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Chester & North Wales CTC Caer a Gogledd Cymru

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2014 sees *'the Link'* published in the Spring and is obtained by subscription from the Editor.

As part of the Club's 75th Anniversary a special commemorative edition of 'The Chain' – the history of CNW CTC will be sent to all subscribers.

Renewal for *'the Link'* will be due beginning September 2014 and will then ensure 4 copies for the 2014/2015 year.

Front Cover Photograph

It's July 2013 on the road between Capmany, Spain and heading up and over the Pyrenees towards Banyuls-sur-Mer, France



If you want a club magazine as 'sharp' as Bruce's new haircut*

Then read on ...

If it's technical tips to make your life easier then 'tune in' to pages 7 & 15 to review 'Tech Tips'

Talking of technical things, have a read of Andy P's article on Fixed Gear riding or rather 'NOT' Riding!

Take a look at Alan Oldfield's steed in the 'My Bike' section to see what our members are riding

Fancy getting in the miles with great scenery and good company? Then read David Matthews' article on Audax riding – you won't be disappointed!

Want an idea on how to get it all wrong? Just read my article on riding the 'Coast to Coast'!

We all have our best or memorable rides – see Alan Oldfield's on page 10

A couple of historical articles for you as well as an article from Brian Lowe which rang a bell with me and probably a few more of you besides!

Want a laugh? David's account of 'Jobsworth' is just a little too close to the truth!

And much, much more

So appetite suitably 'wetter'?

Read on

*Bruce of Wrexham Reivers fame!



The Editor



Welcome to the Spring edition of *'the Link'* under new 'management'.

David Ackerley has done a sterling job over the last few years producing a very professional club magazine and now it's the turn for someone else to help out. Many thanks for all your good work David, very much appreciated.

Well, first things first, who am I and what are my credentials to represent the thoughts and views of the CNW CTC through the vehicle of *'the Link'*?

Having completed my 50 years working to help pay off the 'National Debt' I retired from my job last May and moved up from Milton Keynes where my two daughters still live, to be with my partner of 7 years, Sarah, another cycling 'fanatic'.

We bought a bungalow in Rossett, mainly because the garage was big enough to store our collection of bikes and bits – even this necessitated constructing a 2-level system.

Rossett is an ideal location for us to enjoy our passion for cycling with over 45 years cycling between us, with the Welsh mountains on one side and the Cheshire plains on the other. Combining the fantastic local roads and lanes with the warmth and friendliness of the local cyclists makes for the perfect cycling scenario.

We enjoy club riding, audax and especially touring, only Eastern & Western Europe at the moment but next year, who knows? See www.sarahandmartin.vpweb.co.uk for this year's circular trip around Poland, Romania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Italy, Switzerland and Germany with all points in between.

So

Please let me have any articles, thoughts, technical hints and tips, info on old bikes (I've a couple waiting for renovation) and their history, in fact, ANYTHING that you find interesting because I'm sure your club mates will also be interested as well.

You can even 'let off steam' in the 'Letters to the Editor' section!

Articles can be hand written as well as in pretty well any electronic format!

Your magazine, your choice.

Enough for now, need to get back to cleaning the agricultural 'residue' from my bike!

See you on the road

Martin Brooks



----- ooOoo -----

Anorak Fact

I have started collecting statistics from our Wednesday rides. On our last 14 rides we have ridden a cumulative total of 9,350 miles, during which we have had 8 punctures.

An average of 1,193 miles per puncture!

How does this match up with your personal rate?

John Ferguson



----- ooOoo -----

Coming up in this issue

What's in it!

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A Message from Your President

As the journalists' old cliché has it, "*Cometh the hour, cometh the man*" and the man in question is our new LINK Editor, Martin Brooks to whom I extend the warmest of welcomes. Readers may well recall the note of utter pessimism in my last Presidential Message when it seemed that nobody would take over from retiring Editor David



Ackerley and that the LINK was doomed. With its precursor '*Awheel*', this magazine has been the permanent record of Chester and North Wales events and activities over our 75 year history. However, Martin, a newcomer to our area kindly offered his services at the eleventh hour so we can welcome 2014 with a new-look LINK, new ideas and, I hope, an increased circulation. The editorial green eye-shield may have passed to Martin but we must not forget the previous wearer of that metaphorical eye-shield, David Ackerley. We owe David our thanks for his years of dedicated work as Editor, notable especially for introducing such innovations as colour printing and for filling the odd empty space with witty asides. David has put in a lot

of work in other ways for Chester and North Wales over the years, notably his several years service as Secretary and currently his active membership of our Awards Committee – not to mention running events such as the Bert Bailey Memorial Vets 100. It is upon such volunteers that the continuing success of Chester and North Wales CTC depends.

History Lesson

David Ackerley and Arthur Miller have been busy over the past few months pouring over our extensive collection of archive material which goes back some 80 years. For many years, Ken Brown was our Archivist but, you might recall, he relinquished this post in 2013. In future our paper records will be stored under optimum conditions at the Cheshire Record Office in Chester for all to consult.

In addition, from these records which include *inter alia* minutes of meetings as well as copies of the LINK, Arthur and David have compiled a history of Chester and North Wales CTC which is to be published later this year under the title THE CHAIN. Twenty-five years ago, a booklet describing our first half-century was published, but, from what I have heard, I think THE CHAIN is to be bigger and better. I look forward to reading it. Like all copies of the LINK, a copy will be sent to the National Cycling Archive. (See the LINK, Summer 2011, page 31.)

A Message from Your President ... cont'd



Congratulations

Somewhat belated congratulations (but well deserved ones, nevertheless) to our Right-2-Ride Officer, Peter Williams on the award of a Certificate of Appreciation by Sustrans last November in recognition of the work he does looking after cyclists' interests. It is a well-deserved tribute to his commitment and dedication to our needs often in the face of much frustration from 'official' sources.

A drowning wet New Year's Day (the forerunner of many this winter!) saw me at the Carden Arms, Tilston where, amongst the usual convivial atmosphere at lunch, it was my pleasant duty to present the Trophies to our leading riders in the 2013 CTC Tourist Competition. Secretary Lowri Evans was the leading woman rider and Peter Dilworth the top male rider... Moreover, Peter was the overall CTC national winner for 2013 gaining maximum points. He was closely followed by Lowri in second place - making her the leading woman rider nationally. Our 'bronze medallist' was Andy Polakowski. All in all, with Dave Statham in fifth and Ifor Jones in seventh place, we had five riders in the top ten. So the efforts of this Chester and North Wales team competing in the CTC 2013 Tourist Competition have led to our being the National Champions— again for a record time. I look forward to joining them at the CTC Annual Dinner and Prize Presentation in Glasgow in May where they will receive their due recognition.

Equally unpleasant weather one Tuesday in late January chilled me on my ride to Tilley's Cafe, Bunbury where I was to present the certificate for Cafe of the Year, 2013 and to enjoy elevenses with Watson's Wanderers. Remember that you, our members, vote individually for Cafe of the Year – so please keep that in mind during your refreshment breaks on rides in 2014.

Fabulous Ladies' founder, Sue Booth, reached the shortlist in the *Unsung Cycling Heroine* category as featured in the 2014 Awards by the e-magazine *Total Women's Cycling*. Although she was not the eventual winner (none of the others on the shortlist, as I recall, were specifically noted as CTC) at least someone 'out there' has taken note of her work to promote

cycling amongst women in the Chester area. The Awards recognise individuals who have made the biggest contribution to the growth of women's cycling in the past twelve months.

Winning photos by our keen photographer Andy Polakowski I am told have been chosen by CTC to appear in CYCLE, so once again Chester and North Wales makes its mark in the cycling world. That reminds me of our 75th Anniversary Photographic Competition – announced in the previous edition of the LINK (page 22). The Awards Committee, you may recall, are looking for photographs that capture "The Spirit of Cycling, 2014". You have until 1st October to look for suitable scenes to capture the "Spirit" with your lens. Happy snapping!

75 Years Young

Our 75th Anniversary logo, designed by Glennys Hammond, marks what I hope will be a memorable year for us all. I have already mentioned the Open Photographic Competition but coming shortly will be the Anniversary Rides followed by President's Tea based on Bickerton Village Hall on Sunday 8th June. Full details are given elsewhere but remember the (high) tea is open to all and I hope that some of our older members who can no longer cycle will come. We need a big crowd not only to applaud at the presentations which will take place but also to help eat up the birthday cake which is being prepared.

Looking even farther ahead, the date for the President's Rides and Lunch I have fixed for Sunday 28th September. It is Cheshire's turn to host this event this year and so the lunch venue will be at the War Memorial Hall, Tilston as it was two years ago.

Last Farewells

Sadly I have to record the death last November of Ray Jackson ('Jake') who rode with the old Wednesday and Ledsham/Two Mills Sections. He had been in a care home for some time and had no relatives. His funeral which was attended by a handful of us was organised by his long-term friend and cycling companion George Houldin and by Elsa Kemp. Elsewhere you will find the obituary for Dorothy Clift who died on the 25th January. **Mike Cross**

----- ooOoo -----

Question:

Why did Moses wander in the desert for 40 years?

Answer:

Even then men wouldn't ask for directions!

----- ooOoo -----



Tech Tip No. 1

Fixed wheel bike with mudguards?

It's great riding a fixed wheel bike, feels so smooth, so close to the purity of riding a bike.

Ahh, life is bliss so far so good eh?

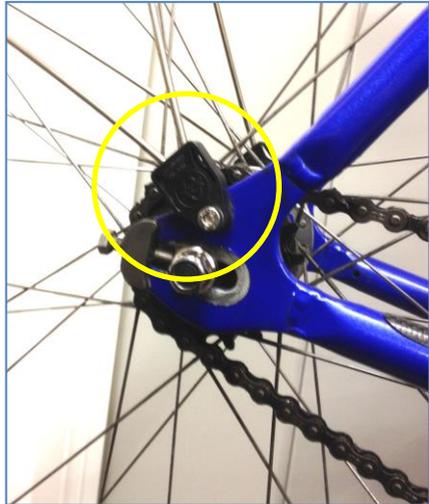
Now it's raining, it's cold, it's dark and what's that? A puncture and the back wheel AGAIN?

It used to be a big problem especially trying to get the back wheel out with those horizontal track ends which were so useful for adjusting the chain tension but now just a pain

What to do?

Look at the mudguard stays in the photo – just fit a set of 'breakaways' on the mudguard stays like they fit on the front!

When you need to take out the back wheel just 'pop' out the mudguard stays and hey presto, the wheel is accessible! Job done!



----- ooOoo -----

Letters to the Editor



A regular topic for *'the Link'*, so now is your opportunity to tell us what you REALLY think!

Tell everyone your opinions, what irritates you, your good ideas

So for example:

Obviously the first topic would be what would you like to see different in THIS magazine?

Also what do you think of:

Two Mills have a 50p once only 'get you home' taxi fund – good idea for the rest of the Groups?

What are your opinions on mudguards – full, full with mudflap, none at all or don't care what happens to your mates riding behind?

How good we are at riding in large groups on the road – are we helping the car drivers to foster a good opinion of ourselves?

Disc brakes or rim brakes for road bikes and tourers?

Let's all hear what you think!

----- ooOoo -----

Jobsworth?



A lady died last September, and MBNA bank billed her in October and November for their annual service charges on her credit card, and then in December added late fees and interest on the monthly charge. The balance that had been zero, now is somewhere around £60.00

A family member rang MBNA:

Family Member: "I am calling to tell you that my grandmother died in September".

MBNA: "But the account was never closed and so the late fees and charges still apply".

Family Member:

"Maybe, you should turn it over to your collections section".

MBNA: "Since it is two months overdue, it already has been".

Family Member: "So, what will they do when they find out she is dead?"

MBNA: "Either report her account to the Frauds Department or report her to the Credit Bureau, maybe both!"

Family Member: "Do you think God will be upset with her?"

MBNA: "Excuse me?"

Family Member: "Did you just get what I was telling you ...

Jobsworth? ... cont'd



the part about her being dead?"

MBNA: "Sir, you'll have to speak to my supervisor".

Supervisor gets on the phone:

Family Member: "I'm phoning to tell you, she died in September".

MBNA: "But the account was never closed and the late fees and charges still apply".

Family Member: "You mean you want to collect from her estate?"

MBNA: (stammer) "Are you her solicitor?"

Family Member: "No, I'm her grandson".

MBNA: "Could you fax us a death certificate?"

Family Member: "no problem.."

(fax number is given)

After they get the fax:

'Coast to Coast' or riding the Pyrenees, sorry, Pennines



"Well", said Alan Davies one sunny evening at Club Night, "why don't we ride the Coast to Coast one day?"

Sarah and I thought this was a good idea, I mean, just climb over that 'bump' called the Pennines and then freewheel down to the east coast – how tough can this be?

Anyway, when it came to it, poor old Alan had to work and Sarah could only get certain days off work so

First stage, the route! Easily sorted, I had the official map from the CTC so we were set, couldn't really understand it but they were the experts so it must be OK.

We were planning to ride from Whitehaven to Tyneside one day, stay in a hotel and then cycle back to Whitehaven the next day. Well, we were hardy club members after all's said and done.

Second stage, the equipment. Needed something fairly light as we had 120+ miles to do before it got dark both days, so out came the carbon, Sarah's Trek and my Dolan. Should be able to get a move on with these. Gearing, as low as possible, I mean, there was this 'lump' in the way!

Third stage, the timing. A Wednesday in June saw us drive up to the Lake District and book into the Premier Inn in Howgate just outside Whitehaven ready for the challenge the next day. We were fairly optimistic despite the grey skies and the drizzle, we were tough!

6:15 the next morning saw us set off just with a small rucksack on our backs with a change of clothing and the credit card of course. The weather hadn't improved, still drizzling but it was light, the roads good, our spirits high.

MBNA: "Our system just isn't set up for death. I don't know what more I can do to help".

Family Member: "Well, if you sort it out, great! If not, you could just keep billing her. I don't think she will care".

MBNA: "Well, the late fees and charges will still apply".

Family Member: "Would you like her new billing address?"

MBNA: "That would help".

Family Member: "Plot 1049, Heaton Cemetery, Heaton Road, Newcastle upon Tyne"

MBNA: "But, that's a cemetery!"

Family Member: "Well, what do you do with dead people on your planet?"

The MBNA were not available for comment when a reporter from the Newcastle Evening Chronicle rang them!

David Ackerley

We followed the A595 north-eastwards towards Cockermouth but somehow, the normal prevailing south westerly wind, wasn't; it was slightly in our faces and, as it happened, was that way for the whole day.

The Coast to Coast signs were pretty good all the way across except where the road turned into tracks and cycle ways which didn't suit our type of machinery. Very often, in a bid to keep you off the main road, you were sent up little back roads only to join the main road a bit further along having added miles with undulations!



The rain started to get heavier and of course with no mudguards started to cause some concerns in the 'shorts area' but after 3 or 4 hours it stopped, the sun came out and the afternoon/evening was good.

We progressed along the A66 past Bassenthwaite Lake through Keswick, Penrith using both big and little roads. Towards the Pennines, the roads were good, we only lost our way 5 or 6 times. For anyone who knows me, this is good;

'Coast to Coast' ... cont'd



my sense of direction is abysmal!

We were making good time, averaging between 17 and 18 mph through Keswick, past Langwathby and Melmerby when suddenly the road started to go upwards, and upwards and upwards

The hills got steeper and steeper and coupled with the rain made the vision of taking up golf seem so much more attractive. The front chain ring was getting smaller while the rear sprockets were getting bigger until there was none left. This seemed to be the measure of the ride from here on, it only getting flat when we reached Newcastle.

Anyway, we cycled (gasp!) our way up Hartside passing a couple of cyclists doing the same ride but who were taking the pace much more sensibly. How come they weren't sweating? Then, looking up, there was a vision through the mist and rain, the café at Hartside. I think we stayed there just a bit longer than normal trying to recoup all that expended energy but go on we had to.

The rain had stopped by now and the skies were brightening up and we were now more optimistic mistakenly thinking the worst of the 'hills' had been conquered, how wrong we were! Progressing on, we were taken down smaller roads through Garrigill with a 'mother' of all hills; we were struggling now with only about half distance covered.

Onwards through Nenthead, purposely diverting away from the C2C route and plotting our own route as it was by this time relegated to a paved (here and there) track. On the A689 past the Kilhope Lead Mining Centre to Cowhill and then continued along the A689 through Westgate. Look how close the contour lines are on the map! The wind was really picking up now, coming at us from the left quarter, going getting tougher still. The scenery was really spectacular, the road running along the river Wear, but what is it with these towns? They all seem to have a really fantastic steep hill going into the town and then (apparently) an even steeper hill coming back out!

After consuming a pair of baguettes and a couple of cups of tea in Stanhope we again climbed (read - struggled) out of the town on the B6278 straight onto the moors. The wind was coming at us from the left hand side and was so strong, riding was difficult blowing us all over the road albeit with the sun scorching down now. What a place this was, hardly any cars but loads of dead sheep where they had been 'playing with the traffic'. Big problems going down the incline towards Derwent Reservoir, lightweight bikes are good but even with 14 stone of rippling muscle (?) holding it down I was blown all over the place, nearly losing it a couple of times. Poor lightweight Sarah was worse off, deciding upon descending at a slower speed with at least a chance of recovery when caught by a strong gust.

We then set a course (hoorah for Garmin) towards Consett where we picked up the A692 ready for the next challenge - the road mending team. It's not only down south where they 'splash and dash' the granite chippings, there were mounds of it here, 12 inches deep in places, putting our feet down at times it was so thick!

We were seeing more built up areas but still the roads insisted on going up and down, no, not undulating, damned steep!

Now, up through Wickham, still going up and down, onto Blaydon where we crossed the river Tyne - thank goodness, now it has to be flat, rivers don't generally flow uphill, do they? We hung a right and then followed the cycleway all the way through to Tyneside and Tynemouth Castle missing all the groups of old and young clutching their bottles of 'brew' as we passed through the various housing estates. Finally made it to the Castle and as you can see, we were really, REALLY happy to have finished.

We reckoned we had ridden over 140 miles and it had taken 8½ hours so the shower in the hotel and meal was definitely



the best part of the day!

Remember, our first stage plan? Ride out one day and then ride back the next - what cocky individual thought they could do that?

The reality of it was, we were so tired that we caught the train back and didn't care that it took all day to get back to the car and back home! **Martin Brooks**

----- 0000 -----

Good Idea!



In the Link previously, the Wednesday riders (WRs) would write about their exploits but now thanks to Glennys and John we now have a space on our CTC Website. I know there are a few members who do not have PCs to follow events but to record the articles in 'The Link' also could become boring.

This Year being the 75th Anniversary of the CTC, I believe there will be many events to cover in 'The Link' and also the start of the Tour de France in Yorkshire.



Best Rides: 2013

New Inn Dyserth

In July of last year I was in the lucky position of leading a CNWCTC Wednesday section 'A' ride to Dyserth from the Eureka Cafe at Two Mills.

I say lucky as not only is the scenery magnificent up in the Clwydians, and the traffic light, but the weather was sunny and warm.

Thirteen riders gathered opposite the cafe whilst I explained the route. I had led this ride to the same destination two years previously, and was determined to find a new route, especially when we got into top country territory. I was also determined to conserve the pace, as I knew of the fairly big climbs coming, and not everyone is 'The Eagle of Toledo'

Keeping a large group together on a led ride is sometimes quite demanding, but even more so when the terrain is hilly, so proper recceing is important, as is a back marker.

We made steady progress down to Queensferry, picking up two more riders at the blue bridge, then a third at Ewloe, making sixteen in all. At least the route e-mail had been read.

The first climb up to Hawarden was steady, a warm-up for the Halkyns. The climb up Middle Mill sorted a few out, but the climb up to Rhosemor was too steep to give out too much. From there the hard steep climb past the church had even the 'keenies' breathing hard, then the grind to the top of Moel y Crio giving beautiful views.

Once we had all reassembled there was the wonderful descent down to Rhes-y-Cae, then on to Lixcm. A rather rough through lane led to Babell, then into really quiet narrow lanes round Sarn, with views to the south, which on a sunny day such as this are unsurpassed cycling country.

As the climbs came more frequently we had to stop more to allow regrouping, especially on the climb up to the top part of Rhualt hill.

As we crossed over the bridge over the A55, I knew the hardest climb over to Cwm to come. I too was feeling

Along with my son Paul, Brian Saxby, Mike Knox, Tony McDonough and another friend, we will be staying in Silsden under canvas. I looked at the first stage route and it passes close by and on stage two, it passes only a few miles away. The rest of the week we have booked into a hostel in York and have arranged to join up and ride with the York CTC. We are looking forward to our summer exploits and will be sharing our highlights with you in 'The Link'. **Chris Byrne**

----- ooOoo -----

the pace up this one, trying to keep everyone close, and also to make sure all knew about the steep descent.

That aside I had my group stop on the way down to admire the view over the bay out to sea and towards Llandudno.

From the bottom it was a pleasant ride, then steep drop down to Dyserth, and The New Inn.

A very pleasant lunch was had, then two of the group decided to go back with the other car assist group, although I knew they could manage the return.



One of the unfortunate aspects of visiting Dyserth is that one has to climb the one in six hill out to reach decent cycling territory, not so easy after lunch.

Well worth it though as we then had the lovely experience of cycling [freewheeling] down the fairly recently tarmaced old railway path down to Prestatyn.

From Prestatyn we headed for Gronant, and two more of our group decided to take the coastal route. An easy steady climb at first, but after the village it seemed to head skywards without respite, and seemingly endless.

Disturbingly, it had not seemed this hard on the recce a few days before, but then my recce had been car assisted to Babell!



Best Rides ... cont'd

We reassembled at the top, getting our breath back, and then set off on a short down hill, before the next grind up to Trelogan. Even I was losing the fun of it then, but knew it was the last big climb.

We were now up in the higher part of the Clwydians, with still good weather and great views.

We all plodded on together, crossed the A55 on small farm bridge, and then turned for Holywell Golf Course on the way to the Pets Cemetery Cafe at Brynford for afternoon tea,

when another member of the group cut off for home, leaving us down to ten.

Much refreshed, we completed a small climb up to the Windmill, then down to Northop on familiar lanes. Still descending, down to Connah's Quay and on to Two Mills.

A wonderful if hard ride with lovely weather, lovely lanes, great company and all in 65 miles.

Alan Oldfield



Café of the Year 2014

Last year's winner for this MOST important category for us cyclists was Tilly's Café in Bunbury so now is your opportunity to vote for your most favourite 'watering hole'.

The rules are as follows:

- Only votes from individual members will be counted; block votes from groups are invalid.
- A member may vote for the café of his/her choice once only in a calendar year.
- The café that secures most votes will get a Certificate from CNW CTC.
- The winning café in any year will not be eligible for entry in the competition until 5 years have passed since its last win.
- Votes should be sent to the Awards Committee by email to: David Ackerley at vega27@btinternet.com or by phone on 01829 770 224

----- ooOoo -----



Certificate designed by John Mawer

----- ooOoo -----

A Tale of Burton Marshes



The following conversation was overheard when a small group of cyclists were making their way across the Burton Marsh cycle route towards Wales.

To set the scene: imagine a multitude of people with enormous lenses on their expensive cameras, and parked cars all along the front from Station Road to Denhall Lane and beyond. The cyclists stop at the junction at the bottom of

Denhall and with the objective of endearing bird watchers to cyclists tried to make conversation:

Cyclist No 1 to Birdwatcher. "Lots of you birdwatchers out today. Are you looking for something special?"

Birdwatcher. "Yes, we are. Somebody reported an American Linnet here during the week".

Cyclist No 2. "Ah; will that be the one we saw back there with the stars and stripes on its back?"

No comment from birdwatcher - Cyclists quickly ride on!

----- ooOoo -----





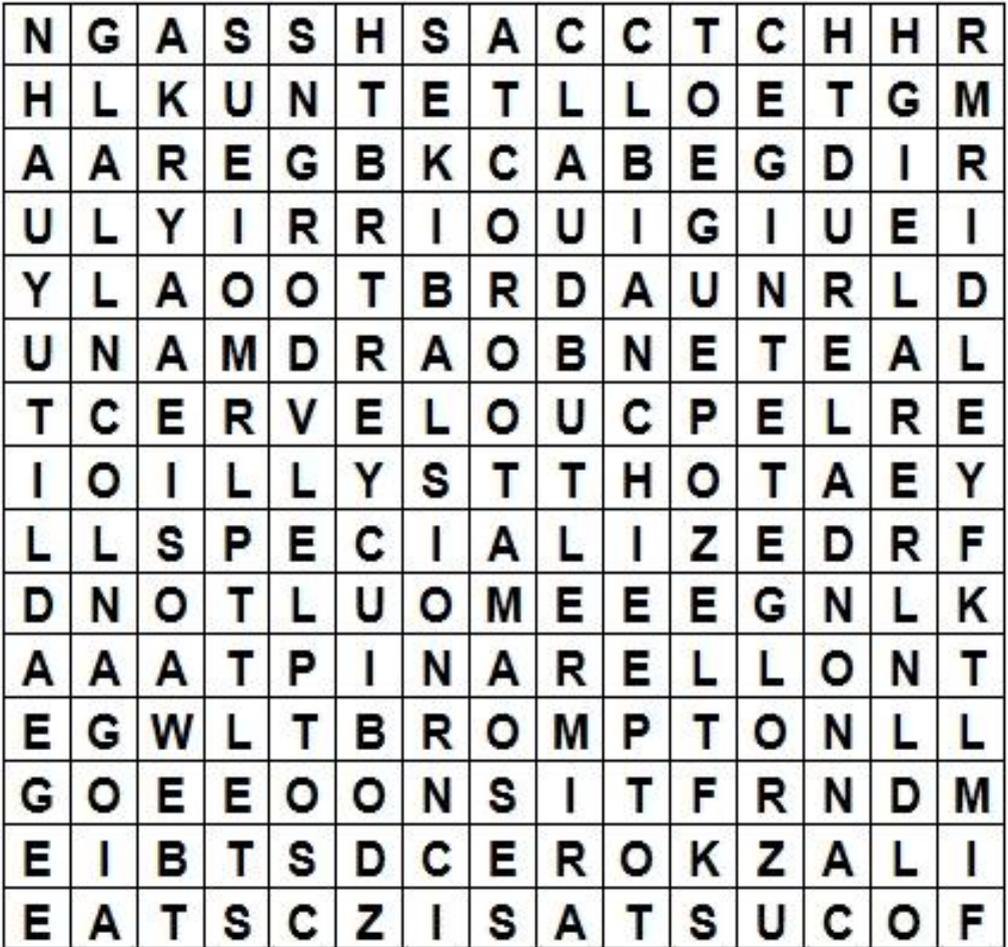
Bicycle Manufacturers Word Search – Can you find them all asks **Steve Larwood?**

Ariel
Bianchi
Boardman
Brompton
Cannondale
Cervelo
ClaudButler

Colnago
Dawes
Dolan
Felt
Focus
Giant
Islabikes

KTM
Moulton
Orbea
Peugeot
Pinarello
Raleigh
Ridgeback

Ridley
Scott
Specialized
Surly
Trek



An Intro to Audax Cycling UK



Enjoy cycling? Enjoy the countryside? Enjoy tea and cake? Well if so, you might just enjoy Audax.

Audax also known as randonneuring is a non-competitive form of cycling that involves pedaling medium to long distances within set time limits. It has its origins in Italy, is administered globally from France and has a following of enthusiasts throughout the world. This article will focus on the form of Audax followed in the UK but there are similar forms popular elsewhere in the world, especially France and Australia.



Audax occupies a ground somewhere between the sportive and the touring group. It is a very sociable and *inexpensive* form of cycling and events start from as little as 50 km (~32 miles). Rides take place on quiet roads as much as possible, can go off road onto the national cycle routes or canal towpaths and will visit some of the best scenery to be seen in the UK. Audaxes are events created by cycling enthusiasts for other enthusiasts and they want you to enjoy it. It can be a fantastic day (or more) out and is highly recommended. Completion of an audax is always a great personal achievement.

Oh and of course don't forget the **cake!**

History

Audax has its origins in late 19th century Italy where day-long endurance sports became popular. The aim was to cover as much ground as possible in 24 hours and participants called themselves 'audax' which translates as 'audacious'. Initially this involved swimming and walking as well as cycling.

In the early 20th century a man named Henri Desgrange---he of Tour de France fame--- laid down the first audax regulations and popularised the sport. Cyclists are expected to cover a set distance with defined control points within set time limits, and must be self sufficient throughout.

In the 1960s a few British riders gained a taste for this form of cycling and decided to try and qualify for cycling's Blue

Riband audax---the 1200 km Brevet from Paris to Brest and back again (PBP---run at 4 year intervals). Slowly the number of riders grew and in 1976 a few got together and formed Audax UK.

AUK is a not-for-profit company and board members do not draw a salary for what they do. In addition, unlike sportives, audax events do not take any profit and all volunteers work for free in their spare time. This volunteer ethos makes audax unique and any members are free to volunteer themselves to help at controls or even train as organisers.

An audax is just a bike ride. Some people might describe them as long-ish bike rides. So the essence of audax is just 'ride your bike'.

How to Enter an Audax

Entering an audax is easy. The simplest approach is to find a ride near you in AUK's calendar at www.audax.uk.net. Just click on your ride of choice and you will be taken to the event page and you can download an entry form and post it off. About a week before the event you will be sent the routesheet, although these can now be downloaded at any time from most calendar pages. Many events will not need this snail mail approach and you can enter online and pay with Paypal. Postal charges for return of your validated brevet card after the event are included in the online entry fee.

The AUK calendar is also published in the quarterly magazine



Arrivée. Once all this is done, just turn up at the appointed time and place, collect your brevet card from the organiser and off you go. Good luck!

Brevets, Rules and Time Limits

Rides are organised by local cycling clubs or an individual or group of volunteers. Even the very large rides such as the 1400k London-Edinburgh-London (held 2 years after PBP, every 4 years) are run by a small army of unpaid enthusiasts. So if you ride an event, make sure you thank them for their

An Intro to Audax Cycling UK ... cont'd



hard work! The goal of an audax is to complete a set minimum distance within certain time restrictions. The route is free between the set control points but the routesheet describes the intended route. Riders are expected to be self-sufficient and navigate themselves if they deviate from the routesheet.

To make sure distances are completed, riders are given a 'Brevet card' at the start. They are then required to stop, typically at 50-80 km intervals at set establishments or locations to gain proof of passage. Such places are called controls and on calendar events will typically be cycle friendly



cafes or pubs. They will often have a stamp available to validate your brevet card for time and place of passage. The final control is the end point (or arrivée) where the ride organiser will collect the Brevet card and arrange for validation. Occasionally, to prevent riders taking a shortcut on a route or to make sure they take a certain route featuring a signature climb or landmark, there will be an 'information control'. This is usually a question on the brevet card such as, 'How many miles to Upper Twiddleton on the sign in the centre of the village', or 'what is the name of the vicar at Lower Twiddleton church'.

To gain validation for a ride, all controls must be passed through within the time limits and all info control questions need to be correctly answered. Organisers are wise to the use of Google Streetview and will make sure the info control cannot be answered in advance!

The time limits vary between different types of ride but there is always an upper speed limit to prevent racing. No finishing order is available after the ride so the event is simply completed, not won or lost. The upper speed limit is usually a challenging 30 kph (18 mph) overall average speed--the lower speed limit varies between the types of Brevet but is typically 15kph.

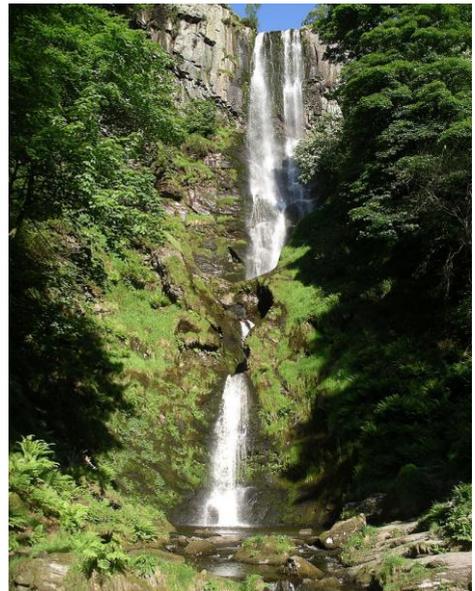
There is an entry fee associated with audaxes. After all, cake is not free and there are administration costs. However,

rides start from as little as £2 an entry and the vast majority are under £10. If you think that's expensive try entering a sportive or even worse, a race. If you are not a member of AUK or CTC you will have to pay a £2 supplement for insurance purposes, but there is no requirement to join AUK to take part in an audax.

Joining AUK is currently £19 for the first year (£14 thereafter) and will gain you access to their points and awards system and a quarterly magazine dedicated to the sport called *Arrivée*. Complete enough rides and you will get your name in it and maybe even a photo.

Brevets Populaire

A BP or populaire is typically a shorter ride in the audax world and these rides are often seen as beginner rides to introduce novices to distance riding. Consequently they typically have shorter distances of 50 km, 100 km or 150 km with more relaxed time limits. Since the goal of AUK is to promote long-distance cycling, rides of less than 200 km do not qualify for the AUK point scoring system although they can qualify for climbing points (AAA points, see below). Nevertheless 100 km rides form a high proportion of AUK's calendar events---as well as providing experience for the longer rides they are a



grand day out. The maximum speed may well be 30 kph for a populaire but the organiser is free to set the lower speed limit as they see fit. A typical populaire minimum speed will be 12.5 kph. This is really quite slow and so well within reach of any competent cyclist.

An Intro to Audax Cycling UK ... cont'd



Brevets Randonneur

Randonnées are the distances that gain you the most kudos and the biggest sense of achievement. Once completed you are also entitled to the lifelong title of 'Randonneur'. These events begin at 200 km (approx 126 miles) and increase in the classic series, 300 km, 400 km, 600 km, 1000 km, 1200 km and 1400 km although longer distance events do exist. These rides will gain you points in the AUK points and awards system but aside from the distance and a small difference in the minimum speed limit, they are identical to populaires.

Do note however, that there is no time allowance for stopping at controls so don't waste any time here.

Calendar events

The AUK calendar contains a large variety of rides of all distances although most are 100 or 200 km. For reasons of daylight hours the longest events tend to take place during late spring and summer although events are scheduled throughout the year.

Chester & N.Wales CTC currently organise 4 audax calendar events each year---each event features a ride of 200k, 100k and 50k approx---12 rides in all.

These events are based on Eureka cafe (April), Corwen (July), Tattenhall (September) and Corwen again (October). We should also mention the Seamons CC "Tour of the Berwyns" event (May) which features rides of 200k and 130k based on Willington Hall near Kelsall.

Full details of these rides and entry information are given on the CTC---C&NW and audax (audax.uk.net) websites.

Perms

In addition to the calendar events are a series of so-called permanent (or 'perm') rides. These are generally ridden alone or with just a couple of mates and purchase of a brevet card is still necessary---but you do have the luxury of choosing your date and therefore have more control over weather conditions.

Audax Altitude Award (AAA)

Hilly audaxes are also known as 'grimpeurs' coming from the French word for climbing. AAA points recognise the achievements of those who like the challenge of climbing. Any ride can count for AAA points but typically 1500 metres of climbing at least are needed for a 100 km event to qualify for AAA points. One AAA point is awarded for each 1000 meters climbed on an event, rounded to the nearest quarter. So the minimum points on offer for a 100 km event would be 1.5 and more AAA points can be gained on longer and hillier routes.

Gold, silver and bronze Grimpeur medals are available to riders who complete AAA qualifying rides depending upon the number of points available for the ride being claimed. There are also awards for the accumulation of 20, 60 and 180 AAA points over any period of time. The AUK handbook has an AAA roll of honour published each year where every rider who achieves 12 AAA points or more is listed.

And finally

Audax ranges from happy afternoons out involving a 32 mile cycle drinking tea and munching cake in the park at the halfway point, to rides of stupendous difficulty that only the most ardent and weather beaten cyclist should attempt. It's got something for everyone so why not give it a go?

David Matthews



Tech Tip No: 2

Where's the culprit?

Now this is an old one, one that my Grandad told me about and one that I thought everybody was aware of.

My observations have proved me wrong!

When you fit a tyre, line up the maker's name on the tyre where the valve comes through the rim.

Next time you have a puncture, find the leak in the tube and then you can hold it up against the tyre as a datum position to find the area of the cause of the problem – the thorn or piece of flint etc. Make's it easier to find the culprit!





Caption Competition



Richard Harrod saw this giant scarecrow at Harlow Carr (RHS) in the image of Wiggo!

OK, what should the caption be to suit this 'effigy' and what other unusual sights have you seen to fire up the imagination?

Photos and suitable captions welcomed as I know from riding with you that there are some 'wicked' senses of humour in the group!

Drop me a line with your photos/captions etc to publish in the next edition.

All contributions appreciated.

Expecting some good ones here but I already have a few photo examples for the next edition to include for comment, but of course

Unless you can come up with something better?

----- ooOoo -----

Cycling for King and Country



As this year is the centenary of the beginning of the First World War, and as an amateur collector and historian on the subject, I thought it would be fitting to pay a tribute to the men who served in the Army Cyclists' Corp. At the start of the war there were four cyclist battalions in the Territorial force.

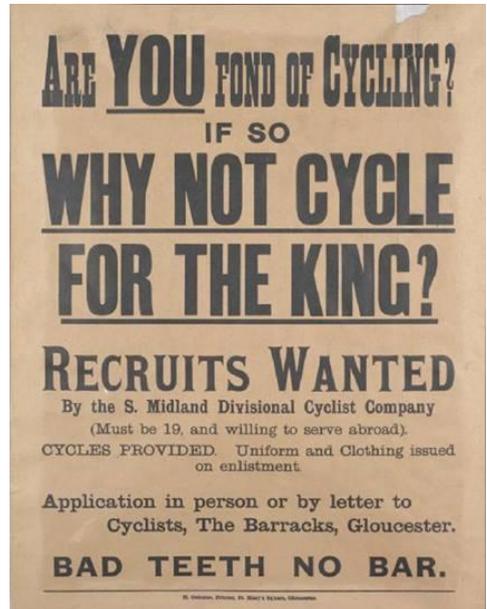
The bike itself was designed to enable the rider to be a completely self contained fighting unit. Everything, from his rifle to his cape and groundsheet could be stored away on his bike. His rations were stored in a small kitbag behind the saddle and an emergency tool kit was stored under the top tube. The rifle was strapped along the down tube.

A book of regulations was also drawn up, and contained such gems as;

" The position of the cyclist at attention is the same as that of a dismounted soldier, except that he will grasp the left steering handle with his left hand and place his right hand at the point of the saddle, elbows to the rear."

The four cyclist battalions were;
 The Northern Cyclists' Battalion - Newcastle upon Tyne.
 The Highland Cyclists' Battalion - Kirkcaldy.
 The Kent Cyclists' Battalion - Tonbridge.
 The Huntingdonshire Cyclists' Battalion - Huntingdon.

The actor Charles Laughton served in the Huntingdonshire Battalion, it is unclear as to whether he actually served



abroad, although the 1st Hunts Battalion did see action at the Somme in late 1916.

Cycling for King and Country ... cont'd



The Kent Cyclists' Battalion served in India, The North West Frontier and later Afghanistan.

At the outbreak of war the battalions were used mainly as coastal defence units, along the east and South east coastlines.



In 1915 the first cyclists units went to France, Flanders and Gallipoli. They were employed as scouts on the front. British and German cycling units did actually engage in

combat, along the Belgian border.

They were also used as couriers, taking messages along the communication trenches. They were also used as security patrols along canals, both in France & Flanders and at home, guarding against acts of sabotage.

Of course it wasn't only the British who used cyclists. The Germans used them as stretcher bearers, two bikes tied together with a makeshift stretcher between them. The Belgians had cyclist battalions, and the Italians had early folding bikes that they carried in the Alps, in their battle with the Austrians.

By the end of the war many cycling battalions had been disbanded and the men moved into infantry regiments. The terrain of France & Flanders was by this time a mud bath and unsuitable for cycling. As we head to the August commemorations let us remember those cyclists who answered the call for king and country.

Darryl Porrino



CTC Cymru events

Treasure Hunt & Map Reading Competitions 3rd May 2014

These two 'fun' competitions start from the Espresso Cafe in Gwersyllt, and if ridden as individuals count for Tourist Competition points. Entry fees £1.50 per event.

Treasure Hunt – can be ridden as individuals or teams of 2. Start between 9.30 and 10.00 am for a route of about 15 miles.

Map Reading – Start at 1.00pm when after 15 minutes to prepare a route you have 2 hours to collect as many points as possible. You need to bring the local OS map 117.

Contact Lowri Evans 01824 705709 or see details on the events page of the C&NW CTC website.

2014 CTC Cymru Welsh Festival of Cycling 24th - 29th July

This year's event is based at Llandovery Rugby Club.

Camping & registration opens from 4pm on the Thursday followed by 4 days of rides & events.

Booking through Emrys Jones 01952 257522
8 St Chad's Close, Wellington, Telford, Shropshire TF1 3EW.

2013 Tourist Competition Results

As some readers will realise Bob Kynaston (who had organised the CTC Tourist Competition with great efficiency for many years) died in January 2013.

Following his death it was decided that the competition would continue to run, however as with many tasks the amount of work involved is not always appreciated until someone else tries to take over. At the time of writing we have the final placings but some individual scores may change.

Once again the Chester & N Wales CTC riders have done well; congratulations to Peter Dilworth who has retained his overall title as well as gaining the prize for the first veteran.

For the second time Peter managed to score the maximum number of points (112) as well as securing a string of freewheeling victories in case it came down to a tie-breaker.

Other individuals had slightly lower scores than last year but it appears that for the first time we have managed to achieve 1st, 2nd & 3rd individual positions, both veteran titles AND have retained the team title.

Andy Polakowski scores 105 points for 3rd place and Dave Statham is equal 5th on 98 points.

In previous years when there were teams of six riders both Ifor Jones and Darryl Porrino would have been in the C&NW CTC team as they scored 92 and 83 points respectively.

Lowri Evans is the remaining member of the team in second place and retains the Lady & Veteran Lady rider titles.

This year's season starts on the 1st of March and runs until the end of October with many rides in the local area.

Lowri Evans

CTC Two Mills £1000 donation to Wirral Community Cycle Hub



CTC Two Mills has supported the growth of the Eastham Centre Cycle Hub with this extraordinary donation. High Visibility Jackets (CTC logo - as seen in the photo), two top notch tool kits and work stands, a brand new bicycle purchased from local bike shop K Cycles – all to benefit the increasing number of regular Hub users many of whom have



learning as well as physical disabilities.
Brian & Sylvia (Chair and membership sec. of CTC Two Mills) seen here with Tricia Seddon of Sustrans

The money donated was our group’s share of the surplus raised from organising last year’s Early Season Tourist Trial. Wirral’s Sustrans Bike It officer, Simon Wallis We are so grateful for the very timely support as we seek to support local people in their aspirations to become happy, healthy, confident and safe cyclists. Happy days said “We are so



grateful for the timely support as we seek to support local people in their aspirations to become happy, healthy, confident and safe cyclists.”

Wirral South MP, Alison McGovern is pictured presenting certificate of cycling achievement to a student from Eastham Centre

Janet Gregory

Ninety Years ago Snips from the 1924 CTC Gazette



The year started with a thundering editorial. ‘We are entirely in sympathy with the London magistrate who stated that ‘a drunken driver was a horrible danger to the public and could not be tolerated’. The outburst was prompted by a 62 year old taxi driver who was arrested in a ‘hopeless state of intoxication’. The only defence offered by the accused was that he was ‘overcome after a smoking a strong cigar’. He was fined £3 with 25s costs and his licence endorsed – not suspended. Such is the strong arm of the law in protecting the public against ‘horrible dangers’ blasts the Gazette Ed’.

Touring note - In the Rheidol Valley, near Aberystwyth there is a very good representation of a white stag carved on the mountainside, the horns being quite realistic. Should certainly be viewed by tourists ‘doing’ the Devil’s bridge. I wonder if it is still there.

A correspondent queried the origin of a ‘dancer’s grave’ on Bartholomew map 24, east of Buckingham. Visiting the site he found only an isolated farm house. Locals knew nothing of the title. He concluded it must have been a long forgotten

suicide when it was custom to bury the deceased at a crossroads.



Then and now, in the C.T.C.: the shade of 1878 and the substance of 1924.
 The highlight of the Northern Section of the Metropolitan DA’s New Year party, attended by no less than 95, was a ju

Ninety Years ago ... cont'd



jitsu demonstration by a Miss Titlow and Mr HE Scuffle. The manner in which the lady picked up the Hon Sec between her finger and thumb and lightly tossed him over her left shoulder 'for luck', was both neat and effective!



Up north the Liverpool DA celebrated the New Year at the Memphis Hotel, Chester where JJ Prescott was congratulated on the excellent arrangements, but seemingly nothing like London's flip act was on the menu. And over the Pennines the Yorkshire DA had more serious work in hand. Plans to renovate all 'essential' CTC Danger signs during the summer months.

Around this time an advertisement appeared in a country newspaper – 'Wanted. Smart young man. Drive Ford and able to kill'. No lack of suitable applicants no doubt, retorted the Gaz' 'ed.

Wrexham Reivers Report March 2014



In spite of the windy weather a record breaking 43 attended the Wrexham Reivers and Cafe Hopper Christmas dinner at the Ponderosa which is at the top of the Horseshoe Pass, some arrived by bike, others came by car. As always the Ponderosa provided an excellent meal which together with the friendly atmosphere produced a really enjoyable event. Lowri Evans was surprised by the extremely generous gift from the group; thanks to this, and Peter Dilworth's

And if you complain about highways engineers now, how's this for mendacious milestoneing? A member reported that milestones on the Croydon—Godstone road near Purley station measured around 1,820 yards apart. It appears when the road was re-aligned towards Lewis, instead of repositioning all the milestones on this stretch, the existing stones were placed equidistance apart – which wasn't one mile. Such is the perseverance of some individuals who carry a tape measure in their saddle bags to measure mile stones!

And a report from the *Auto Car* magazine of a motorist driving out of Birkenhead in heavy rain and darkness. Claiming to be travelling at 20mph, he encountered a heavily loaded handcart with no rear light and propelled by a youth. The driver drove straight forward with his 'heavy five-seater', scattering the handcart, youth, and hundreds of potatoes and onions, inflicting painful damage to the youth.

His own damage involved repairs to a headlamp, radiator and mudguards. He regaled the youth's 'abominable laziness' in using the gauge of the tramlines 4 ½ yds from the kerb to facilitate pushing his cart. No mention of the consequences for the youth but the Gaz' ed spluttered with rage.

Several months earlier the coroner in the case of a man killed walking home in the dark from his work at Prices Candleworks, Bromborough, stated that *a driver is negligent if he is driving too fast to pull up within the distance illuminated by lamps.*

But there again, I do remember a Wallasey cycling pal of mine with a weakness for motor bikes, who planned to use the latter for a weekend trip to Cynwyd Youth Hostel in the 50s. Finding at the last minute his motor bike lamp had packed in, he replaced it with his cycle lamp. He undertook his trip goodness knows how – particularly with the diabolical twin celled batteries inflicted on us at that time.

To be continued

Roy Spilsbury

----- ooOoo -----

mechanical skills, her Roberts has now been re-sprayed and rebuilt.

2014 started with the New Year's Day ride; a small group cycled from Gwersyllt through the wet and windy weather to meet up in the Carden Arms, Tilston for lunch other groups from C&NW CTC. After lunch the trophies for the highest points scored in the Tourist Competition were presented to Peter Dilworth & Lowri Evans.

January was Lowri Evans's ride to the Mountain Bike Centre in Llandegla. Several decide it was rather too early in the year for the climb, but a small group reached the Centre before being led back to Wrexham by Dave Statham.

Wrexham Reivers Report.... cont'd



Due to illness Graham Gadd wasn't able to lead his ride to the Wirral however Dave Statham stepped in and the group set off to the Burton Marshes. In keeping with most of the winter rides the weather was blustery, and all were glad that the cycle path was passable after the winter storms.

Although a few cyclists were spotted the main group on the Marshes were bird watchers – dozens with cameras and telephoto lenses all trying to catch a glimpse of a rare avian visitor.

February's first ride was lead by Bruce Newnes to the Ice Cream Farm. The flat route was a popular choice with all of the riders and everyone was delighted to have a day out without the strong winds and heavy showers of recent weeks.

16 riders turned out for the trip to Ruthin (with ages ranging between 30 and 80) even though the forecast was for strong winds & rain. Everyone made it to the Mountain Bike Centre

which was fairly quiet as all of the trails were closed to mountain bikers due to the trees that had fallen in the storms. Eight riders decided to head back, whilst the remainder rode on to Ruthin on a promise of more tea and cake. A slightly bedraggled mob had the promised refreshments at Lowri's house before heading back up to Graigfechan and home.

Dave Hill's reputation with the Mold group had some people worried that they would be off road and struggling through knee deep mud; needless to say their fears were unfounded as Dave tailored his route to the group he was leading. After a ride out to the cafe at Mickle Trafford and enjoying quiet lanes and cycle paths there was quite a contrast as Dave used his local knowledge to lead the group successfully past Chester Station and out across the river.

Lowri Evans

----- ooOoo -----

Bob Cliff Memorial Cheshire Cycleway Ride



Sue Booth writes:

16 members of Chester CTC completed the 100 mile route last summer, led by shorts Dave (as he is getting to know the route well now!)

"Here are my Tweets as we completed the day".

- 10:16 Delamere done, 87 miles to go. Sometimes it even stops raining!
- 11:16 am Coffee stop Great Budworth, 76 miles to go! 15 riders in our group, still smiling!
- 12:50 pm Somewhere in Cheshire drying out now! 62 more
- 1:10 pm Have climbed old wizard hill, beautiful but gosh! Am hot now!!
- 1:52 pm Bacon and egg baps at Bollington. Brilliant!! 45 done, 55 to go - nearly half way!!
- 3:05 pm Over halfway and Macclesfield hills conquered. 48 left
- 3:44 pm Extremely windy now, in our faces. May be a long 41 miles
- 4:41 pm 32 miles to go, at Hassell Green. Snack bar and energy drink quick stop
- 6:18 pm Not far now, 17, but seems so far!!!
- 6:55 pm Many stiff knees and shoulders. Eaton with a mere 13 to go!
- 8:16 pm WE ALL DID IT HURRAH!!! My goodness, legs tingling. Time for a drinky, bar is open :-D

----- ooOoo -----



Christmas 2013 Quiz Results

The tie at the top was broken by the toss of a coin and Stuart Roberts won it with 50 points out of a maximum of 51. "Congratulations Stu" and to all those who took part; they certainly showed up the alakefic* majority who were too uninterested or idle to put pen to paper, even though there was a good prize available.

Stuart Roberts and David Matthews - 50
 David Collinson - 49
 John Mawer - 48
 Des James - 46
 Ifor Jones - 45

*Those who have served in HM forces will know what this means! **David Ackerley**

No.	Answer	Points
1	Hilda	1
2	a. Sir Chris Hoy	3
	b. Track Cycling	
	c. 7. (6 gold & 1 silver)	
3	Sir Tony Hall	1
4	Manchester City	1
5	Reading, Queen's Park Rangers and Wigan	3
6	Wales	1
7	Rt. Revd Justin Welby	1
8	Cambridge	1
9	a) Boston Marathon. B) 26 miles and 385 yards	2
10	Cardiff, Hull City and Crystal Palace	3
11	Vincenzo Nibali	1

No.	Answer	Points
12	a) Ruler of the World and b) Dawn Approach	2
13	Patrick Mercer	1
14	Her coronation	1
15	Lack of coal	1
16	a) Sir Bradley Wiggins. b) Injury/ill health	2
17	a) Utah, Omaha, Gold, Juno and Sword	7
	b) 06.06.44	
	c) Omaha	
18	USA	1
19	The 1 st weekend would clash with the start of Le Tour in Yorkshire	1
20	a) Novak Djokovic	2
	b) Serbian	
21	a) 1 mile. b). 1.5 miles	2
22	Ephraim Mirvis	1
23	Bala	1
24	The knot	1
25	a) Zulu, b) 24th Foot (South Wales Borderers) c) Stanley Baker	3
26	Cycles	1
27	The Marshall Plan	1
28	Shakespeare	1
29	3.28	1
30	a). Edward Elgar. b). Music. c). Hereford	3



Tasteless?

My wife recently suggested I go through my cycling garb as she had noticed that there was a load of "stuff" (jerseys) in my wardrobe which I never seemed to wear. I was immediately on the defensive wondering if my wardrobe space was being targeted and that as a none cyclist she would not understand that just because I didn't wear them doesn't mean that I can get rid of them. This is what I discovered.

First on my list of non-wearables is my "South African Jersey". I bought it in Johannesburg airport whilst waiting for a flight home after a none cycling holiday. At that time the Wednesday Section had a South African visitor riding with



us and we had become good friends. (Anyone remember Arnold Stark?) It is a very colourful jersey representing the South African flag with bright yellow, red, green, blue and dashes of white and black. What a way to surprise Arnold. I thought he would probably fall off his bike when he saw me dressed up in his national flag. Well I did wear it and Arnold

Tasteless? ... cont'd



was suitably impressed. Ah he asked, you must have ridden the Argus. I am afraid I had to admit ignorance having then never heard of the Cape Argus. This was a pretty poor admission when the Argus claims to be the biggest annual cycling race in the world with often over 30,000 participants.

Like me Arnold was no spring chicken but he and his wife rode the Argus as often as they could. Because they lived in Johannesburg, security and safety issues prevented them from training freely and so they did most of their training on a turbo. This jersey is gaudy and loud and I do like the colours but I think my reluctance to wear it relates to the fact that I can anticipate conversations along the following lines.

"Oh did you ride the Argus?"

"No"

"So where did you ride in South Africa?"

"I didn't"

"So why are you wearing a South African Jersey?"

Speechless again.

I found two other jerseys which took me back to my effort at le Jog in 2007. The first was a birthday present from my daughter which she had given to me on just 4 days before commencement of this epic ride. Oh that's really nice said I but with innermost thoughts about how could I possibly have the bottle to wear this. You can wear this in the Highlands or when you get to John O'Groats said she? What was it? "Un maillot a pois rouges" ? A red polka dot jersey . (Googled the French version to be honest) I rather like the jersey but to wear it on a club ride would be like waving a red rag to a bull. I can hear the rumbles now. "King of the mountains eh? We shall see".



between myself and Mark Cavendish here because my sprinting is not the tops either! Get it?). So to be sure I get a nice peaceful ride it stays in the wardrobe.

What was the second jersey from le Jog? Well if you can imagine a seamstress making a jersey out of a lycra Union Jack with wording in a panel in the back "Lands' End to John O'Groats" you have it. To be honest it is far too gaudy for my taste and seems to me that you are making a statement that you have done something special. In reality almost

Sure I can climb hills but in the same manner as Mark Cavendish. At the back of the peloton and hoping to get in on time.

(Oh incidentally, I am not making a comparison



Vet's 100 a few years ago and one of the group was wearing a jersey emblazoned with Mount Ventoux. I planned to join a CTC tour the following year which included the famous climb. I liked the look of the jersey and made a note of it in my little black book and for some reason noted the elevation of 1908m clearly printed thereon.

I joined the tour and completed the climb and recall going into a bike shop in Malaucene to buy my jersey. I was delighted to find one but showing an elevation of 1912m. Ok whatever, maybe the mountain had grown in the last couple of years .



On my return to UK and wearing my jersey for the first time, I pointed out the anomaly to a colleague who jibed "The other guy probably only rode up to the first level car park!"

I do wear this jersey but infrequently because this is another famous climb which many riders have completed and I think carries an element of bragging but I am not a natural braggart. (I don't think so anyway). The other reason is that we have one regular rider who frequently holidays in France and tells me he has ridden it ONLY three times. Furthermore



in relative terms I am a newcomer to this cycling lark and I rub shoulders with those who have ridden almost every famous climb in Europe and elsewhere.

Co members of CTC C&NW committee

might not believe it but I sometimes know when it's appropriate to keep my mouth shut!

I have told you about the tops I do not use but I also have favourites which are a set of three I bought about 10 or even

Tasteless? ... cont'd



more years ago from a local cycling clothes manufacturer and supplier called "Parrot". These are long sleeved jerseys in 100% polyester, each in boring monocolours of either red, blue or yellow but I dote on them. I can use them three quarters of the year and do so wearing two at a time if it is chilly. I have been known to wear all three. They have been regularly used for 10+ years and thrown into the washing machine after each ride. (Confession - on cycling holidays they might have seen two or three rides without a wash!). Unfortunately they are now showing signs of falling apart.

They have been darned, stitched and patched and surely but regretfully must shortly be consigned to the redundant section of the wardrobe. So it might not be too soon before you see a cyclist, dressed in a union jack or even a red polka dot jersey or even one implying that he had ridden the famous Cape Argus. It might be me.

Is my wife going to get to use any space from my wardrobe?

No chance!

Brian Lowe



----- ooOoo -----

Just a reminder for all those budding photographers out there

75th Anniversary Open Photographic Competition

A great opportunity to share your cycling photographs and possibly win a prize!



THEME OF THE COMPETITION

"THE SPIRIT OF CYCLING, 2014"

Prizes: Two prizes of £30 and £25

and

A Junior Prize worth £25

Competition Rules

1. Amateur photographers only
2. Closing date **WEDNESDAY 1ST OCTOBER 2014**
3. No more than THREE entries per individual
4. Hard copies only
5. Maximum size A4 (unmounted)
6. A signed entry form must accompany EACH entry
7. Junior entries: age under18 on 2 November 2014
8. The Judges' decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into
9. Prizes will be presented at the AGM on **2nd NOVEMBER 2014**

10. The Awards Committee reserves the right not to make any award
11. The Awards Committee cannot accept responsibility for entries lost or damaged in the post
12. Chester and North Wales CTC reserves the right to display or publish any of the photograph(s), which will be suitably attributed to the photographer(s)
13. Prize winning entries will be stored in the Chester and North Wales CTC Archives
14. Other entries cannot be returned unless accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope and suitable packing, or they can be collected at the AGM

Entry forms may be obtained from:

The Club's website - by email from David Ackerley on: vega27@btinternet.com
or by phoning David on 01829 770224

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The North Sea Route

The North Sea Route, opened in mid 2001, is a 6000km cycle link of England, Holland, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Norway and Scotland. In that order, because we cycled 4400km of the route starting at our front door, in Cheshire, England and finished at Stavanger in Norway. Anti clockwise was a lucky selection as we had wind assistance in England, crosswinds in Holland and part of Germany, then assistance in north Germany and in Denmark, Sweden and Norway. There was an additional advantage, in that after crossing the Pennines, and joining the Route, the ride was flat until Norway and by then we were accustomed to riding heavy, unwieldy bikes.



We clocked 4400km, but there were about 2000km remaining. The difference is due to using the Trans Pennine Route to join the North Sea Route at Hull and to diversions, sometimes by choice, sometimes by chance. We camped every night except for five, in nine weeks. At almost every campsite, there was an alternative to camping, huts of various sizes. In addition, along the route, there were youth hostels and guesthouses and hotels. We averaged 68km per day, cycling every day, our daily distance being determined by the availability of campsites.

It rained every day, but not all day, on the 13 days and 995km in England. It was extremely windy (it usually is, we were informed) every day and all day on the 6 days and 456km in Holland. In Germany we had some heavy rain but some hot sunshine on the 13 days and 905kms. In Denmark, we had tail winds and ideal cycling weather for the 8 days and 650kms we were there. By the time we had reached Sweden, I had discarded my vest. We were there for 6 days and 367kms. In Norway we had temperatures in the high 20s and the best summer for 100 years, another 19 days and 1034kms.

I did not wish to carry excess weight, as without provisions, my bike and bags weighed 40kgs. So we proposed starting off with only the Sustrans guidebooks and maps, acquiring others as needed. The Dutch map had routes clearly defined, without obscuring road numbers and had the advantage of showing all of the country. The German Radweg books of Germany and Denmark and the Norwegian Sykkelguide books had the double disadvantage of being strip maps (fine if you keep on the strip) and overprinting of routes obscuring the roads and road numbers. It would have been better merely to highlight the routes. Swedish route guides, we were not able to obtain. A brief description of the route had to suffice. Route way marking must have been a tremendous task, but signposts were, in many instances, missing or hidden, small, and usually too close to the change of direction, without warning. Overshooting was common.

In southern England, we cycled on quiet, traffic free roads, which we did not realise existed. Only in cities, was traffic a hazard. Routes were fairly well signed, but there were few cyclists. In Holland the contrast was marked. We anticipated that the routes would be well used, but at times there was congestion on the specially designed, traffic free fietspad. In Germany the sea defences continued, providing the infrastructure for recreational cycling, as in Holland. There was a new frustration, gates which only opened 45 degrees and were counter balanced to close. In Germany the route traversed picturesque towns and seaports. Denmark was another country of intensely used paths and the scenery changed. The dykes and farmland gave way to sand dunes. The undulations began and we started to use our gears. Where the surface was coloured blue, cyclists had priority. We had the novel experience of entering roundabouts with traffic stopping at every entry to give us free passage. In Sweden we were unable to obtain a route map so we left Goteborg on a cycle path with a green 'Sverige cykelspart' sign, assuming this to be the route to Svinesund in Norway. We were wrong. After many kilometres, we found out how wrong. It was the route to Stockholm. Reference to an atlas will disclose the magnitude of our error. There were fewer cyclists in Sweden, fewer cycle paths and more cars. Riding on the road through Grebbensted a car door was opened and felled me. It was a Volvo. My front and rear pannier bags saved my bike from damage and my helmet saved my head. I got to my feet with only minor grazes.

Before we set off, I thought that parts of the route might be boring, due to it being so flat. It never was monotonous, because of the changing scenery, the variety of surfaces, the people we met, the different languages, different currencies and, not least, because it was not flat.

I knew, from previous experience, that Lincolnshire was not flat. Neither was the rest of southern England, we found. At times, we had to change gear in Holland and Germany, and



The North Sea Route ... cont'd

when we came to Denmark, where the route traversed high sand dunes, we struggled. Sweden was not mountainous, but certainly testing and in Norway the route became more of a challenge. As we progressed north in Norway, the scenery became more dramatic and the riding more difficult. We walked up many of the climbs.

In England, there were few miles of dedicated cycle paths. The road surface on the B, and occasionally, A class roads we used was sealed asphalt. But there were a couple of grassed bridle paths in Lincolnshire. The disused rail track, Marriott's Way was 16 miles of compressed gravel to Norwich and the 3mile Ivanhoe Trail south of Colchester, did not pose riding problems. In Holland and Germany most of the route is on non-motor, asphalt fietspad and radweg. In places, there is a choice along the dykes. It is possible to ride along the banked

side alongside the sea, on top of the dyke or along the base on the landward side. In Denmark, just after crossing the border, we had our first encounter with deep gravel. But we also rode along smooth asphalt. One day, following the route into a forest, and we were confident that we were on course, the asphalt became broken, next came ball bearing-like gravel, then sticky sand and mud, and finally a broad swathe of grass disappearing onto the distance. We gave up and retraced to a road. Sweden's cykelspåret was mainly on minor roads, or alongside main roads, all asphalt surfaced. The Norwegian Sykleguide reassures riders 'that over half the route can be classified as easy cycling'. As we progressed north in Norway, riding became more difficult. Three days before the end of the tour, in one day, I had used bottom gear (29) 14 times. It had not been low enough, so I walked.

Alan Johnston

----- ooOoo -----



Be Careful out there!

A couple of 'not so nice' things to report where we need to be vigilant:

Still getting the odd report of drawing pins and carpet tacks on the Greenway so keep your eyes open or your tyre levers 'at the ready'!

This next report is more than just worrying.

Siobhan Delamare suffered concussion after being hit in the throat by a rope deliberately stretched across prom!

A Merseyside cyclist told of the horrific moment she was catapulted off her bike by a rope trap that caught her around the throat.

Siobhan Delamare spoke of how she was lucky to be alive after being released from hospital, having suffered concussion in the fall.

The 23-year-old had been cycling from New Brighton back home to Rock Ferry at around 7pm when she hit the rope

from a life-ring that had been deliberately stretched across Egremont Promenade.

She suffered a concussion where she hit her head, and had been ordered to rest and not to drive for two weeks. She had grazes and cuts on her throat and arms where the rope hit and is covered in bruises, and is currently struggling to talk or swallow due to the swelling.

The primary school teaching assistant, who was not wearing a helmet, said she was knocked unconscious after being flung back and landing on her head.

A CT scan revealed swelling on her brain at the point of impact but X-rays showed no bones were broken.

Siobhan revealed she was only told the rope had been set up deliberately after she had arrived at Arrowe Park hospital.

She said: "I feel disgusted. I was told the people involved videoed it as well. I'm there on the promenade all the time, I feel like it could've happened any time".

A 13-year-old girl from the Wallasey area and a 15-year-old girl from Prenton were arrested on suspicion of assault and "depositing a thing on a highway causing injury or danger to a user".

They were bailed pending a referral to the youth offending team.

----- ooOoo -----

Tandem Rider

A tandem rider is stopped by a police car.

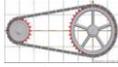
"What've I done, officer?" asks the rider.

"Perhaps you didn't notice sir, but your wife fell off your bike half a mile back . . ."

"Oh, thank God for that," says the rider - "I thought I'd gone deaf!"

----- ooOoo -----

How to Ride a (Fixed Gear) Bike - Part 3 (Unexpected*) Tales of the Unexpected



(*Unexpected on account of the previous Editor's retirement, but his replacement, and the replacement's partner, being enthusiastic Fixedistas.)

It is a truth universally acknowledged that in any mechanical system, with the best of intentions and maintenance régime, occurrences will, erm, occur. Murphy and his Law are very much part of cycling lore and of course the mantra "if it ain't broken why fix it" has long been a source of inspiration to slackers, dilettantes and the author himself.

So even with most of the components likely to fail having been eliminated from the Fixed Gear bike, ie the derailleurs (front and rear), gear levers, additional chainrings and the rear brake (if you're riding a "proper" fixed) or both brakes if you're riding Hard Core (illegal and dangerous), there is still the potential for things to go wrong.

The components that remain to cause problems are the wheels (and tyres) and the transmission. The author is currently spending the winter months on 48 spoke wheels (yes, a total of 96 spokes, built by Alex at Fitzrovia Bicycles) which suggest extreme pessimism but which, on the contrary he maintains are stylish, aerodynamic and a reaction against the minimal spoke "Factory Built" wheels that adorn the sleekest of road bikes.

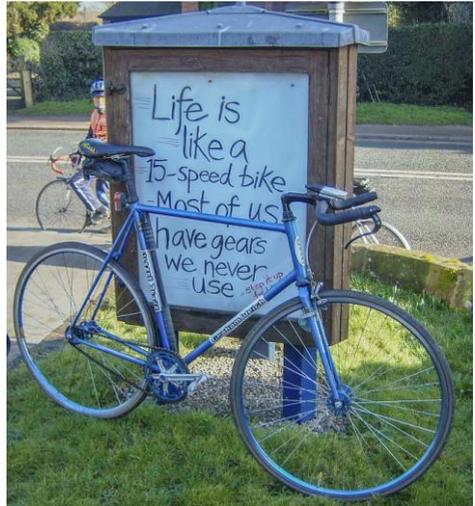
It's a fact that one broken spoke out of 48 leaves enough spokes to keep the rim straight enough to allow the wheel to pass through the frame. One broken out of just a dozen though and you've had it - your wheel will be too out of shape to turn freely without rubbing the frame. And if your frame is carbon ?

The transmission on the other hand is another matter; any problems here and it is not just your forward progress that suffers, your legal second brake is the transmission. Consequently the most serious of occurrences usually involve the transmission and I will detail some of these in the following actual True Life Case Histories.

Case History 1: rider A on a lovely blue Graham Weigh (Reynolds 653 tubing, originally built for Graham Weigh himself when the Manchester Velodrome first opened) was descending the Terrig Hill between Treuddyn and Nercwys (in the foothills of the Clwydians near Mold) when the chain became dislodged and jammed in such a way as to cause the rear wheel to lock. Fortunately the rider was able to stop in a short distance and the tyre remained undamaged.

The wheels in this case, whilst very chic and classy in appearance, were slightly unconventional in that they were Shimano BMX hubs paired with Mavic Open Pro rims (36H) and built by "Bricky" (Colin Brick at The Wheelbase in

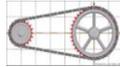
Bebington). "Chic and classy?"; yes, both the hubs and rims were obtained in anodised blue and looked great when paired with the metallic blue frame and matching chainring, also BMX.



The seemingly alien world of BMX can, in fact, provide some components for Fixed Gear bikes: some of the chainrings used have been in the 130mm BCD (Bolt Circle Diameter of the 5 mounting bolts) size that is a Shimano standard and the hubs are, of course, single speed and are often 36 hole. There are two issues with hubs: the front is OK but the rear is usually 110mm across the locknuts instead of the usual 120mm; a bit of juggling with spacers and compromising on a width of about 115mm (steel frames have a bit of "give") makes everything fit. The other issue is the thread for the sprocket. BMX hubs take a freewheel which means that your fixed sprocket will screw on but there will not be a separate thread for the locking.

A fixed hub lock ring thread is of a slightly smaller diameter (so that the sprocket can pass over it) and is a reverse thread so that it can't unscrew if there is any unscrewing of the sprocket The solution when using BMX hubs is to use a standard UK bottom bracket locking as the locking for the sprocket (they both have the same threads). Tightening the locking against the tightened sprocket means that it is very difficult for the combination to come loose

And so, back to the Case History. Rider A unjammed the chain, fitted it back over the chainring and sprocket and then retensioned it, which is what he should have checked at the start of the ride, and which is why it unshipped.



How to Ride a (Fixed Gear) Bike ... cont'd

Satisfied that everything was now hunky-dunky he continued down The Terrig, maybe slightly more gingerly, over the narrow stone chicane of a bridge at the bottom and up the other side accelerating as his confidence returned and just before the junction with the lane up to Black Mountain a final sprint over the crest suddenly found him over the handlebars and lying in the road.

What happened? When the chain jammed on the sprocket and the tyre locked on the road, the sprocket tried to unscrew itself. The BB locking stopped it going too far but it did unscrew a little bit. Still tight against the locking it allowed him to ride up the hill after the bridge, with the help of the momentum from the downhill section though. However, the force of the final flourish was enough to cause the sprocket to rotate forward and when that resistance to the rider's effort was removed there was only one possible reaction: more forward motion of the rider than there was of the bike.

Moral: when replacing an unshipped chain always give a (forward) stamp on the pedal to check sprocket tightness. And, oh yes, ensure correct chain tension before you set off on a ride.

Case History 2: rider B on a lovely white Corrado (Dedacciai Zero tubing, originally built for Matt Brammeier, the Liverpool Irish Continental Pro) was descending the Halkyns from Rhosesmor down to Middle Mill near Northop when the chain became dislodged and dropped between the sprocket and the flange of the hub. The rider was able to "freewheel" and came to a stop at the bridge near the Mill.



In this case the wheels were IRO double sided hubs in anodised blue paired with Velocity Deep-V rims in white (32H) again built at Fitzrovia Bicycles. A great visual combination on this very white machine with accents of blue. On investigation, the sound of spokes breaking during the freewheeling turned out to be just that: the chain had managed to break off a couple of spokeheads which

necessitated a little tweaking with a spoke key on the multi-tool after unscrewing the broken spokes. This was sufficient to allow the ride to continue as planned after resetting the chain. This was the last of quite a few similar instances due to the EAI (Euro Asian Imports) sprocket with shallow teeth. The author is aware of the problems with similar sprockets and advises the use of Villiers sprockets of the pointed variety.

Moral: use a sprocket with the longest teeth possible; short teeth are only necessary for bikes with derailleurs where you actually want the chain to be able to leave a sprocket. And, oh yes, ensure correct chain tension before you set off on a ride.

Case History 3: this involves rider B on the lovely white Corrado again, this time ascending a hill up to Broadway Tower near Chipping Campden on a 160km Audax in the Cotswolds, exactly 7 days after Case History 2. Significantly, it turned out.

On the steepest section of the climb rider B suddenly found himself travelling over the handlebars and then lying in the road. It has to be said that this excursion was preceded by a bang and the evidence for the bang was to be seen alongside the rider: a broken chain. More worryingly was the other evidence to be seen on the road: a suspiciously large amount of red fluid. Fortunately the other riders in the bunch had managed to avoid him.

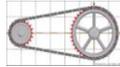
Examination of rider B showed no obvious cuts or lacerations. Closer inspection of the fluid revealed that it was diluted black currant juice. Rider B, conscious above all practicalities of the need for a Fixed Gear bike to be aesthetically correct and pleasing, and so not have any braze-ons for bottle cages, had found it necessary to carry a bottle in a rear jersey pocket, and it was this that he had landed on when he hit the road. This burst and was the source of the fluid.

The chain was repaired with some spare links and the Audax was completed without further mechanical mishap.

Coming so soon after Case History 2 it was felt that the two occurrences were linked: it seems that when the chain damaged the spokeheads, the spokes, in retaliation, damaged the chain, no doubt in gleeful anticipation of what might happen in the Cotswolds Audax. And so it did.

Moral: always carry spare links that suit your chain. From time to time carefully examine your chain after cleaning for cracks radiating from rivet holes, especially the left side of the chain which never seems to get as much attention as the right.

Case History 4: rider C on a lovely orange and yellow Graham Weigh (Reynolds 853 trapezoidal tubing, Campagnolo equipment ex-Dave Le Gry's throughout) was descending Racecourse Hill between Overton and Bangor-on-Dee at



How to Ride a (Fixed Gear) Bike ... cont'd

some speed when the chain became dislodged (*This is becoming monotonous. - Ed.*) and caught on the end of the crank. Although not obvious to the rider at that moment, the tension in the chain now bent the chainring and one of the spider arms of the Campag Pista chainset through a right angle.



What was obvious to rider C however was that he was no longer pedalling; this is worrying on a fixed. More worryingly still, neither was he freewheeling, another circumstance to be avoided on fixed.

In fact he was skidding at well over 20mph; given that he was riding 23mm Schwalbe Stelvios (rather than anything more substantial) this was a situation that would not continue for long. The riders behind, watching mesmerised, reported that the subsequent explosion was the most dramatic ever witnessed, with shreds of tyre and dust shooting sideways in a great cloud. And a stench of rubber in the nostrils.

But the drama was by no means over. With the tyre now in shreds, progress downhill continued on the rim, which, having a lower coefficient of friction than the now defunct tyre, did little to reduce momentum. And still being part of the "locked" transmission, the rim was gradually wearing away with a fearsome sound. And becoming a ghastly prelude to something altogether quite gruesome. And involving the NHS.

To the credit of the rider he managed to bring the machine to a standstill whilst remaining upright, very much a relief to his colleagues in front of him who could only *hear* the events unfolding behind.

The beautiful machine was a sorry sight: apart from the bent chain ring and spider, the shredded tyre, the rim which was worn away almost to the spokes (one of those lovely Mavic Open 4 CD rims, sadly discontinued) the rear of the frame, the chainstays and seatstays were bent in a curve due to the dynamic tension that had built up.



Unfastening the rear wheel allowed the frame to return more or less to its correct shape. Cold-setting by a technician has ensured that the frame is correctly in line and is now being ridden again. The chainset has been replaced by a Miche and the Mavic rim replaced with a similar Rigida.

For the first time the rider had to be rescued by his wife.

The moral: pretty much the same as the other Case Histories, ie ensure correct chain tension before you set off on a ride. (*Don't these riders ever learn? - Ed*) It should be noted, before anyone asks, that a jockey wheel type of chain tensioner such as a "Singleator" will not work: tension in the lower part of the chain will destroy it. Otherwise as long as you keep your chain in good condition, what could possibly go wrong?

The author is ever sensible of the warmest gratitude towards the readers of *The Link* who, by bringing him and others into their sensibilities, have been the means of uniting them.

Andy Polakowski
Mold

----- ooOoo -----

Little Boy

A little boy out riding his bicycle knocked down an old lady.

She was a bit shaken, but got up, dusted herself off, then turned to the little boy and said, "Don't you know how to ride a bike?"

"Yes", he answered, "but I don't know how to ring the bell yet!"

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Obituary



Dorothy Cliff

1933 – 2014

There cannot be many members of CTC still involved in running major local events when 80 years old. Yet it was at that age in June last year that

Dorothy oversaw what was to be her final contribution to Chester and North Wales CTC, namely, organising The Bob Cliff Memorial Cheshire Cycleway Rides. This she had done for almost a decade, putting her own 'stamp' on an event so named in honour of her late husband. Never having driven let alone owned a car, a bicycle was Dorothy's chosen mode of transport throughout her life. It enabled her to develop and enjoy a life-time's passion for the countryside and the natural world around her.

The only child of Edith and William Oldfield, Dorothy was born and grew up in Ellesmere Port, attending first the William Stockton School and later The Grange School. Much of her childhood was affected by the hardships of the Second World War. She recalled hiding under the stairs during air raids, and the unexploded bomb which fell on her school and interrupted her education. Shortly after leaving school she began clerical work in a local factory and was able to save for the bike she coveted and which was to foster her love of cycling.

Evidence of this manifested itself at her funeral. The large number of mourners who attended the United Reformed Church, Upton-by-Chester on 10th February witnessed a tribute to this commitment to cycling as soon as they entered the church – for there, on the altar, stood her Rotrax. This was the bicycle that she bought in 1955 from Davies Brothers in Chester (for £12.00!) and which she had ridden for the rest of her life. (In her later years, Dorothy even had it remodelled with a conversion into an open-frame so that she could continue with her cycling.) This Rotrax took her not only around Cheshire and Wales but on many youth hostelling and cycle-camping holidays both at home and overseas. Her first tour abroad, with her close friend Alwyn, was in Holland, followed later with a tour of Norway's fjord land – quite an undertaking for two young women in those days.

Tragedy struck all too soon in Dorothy's early cycling days when, in 1957, her then fiancé, Ray Cullen, was knocked off his bike and killed on the A41 at Eastham, Wirral. Dorothy never forgot him and always spoke warmly of him. Later, Dorothy joined the Cestrian Cycling Club where she was to meet her future husband, Bob. They married in 1961

enjoying a cycle-camping honeymoon in Switzerland (complete with a dramatic storm under the Eiger) before moving to Upton-by-Chester. It was here that they lived all their married life.

Cycle camping adventures at home and abroad continued – even when Stephen and later Janet were born. The family recount a cycle-camping adventure in the Isle of Man when Stephen was a toddler and his sister, Janet, only three months old – and that in the days before disposable nappies! This, as they say, was the first of numerous 'character-building' family cycling holidays.

Many readers will recall that, tragically, Bob died of cancer in 1993, leaving Dorothy to face over two decades of widowhood. It was typical of Dorothy's spirit that she set to in a commendably positive manner to overcome her untimely loss. As well as continuing with her cycling, she travelled to far-away places including Canada, China and cycling in New Zealand. Sometimes Dorothy travelled alone and sometimes with friends – such as when she completed the End-to-End with three women companions in the late 90s.

But there was more to Dorothy than being a cyclist and country-lover. She had a deep compassion for other people. This manifested itself when she became a counsellor with the Samaritans serving for some twenty years, eventually becoming Branch Secretary. She also regularly visited lonely elderly friends, and always made sure that her neighbours were taken care of in times of difficulty. As well as all this, Dorothy played an active part in a wide range of local societies. This encompassed a variety of interests, including walking, gardening and table tennis, together with membership of local history and environment groups as well as the Civic Trust. She was prominent in the local U3A and was its Chair for several years.

Dorothy's positive attitude to life can perhaps best be summed up by her reaction to being told last autumn that she was terminally ill and had not long to live. On returning home after hearing her bad news, she was upset when she remembered that she had forgotten her promise to visit a friend in hospital that day.

Those who valued Dorothy Cliff as a long term friend or perhaps came to know her only briefly in her later years will miss an interesting, likeable and caring woman whose influence touched many lives. Most of all, her daughter Janet and son Stephen and their families which she loved and cared for so much, will long mourn the loss of a mother and grandmother. It is to them, above all, that we offer our sincerest condolences.

Mike Cross

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In the next edition

In the next issue we will have the regular topics:

My Bike – let’s all see what’s special to you and why!

Letters to the Editor – what’s on YOUR mind?

Tech Tips – just some ideas that will make your life easier – have you any tips you can share with the rest of us?

Of course we will feature all those expeditions, best rides and any other cycling related anecdotes you may have – the more the better!

Also a couple of ‘specials’!

Group Riding

Imagine you’re riding in a group and someone shouts “Car Up” – what does that mean to the rest of us? I ride with and have ridden with lots of groups both club and audax level and to some people it can mean a car coming up towards us but to the rest of us it means a car is coming up behind us. Which?

Can we ride ‘two abreast’ – see what Highway Code Rule 66 states and how that can affect the relationship between us and the car drivers.

So, to try to remind riders on the ‘intricacies’ of group riding **Brian Lowe** has volunteered to submit a suitable article in the next edition.



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Watson’s Wanderers

This is the photo of Watson’s Wanderers just about to set off on one of their rides as featured on the Chester & North Wales website. Now, everyone in the area knows of Harry Watson and his vast experience of rides, roads and pubs but what do we know of Harry himself?

I’m intending to run a series of articles on our local ‘heroes’ who quietly and efficiently help the rest of us enjoy our rides so much and Harry has kindly volunteered to let us all know ‘what makes him tick’.

We all know about the life and times of the Eureka Café Two Mills but what about that other centre of cycling for us here in the area – Espresso Café in Gwersyllt?

This typically sees 15-20 riders on the main days of Tuesdays and Saturdays setting off in various groups and destinations – see Chester & NW CTC website.

This is where the Café Hoppers were inaugurated and later on the Wrexham Reivers so how have these groups developed over the years?

See the next edition where all will be revealed.

While we are on the subject of cafés etc, have any of those amateur historians amongst ever investigated what our favourite eating places were before we could buy tea and cakes from them? For example, Tilly’s in Bunbury, last years best café but what was it before it became a café?

Of course we will also feature all those expeditions, best rides and any other cycling related anecdotes you may have – the more the better!

As you know, the next edition of will be ready for Christmas this year so you’ve plenty of time to think up some good topics, write those letters and get those cameras out!

Don’t forget that subscribers to *‘the Link’* will be getting their personal copy of the ‘The Chain’ around June time. This relates and commemorates the 75 years of Chester and North Wales CTC so all in all, a good year to come!



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My Bike – ‘Members Machines’

This issue shows how Alan Oldfield built his dream



Machine: 1993 Raleigh M-Tax 700

Owner: Alan Oldfield

How long owned: Just over twelve months

How acquired: Frame bought from eBay. Most other equipment original from M-Trax 500 bought at same time. Wheels NOS period parts built up by CNWCTC resident wheel builder Tony Small.

What do I like the most?: The epitome of British manufacturing when we decide to make the best. A serious mountain bike when made, with innovations like the use of titanium tubing coupled with K2 chromoly, bonded, not brazed, to alloy lugs.

And the least?: Rather heavy compared to alloy bike, and known as 'The Royal Mail Tourer'.

Best ride: Bordeaux to Med tour in 2013, following the Garonne Lateral Canal and Canal du Midi.

Additional information: Turned into tourer & winter club bike when built up, changing tyres, and adding mudguards, renewing transmission parts: i.e. chain, cassette, bottom bracket; also gear cables and covers, and brake pads. All other parts original.

Only part needing replacement was the rear mech, which I was able to acquire NOS on eBay - from the time when Shimano parts were still made in Japan!

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