**History of Cyclon**

The following article titled "How Cyclon Began" was authored by Lowell Aronoff ( co-chair of the Cyclon91 organizing committee) and was originally published in the TBN Newletter June/July 1991 issue.

On July 1, 1986, Dick Querney was discussing the frustrations the Great Canadian Bicycle Rally (GCBR) every year for the past 5 years with Bud Jorgensen. The GCBR was a great success, but it was too much work. Dick told Bud that if he could not find someone to take over the event 1986 would be its last year.

This statement started Bud thinking. The GCBR was a fabulous weekend. With 10 years under its belt, it was a tradition. Cycling in Ontario did not have many icons of tradition. Organizing bicycle tours was not something new to Bud, he organized many TBN day trips as well as weekend trips. But a bicycle rally was different - ten times larger and infinitely more complex. Could he get the turn out? Did he have the time? could he solve the problems? Did he really believe he know what the problems were? Could he find the people to help with talent in the needed areas?

On TBN Sunday rides, Bud bounced his ideas off many fellow TBN'ers and found tremendous enthusiasm. But was it enough? Would people contribute more than verbal support?

The Point Pelee Wheelee weekend which Bud organized that summer was a great success. It managed to attract 50 people but more important, was the warm feeling that was pervasive among the participants. This gave Bud the confidence to feel that he: really could organize a bicycle rally. But what kind of bicycle rally? And where would he get the seed money - from the GCBR or the TBN?

Bud approached the board of the TBN with the idea. There was a great deal of trepidation. In the 3 years of its existence, the TBN had exploded from zero to 600 members. The club had already changed its focus from the founder, Richard Aaron's idea of a network of small clubs and tour organizers, to a club with a greater social focus. The majority of the work was still being done by the same small group of volunteers that had started the TBN. A bicycle rally would broaden the base of the TBN. The board was not convinced that a larger club was either desirable, or that they could handle the increased size.

By this time, however, Bud's enthusiasm for the idea had spawned enthusiasm in others. It made sense to call a meeting to determine whether Bud had a group with enough experience to pull it off. The first organizing meeting for the as yet unnamed CYCLON took place on September 30th, 1986.

With the enthusiasm of the first meeting, it was obvious that we were not talking about *if* we were going to organize a bicycle rally, but *how* to do it. Not a single person at that meeting had ever been involved in the organization of a bicycle rally and there was no clear consensus of ideas. Where would be get the seed money? If we took over the Great Canadian Bicycle Rally, Dick Querney would insist that our rally be a camping weekend. Did we want more amenities such as nicer accommodations? Did we want to organize evening activities? And what about insurance? All volunteer sports organizations at that time were worried about insurance. None of us wanted to be held personally liable for accidents. Insurance companies were decidedly unenthusiastic about covering these types of events because of the massive awards that the courts were handing out. The list of potential problems seemed endless, but yes, at that meeting we: decided that we were going to organize a bicycle rally.

Dave Hearn came up with the name 'CYCLON' and in that first meeting we decided that if we could convince the TBN to sponsor the event, we would hold CYCLON n the Civic holiday weekend. This way we would not compete with the Great Canadian Bicycle Rally.

If there was on thing that the rally had an abundance of, it was volunteers. Bud, Dave Hearn, and Pam Harrison had a knack for infusing their enthusiasm in others. The amount of talent on that committee was amazing. Among the people who donated time in their respective professions were commercial artists, journalists, marketers, a nutritionist, and a database application designer.

By the beginning of July, despite 9 months of a lot of hard work by many talented people, we had not finished the route research, had not finished the entertainment, had only 60 people registered, and no idea what to do about insurance. The TBN had reluctantly put up more than it could afford in seed money. And everyone on the committee was worried that we had created a huge flop that would lose a ton of money.

At that point the real (frantic) work started. The TBN membership list was divided amongst the volunteers and most members were called.

A group spent the weekend in St. Catharines to finish and check out all the routes. A huge last minute push resulted in the insurance coming through on the day before the event.

On Friday, July 31st, 1987, it was clear that all the work had been worthwhile. About 210 people arrived, ranging in age from 16 to 45+. Almost half were non-TBN members. The feeling of camaraderie on the first night of CYCLON made it apparent that CYCLON would be an annual event for a long time to come.

Clearly, word spread. Cyclon 88 returned to Brock University, St. Catharines and 360 people showed up, about 100 more than had been budgeted for. This large turn out produce near a $10,000 surplus in revenue allowing the Cyclon committee to replay its $2500 seed money load from TBN and establish an account balance to be used as seed money for future Cyclons.

This success did not come without a lot of effort from unpaid volunteers. An analysis of this effort revealed that each committee member had devoted approximately 5 hours per week over a seven-month period or approximately 140 hours per person.

List of Subsequent Cyclons

Cyclons 89 and 90 were held in Guelph based out of Guelph University with a registration of 300 and 272 respectively. Cyclon 89 produced about a $7500 surplus in revenue but Cyclon90 experienced a loss.

Cyclons 91 and 92 were held at the University of Waterloo.

Cyclon 93 went London, Ontario based out of the Radisson hotel which, although a luxurious venue proved expensive producing a deficit.

Cyclons 94 and 95 moved east to the Isle of Quinte with accommodations spread among some 35 B&B. While both years were ruled a success, both years resulted in a deficit.

Cyclons 96 and 97 returned to its roots at Brock University. St. Catharines.

Cyclons 98 and 99 were held in Kingston, based at the Queen’s University.

Cyclon 2000 was originally going to be held in Bellville based out of the Loyalist College campuses however, the College ended up backing out of this arrangement so Cyclon moved back to Guelph. This move coupled with the higher Guelph University costs resulted in a substantial financial loss, mitigated only by $5000 cheque received from Loyalist College for cancelling out. On a positive note, Cyclon2000 celebrated the arrival of the new millennium with a new Cyclon logo.

Cyclon 2001 celebrated its 15th anniversary and retuned to Guelph. By now Cyclon had an established reputation and this year attracted registrants from Ottawa, Montreal, the USA and England.

Cyclons 2002 and 2003 moved back to the Niagara Peninsula and Brock University.

Cyclons 2004 and 2005 went in a different direction travelling north to Barrie, based out of the Georgian College campus.

Cyclon 2006 moved back to Queen’s University, Kingston and decided to mark its 20th anniversary by commissioning a Cyclon logo’d riding jersey. To make it even more unique, purchase was restricted to Cyclon registrants.

Cyclons 2007 returned to Kingston but this year experienced over a $5000 deficit.

Cyclons 2008 and 2009 returned to St. Catharines boasting a ‘Back to Brock’ slogan.

Cyclons 2010 and 2011 were held in Waterloo.

Cyclons 2012 and 2013 tried a new venue, Trent University, Peterborough.

Cyclons 2014 and 2015 ventured further away and based its operations at the University of Ottawa.

Cyclons 2016 and 2017 tried Queen’s University in Kingston again in part to help mark both Canada’s 150th and Cyclon’s 30th anniversary.

Cyclon 2018 retuned west to Waterloo, this time trying a new venue, the student residences of Wilfred Laurie University.