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Bike race receives rough ride

By ROB KELLY
A Hamilton bicycle race organizer had an uphill climb to convince municipal councillors his event was worth the aggravation this year.

Monday night Tim Farrar appeared before a skeptical general committee and outlined plans for a high-profile, heavily sponsored, star-studded (at least in the bike world) event he hopes will come to the town August 15.

The Niagara Classic bicycle race has run through Milton for the past two years. But municipal officials have become annoyed with what they see as the dangers and disadvantages associated with bike races. Also, the sport has come under intense criticism in the area following an outcry by Lowville residents after a recent race.

Approximately 600 racers converged on the tiny rural village for that event, and many of them choked the area throughout the day, according to Mr. Farrar. Area residents complained of unacceptable behaviour by cyclists and spectators. That behaviour was reported to include people relieving themselves publicly.

As well, Milton councillors were concerned about the safety aspects of the race, with 100 cyclists barreling along rural roads alongside cars.

Eventually councillors opted to grudgingly support the race, which has received the backing of Milton's Downtown Business Improvement Area group. But they didn't make it easy for Mr. Farrar.

Calling himself "one of the biggest supporters" of the race in the past, Mayor Gord Krantz said last year there were "some real problems." Those included devoting "eight to 10" municipal workers to race duties, Mr. Krantz said, in effect having taxpayers subsidize the event.

"It becomes costly and I want to make sure that does not happen again."

Councillor Brian Penman said in such races "things like stop signs are frequently ignored. This is not Europe, where you set aside whole countries for racers to plow through."

The councillor cited the "increasingly hostile" position of such municipalities as Burlington toward racing and added, "I'm no prude, but some of the things that have been reported in the last while are socially not acceptable. I have nothing against the race, but I do have something against a lack of etiquette."

Mr. Penman said cyclists often act "as if they own the road," creating a situation "of an accident waiting to happen."

"I want some assurance we're on top of these things."

Mr. Farrar said he would be "the first to acknowledge the organizational shortcomings" in the past, but said they were due to "financial shortcomings" and now race officials are "on a surer footing" with new sponsors.

There are a number "of fairly significant differences" between the much-criticized Lowville event and his proposal, Mr. Farrar said. One is the size. He estimated 650 racers took part in the Lowville event. The Niagara Classic involves only 100 racers, divided into five-man teams.

Another major difference is "the

calibre of the competition." While the 650 cyclists in the Lowville event were largely locally based, his race involves 20 five-man teams that form some of the top-echelon world competitors, Mr. Farrar said.

The race co-ordinator also indicated there will be a higher police presence with his event, and more portable toilets, if necessary.

In addition, race organizers have posted a \$1,000 performance bond with the town.

Councillor Bill Johnson said Mr. Farrar "would be well advised to tell all your participants that if their conduct is not exemplary this will be the last race in Milton."

"I want to see this thing as a first-class race," councillor Brad Clements told Mr. Farrar. "Otherwise we're going to cancel it. The onus is on you to ensure it is a first-class race."

Council instructed Mr. Farrar to appear in early August with a report concerning final preparations and race precautions, including approval from the Halton regional police.

Mr. Farrar still must obtain permission from the city of Burlington and Halton Region for the event.

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Inmates get rave reviews for recycling

While government institutions may be expected to lead the way in recycling, one could perhaps be excused for thinking such an idea would only receive a lukewarm reception from prison inmates. In Milton, however, that is apparently not the case.

Following a recent tour of Maplehurst Correctional Centre, Halton North MPP Walt said, "it is obvious that Maplehurst is an example of what government institutions can do to promote proper waste management. The staff and inmates at the centre can take great pride in the success of their efforts."

Maplehurst officials have completed stage one of their recycling plan, which involves both staff and inmates. The facility has its own "blue boxes" for recycling in each common area, and special containers for pop tins have been provided by Alcan in the visiting area.

Prison superintendent Gary Comerford said the commitment to less waste also extends to bulk buying of supplies. "Bulk buying makes good sense. If you buy large packages you not only have economic benefits, but you have less waste in the form of empty containers."

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Champion appointments

 Rob Kelly Publisher of The Champion, Ian Oliver is pleased to announce the promotion of Rob Kelly to the position of News Editor. Rob brings to the position the talent and commitment he has shown in the past in his news and sports reporting.	 Stephen Uhraney Ian Oliver, publisher of The Champion is pleased to announce Stephen Uhraney's appointment to the position of photographer. Stephen has worked for the <i>Etobicoke Guardian</i> and will work with photographer John Warren.	 Karen Smith Publisher of The Champion, Ian Oliver is pleased to announce the appointment of Karen Smith to the position of reporter. Karen was previously employed by Metroland's <i>Mississauga News</i> and <i>Etobicoke Guardian</i> newspapers.
 Annemarie Mojsilovich Ian Oliver, publisher of The Champion is pleased to announce the appointment of Annemarie Mojsilovich to the position of <i>Television Times</i> sales representative. Annemarie is a former student and employee of Sheridan College.	 Charles Parchem Publisher of The Champion, Ian Oliver is pleased to announce the appointment of Charles Parchem to the position of <i>Champion Country</i> sales representative. Charles is a long-time Campbellville resident and is selling advertising that will appeal to our rural readers.	 Linda Norton Ian Oliver, publisher of The Champion is pleased to announce the appointment of Linda Norton to the position of clerical assistant. Linda, a resident of Milton, will enhance the level of service provided to our customers.