



Special Interest Articles:

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- Thursday Evening TT reprise
- Adventures in Europe
- Quiz and curry

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Chairman's view from the saddle



Well what a wonderful summer for cycling it has been!

Excepting August which was definitely a bit variable, it has been mainly warm and sunny though, with perhaps stronger winds than usual, but that's OK if they are behind you!

The Sunday rides remain the core weekly event for many of our members, with a good turnout most weeks. We have benefitted from the addition of a third lead group, riding at a slightly slower pace than the old medium pace group and often over a slightly shorter distance. This has been termed 'easier pace' and I very much hope will become a permanent feature aimed at broadening our appeal and making the joining of our rides a far less daunting prospect for the less experienced or less fit cyclists.

We are however always

desperately short of volunteers to lead any of the ride groups so please do put your name forward to Andy Watson for a few dates when the next rides list comes up. It is not a difficult task and certainly gives you a better understanding of how important group discipline is if we are to continue to have successful group rides.

The TT season has run its course, Rick and Jack have again shown what strong riders they are vying for the lead in the gross time standings, and Steve Newton, in his debut season, has topped the handicap table. Many congratulations to him. Ollie has shown great improvement and pace this year.

We are indebted to our timekeepers and pushers off, but again we are desperately short of volunteers for this task, so much so that we had to cancel one 25 mile TT and very nearly had to cancel a whole evening earlier in the season, only saved by a volunteer from Farnham. It would not be an exaggeration to say that the situation is critical and that if more volunteers do not come forward we will lose this important part of the clubs competition and significant income to the

club.

Just come along next season to the start at the Bentley bypass layby and you will be shown the ropes. Alternatively look out for some Timekeeping fun during our winter club night programme.

The most recent big event involving 10 club members was The London Prudential Surrey Hills Classic 100. What a fantastic day, with many thanks to Chris Boxall for organizing the two Alton teams (one of 4 men and one of 2 men and 2 women). Congratulations to Chris Boxall, Oliver Bishop, and Hugo Parrot from team A and Mike Hayward, Caroline Brodie, Paul Jones and Fay Bostock from team B all of whom finished in excellent times. Also to John Heath and Guy Henshaw, who entered and finished as individuals.

Commiserations to John Dunn who was ill on the day and not able to ride.....hopefully next year, John?

I would recommend this ride to anyone who has not yet done it; it really is the London Marathon on wheels with superb organization and crowds cheering you on all the way round.

Chairman's view from the saddle - Continued



Barbecue night: Shaun demonstrates his flippin' skills and Mike shows he can "meat" the challenge!



Barbecue night: Clean plates, but still a beer or two to enjoy!



Club 10 mile time trial team record breakers – Jack, Rick and Ollie



Steve Newton (slimmer version now available) has enjoyed a remarkable debut TT season.

Our most recent social event was the club BBQ, a very successful and enjoyable evening, many thanks to Shaun for doing the brunt of the organizing and to Jim for all the publicity, as well as all the little elves who, unbidden, helped to magic away all the dirty plates and cutlery at the end.

On a personal note John Heath and I continue with our RTYR quest with nine of twelve 200k rides done for the calendar year. It has kept us both fit, but amongst other things it has meant a lamentable attendance rate for the Sunday rides on my part. I have also ridden from Hook of Holland to Vienna and Side to Side (St

Dauids Wales to Lowestoft). Vienna report later in this newsletter and others to follow.

So it only remains for me to wish you all many more happy miles for what summer remains, hoping that Autumn does come around too quickly.

Mike Hayward

Weekly Time Trials series end of season report

At time of publishing we have just drawn a close on the weekly Thursday evening time trial event series. We've had a largely fine weather season, with really only one week of blustery wind and rain, way back in May. Otherwise the sunshine has been frequently seen. Westerly winds have prevailed, making the run down to the Holybourne roundabout the challenge it is, but some weeks it hasn't felt like any help was present on the return leg. Steve Newton is top of the handicap table and he has demonstrated the power of consistency and improvement over the whole season. He started out back at the beginning of May riding a short 29, but succeeded in improving on that many times, closing off on the last ride of the series with a 23:44. Rick has repeated the same form improvement which he demonstrated last year, recording his best times in July and August, and he, too, was delighted to record a PB for the course (20:23) on the last ride of the series, alongside Steve, Jack Freeman (20:51), Charlie Williams (25:15), and Ollie Suatt (25:02). Jack's 20:51 was his first sub 21 minute ride, and it broke his own junior club record for 10 miles. And that time, combined with Rick's 20:23 and Ollie Williams' 22:08 for the night, broke the club 10 mile team time trial record for the third time this season, with the mark now standing at 1:03:22. Ollie's 21:54 the previous week, broke him through the 22 minute mark for the first time. Rick has also succeeded in breaking other club records away from the H10/8 course – see article on page 10.

We have so far had a total of 13 different Alton CC/Owens Cycles riders competing over the 17 week season, including of course the ever present Steve N, who despite regularly visits back up to his native North East, hasn't missed a single Thursday. We have also been blessed with great support from local visiting clubs, with frequent representation from Farnham Road Club, Farnham Tri, VC Meudon, Charlotteville, Andover Wheelers, a3crg, Hoops Velo, VC Venta, Handsling Racing and Antelope.

From further afield, we've had rides in jerseys representing Port Sunlight Wheelers on the Wirral, Saracen RC from the Midlands and a number of London clubs. We've had a number of visiting riders from Fareham Wheelers, and so it proved that one such rider James Copeland, and his travelling partner on the evening, Gary Chambers, riding for Royal Navy/Royal Marines, recorded two of the fastest times we've witnessed on the H10/8 course in many a year. On August 20th, James crossed the line with a 19.56, and Gary proceeded to better him with a 19:54. They seemed to enjoy the visit, so hopefully we'll see them back next year!

Track Update from Mike (mikehayward64@hotmail.com)

I am very keen to restart Track cycling in ACC and I know this is a feeling shared by a number of our members, especially our juniors and younger members. I have been able to secure 3 dates at Calshot track for this coming winter season, and have booked a coach for each of these sessions.

The dates are:

**Saturday 19th December
2015 11.00-14.00**

**Saturday 30th January
2016 09.00-12.00**

**Sunday 14th February
2016 14.00-17.00**

Booking the track is extremely difficult due to the massive increase in popularity of track cycling so we are lucky to get

these dates. I have also been able to secure the coaching services of Chester Hill, head of Southern coaching who works with both British Cycling and UCI, for the December session, and Harry Jackson (ex double Olympic track cyclist who we all know well!) for the other 2 sessions.

The cost of the track is £155 per 3 hour session and the coaches usually charge at least £50 making a total cost of £205. The track can accommodate a maximum of 16 riders, and if we get that number the cost will be **just £12.80 per rider** plus cost of bike hire.

Payment will be strictly in advance for all the sessions and will need to be made to me as I have to pay the track in

full at least 4 weeks ahead of the booked date.

I plan that the first session will be skills and training for the full 3 hours. The second and third sessions will be divided into skills and fitness for an hour and a half and then 2 elements of the club competition in the latter half of each session. To be eligible for the competition you must be a member of ACC and to attend all three of the track sessions.

Please email me on mikehayward64@hotmail.com in order to gain one of the 16 available places. It should be lots of fun and is also great for building skills, confidence and fitness.

Mike Hayward



***“Fancy a crack
at track
cycling? Now’s
your chance!”***

How I saved the planet – or why you should never be without your Morgan Blue, by John Dunn.....



***“Every home should
have one of
these????”***

I had seen these in the tools section of Chain Reaction's website but never really understood why I would want one.

Then I was watching 'Slaying the Badger' - the story of how Greg LeMond beat Bernard Hinault in the 1986 Tour de France, and suddenly I noticed one!

During the documentary, LeMond was interviewed in his garage while re-building an old bike... and you

guessed it - he was using a chain keeper!

Hoping to emulate his achievements on the next club ride, I rushed out and bought one. Best £4 I ever spent!

After a ride, just take off the rear wheel, screw on the chain keeper - so that the chain has somewhere to go - and then you can clean between the chain stays, you can spin the pedals and lube away the chain to

your heart's desire! Also if you need to transport the bike without wheels, this little gizmo will hold the chain securely in place.

I expect everyone else in the club is actually already using one, and is keeping what they think is a closely secret? Well, not any more, ha! ha!

Other brands are reported to be also available.

London to Holyhead? You just head up the M40, **don't you? B**ut in 1963, by bike, in the most prestigious one-day event in the UK road racing calendar – modest Alan Jacob tells another story



The alarm clock is ringing, and it's still dark outside, so why am I being awakened at the unearthly hour of 3.00 a.m.? As I come to my senses I remember it is the annual Corona Soft Drinks sponsored 267 mile London to Holyhead road race with a 5.00 a.m. start from Marble Arch. Those two hours will be needed to grab some breakfast and get prepared for the day's action.

In the early 1960's there was not sufficient sponsorship to support professional cycling in the UK. However, we did have a strong group of 'independent' (semi-professional) riders with a full season of events.

The London to Holyhead was, without doubt, the most prestigious one day event on the calendar, and the only race of the year that our sponsors would pay double the normal win bonus. Our Condor/Mackeson team had six sponsors who would normally pay a win bonus of £3. With a double bonus from each sponsor and a first prize of £100 it would be possible to pick up £136 for one day's work! Not much by today's standards, but at that time I was earning a fairly average wage of £24 per week, so the carrot

was a prize fund of more than a month's money in one day!

With a ten minute late start and a long neutralized section, the early stages of the race were well behind schedule. With no riders allowed to hide in the bunch and everyone taking their turn at through-and-off, together with a helpful wind, the first 100 miles were covered in a comfortable 4 hours and 24 minutes.

The first real attack of the race occurred at around 146 miles when three of The Viking Cycles team, Stan Brittain, John Geddes, and Albert Hitchin grabbed a small lead. There was no way the other teams in the race would allow this break to succeed, and by the time we reached Shrewsbury they were back in the peloton. The next rider to try his luck was one of the few amateurs in the race, Kevin Fairhead, of Camberley & Farnborough, who soon built a two minute lead which made him the first rider into Wales. But again the bunch reacted and he was caught in time for Bernard Burns of Viking Cycles, to win the prime at Chirk.

Fairhead's break and the subsequent chase was the beginning of the end for some riders, who were feeling the pace and distance. The last official feed was at Carrig-y-Druidion (207 miles), and at that point Dennis Tarr, 1962 winner, and Condor team mates Willoughby and Willison, together with the Ryall Raxar and Hearneville teams, had all retired. At around this point Doug Collins, riding a small wheeled Moulton bike broke spokes in his rear wheel and crashed out of the race.

With 60 miles still to race and no team mates to call on for help, I had to stay near the front to be alive to the race situation, but I did not want to get involved in energy sapping breaks that were not going to succeed.

A group containing John Geddes, Bill

Bradley, Stan Britain, John Perks, Bernard Burns and Grieves built a lead of one and half minutes, but with three Viking riders in the break and the other three riders without the support of team mates and unlikely to be giving it 100%, it was doubtful if they would stay away.

However, on a long descent Billy Holmes, Falcon Cycles, and Dennis Hamilton, Woodrup Ovaltine, jumped away from the dwindling peloton and, travelling at a recorded 55mph, soon caught the leaders. With two Falcon and three Viking riders in the lead group, I knew that it was time to get moving.

With help from two amateurs, Fairhead and Newell, Rugby R.C.C., we gradually reduced the time gap, and on arrival on Angelsey we were all together again. On the climb to Gwalchmai Billy Holmes made one last attempt at a solo break, but on reaching the village (254 miles), that attack had been cancelled out. I knew that my best chance of winning was to stay near the front and mark any attempted breaks, and then rely on my track experience to get into position for the final sprint.

Things worked out well for me as I avoided the crash when John Geddes broke a crank just prior to the sprint, and with good legs I had a length in hand over Dave Bedwell at the line!

Dave spoke to me at the finish and told me that he had decided to follow my wheel as I was the only "sprinter" in the leading group who did not have any team support. His tactic worked as he picked up the £50 second place prize.

Despite the late start and all those Welsh hills the average speed for the race was around 23mph. This meant we finished well ahead of schedule and the The Mayor of Holyhead who was supposed to present the prizes missed the race completely!



Cycling Shorts

Spotted in the Daily Telegraph letters section:

Froome vs France. Sir, I have just finished reading a very entertaining book by Stephen Clarke entitled " 1000 Years of Annoying the French ". If this work is reprinted, it surely should be updated with a chapter on Chris Froome's wonderful cycling achievements. Ian Peacock, Trowbridge, Wiltshire.

Best and the worst! Charles Bailey waxes lyrical about cycling kit!!

Favourite piece of kit: My bar bag for touring. (Big sigh) - Having it on the bike means **I am on holiday**. That's enough!

But the bit that I could not do without: Lumicycle halogen lighting. Very important for Friday night rides. It's good, it has lasted 12 years, and, what's more, you can get spares!

But the thing that I wish that I had never bought!!!! Topeak Multi-tool. If I have to use it, it means something has gone wrong on the road. It's nearly impossible to get the tightness of the hinge bolts right, and bits either flop into or out of place, or refuse to open up for use at all! Finally, although it has every tool you might need, none of them are ever quite right for the job. And it rattles in the saddle bag. Grrrrrrhhhhh!

Steve Newton is turning southern?

Yours truly (ed and publicity sec) received a very nice email from our man from the north east, saying as how he was much chuffed by the friendliness of us southern folk in the Alton Cycling Club, and he wished it to be known that he is very appreciative of the welcome he has had from club members. So there you have it! Message communicated, and Steve, we're very pleased to have you down here, even if we can't understand a wee canny word you are saying!

Never a truer word.....

"The bicycle is just as good company as most husbands and, when it gets old and shabby, a woman can dispose of it and get a new one without shocking the entire community" - Ann Strong, Journalist, 1895.

"I thought of that while riding my bicycle" - Albert Einstein on his Theory of Relativity.

"You never have the wind with you - either it is against you or you're having a good day" - Daniel Behrman, Author.

"Nothing compares to the simple pleasure of a bike ride" - President John F. Kennedy

When I see an adult on a bicycle, I do not despair for the future of the human race. ~H.G. Wells

The bicycle is the perfect transducer to match man's metabolic energy to the impedance of locomotion. Equipped with this tool, man outstrips the efficiency of not only all machines but all other animals as well. ~Ivan Illich, Energy and Equity, 1974

Did you hear about the vampire bicycle that went round biting people's arms off? It was a vicious cycle.

I went on a long bicycle ride yesterday. Farcical....

Miles Thomas reports on his challenge to climb **one of cycling's greatest icons** – Mont Ventoux - three times in a day!!!!

Three of us went to Provence, although only two of us were determined to do "the triple". We had warmed up the day before with a 107 km route around the Gorge de la Nesque, although it quickly became clear that warming up was not necessary in the 37 degree heat!

For the Ventoux climb we set out at 08:30 a.m. from Bedoin for the first ascent, this one generally being regarded as the toughest due to the long punishing sections of steep gradient. It was as tough as described but the popping out of the tree line for the first time and seeing the summit was a great experience. The first ascent took just over 2 hours, quickly followed by a descent to Malaucene with a peak of 88kph!

After a food break we took on the ascent from Malaucene, mainly gruelling because of the midday heat and the sparse shade offered at the road side. it took us around 2hrs 25mins.

To be fair I was ready to pack it in at this point but peer pressure was sufficient to make me take the descent to Sault and make my mind up then. The final ascent from Sault is longer but with a more gentle gradient so we ploughed on and finished the final climb in a total of 7 hrs 40mins (moving time). Certainly breaking no records but not bad considering the crippling heat!

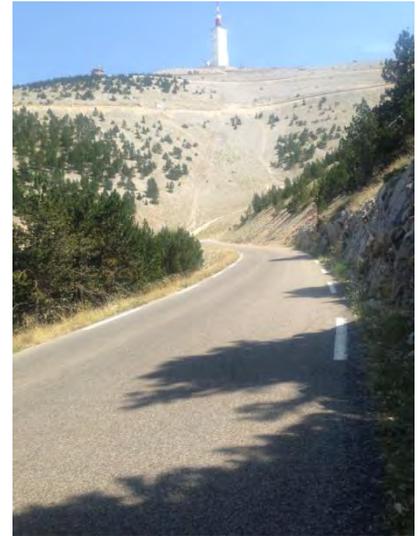
The final descent back to Bedoin was amazing, as the road just gently weaves left and right and you can keep

your speed right up for massive sections, and still take some of the corners at 60kph!

The total challenge covered 132km.

I would certainly recommend the challenge to anyone who likes extreme climbing and descending, and pretty french villages with lovely patisseries. The scenery around Provence is fabulous and the roads are perfect for cycling.

P.S. I neglected to mention the most important stat - 15,049 feet of climb!



*...popping out of the tree line...,
...and seeing the summit...*



Not sure this was such a good idea...

.....I neglected to mention the most important stat - 15,049 feet of climb!



3 ascents, 7 hours 40 minutes moving time, and 15,049 feet of climb!

Up the Rhine, Down the Danube.

Charles Bailey explains how to ride to Vienna in 18 easy stages.

1. Take the train from Alton to Manningtree, via Waterloo and Stratford. (To get from Waterloo to Stratford, ride your bike through the East End on some of the filthiest cycle tracks imagineable.) From Manningtree, cycle to Harwich and, to kill time before the ferry leaves for Holland, look for a good pub: there isn't one.
2. On the ferry, spoil yourself with a three course dinner, cabin accommodation and a full English breakfast the following morning, as otherwise you will find that the Hook of Holland is cold and closed when the ferry docks at 6.00am.



3. Don't worry about a map. The EU has announced that the magnificent Rhine has been gilded yet further with the launch of a cycle highway along its entire length through all seven countries. Regular and uniform signage now means that a map would be a waste of weight for the serious touring cyclist.
4. You will not discover any signage for the first three days; you will have to ask people the way. A pretty girl on a fancy vintage 7-speed may lead you

right to the middle of Rotterdam. After a couple of days, you will have got the hang of the Dutch waypoint system of cycle routes; unfortunately, by this time you should already be in Germany.

5. You can take a cycle ferry across the Rhine every few kms along its course. The German ferrymen are very helpful with directions, always putting you on the wrong track. It would be worth making the effort to avoid the Bayer petrochemical plant if this were possible, but it seems it isn't and once you're in it, it takes a very long time to get out.
6. If after three days in Germany you feel that life would be easier with a map, go to a railway station. German bike shops don't sell cycling maps, but the kiosks at railway stations do. Also go to a garage and get a road atlas, just to be on the safe side.
7. When you arrive at your German hotel in the evening, expect to be told that tonight is the one night of the week on which its restaurant isn't open. If your German is good, you may understand the directions on how to get to the nearest place to eat.
8. The Black Forest is beautiful. The Danube is fascinating. The Rhine is neither.

9. It is 100kms from the Rhine to the Danube, a journey on which the sense of relief at leaving the Rhine is instantaneous and palpable.



Hooray, no more Rhine!!!

10. Germans do not build switchback roads for long ascents or believe that trees should be allowed to cast a shadow on or near any tarmac. This is because they all have powerful air-conditioned cars that can zoom straight up any climb, and like other people to get a good view of them as they do it.
11. It gets very hot in the centre of Europe, even in early June and especially when you have full panniers, 1,000 m of vertical gain to get through in 15 kms and a full stream of powerful air-conditioned cars zooming past you.

12. The Danube cycle path is a fully developed route, well signed and with plenty of places to stay, visit or stop for coffee and cake. This means it is very well patronised by large parties of elderly folk of all shapes and sizes, and all on ebikes. These ebikes are much faster than anything an Englishman would recognize, which is very annoying if you are riding a fancy tourer and think you are fit. Worse than that, the ebikers always get the best tables in the restaurants.

13. The source of the Danube is not where this river starts. It is a spring surrounded by a celebration of baroque stone, set in the garden of the Furstenburg's castle in Donaueschingen, from where it flows along a drain across their lawn and into another river. This river instantly becomes the Danube and whatever else joins it is a tributary, even if it is bigger. While we were there, this unmissable Furstenburg attraction was sadly closed for repairs.



14. All of the water in the Danube does not always flow East to the Black Sea. There are sink holes about 30kms from the start which drain some of the flow into aquifers which then empty into Lake Constantine from where they become part of the Rhine and flow out into

the North Sea. Scientists with dyes have proved this.

15. The Danube is not blue, except at Blauentorp, the spring source of a tributary that joins the Danube at Ulm. Fortunately, Blauentorp was open when we got there, otherwise we would have made an unnecessary 40km diversion to see this wonder.



Blauentorp is blue!

16. There are as many mosquitoes around the Danube as there are midges in Scotland. Don't stand around trying to disprove this statement. You will not get away from them on a bike, as they fly straight down your throat and make you cough like you smoke 40 Woodbine a day. Even so, it is not a good idea to put Jungle Formula on your tonsils. A trip on a riverboat is the best way to dodge the mozzies. The better boats have waitress service for drinks in your seat so you can wash your tonsils as you cruise.

17. It is acceptable to take your bike into a car wash in Germany. No one will laugh.



Which wash "cycle" to choose?

18. There is a concentration camp at Maulhausen. This is a shocking place in the same way that the Airborne Museum in Arnhem is inspiring. Both are essential visits along the way.



Last day.....

More than 18 steps are needed. There are so many striking things to see or experience. It was a very worthwhile journey, and I'd do it again. Mike Hayward, Charles Bailey and Jeremy Hughes rode 2000kms over eighteen days to the Freud Museum in Vienna. They raised £5,200 for Alton Counselling Service's "Changing Gear" project. Changing Gear is a project to provide counselling to 16-18 year olds living in and around Alton.

John Dunn gives us his reflections on a combined (i) off-road training camp (ii) "The Island" danger survival course (iii) on-road training camp (iv) film set immersion experience (v) downhill training camp (vi) heat acclimatization programme, and family holiday!



July was family holiday time and mine spent a week in Madeira. We were taking advantage of a cheap deal which involved submitting to a time share sales pitch on the last day.

As Prudential RideLondon 100 was around the corner, I thought it would be a good idea to sign up for a mountain bike adventure to get in some last minute training, so Anthony and I packed up some gear, including knee pads and Livestrong jerseys, confident in our abilities, having recently survived a recent trip to the Afan trail centre in Wales. We had stayed in the Afan Lodge - often frequented by Dermott O'Leary of X-Factor fame.

Our Madeira ride was on the first day of the holiday and Ant and I were picked up from the hotel and whisked off to the Adventure hub where canoeists, climbers and canyoneers were all getting kitted out in great anticipation. This is where we met the others in our group: one other mountain biker from Birmingham and six roadies from Germany. The roadies did not want to do the trails - but they were interested in doing some serious climbing... so a compromise was reached where we would only drive part way up the mountain. We would then all ascend on the road for 500m at which point the Germans would continue to the top and we would start descending on the trails - we would then all RV for lunch and swap stories.

This was when I realised that my hired Cannondale 120 was too small and the front brake needed to be pulled almost all the way to the grip to have any effect. The tyres were also pumped up very

hard, to avoid pinch flats; I realized this at end of the ride! The trails seemed easier than Afan but I struggled with the bike - going over the bars once and falling backwards, having failed to anticipate a gear change and realising too late that my legs weren't made of iron.

Ant crashed over a berm into some rocks - but somehow emerged unscathed.

Moving productively down the trail, we noticed a 'drone' hovering just over our heads. We stopped and were introduced to 'Maddog' and his film crew who were making a downhill video. We didn't actually get to see Maddog in action as none of us could be bothered to go back up the mountain but the drone was impressive; it must have been as big as a bike with 8 propellers and it made a unearthly hum.

Anyway, we met our German friends for lunch. They had enjoyed their climb but one of their number was covered in blood having gone over his bars and taken the skin off his shoulder. Apparently, he had applied his powerful front 180mm disc brake without any real understanding of the effect it would have on his bike or his 70kg body.

Fortunately, our leader had a box of plasters, largely depleted but it did contain a small round corn plaster that was optimistically applied to what remained of the shoulder.

Well that was the 'dangerous' part of the ride completed, now all we had to do was descend using path alongside the Lavada irrigation /drainage system that criss-crosses the island.

At a constant 1% downhill with the occasional minor climb, we were really steaming; however, the Lavada's had their own dangers.

The obvious one was sliding into the concrete drainage channel following a misjudged corner, worse was when the path ran alongside a sheer 20m drop, even worse was when part of the path had collapsed leaving no more than 3 inches of rideable path with no dismount option and the possibility that one of us could cause the rest of the path to collapse.

However, the riskiest part of all was walking the bikes along the wall of a road tunnel with no barrier and a shear drop into the cars below - the metal cleats on concrete did not inspire confidence.

Finally, we turned into some normal roads and descended from International's Football Stadium (where Ronaldo used to play) before finally returning to the Adventure hub seven hours later.

Anyway, the heat and the effort was great preparation for RideLondon and I'm pleased to report that the whole party made it safely.

Finally, some good and bad news - the good news was that my wife and I resisted the sales pressure and didn't commit to the time share; the bad news is that I developed Shingles and had to withdraw from the RideLondon.

Apologies to my team mates!

John D.

Splines and Sprockets – what else is going on in our cycling world.....

Tricky Ricky

Not only has Rick been successful in teaming up with Jack and Ollie, and successively beating (3 times this season) the club team 10 mile time trial record previously held by Phil Bowley, Stuart Ritchie and Paul Jones, he has also been breaking some individual club records on his exploits away from the A31 course.



On the 9th August, Rick took part in the Veterans Time Trial Association's National 50 mile championships, which took place locally on the A3. He recorded a personal best 1:45:07, and smashed Alton CC's long standing club record of 1:50:30 (held by Andy Walters) into the bargain! This was good enough to be amongst the top 5 fastest recorded times of the day in the Nationals, and on standard (age adjusted measurement), Rick also featured in the top ten listing.

On Sunday 16 August, he added to his Palmares by breaking the Club 30 mile time trial club record of 1:09:02, previously held by Ian Cargill, whilst competing in the NEC-Veterans Time Trial Association National Championships 30 mile event on the Liss H30/1 course.

Rick was fourth fastest veteran on the day with a 1:06:24 for the distance, and finished 7th in the Championships on age adjusted time

You never know who you'll meet on Alton's regular Thursday TT....

"I'll take that!" exclaimed Alan Murchison (Thursday 16 July) when he checked his time on the club's regular evening 10 mile time trial event, as the only one out of 13 entrants to record a time inside 21 minutes, and thus carried off the best time of the evening as a result. It was the second time this season that Alton's weekly event had been graced by Michelin starred chef Alan (you may well remember him from the BBC's "Great British Menu" series back in 2012), but Alan is also a multiple World and European AG Duathlon champion. It was, however, a wet and windy evening back in May when, racing for Banjo Raceware, he turned out previously on the A31 course, and found himself alongside just 3 other riders, Jack Freeman, Steve Newton and lady entry Vicky Gill from Drag 2 Zero racing team.

For two or three weeks in late July, we had an extra visiting spectator for our Thursday evening events, and yours truly (ed) engaged to chat with the lady who was evidently following the exploits of some other visiting rider in our series. "I don't do time trials" she said, "but I do race criteriums". As she declared herself to be a local (from Fleet), I asked her if she had taken part in the recently held Guildford Town Centre races, and she admitted to have taken part in the Elite Women's Race. "How did you get on?" I asked, whereupon she modestly replied that although she had hoped to do well if she had got into the top ten, it being an international entry field, but she had in fact come 3rd! The next time she came along, I asked her what was coming up in her racing season, and she said she was entered for the Prudential RideLondon Elite Women's Closed Circuit Grand Prix event on Saturday 1st August. This event was covered live on BBC, and so I watched it with interest to see her not only attacking in an extended solo breakaway in the mid part of the race, but also almost staying away for a stab at a podium place alongside Dani King and Lucy Martin, in the second to last lap before the awful crash which dramatically reshaped the order of things, and allowed Barbara Guarischi of Velocio Sports to contest and win the final bunch sprint.

Splines and Sprockets - continued

Mystery spectator continued.....

Lucy Chittenden was our mystery visiting spectator, and she was the leading rider in that race for the Bonito Squadra Corso team, finally finishing in 30th place, just 3 places behind Dani King. I don't know if there was a most aggressive rider award, but she would have stood a good chance of winning it, and she will be a great prospect to watch out for in the coming seasons.

Many Congratulations are due to Jack!

Amongst Jack's many progressions this year, one achievement which has gone largely unnoticed is that Jack Freeman now has his Cat. 2 racing licence, and so we can expect to hear lots more in the coming months about his racing exploits as he moves up the seniority tables. We'll hope to give you a summary of his experiences in later newsletter editions.

Rumours abound.....

.....As to when we are going to see Alan J back out on a Sunday morning, but hopefully it won't be too long now. We are all delighted that he is recovering well from his op., and I am sure I can speak for everyone in saying how pleased I will be (gritted teeth) again to hear the mechanical whirr of his sturdy electropede as he sails past me (again and again) on the hills!

Dates for your diary.....

1. How many teeth in total on a standard 11-28 Ultegra 6800 11 speed cassette?
2. Marco Pantani was widely considered as one of the best climbers of his era, but what was his mother's maiden name?
3. Who came third in the women's UCI World Championship UCI Downhill event in Hafjell, Norway?
4. In the 1935 Tour de France, who was the stage winner of the 12th Stage from Cannes to Marseille, and which other stage did this rider win?
5. In what year was the Sturmey-Archer Type V 3-speed hub introduced?

You will be extremely pleased to know that none of these questions, or anything quite as fiendish as them, will be featuring in our upcoming Quiz and Curry night, to be held on **Monday, December the 7th, at the Rugby Club**. I am sure some of you will try to find the answers to some of these questions, and tell me (ed) the answers before that date, and if you do, I might consider a bonus prize, but then again, I might not.....

See if you fare better with this kind of question?

Which current famous British rider (with his own team) might be carrying a "rigidly sewn bag?"

Yes, there you are, not so difficult after all, and much more representative of the questions which will be set for 7th December. You'll need a team of players (max. 6) with a mixture of a little bit of cycling knowledge and plenty of general knowledge, so please invite friends and family, to kick off the festive season with a bit of fun. Entry price (TBA) will be a fiver, or probably less, per person, including the meal (still working out the catering and prizes etc.).

And, lastly, Monday 16th November is AGM night, at the Rugby Club – put it in your diary!!!!!!

Newsletter produced and edited by Jim Woods, so all errors and omissions are his fault! Apologies in advance.....