

THE SQUIRREL

Spring 2008



The Squirrel

Seamons Tour of the Berwyns: Saturday May 17th. 200km or 130km Audax from Kelsall. Contact Dave Barker.

Cheshire Cycle Way - June 7th / 8th.

It's nearly 5 years since we completed the whole of this 200 mile circuit in two days. The long overdue repeat is planned for Sat & Sun June 7th & 8th.

Plan: Drive out Sat (8.30 am) to **Tilston (Carden Arms)**. Start about **9.30am**. Ride anti clockwise to reach The Greyhound at Ashley about 6pm. Overnight in the comfort of your own bed. Sunday am. Ride out with fellow Tourist's section to lunch at Stoak (Bunbury Arms), on the Wirral. Continue via Neston and Chester to Tilston. Drive back. Anyone fancy a go just let John Hurley or Gordon Peake know, or just be there!

Check out <http://www.cheshire.gov.uk/cycling/cycleway/>

York Rally: June 21st-22nd, Seamons Diamond Jubilee Rides. Contact John Carberry. As part of the club's diamond jubilee year, a special commemorative ride has

been organised at the York Cycle Show in June - the largest cyclists' gathering in the country.

The Seamons Diamond Jubilee Invitation Ride will leave the rally showground at 9.30am (currently) on **Saturday, June 21**. The plan is to get 60 miles in on a round-trip to Harrogate.

This message is an appeal for you to get the date in your diary and for you to "get your kit on" and support the ride with as many Seamons riders as possible.

If you've not been to the rally before, it's a great social weekend with something for everyone in the way of cycling.

Details of what's on offer are available here: <http://www.ctc.org.uk/desktopdefault.aspx?tabid=4377> or you can ask anyone in the club who's been before.

If you want to make a weekend of it you can camp on the field, B&B it, YHA it, or even (like me) stay in a hotel!! Lots of choices and lots to do.

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And if you don't fancy a weekend talking sprockets and spokes, you could just turn up for the ride itself. It's no more than a two-hour drive to York from Alti. The rides all start from the same place - under the covered walkway called Ebor Way, on the racecourse.

Manchester to Blackpool Sunday 13th July: details from Dave Barker.

May 26th Treasure Hunt (Bank holiday)
August 16th Club Open 25'
October 4th Club Fun 10' 2-up at Kilton
October 5th Hill Climb Champs and Lunch
December 6/7th Montgomery Weekend
December 21st Christmas Hot-Pot

Cover: Robin Haigh at the finish of the Llangollen.

'The Squirrel' is the magazine of the Seamons Cycling Club. Editor— Pete Coles, 72 Bold Street, Altrincham, WA14 2ES. ☎ 0161 929 1462 or e-mail pete@thepot.freeserve.co.uk. Club website at www.seamons.org.uk from where the on-line version of this magazine is available in PDF format.

BITS AND BITS

Welcome to new members:

Or perhaps “Welcome back” to Dave Williams, Wendy Taylor and Alan Rogerson who have all been their separate ways, and now return. They figure in the club’s history as far back as 1963 for “Koj” Rogerson, and 1978 for Dave. Koj is mentioned in the Club Minutes for an outrageous Proposition (in my eyes) to “ban women from the Club as they are leading the young men astray”. And his Proposition was seconded by Johnny Pardoe! This man is now my husband! and Koj was his Best Man (twice). The Proposition was defeated (obviously) 20-2. Dave Williams in 1978, according to the Spring Squirrel that year, had his “long locks shorn”. Welcome back, and behave yourselves this time. Welcome to new members Simon Williams and Chris Thompson. We hope you will enjoy your cycling with us. No outrageous propositions please, and keep your hair tidy. Also, avoid black socks on club runs, unless it is a very wet day.

Older members will be saddened to hear of the death of Ann Chapman, wife of Roger, who has always been a stalwart member of the club. Roger thanks us for attending her funeral.

There is a road race on Twemlow lane on Tuesday 17/6/2008 so we have been forced to change our calendar. the changes are

The club 25 is on Tuesday 10/6/2008

There is no Club 8.75 tt on Wednesday 11/6/2008

There is a club 8.75 TT on Wednesday 18/06/2008

Hope this has not messed up to many training programs.

E-Mail Received from John Mercer:

Dear friends and relatives,

Just to let you know that I had a severe stroke on February 22nd of this year. I left hospital on March 18th.

I currently find it difficult to talk but can move around well and recently walked three miles! I have some difficulties with the right side of my face and my right hand and have been told by the stroke specialist that I must give up alcohol completely.

However I am undergoing speech therapy and making good progress, so hope to regale you with amusing stories soon.

I would like to apologise for not letting you know sooner and would like to ask you not to telephone for the moment as Sylvia's time is almost exclusively taken up with my care and arranging my treatment.

I am, however, looking forward to getting in touch with you all personally when I am better.

I would like to thank Sylvia, Clare and Beach for their continued support particularly during the first fortnight when they stayed up throughout the night and protected me from the nurses.

Beach has typed this letter.

I hope you are all well.

Love

John

PAPER GPS

If You Get Lost, Blame The Directions!

Who needs a fancy GPS system with an annoying robotic voice? Whether you're transcribing directions from the Internet or from an actual human, "Paper GPS" allows you to map out urban geography with organization and ease.

Less expensive than electronic GPS, and no batteries required! If Internet directions get you lost, there's no one to blame! 60 useful sheets per generous pad.



Matt Crampton at The World Championships Manchester 2008



The Tourists at Swettenham Ford



(Continued from page 6)

Castle.

Polite patient motorists!

Our ability to order meals in English and use of simple menu pointing.

Rob's regular ability – using his command of classroom Spanish – to confuse all the waiters especially a very puzzled lass from Solihull !!

Scallops Restaurant –Javea.

18 inch Cod to die for. In fact any 3 course meal including a bottle of wine each, for 8 Euros.

On the trip back it was decided as I (Gordon) had done previous years write ups, it was Rob's turn to put pen to paper. So if he's got around to it, you won't be reading this.

Role on next year.....

PS. Boydell on the spell check reveals Bordello! - - - Is that similar to a Pinnarello?

Gordon Peake



of us never got involved with the sprint we were strung out for miles along the route, Bucklow Hill used to see some off the back, the dash to Chester a few more, Marford and Gresford a lot more. And if by any chance you arrived at Ruabon in a group

The Way it Was.

After the Hill Climb usually the last event of the year, the hard riders and racing lads started the social season. Relax a bit, go dancing, fraternize with the opposite sex, have a few beers and play dart's matches etc the sort of thing most folk did all year.

Let's face it getting up at four o'clock in the morning; ride to the start of your chosen event, some carrying their sprints on the front axle of their bike, not quite normal is it? All in an attempt to beat the hour, win the event or in my case beat events.

Soon the Llangollen Burn up was born, early season training for the racing season; it seemed a good idea at the time. The racing lads and all the hard riders from the touring section turned up, most of the club really. The Route in those days A536 Bucklow Hill to Northwich, Hartford, Kelshall Village through Chester over the river Dee onto the B5445, Pulford Rossett Marford Gresford, north end of Wrexham, Rhostyllen to Ruabon, right and sprint for the Town Sign of Llangollen. Most

of six or seven riders, the next few miles and little hills made damn sure there was only three or four in for the sprint. Not everyone arrived at the café stop. Back over Worlds End or the Horseshoe Pass and a good day was had by all!!

I was a competitor on quite a few of these Club Runs. As it is the Seamons 60 years anniversary I thought it would be a Nice Idea to ride it again Big Mistake!! Unless you are reasonably fit the Llangollen run in March is not a good idea. March 2nd 2008 I was up early and it was a bright sunny morning but very windy South West/West not good for this ride. I decided to ride on my own, the tourist venue was Beeston but I decided to go a bit earlier (where's the sense in the man). The tourist route out to Beeston, Malpas, Bangor Isycoed and Johnstown to Ruabon is very a picturesque ride and I was looking forward to it but that wind changed that. I arrived at Ruabon and sure enough the last few miles and the little hills did the trick. I arrived at the café KNACKARD. No change there then. The Scrubber

Carberry's Boot Camp **Gordon's version!**

The tourists early season trip to Javea in Spain has become a regular calendar feature. The inevitable submission to the Squirrel has documented the various aspects of the visit in previous years. However a quick mention of John Carberry's organisation, the cosy villa, Eduard's Cycle Hire, Spanish sunshine, and the numerous food emporiums cannot be overlooked. They all help to make this long week a superb trip. A Boot camp it certainly is not! - This year we went about a month earlier at the end of February. Despite Jim Boydell's advice to the contrary this gamble paid off. We had nine warm and completely dry days. Only one afternoon did the temperature plummet and caught us a layer short. John's format is strict 9.30 starts, mid morning coffee stop. Lunch break, afternoon coffee and back to base around 5 ish for showers, laundry and a stretch on the veranda. Then it's off out in the car to tonight's restaurant of choice. Appetite is rarely a problem after anything between 50 and 70 miles completed. Seven consecutive days in the saddle planned with no rest day envisaged. John had set a comfortable target of 400 miles. With dry weather this was easily achieved. Between 6 of us, we clocked up well over **2,500 miles and not one puncture**. I can't recommend "Rock Hard" racing saddles for more than two days running. Luckily for me, Fred Foster had brought a softer saddle which had lay hidden in his suitcase. It saved me the torture of day three and saw the rest of the week out "under me". Fred regretted this gesture by day four but hadn't the heart to mention it or ask for it back. He only mentioned his regret at the week's end. What a gent!

Dave Barker (trip statistician and Spain trip virgin) had a different technique to stem off the worst of the saddle factor. Copious white gunk appeared from a huge pot each morning, strategically slopped on the chamois and then the whole thing raised and manoeuvred into position. A feat Dave performed with practiced grace, but it had me retreating to the

opposite end of the villa. Only once did this ritual go drastically wrong - giving rise to one of those very rare occasions when you'll hear Dave swear. Other occasions usually involve impatient motorists or the mention of deference to a monarch.

By day three the leg muscles complained for the first hour each morning, but by closely hugging the wheels of the relentless Rob Morton and determined Carberry, Dave and I managed to hang on and complete every inch planned for the week. Mike Brooks was hindered by a touch of grieving legs and Fred confessed to a slight loss of match fitness since retiring to Colwyn Bay.

The end of the week includes a "contingency day" without the bikes. Stuart Kay (part time Costa Blanca resident and our occasional seventh rider) had a hike planned! So for once we parted company with tarmac and after a full breakfast costing 2 Euros, and a car assist, we headed into the Bernia Mountains. It turned out to be a marvellous 5 hour trek with terrific views into the Spanish Sierra's and over the blue Mediterranean. We all (well nearly all) thought it brilliant. John however finds hiking a slow, pointless, sweaty pastime with no convenient cafes or toilets. I suspect losing the leader's two stripes for the day may have had something to do with his grumblings. The walk included a surprise scramble on hands and knees through a "forat". An 80 yard cave under a never ending ridge. You pop out on the other side of an unclimbable mountain ridge. The panoramic view as you emerge over Altea and the Med are simply stunning. A great picnic spot we decided.

Visit web site http://www.topwalks.net/en/bernia/bernia_1.htm for a taste.

We also found the ruins of an old Spanish Fort.

Other highlights of the week:

The Col De Rates climb and the miles of decent on silky tarmac to Castle de

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Tourist Trophy

Final standings for 2007

1. Gordon Peake	8
2. John Pardoe	7
3. Keith Wilkinson	6
John Carberry	6
Reg Blease	6
6. Dave Barker	5
Peter Coles	5
Roger Haines	5

The 2008 contest is under way. So far points have been picked up in the Tour of Spain (so to speak), the Llangollen tourist ride where President Reg played a blinder, the 50 in 4 and the Cheshire Cat Cyclo Sportive.

Upcoming events include the Cheshire Cycleway 2-day, the York rally which includes a Seamons 60th anniversary 60 mile ride, Manchester-Blackpool, local Audax rides and Cyclo sportives, and any other Club weekends, car-assisted rides, treasure hunts etc.

The big one is, of course, the Seamons Tour of the Berwyns, along with the new Seamons Llangollen Panorama:

on SATURDAY 17 MAY
from WILLINGTON HALL, KELSALL
Either TOUR OF THE BERWYNS 208km
start 8am
or LLANGOLLEN PANORAMA
135km start 8.30am

The Tour of the Berwyns is run on the classic international formula which specifies a minimum speed of 15 kph to qualify. You therefore have about 13 hours 50 minutes to get round a course which hits the hills before the first control at Garth (above Llangollen), and

then takes in Corwen, the Milltirr Cerrig pass, and some testing lumps round Llanrhaeadr (ie the Berwyns) before running down the Ceiriog valley to Chirk. The final 40 miles are across the Welsh borders and Cheshire to finish in Kelsall. You don't have to take as long as this. Some have done it in about 8 hours.

The shorter Llangollen Panorama, like all Audaxes in the 100 to 160km range, is aimed at intending/aspiring Audax riders and so has a slightly lower minimum speed, 12 kph. You've therefore got just over 11 hours to complete the ride.

The route is the same to Garth and for the next few miles along the Panorama.

It then drops into Llangollen before (sorry about this) a brutal, but unavoidable, climb onto the ridge and down to Chirk. The two routes then converge for the run back to Kelsall.

You have to enter in advance before 12 May. You need an Audax entry form downloadable from www.audax.uk.net; or obtainable from me on Club nights or at Rackhams on Sunday mornings (Dave Barker).

Entry fee: £5 which includes tea/coffee at the start, free car parking and subsidised refreshments at the finish.

What a bargain!



We need the Seamons to flood the entry for both events.



FIRST SUNDAY IN MARCH

No other event in the club calendar is as much talked about as the Llangollen thrash, traditionally held on the first Sunday in March and this year was no exception.

Sunday half-day section runs had been very well attended peaking at over 30 (so many in fact that the committee has decided that if there are over 22 riders in future the group must be split into two). In the three weeks leading up to the Llangollen extended runs had been held so a high turnout was expected on the day.

And so it was. Seventeen riders ready to tackle the headwind that awaited us. Each year more and more carbon frames appear, a great occasion for trying out ones new gear.

Roy Myers is confident that his new steed will help him descend Kelsall in the bunch and others hope that a little bit less weight will make all the difference.

I look around and to my dismay find that several of the riders I think I can beat are not

actually going on the ride and of those that are I reckon I can perhaps beat two. Ah well lets get going and see what happens.

Usually the lead pair out of Altrincham stays at the front for much longer than the “agreed” five minutes but not today, the lead changes quickly as the rider’s sample the headwind. Soon we get round the M6 roundabout and then we have single lane traffic flows at Sandiway where a Transit van forces its impatient way past us. Someone gets out of the saddle to honk, a wheel touches and down comes Martin Wiggan. The whole bunch stops whilst Martin gets his breath back (and Keith Bailey has a natural). We are soon on our way and as the pace picks up on the Kelsall by-pass we once again say goodbye to Roy.

Through-and-off starts as the road levels out and quite quickly some riders miss turns at the front. Onto the Chester by-pass and the pace picks up and we loose more riders. One of the first to go is Nick Crampton who admitted to not feeling well at the start. Son Robert is still hanging on but at this stage not coming through.

As we approach Wales and for me the dreaded climb of Marford I wonder what lies in store. Ian Udall has confided that he doesn’t intend to attack on the climb but about one third of the way up Martin Wiggan tries to open a gap followed by Adam Rycroft but the bunch is evenly matched and the headwind strong. I dig in and find I can stay with the leaders but we say goodbye to several hopefuls, some not to be seen again today.

We are still doing 17mph on the climb but the road levels out and we all get through the traffic lights in the next village together. However as we approach the huge roundabout leading onto the Wrexham bye-pass traffic is queuing at the lights but the two lanes leading onto the bye-pass are clear. I take a chance and power up the ramp onto the dual carriageway. I know that I cannot last long into the



onds I start to think its mine only for powerhouse Robin to take it from me by a length. For him it's his 22nd (yes 22nd) win. I am delighted to be second. Dan consoles himself that he was just in the wrong position for the finish.

At the café we regroup. Ian comes in next. Paul just couldn't stay with him. Other finishers are Keith Bailey, Adam, Alan Blackburn who helped Nigel Harrop with a puncture Rob Crampton (looking like a candidate for the Hammering of the Year award), Martin

wind by myself but I am quickly joined by Robin Haigh and Dan Mathers. We start working together and after a couple of minutes I look behind and we have a good break. I can see two riders together who I later find out were Ian and Paul Smith but we are working well although our speed varies enormously into the wind.

Wiggan who still looks pale from his fall and who sensibly has called his wife to take him home by car. Audax rider (and the only person with mudguards) Rob, also makes it looking quite fresh, as do Basil and Charles. In fact only Roy, Nick and Nigel Kelly don't make it.

I miss a couple of turns but still try and help when I do get to the front and we soon turn off the bye-pass onto the final run in to the finish. Once again I expect to get dropped as the road heads skywards but it becomes obvious that my two colleagues don't have much more left in the tank than I do. I again dig deep to get over the last of the climbs, confident now that I will at worst get third place as nobody else will catch us. I miss another couple of turns on the run in but when I do go through I again try hard to keep the pace up and thus help us stay clear.

Matt Crampton arrives at the café to take Robert home by car. They will pick dad up somewhere near Chester. Carol and Kath join Johnny Pardoe and shortly before we are to leave the President himself arrives and is invited to enjoy a photo shoot with the café owner and the first three.

The last slight rise is over and it's now down hill to the Llangollen sign. Dan is at the front and I'm at the back, the finish is getting ever closer and no one makes a move we round the last bend and can see the sign (with Pardoe camera ready) I can't wait any longer so launch my attack. For a few wonderful sec-

I get my way and the group agree to head home over Worlds End. The sun is shining still and we should have the best of a tailwind. JKP joins us as far as the ford for a photo shoot then heads back down hill to join Reg and the girls. We swoop down off the moors and new rider Rob helps us as I try to remember the way and he shows us a back road route to the south of Chester where I take my leave of the bunch. Its over for another year and we will all have our thoughts of what may have been (all that is except the maestro of this event Robin!).

Keith Stacey

59th Annual Dinner



What a superb job Sara and Louise did in organizing our annual dinner and prize giving this year. The return to the Cresta Court seemed to be welcomed by most people and even though the numbers were slightly down on last year, aided by the amount of alcoholic beverage consumed over the evening, a most enjoyable time was had by all.

Peter Coles appeared to find a new use for the rear pockets of his extremely smart dress cycling top, in the storage of reserve supplies of bottles of beer (is this Peters big secret, real ale in his water bottles?).

Derek Hodgins as our guest of honor had us all so enthralled with his life story that we

were all riveted to our seats for so long that bladder weakness started to set in (or was it alcohol withdrawal symptoms). No sooner had Derek finished than there was a mass exodus to the toilets and a mad scramble for the bar. Poor Carol Pardoe had to don her school teacher's hat to round everybody up and herd them all back into the main room for the prize giving ceremony.

In the absence of Jim Boydell this year, Keith Stacey did an admirable job in presenting all the prizes and awards assisted by our guest of honor Derek Hodgins. I myself presented a special award of the rampant squirrel and certificate to Keith Wilkinson after his most unfortunate encounter with that certain rodent, not to make too light of the matter we all do wish you a full and speedy recovery Keith.

The mini-bike race during the disco interlude was organized by Keith Stacey, culminating in a pursuit between our Commonwealth Games silver medalist Matt Crampton and his younger brother Rob, resulting in a most embarrassing defeat for Matt (short legs

being a distinct advantage for the younger Crampton).

Once again the photo display was organized by Dave Barker and Malc McAllister. This does involve a great amount of work and I know is much appreciated by everyone including myself. Also a big thanks to John Pardoe for once again providing us with a glimpse of all our yesterdays in the form of the club archives.

Next year is our Diamond Jubilee Dinner again at the Cresta Court and I hope to see as many of you as possible at this special event, bye for now from your chairman
Harvey S. Maitland

Cyclists toast 60 years in saddle

Dean Kirby

12/ 2/2008

A CYCLING club set up by a group of pals in 1948 is celebrating its diamond anniversary with nearly 130 members on its books.

Friends set up the [Seamons Cycling Club](#) in Altrincham in a bid to stay fit and enjoy the Cheshire countryside after the Second World War.

Now riders young and old are celebrating 60 years on the road.

Founding member Reg Blease, 75, said: "The club changed my life. I joined in 1948, after it was set up by Bob Richardson, who was to become my brother-in-law, and a few other people.

"We didn't know at the time if it would last 10 years, 20 years or 30 years, but I'm still cycling now and the club is going from strength to strength."

The Altrincham district now known as Oldfield Brow overlooks an area locals called Seamons Moss.

It was here in 1945 that a community centre was formed in an old school house and a cycling section took root.

Section

Within a few years it became obvious the cycling section was getting bigger than the community centre, so in 1948 the riders broke away and the Seamons club was born.

Grandfather Reg, a former painter and decorator, has notched up an estimated 300,000 miles, the equivalent of cycling round the world 12 times, since he signed up.

He has shared his love of cycling with wife Vera, who he met thanks to the club, and the couple regularly go out on their tandem.

Members go on rides across Britain and abroad. They even have a Commonwealth medallist among their numbers. Matthew Crampton, from Didsbury, won silver in the team sprint event at Melbourne in 2006.

The 21-year-old's dad, Nick, 47, brother Robert, 15, and sister Jessica, 13, are also members. .

They are among those celebrating the 60th anniversary year, which began at the club's annual dinner on Saturday. Nick said: "The club is great. It really brings the family together and cycling is brilliant for the kids."

From the M.E.N.



The youngest and oldest members of Seamons Cycling Club Jessica Crampton,13, and Reg Blease, 76



CLUBRUNS



DATE

HALF-DAY

TOURING SECTION

04 MAY	HOPE	CHESTER
11 MAY	TWO MILLS	PADDOCK FARM
18 MAY	PADDOCK FARM	WRENBURY
25 MAY	DELAMERE	HOPE
01 JUNE	CAT&FIDDLE	TILSTON
08 JUNE	POOLE MARINA	STOAK *
15 JUNE	ASTBURY	LONGNOR
22 JUNE	ROSE FARM	MILLERS DALE **
29 JUNE	BUXTON	100 IN 8
06 JULY	BEESTON	IPSTONES
13 JULY	WINCLE MINN	SOUTHPORT
20 JULY	DAGFIELD FARM	MONEYASH
27 JULY	HOLLANDS	WHITMORE
03 AUGUST	TATTENHALL	19 GATES
10 AUGUST	BLAZE FARM	WHITCHURCH
17 AUGUST	NANTWICH MARINA	TIDESWELL
24 AUGUST	MEERBROOK	BANGOR ISYCOED
31 AUGUST	RADWAY GREEN	HARTINGTON
07 SEPTEMBER	CAT&FIDDLE	TWO MILLS
14 SEPTEMBER	TWO MILLS	HATHERSAGE
21 SEPTEMBER	HOPE	CHESTER - BOB RICHARDSON MEMORIAL RUN

- * Cheshire Cycleway two day ride (contact Gordon Peake for details)
- ** CTC York Rally + The Seamons Diamond Jubilee Invitation Ride will leave the rally showground at 9.30am on Saturday, June 21. The plan is to get 60 miles on a round-trip to Harrogate.

