the modern history of Kings Park CC into the 21st century.

Geoff Waters

Durban

December 2013 32

The 1997 Cyclists' Reunion

Sixty five people with cycling connections attended the reunion from Durban, Pietermaritzburg and Johannesburg. They included cyclists from several different generations, many of them leading riders in their day. George Estman was the unofficial guest of honour. Many whose names are recorded in this history appear in the group photograph. Sadly, a significant number of them have passed away since this reunion.

CYCLISTS' REUNION, PINETOWN, KZN 1997

Front Row: Ron Thompson, Anette Thompson, Taffy Boyd, Don Russell, Toni Pedro, Jimmy Redman, Chris Hicks, Albert Fryer, John Smith, Mervyn Wilkenson.

Second Row: D. Kreunen, Joan Turk, Bob Turk, Julie de Backer, George Estman, Norman Fisher, Stan Chelin, Maurice Chelin, Peter van Blommenstein, Jan Beukes, Unknown.

Third Row: Geoff Waters, Jan Devis, Rudi Vorster, Julie Louter, Ruth Caldwell, Bev Rhodes, Unknown, Francis Ramsay, Hanna Buck, Unknown, Genevieve Low, Chris Venter, Norman Myers, Don Wilkinson.

Fourth Row: Marek Marchewa, Noel Dunn, Philip Gatenby, Wally Bodin, Keith Rhodes, Ted Blevins, Alan Caldwell, Lang Musgrave, Bev Rhodes, Wayne Bryant, Eric Low, Dave Wiseman, Frans Berghoff, Unknown, Colin Buck, Arnold Kreunen, Michael Leppan, Malcolm Commins, Jannie Beukes, Keith Scafturis, Ron Scafturis, Erling Henricksen, Faggi Thompson.

Back Row: Rob Hill, Dave Hockett, Greg Albert, Deon Braun, Dave Geoghegan, Paddy McDuling, Ralph Smout. 33

SOURCES

The two main sources on which this document is based are:

The Dave Hockett Cycling Archive

The Editor's (Geoff Waters) Cycling Archive

Books

Hoban, Barry, with John Wilcockson (1981) *Watching the Wheels Go Round*. London: Stanley Paul.

Jowett, Walter (1982) *Centenary: 100 Years of Organised South African Cycle Racing*. Pietermaritzburg: SACF.

Website

Articles on South African cycling in the 'Lightweight Extras' section of classiclighweights.co.uk.

COPY EDITING AND INTEGRATION OF THE DOCUMENT

Sandra Waters undertook the copy editing, scanning of materials and assembly of the document in its final form. Without her IT skills the completion of the document would not have been possible.