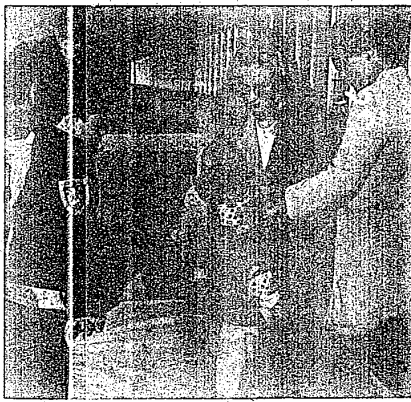
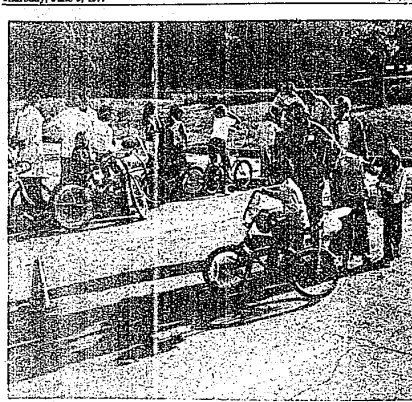


At age 4, Chris Petrak was probably the youngest contestant in the bike rodeo. Danny Grafmiller, 8, takes a shortcut over the school's bike rack in the background.



Third-grader Dan Quick waits for his ice cream sundae prepared by Alameda PTA mothers Carlean Kannisto and Vicki Grafmiller.



Bike rodeo entrants pursue their chalk-lined course while father judges gauge the results.

Safety stressed

Kids take to bike rodeo

By LYNN ORR

How can you have a school rodeo minus horses?

Simple, said the Alameda Elementary School Parent-Teacher Association—put the kids on bikes.

Promoting safety on bicycles, especially with the summer bike roving months nearing, was the intent of Alameda's Bike Rodeo last week, sponsored by the school's PTA.

And more than 100 kids and parents turned out for the event, spawning the only unforeseen problem—space.

"We learned one thing for next year," says PTA Health and Safety Chairperson Jan Johnson. "We need more room."

Parent judges scored the entrants for circling and changing directions; straight line control; weaving and maneuvering to avoid obstacles, and short radius turning.

Alameda's parking lot was turned into a chalk-covered arena, where students had to have their bikes checked out by Farmington Hills police officers Sgt. Richard Krueger and Ptl. Peter Larson of the traffic division.

The officers checked for reflectors on front and back of bikes; oiled chains and pedals; brake speed, and bike registration.

From there, the students entered the events of their choosing, while some chose to stray over to the ice cream social area where PTA mothers supplied Baskin-Robbins ice cream sundaes for 50 cents a two-scoop.

Five parent judges had the difficult task of selecting the best decorated bike, judged on original materials, creativity, and theme. Sarah Waters, 7, carried off the top prize, after much pondering by the parents.

Patterned after the Jaycee rodeo, the Alameda PTA wanted a chance to get kids and parents together and remind children of bike safety tips they should follow in the months ahead, says Mrs. Johnson.

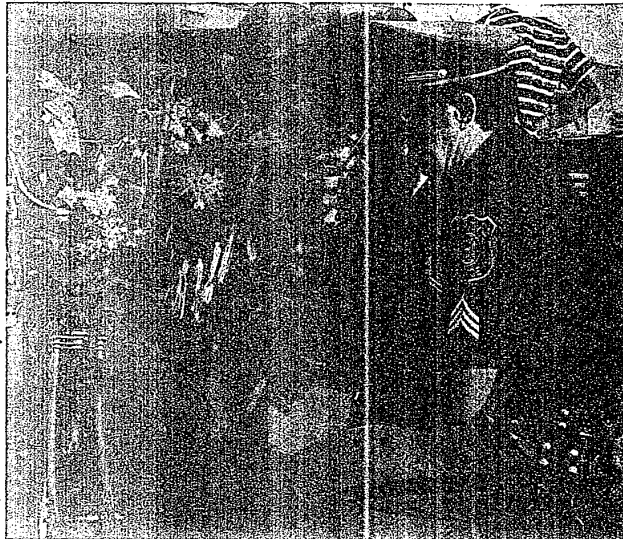
And with a minimum of scrapes and a multitude of smiling faces, both goals were accomplished, most parents agreed.



Alameda Elementary School students (left) line up for the short radius turning event.



Sarah Waters, 7, and "Spot" took the Blue Ribbon for bike decoration at Alameda's Bike Rodeo. (Staff photos by Lynn Orr)



Christine Carnacchi, 6, has her flower-bedecked two wheeler checked out by Sgt. Richard Krueger of Farmington Hills Police Department.

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