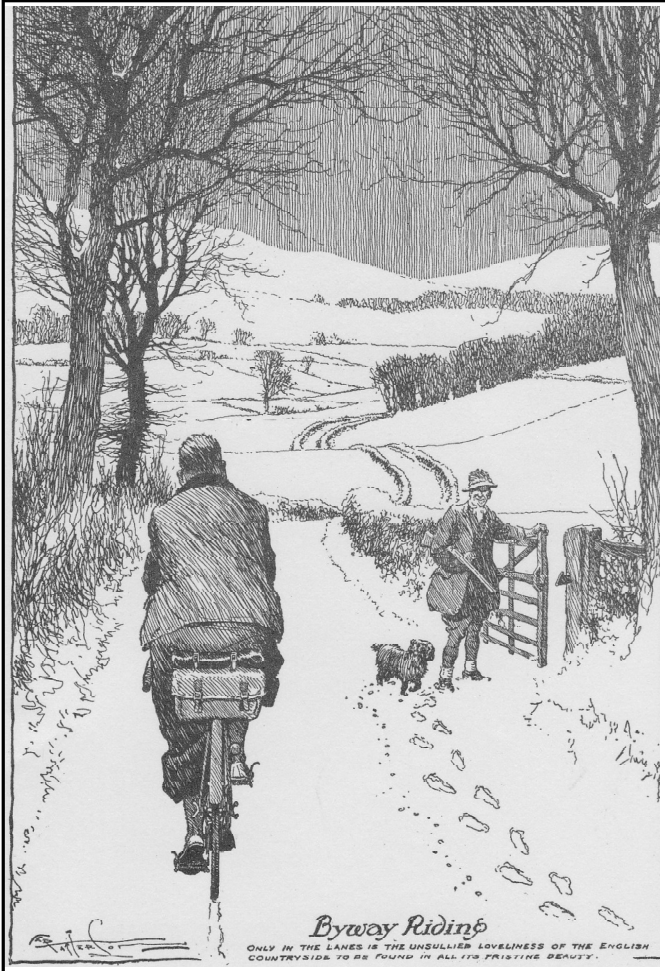


THE SQUIRREL



Diamond Jubilee Year
CHRISTMAS 2008

EDITORIAL

As discussed at the AGM, and subsequent committee meeting, Carol and I will edit the final two issues of the Squirrel in this, the Club's 60th Year. That takes us to the end of March, when the situation will be reviewed. In the meantime, a vote of thanks should go to our retiring technical editor, Peter Coles, who has kept the Squirrel going these past four years.

We have heard through the cycling grapevine that former Editor, Jim Boydell, is to be awarded a special Certificate of Honour by the CTT (formerly RTTC) for his valuable contribution to the sport of time-trialling over many years. Congratulations, Jim, and justly deserved.

The magazine displays well the diversity within the club, from time-trialling, road-racing and women's racing, to track nights at the velodrome, mountain-biking, touring and weekends away, with well-attended club runs every Sunday, and sometimes in the week as well! TheSquirrel is only as good as its contributors, so we would like to thank all those members who have sent us copy. Sit back and enjoy this bumper Christmas edition.

We wish you all a very happy Christmas, and many safe and enjoyable miles in 2009.

John and Carol.

And a word (or more) from the 'remote compiler'...

This magazine comes to you courtesy of the miracle of the broadband internet whereby all the material, text, cartoons and photos have winged their way from the Pardoes to the south coast for me to put together into the format we call the Squirrel. It's great to see that the club continues to prosper and we make no apology for reprinting a couple of articles from the past. The Able Bodied Seamons article appeared in Cycling in November 1965 and the fact that most of those mentioned are still involved with the club demonstrates the loyalty that the club engenders. Note the fact that the total membership at that time was between 30-40! My how we've grown. The other article 'In The Beginning' was penned by the late Bob Richardson for the 50th Anniversary of the club and we thought it was worth a reprint as we have acquired so many new members since then who are probably unaware of our beginnings and even the origins of the name and the reason for our (slightly) bizarre emblem. Yes, there really were red squirrels in Oldfield Brow in the late forties. There's plenty of new stuff to balance the nostalgia and the club seems to have a bright future with a committee that is very forward looking, a growing female membership and a plan to attract more younger members. I follow the fortunes of the club and its riders on various websites and congratulate (in no particular order) Ian Udall for being that member who volunteers and is not afraid of taking on some commitment; Allan Blackburn for the superb job he has made of updating the club website and keeping it bang up to date (very important to a remote member) and finally to Matt Crampton for his sensational riding in the World Cup and revolution meetings. Did I really hear correctly that he had won 15,000 euros for that keirin? I think we got a fiver for a '12'hour win! We hope that you enjoy the latest incarnation of the magazine and on a personal note I look forward to meeting up with you all at the Anniversary Dinner. You **have** all got your tickets booked, haven't you?

All the best for the Festive Season Jim Boydell



Santa's getting a sat-nav for Christmas

"The Squirrel" is the official magazine of the Seamons Cycling Club whose clubruns leave every Sunday morning from Rackhams. Further details available from the club website at: <http://www.seamonscc.co.uk>
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All photos supplied by John Pardoe & Darren Buckley.
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BITS AND BITS

Don't lose your bottle:
After taking a break on Withington Green during the Jubilee Rides, Cath managed to leave her bottle behind on the bench. Imagine her surprise a week later, when riding by she saw her bottle still perched on the arm, not even blown off by the gale force winds of that week. And no-one had drunk the contents!

The next round is on you:
Matt Crampton (2nd claim) won the 15,000 Euro Keirin at the recent World Cup Champs at the velodrome – we can't wait for him to come down to Club night. He also had two fantastic wins at the Revolution – see his photo in cyclingnews.com and spot the Seamons spectators.

Hippy news:
Karen tested her new hip on the 60k Jubilee Ride, never dropping off the pace, including the rough stuff section. Hip, hip, hooray! (sorry Karen)

Risk assessment
Dave Barker, being a conscientious fellow, decided to check out the Berwyns 200k route to miss out the section which passes the Bangor-on-Dee race course on race day. He happened to choose that Tuesday in October when it rained, snowed, blew a gale and roads were flooded and people warned to stay at home. At times the water was over his bottom bracket. Not surprisingly he caught a chill. So whatever the weather for the event next May, it looks like we've no excuse.

Goodbye Christmas Pudding Ride Jan.9th:
Seen in the Audax magazine "Arrivee". Riders are warned that the weather may be cold and/or wet, which could make this a challenging ride. But be assured of good company and cafes. And you even get a free hot drink at the Finish. After 200k on a January day, it might be less "Goodbye Christmas pud" and more "Hello Hypothermia".

The Sun:
On a very misty morning JP and Carol turned up at Two Mills to find Jim Grace there already. "Have you seen the sun this morning?" asked Carol. "No, I don't read political papers," replied Jim.

The lost member:
After a year of returned e-mails from a mysterious person called "gwynfor", saying "delete me from your list", but never saying who he actually was, the Secretary discovered they were from Bob Davies. Thinking his tone was somewhat brusque and unfriendly, she deleted him from the membership list. Meeting up with him on the Jubilee Rides he explained he had changed e-mail addresses, and they were automated messages from "gwynfor". He was mortified to hear he had been deleted. A past Club Champion and President, to boot. Moral: snail mail is better!

Winter competition (table-tennis, darts, table-football):
If you have not been approached by Phil and his unique brand of persuasion – "Stop messing about and get your name on the b..... list", you soon will be. Keep up the good work, Phil. Remember, points means prizes.

New babies
Congratulations to Martin Wiggan, now proud Dad of three. A bouncing baby boy 9.9oz
And to Darren and Katherine, a daughter, Alice.



Thank you for kind donation from our Northwich member, Les Bailey.

A timely reminder that our new Membership Secretary, Mike Brooks, will be collecting your subs. any time now. Details of the fees are elsewhere and it really helps the membership secretary if you can be prompt in your payments. It also means that the 2009 club handbook can be produced!

On the right track

The club track night took place on a Saturday night, regulars were used to the huge arena, but the novices were quietly impressed with the vastness of the velodrome, and the daunting prospect of riding around 45 degree wooden banks. As we donned our club jerseys and began to warm up, the previous session on the track were leaving; we were almost ready to get on the track.

The regulars took to the track as soon as possible, and soon built up speed and confidence as they remembered how to ride fixed wheel, as several had not done so in a while. Meanwhile, the newcomers to track cycling were introduced to the bikes and the track. After a while, confidence grew and soon everyone was flying around the velodrome. Our coach and instructor then began to organize races, where the first was a ten lap scratch. This is a race where the riders all start at the same time, and the first to do 10 laps wins, however, I can assure you that it is not as simple as it sounds! Then the flying 200m took place, where each rider takes turns to race 200 meters, which is about two thirds of a lap, as fast as they can. The racing continued for what seemed only like half an hour, but before I knew it, the 2 hours track time was gone, and we took once again to the track to warm down.

I can thoroughly recommend this event to anyone, as I and all other members there had a great time. I, as a newcomer to track cycling, was impressed by the ease with which we could get onto the track, and begin to get used to and enjoy it. Thank you to those who took part in organizing the event, and the next track night is on the 16th of December, and all are expected to be there!

Harry Streuli



The club group at the velodrome

From the new President:

I was a great honour to be once again elected President as the Club enters its 61st year stronger than ever.

We have a largely new committee bringing forward new ideas. One particular task they are taking on is to increase our junior membership. This will need the help and support of members not on the committee so please come forward if you are able to help.

We are told that cycling is enjoying something of a renaissance, due either to our success at the Olympics or the search for a healthier lifestyle (or maybe the credit crunch!). Let's capitalize on this and encourage others to experience the wonderful sport and pastime we enjoy so much.

Keith



The new president prepares for the ultimate challenge - the Freewheel!

OUCH - A REBUTTAL

As an eminent journalist, the author of Touring Longs and Shorts should check his facts more carefully. Dave Matthews does not give away top of the range Campag Look pedals, even to his Audax mates. They cost me £20.

Best wishes
Dave Barker.

JUST SQUEEZED IN

But important none the less.

Have you changed your address, or contact details since the last handbook? If so, will you please let the new membership secretary, Mike Brooks, know as soon as possible. And remember - you **MUST** be a member of either the CTC or BC to join the club as a riding member. Proof of this will be required when renewing your club membership.

End to End & Side to Side (Cheshire, that is!)

The 5 Years of Planning:

It was Aug 2003, the "Grands Randonneurs" Seams, first conquered the whole of the Cheshire Cycle Way (CCW), in two consecutive days, as a group ride. On completion we vowed to repeat this splendid ride on an annual basis. Five years later John Hurlley and I (Gordon), set a date and invited all to join in. So, on Sat June 7th 2008 we finally got started on this 200 mile, around Cheshire marathon. Yes it might not be as exciting as the Alps or End to Ending, but it has a homely familiar charm, sprinkled with new bits. Unfamiliar lanes going east / west and vice versa, never used on club runs and similarly the back lanes, railway tracks and canal banks around the Wirral. A part of Cheshire rarely, if ever explored. Arranged so that the overnight is spent at home enables a light weight approach. No spare dry clothes to lug around – not even your toothbrush. June has the longest daylight hours - so no time pressure.

Modus Operandi:

Saturday - Drive to Tilston (near Malpas) where we had arranged over night Car Parking at the ever friendly Carden Arms. 9am start - Ride the CCW anti clockwise Malpas / Alsager / Macc Forest / Bollington / Alderley Edge etc to Ashley. (Then Home!). Sunday - Rackhams 9am -continue from Ashley across to the Wirral / Parkgate / Chester / Tilston for a celebratory nosh at the Carden Arms. Drive back. - Minimal Cost / Maximum pleasure!

Techno Assist:

Technology of course has changed dramatically in five years. We no longer needed paper maps, regular stops to confer, no compass or sextant. No need to search for the now overgrown CCW little blue signs at junctions. Pete Coles's GPS (handle bar mounted of course) was loaded up, or should that read "downloaded". It's very clever, with OS map definition and green dots for cycle ways, just like the latest OS maps. However dependence on techno is only as good as the battery life, so be prepared, oh, and don't drop it! It did us proud however and speeds things up considerably even with the odd wait whilst he fiddled with it. In another five years no doubt it



The first and last pub The Carden Arms

will be all there "on your mobile phone", plus - tell you when your thirsty - monitor your "pleasure level" - video the whole thing - and probably turn out a bag of chips on request. Progress?

Reg Blease was the other survivor from the 2003 trip. Despite riding the Cheshire lanes longer than I've been alive, he still cracks on he's lost, most of the time. This doesn't bother him at all, as he always eventually recognises where he is and rides with the confidence of a homing pigeon. John Coles missed out in 2003, globe trotting, but not this time. John Verbickas completes this year's gang. John still wrestling and experimenting, between being a "slow-ish" fast man, or a fast-ish "grand randonneur". John Pardoe guested for most of Saturday, giving his rarely seen tricycle a run out, but as in 2003 was a "no show" on Sunday. With 4 John's out I could see confusion already.

Were Off:

Good time was made Saturday morning as we left Tilston heading south west for Threapwood. Here we went a little wrong as we took the B5069 instead of the parallel yellow road. Pete's GPS was pointing out our folly but the roads are so close it made little difference. Lovely lanes lead us from Malpas to Wrenbury for a banana stop beside the Shropshire Union Canal. Then it's vaguely east through Audlem, Bridgemere, and Betley to one of my favourite stops for lunch. The White Lion Inn at Barthomley. Always order beef! I'm almost a veggie but can't resist the quality beef here. I believe three fields down the lane you can see next week's menu still chewing the cud. Replenished we ploughed on towards more familiar territory. Leaving Alsager on a little known

Bridleway towards Hassall Green, then Astbury, Radnor Bank, Marton and Gawsorth. The view gets daunting, as stretched out in front are the lumpy profiles of the Pennine foothills. It's not long before the Granny ring comes into play and we climb up past the Hanging Gate Inn, leaving Sutton and civilisation behind. Three miles of struggle then you lose all that height, as you drop into Wildboarclough. Always a pleasant stretch even when going upstream. Up and across the Cat road then more lumps past Lamaload reservoir. With eleven chevrons behind, you hurtle down a rather patched up lane into



The highest pub
The Hanging Gate

Bollington. All accounted for - except Mr Pardoe who'd branched off home knowing he'd have the "ton up" before reaching Holmes Chapel. John confided that he now works in Kilometres so that his tally "numerically" reflects the same as his miles in the past. Sneaky!

Bollington to Ashley seems pleasantly flat as we complete day one. Home for 7pm ish and an empty drive. For a moment I wondered where my car had gone.

Day 2:

Sunday, and a full flotilla of Seamons (15) left to rejoin the CCW at The Greyhound. The synchronisation of the Sunday run with Day 2 of CCW is of course, not coincidental. A straight forward zigzag towards the Wirral via Budworth, Acton Bridge, Delamere and Mouldsworth. All went well until Little Leigh. Here Dave Barker's pedal fell apart (like they do!). It then became apparent these pedals had previously served Dave Matthews (renowned for considerable mile crunching). No doubt having got his monies worth he'd passed them on to Dave B, (another audax mileage eater). So how far those pedals had seen is anybody's guess. Comments included - "I'd take them back to the shop, you've been ripped off" and "you'll be lucky - Pendleton's closed down twenty years ago" etc. Dave limped back and we pressed on.

Climbing up "that hill" at Acton Bridge you swing right at the bench triangle. A lovely lane that swings parallel to the River Weaver to pop out just beyond Crowton. However the GPS signalled a left turn into an unlikely cul de sac, amongst the houses of Acton village. The tarmac soon disappears and cinders take over on a "white road?", dropping suddenly to Cliff

Brook. Twelve foot high reeds hide a tiny footbridge. No longer serving any agricultural purpose the road becomes "the edge of a field". Horses and mountain bikes would be at home, but fifteen (sorry Dave, fourteen), "cyclists" looked completely out of place. Even Johnny Coles, who knows them all, couldn't remember ever finding this one before. A "ploughed field" or "bridleway" according to the map. This obstacle course spread the pack out with about 15 minutes between the first (who rode it all) to the last (who walked it). Cleats full of clay and looks of dismay as we gathered up. Checking the map later Pete's GPS was dead right. The green dots on the OS map go that way! However whether the OS people have misinterpreted the Cycle Way info or whatever, it's a barmy mile, easy circumvented. Interestingly, the little blue signs do go past Acton Bridge station and along tarmac to Crowton. We plough on (literally) to lunch at Stoak near Chester Zoo. Well not all! We got a bit spread out as hunger overruled group discipline. A little pack took one turn too many and almost ate in Chester. One chap, well known for diversions had dropped off the back and we found out later was on his way to Stoke rather than Stoak!! He certainly gets about.

After lunch we split - the CCW group headed north on the Shropshire Union Canal to Ellesmere Port. Not the most scenic part of the route but with GPS guidance we quickly manoeuvred through the suburbs and into the idyllic country lanes between here and Neston (Parkgate). Here, as last time, a compulsory ice cream stop overlooks the Dee estuary as the sun smiled and half of Liverpool appeared for a breath of sea air and traditional 50 yard walk from the car and back. Yellow roads through Burton and Two Mills



The prettiest pub
The White Lion at Barthomley

area, lead back to the canal (not far from lunch actually) just north of Chester. Along the tow path again, but in the opposite direction, through the centre of Chester (fascinating this bit – ducks to drunks) and out to pick up tarmac again at Christleton. From Chester to Tilston is about 12 miles in a straight line.

On the Cycle way it's more than double! You divert out as far as Beeston then hit Harthill towards the end, as the sun begins to drop, and you've really had enough of hills for one weekend.

Arrivee:

We finished on schedule without any serious incident. I haven't a clue what time it was, I was only concerned that the Carden Arms were still serving food. The landlord was genuinely interested in our excursion after our parking arrangement conversation the week before. He invited us to eat in the restaurant bit, which when sweaty and in muck splattered Lycra isn't always encouraged, and never presumed. However at that time on a Sunday we had the room to ourselves and had a hearty nosh and re-hydrate! Our thanks to the Carden Arms. (Good menu!).

Best part of 200 miles on the clock, no punctures, and I don't remember caping up once. Next years "annual" repeat will take place in 2013, I suspect! Be there !

Gordon Peake...

Theo Parsons

I enjoyed reading "My tenuous link" by Gordon Peake, and I'd just like to say that I have known and ridden many happy miles with all the club's previous owners of those superb Theo Parsons machines. These include the late George Arstall, who rode a fixed wheel in ruby red with beautiful chrome forks, the late Mike Newhall, and last but by no means least the late Malc Judge, who won the Mersey Roads "24" on one of Theo's machines.

I bought my very first trike from Theo way back in 1957, a Holdsworth conversion set, which I built up in the front room of 103 Norris Rd. Sale, only to find I couldn't get it back out through the door. My Mum wasn't best pleased! I had to strip it down and re-build it outside in the garden – serves me right! Many years later, probably 1969, we bought a lovely dalmation pup from Theo, who then lived in a cottage down Brooks Drive.

Theo, who is now in his 90's, lives in a caravan at Toss-side, very close to where the club had a week-end away in Gisburn Forest. I wonder if we could get him to our 60th!

John Pardoe



NORTHERN ROAD RECORDS ASSOCIATION

Following my Report at the recent AGM, I thought I would endeavour to ex-

plain the origin and purpose of the N.R.R.A. It was formed in 1890, the objective being to establish a standard for records over set distances and place to place over Northern roads, and to hallmark claims with absolute authority. This was long before the R.T.T.C. – now the C.T.T. – was established in 1937. In its early days the cycle was the fastest vehicle on the road, and as a result cyclists were not always welcome by the Authorities (sounds familiar!), but slowly respect was gained due to the correct behaviour of those early pioneer riders.

In May, 1891, using a course starting at Rainhill, running through Warrington along London Road (now the A50) to Arclid and back, using human pacers, possibly up to 5 tandems (that must have been some spectacle!) R.H. Carlisle set up a 50 mile time of 2.54.10.

On the 4th November, 1990, the late Peter Longbottom riding for the Manchester Wheelers, recorded a record-breaking time of 1.30.14 using the Bows Moor course (33 m.p.h. av. speed).

In 1961 Delegates of the South Lancs. Road Club proposed that women's record claims should be recognized, and this was agreed. Irene Southart set up the very first record with 2.14.56 for '50' miles, a creditable time bearing in mind that she was setting up the Manchester-Carlisle record at the time. Record Tables, for bicycle, tricycle, tandem and tandem tricycle:

25, 50, 100, 12 hour and 24 hours, straight out.

Manchester – Carlisle

Lancaster – York and back

York to Berwick-on-Tweed,

Liverpool to Lincoln and back

Birkenhead to Ludlow and back.

It is now some 43 years since any Seamons member claimed a record, and that was yours truly partnered by Jim Shuttleworth of the Stretford Wheelers, covering 246 miles on a tandem tricycle.

There is a marvellous book – "100 years of cycling record breaking" available from "H" (Harold Nelson). If any member is interested in finding out more about this fascinating branch of the sport, or better still, having a go! contact JP

Trailquest in the Peak

Dark and White Peak Trailquest Round 2 of the 2008 Dark and White Peak Trailquest Winter league was team BikeShak's first event - and boy were we in for a treat. 100 teams/ individuals (mostly singles instead of pairs like us) lined up to get onto the trails as the mists lifted from Hope Valley to reveal a beautiful spring day. The brown and green hills loomed above us concealing greasy white limestone rock to the south of us and gritstone to the north. The map provided is handily marked with out of bounds areas, notes of caution for steep tricky descents, and the all important checkpoint locations and scores for each. Checkpoints stretched from Bradwell to the top end of Ladybower reservoir on the A57 - 285 points in all - and we wanted as many as we could get. We left a checkpoint near the start to pick up at the end of our 3 hours and set about a clockwise route from Bradwell. The twisty path through the cement works was fast and followed by a brief excursion into Castleton before attacking the Mam Tor broken road climb. Earlier in the year I'd climbed this on my road bike without putting a foot down, and it posed no problems for my Kenda/Schwalbe shod full suspension. Similarly, Keith was putting the power down on his BikeShak Kona Hard Tail to lead us up the climb. Another checkpoint sorted and we swung over the back of the Tor down the steep descent to our first testing bridleway. The track slithers down to Greenlands farm and I soon discovered the drawback of my fast rear UST as I was sent sprawling into the heather, having failed to negotiate a mud-filled rut. Keith remarked what a shame it was he had no camera to hand. Nothing more than my ego bruised, I caught Keith up and we both raced past the next checkpoint. A brief scouting mission by us and a couple of other teams and we found the dibber box beneath a tree we had passed. This was to prove a costly time penalty but no matter - we raced to the next point and up to Hope Cross. This saw us at the top of the valley and revealed breathtaking views as we negotiated horses, walkers and other teams doing an out and back to the next checkpoint along the Roman road. Our Eccles cake snack was taken on the fly, quite literally, as I stuffed it down whilst simultaneously hopping gutter runs at 30mph and then bashing through the ford at the bottom. We experienced the epitome of Dark Peak

riding in these sections as we negotiated uneven gritstone and shale slabs on long descents and up some short tough sections - tricky stuff for a roady, I said to Keith, but he was having no problems as he stuck to my tail, although he did admit to contracting 'vibrohand' from the boulder-bashing he was subjecting his Kona to. We shot across the A57 and a steep tarmac climb through Rowlee Farm got us back onto the gritstone trails, pasture and through a slow boggy field to complete the section with a mad-cap descent down to the Derwent valley/Ladybower dam. We missed the next checkpoint and instead opted for a bold finishing run to complete our route. Another climb up to Bamford Edge enabled us to clear a couple of check points and take in a brilliant technical descent from Nether Hurst and down to Bamford Station. We just had time to get that final checkpoint we had saved especially for the end, before steaming into the finish. Tea was served and we got our download score within minutes. 205 points included a 5 point penalty for finishing 5 minutes late - not bad for our first start. We had posted a creditable 2nd place in the vets category, joint 6th overall, and were far and away the quickest team of two on the day. Round 3 is in Grindleford nr Hathersage. Don't delay if you want to enter, as the 2nd event was understandably sold out.

See you there - Dan Mathers & Keith Bailey.



No, Dan hasn't had a sex change but we've a picture of him elsewhere. So, Keith Bailey gets this bit to himself - well with daughter Melanie who gave a good account of herself on the leg-breaking Montgomery weekend. A family hug, how sweet, on a get-together not normally known for any sign of compassion.

PURE NOSTALGIA



Thought: is nostalgia a thing of the past? Well, many relics of the Seamons past turned up on the night. We had Bob McPartland, Chairman in the 90's, Bob Davies, President in the 70's and cyclo-cross star in the 60's, Johnny Coles who was Treasurer in the 70's – and is still Treasurer today! JP who was President in the 80's, and Keith Stacey, National B.A.R. Champion in 1965. A lot to feel nostalgic about in our 60th year. About 40 members gathered at the club-room to view the various items of memorabilia. Among these was the original fixed wheel machine on which Keith Stacey recorded 4 hours and 2 minutes in the Cheshire "100" in 1965, his RTTC Championship medals, and international jerseys.

There were personal collections of members' medals, jerseys and photos, and 3 photo display boards spanning 6 decades of the club's history, plus the Club Archive which now comprises 15 volumes dating back to the Club's inception in 1948. There were N.R.R.A and R.R.A. certificates, start-sheets, finishing sheets, the Club Minutes books, and even the original Accounts Book from 1948.

Ian Dunning brought along 2 of his ancient machines, including a superb Penny Farthing. There were old lamps, saddles, gears, bits of this and bits of that, and club jerseys from across the decades – some of which are still being worn! (guess who by?).

Refreshments were provided by Carol, Karen, Vera and Louise. Vera did a great job manning the kitchen.

Nostalgia may not be what it used to be! but we did enjoy it. If you missed it, only 10 years to wait till the next one!



A few years ago I received an e-mail from a guy in Texas, Jim Krieger, who subsequently took out club membership. He'd pulled up the club website when he had acquired an old Theo Parsons track frame and wanted more details of the maker. Geoff Robinson, now resident in Texas had owned the frame previously and (it turns out) he was an original member of the 'Gang of Four' at the time the club was formed. You'll find his name mentioned



in the letter supplied by Frank Murphy at the time of the Golden Jubilee and included elsewhere in this issue. So when he turned up at the clubroom some time ago there was a whole lot more nostalgia and no doubt some happy memories to take back to the rather warmer climes of Texas. JLB

60TH DIAMOND JUBILEE RIDES

Well over 50 members, from the youngest to the oldest (13-95!), gathered in the Old Market Tavern after completing either the 60K or 60 mile ride. Distances varied considerably, with members spread all over Cheshire – nothing new there then!

What an honour to have our President and Founder member, Reg, out on the tandem with his wife Vera, leading the procession out through Altrincham, Hale and Ashley, the appointed spot for all the groups to melt/speed/fly away into deepest Cheshire. Dave Barker's devious routes were then followed – or not! – all measured with his trusty piece of string on an ancient Barts map. Who needs satnav?

Dave's route took us across bridleways, fords, through woods, and chunterings were heard in the bunch: "I haven't a clue where I am!" A great route. Thanks, Dave.

Back at the OMT we all enjoyed a superb and good value buffet, ably organized by Gordon ("new kid on the block", but now a member for 9 years) Peake, with a super birthday cake, courtesy of his wife, Karen. We all sang Happy Birthday Seamons. Thanks, Gordon and Karen.

Darren was in charge of organizing the group photo for the local press, while JP and JC were snapping away round the fringes. The group photo has since appeared in Cycling Weekly.

Our 95 year old guest was Henry Mason, brought along by John Thorogood. Henry was a former member of the Ravens, and held a club Altrincham-Lancaster record way back in the 1930's.

It was a great day in the history of the Club. Perhaps we could consider an annual Birthday Ride along the same lines, and routes! Thank you again, Gordon, Karen and Dave.



From the top - clockwise: The group waits for the off; Which way to go?; Karen Peake's magnificent birthday cake; Gordon ensures that everyone's fully paid up before they tuck in; senior members Reg & Vera lead out the Seamons CC Jubilee clubrun.



End to End

Part Two

in which John Carberry ties up the loose ends

Our route recipe used a variety of ingredients. We looked at what other people had done in terms of daily distances and ports of call, scrutinised the CTC “traditional” routes, and combined it all with roads that looked good on the map or places we’d always fancied visiting.

The single road across Dartmoor, the back road around Loch Ness, the secret roads near Shap that steer you under and then in between the carriageways of the M6. Glastonbury. Detouring to Monmouth so we can go over the Severn Bridge and claim Wales as a stopover; King Harry’s Ferry. Ironbridge and the Cheddar Gorge; the promise of an A-road with passing places that stretches north from Lairg to Tongue. Going left after Carlisle, rather than right, because it looked less hilly, quieter and more interesting.

With six of us on the trip (originally) we booked accommodation in advance. Well, Gail did. As soon as I started mentioning youth hostels and bunk-houses in the interests of keeping down costs, the job was taken off me.

“There’s no way I’m driving from one end of the country to the other, carrying your stinky cycling clothes, and then sleeping in a dormitory full of snoring strangers,” was how I think she phrased it.

So what if Gail spent nights researching suitable B&Bs on the internet, writing emails and making calls to landladies up and down the land. Phone calls, shmone calls, I say – in between the stopovers is where the real work for a tour goes in, of course.

Johnny Pardoe take note: GPS is your friend. Not only will it make your touring life easier, it will let you move across the country as if you’re on a club run led by a local. For £80 it was the single best piece of kit I bought. (But JP doesn’t like being led! – CP)

Using Pete’s copy of Memory Map on the PC, I simply spent a few nights clicking on the white, yellow and B-roads with the mouse, joined up the dots and hey presto we had our route in the bag. With GPS you don’t stop to read the map every quarter-of-a-mile, you’re free to sit back

and enjoy the view with the occasional glance down at the handlebars to make sure your electronic pointer is still on track. Thanks to the GPS, certainly for the first couple of days, we seemed to find a whole host of barely-used lanes; the grass down the centre evidence of how infrequent were its visitors.

In more than 1,000 miles we took, probably, four wrong turns. Seriously. And that was because we’d misinterpreted what the little screen was telling us. Where we could see some of the navigation looked a bit trickier – whenever you get anywhere really urban, it’s harder to tell on the ground if the way you need is just another estate road or the main road out of Dodge – I’d printed off a screen-grab of the map. I think I had about four of them and used them only once. I don’t believe we were just lucky!

With the luxury of a vehicle to carry our luggage, I took four complete changes of short-sleeve kit, two long-sleeve jerseys, arm-warmers, leg-warmers and three caps. The idea was to wash the kit each night and then you’ve got three more days for it to dry before you need it again.

Long-sleeve tops you can be less fussy about as you’re not wearing them next to your skin, are less likely to get really smelly and aren’t really prone to giving you any nasty infections! I’d wash the kit in the bottom of the shower while I was in there and then wring it out inside a towel. A top tourist’s tip that – gets the stuff much drier and doesn’t knacker the fibres of your clothes. When we got to Knutsford, we could be sure of a proper laundry day. Providing we asked the landlady nicely.

Another top tip I’d read and found really useful was to not use only the one manufacturer’s shorts – it reduces the risk of chafing in the same place every day. Brilliant advice which I think Nigel wishes he’d heeded before setting off in his £3 million Assos shorts. I’d treated myself to some new kit for the trip but had taken the precaution of “wearing it in” beforehand. This was a good idea too as I found one pair of shorts a little too abrasive and made the wise choice of leaving them in the drawer.

A car boot also meant we could take a really good spares box. Top inclusions here were a chain cleaner and fluid and some Muc-Off. We were like cowboys at the end of the day, seeing to our horses first before we sorted ourselves out! We even found room for the track pump. I reckon we probably had maybe four days with-

out any rain at all the whole trip. Some days it rained nearly every pedal stroke. Spinning out on a clean (ish) bike with a newly-lubed chain at the start of another day was one of those little lifts in morale that can make a big difference over two weeks. All this rain, combined with the mud and road-grime you get off the beaten track, did take its toll on brake blocks, particularly in roller-coaster country south of Glastonbury. The solution here was just to keep an eye on your rims and blocks. We had spares and needed them.

Things I learned:

Britain is HUGE. After a week of cycling all day, every day, you're only just into Scotland. And you've still got a whole week to go.

You can get wetter than you think. August 2008 was one of the rainiest on record.

Midges love me.

GPS is the future of touring. No question. My Garmin eTrex never let me down. Even when it had to be covered in clingfilm to protect it from (yet more) rain. And it runs on normal batteries.

The Scots don't like tea shops. Even when there was a perfectly good town or village, ripe and ready for a nice place to chat and have a brew, we were often disappointed. Sandwiches in the doorway of Spar was not a dining highlight.

Where we live can hold its own against any of the other traditional "nice places" across the country.

Scottish drivers all seem to indicate that they're pulling in after they've overtaken you. Strange but true.

Chips are hard to avoid. No matter how hard you try.

You can get fed up of sausages.

Sudocrem is as essential as a spare tube and a pump.

There are always other people on bikes madder than you. Example: man from South Africa doing the End to End on a mountain bike. He had a rucksack on his back and a crud-guard on his bike. That was all the stuff he had for his ten-day assault. Bonkers.

You can kill rain jackets through over-use/over-sweating.

Even people in John o' Groats can't spell the name of their hometown properly.

Gretna is one of the grimmest places on earth on a rainy Saturday night.

The road from Tyndrum to Glencoe is worth driving to just to get the bike out and ride.

You **can** eat a whole packet of fig rolls in between meals.

DIARY DATES

For those who want to catch the action but experience none of the pain of the Llangollen run, making a weekend of it might be just for you?

We've got a provisional booking at the Tyddyn Farm bunkhouse at Cerrig for the nights of Friday and Saturday, March 6 and 7.

Anyone who's been before will tell you how welcoming Linda is and how the bunkhouse is ideally situated for riding and for meeting up with the Llangollen contingent.

So that we can firm up numbers, can anyone interested please email John Carberry. He will need to give Linda some idea of numbers early in the New Year.

Payment is normally made on arrival, so it's just about letting him know at this stage.

Contact John at: jm.carberry@bopenworld.com

IT'S A BIT OF A PUZZLE

Some brain teasers to prevent your brains from disappearing into an alcoholic haze....

1 What is the closest relation that your mother's brother's brother-in-law could be to you?

2 A child put 30 pence into a machine for a bar of chocolate using 2 coins, one of which was NOT a 10 pence coin. What were the two coins used?

3 If it takes 5 men, 6 hours to dig 7 holes, how long does it take one man to dig half a hole?

4 Which single English word can have the contradictory meanings: 'to unite' and 'to split'.

5 Bill could never tell the truth, Tim could never tell a lie. One of them said "The other one said he is Bill." Which one said that?

6 How can you take one away from nineteen and make twenty?

7 With nothing to hand but a three-pint jug and a five-pint jug, how can you measure exactly one pint of water?

8 Can you find the country hidden in the sentence: In December mud and slush are a peril on the roads.

9 Can you form a common English word by taking the letters ERGRO and putting three letters in front and the same three letters in the same order behind?

10 Can you put BEES into HIVES in 6 moves, changing just one letter each move and forming a valid word each time?

Answers to be found on Page 25 of this issue.

MONTGOMERY AGAIN

This now traditional – nine years! - winter week-end away is proving to be more popular than ever, with twenty-four members and friends attending at various times over the three day weekend.

Day 1

The usual ride over Long Mountain was revised after one or two riders made close contact with the slippery tarmac, but the two sections met at Stiperstones for lunch all the same. Robin then took the “A” team up The Bog and over the Long Mynd, then down Asterton Bank as a bonus. It was on this very steep descent that young Melanie Bailey joined the Master Class of cyclo-acrobatics when she parted company with her bike in spectacular fashion, but somehow survived and lived to ride another day – two in fact! Not surprisingly this was the talking point for the rest of the weekend, her words ringing in her Dad’s ears as she sped past everyone out of control: “I can’t stop”!

Day 2

Today dawned crisp and frosty, with a beautiful blue sky, but minus 5 degrees. The Seamons, in traditional fashion, were split all over The Marches, with



a car-assisted group visiting the National Cycle Museum at Llandrindod Wells, a solo trike run for JP round the Abermule-Clun-Bishop’s Castle circuit (a ride I’ve wanted to do on 3 wheels for many years), Christmas shopping for Louise in Shrewsbury, and Robin, undaunted by any wintry weather, delegating Basil to plot an ice-free route on “B” roads on his laptop to Bala. This turned out to be an epic 81 miles, to Emily’s cafe at Lake Vyrnwy, then over the Hirnant – apparently this included some very hairy moments – to Bala, getting back after dark, just 15 minutes before dinner was served. At least not long to wait! Ian, meanwhile, had departed to Derby to attend the CTT AGM, in his new capacity as District CTT Secretary. He came back for more Montgomery! How nice to see Reg Herbert, Founder member of the Seamons in 1948, who lives locally, join us for Dinner. His comment, as usual was: “You must be mad, just like we were, back in those halcyon days.” The evening’s entertainment ranged from pool down at the local, to Phil’s Scrabble/card school where they make up the rules as they go.

Day 3

Rain was forecast, but didn’t materialize ‘til we were all safely back at the very comfortable Dragon Hotel. There were sixteen of us left to enjoy the Abermule-Kerry Forest circuit to The Sun Inn at Clun, where we melted in front of log fire, drinking copious amounts of hot tea, yes! TEA, before making our various ways back to base.

Altogether, despite the short days and wintry weather, we all enjoyed a great weekend. There were thrills and spills, one or two mechanicals and the odd puncture, but I reckon we’ll all be signing up again for next year. Thanks Robin for stitching it all together in your unique, laid-back and relaxed style.

JP



Montgomery goes all technological, Basil's laptop, GPS - what next? Louise just gets on with what it's really all about - the riding.



CLWYDIAN SPRING -AUDAX 2009

Club members are familiar with "The Seamons CC Tour of the Berwyns" run as a 200K Audax in mid May each year.

There is now an additional opportunity to sample the scenic delights of North Wales from the comfort of your bicycle saddle. David Matthews has recently taken over organisation of the classic "The Clwydian" 200k Audax, originally run by the late, and much missed, Graham Mills who had emigrated north to live near Corwen.

"The Clwydian" event starts at 08:00 on Saturday March 21st 2009---the traditional calendar slot used by Graham. This timing neatly places the event between the Llangollen thrash and the Tour of the Berwyns; a perfect way to maintain fitness and assess form for the imminent spring/summer season.

The start is at Corwen on the A5, where there are plenty of free car parks. The local craft centre/caf  has agreed to stay open from 07:15 to 22:00 to host the event. Tea at the start and a scone and tea at the finish is included in the  4.50 entry fee, in traditional Seamons fashion.

"The Clwydian" route starts by circling Lake Bala and then heads north to the first control at The Three Cooks' caf  on the A5. The ride then continues to the Loggerheads Caf  near Mold for the next control. After Loggerheads, riders continue north through the scenic Clwyd hills to Rhyl and then west to the seafront caf  at Pensarn. (This explains why the ride is scheduled for March---before all the tourists arrive and block the roads from Rhyl to Pensarn).

Now comes the extra-fun bit. Leaving the caf  at Pensarn, you head back over the Denbigh moors to Llansannan and on to Llyn Brenig. Once past Llyn Brenig, barring one short climb out of Pont yr Alwen, it is all down hill for 25K to Corwen. Descending a well graded 15K on the A5 from Cerrigydrudion to Corwen after crossing the hills from Pensarn is a great and unforgettable experience. In the past, there was only one Audax ride on offer on this date. However, for those who do not relish the full 200k experience at this time of the year, there is now a brand new ride---"The Clwyd Gate". This 138K ride starts at 08:30 from the same caf  in Corwen as "The Clwydian". The route initially reverses the "Tour of the Berwyns" east along the river, before striking north up the Horseshoe Pass to a control at the Ponderosa Caf . Riders then descend the north side of The Pass and travel on to a caf  control in Ruthin via the Clwyd Gate.

After Ruthin, the ride (now similar to the defunct

"Dee to Sea" 100k Audax) follows a very scenic route on the B5429, B5428 and then the Bontnewydd valley to Pensarn. After Pensarn, the route is identical to "The Clwydian"---a great experience!

Further details and entry forms are available at www.audax.uk.net. If you would like to read a route sheet of either event in advance, then send me an email at dmanu@fsmail.net.

We hope you will come and join us on one of these classic rides.

David Matthews

CAMPAG COLLATION

My bike needed a new bottom bracket, so I splashed out  25- for a lightweight Campagnolo Centaur, square taper unit from GB cycles.

The BB arrived in a smart box, which contained a thick, multilingual book of instructions. As I normally buy discount bike parts naked at jumble sales or on ebay, this booklet was a novelty to me.

The booklet contains an important notice, in bold type, and I paraphrase: **"The parts and components of all Campagnolo products are designed as a single integrated system. Use only the parts and components supplied or specified by Campagnolo without interfacing them with products, parts or components manufactured by other companies"**

This seemed an appropriate time to take stock of the status of my bike's transmission.

Gear levers: Simplex retrofriction bought for  8- in the late 80s. Still work perfectly.

Gear cables: Fibrax stainless bought for  2 at jumble sale

Chainset: Campag 10 speed 50/34 Centaur with outer ring replaced by 48t Campag mountain bike ring; ring bought at jumble sale for  5-

Front mech: Shimano 600 bought at jumble sale for  5-

Rear mech: Centaur 9 speed

Rear hub etc: Shimano 10 speed hyperglide shimmed to take 7 speed uniglide cassette.

(Uniglide sprockets last much longer than hyperglide) Skewer is Campag Chorus.

Chain: 7 speed Sachs/Sedis bought at jumble sale; 3 chains for  15-

It all seems to work perfectly. Am I missing something?

The Retro Randoneur

TOURING SHORTS &

LONGSS

Dave Barker is the latest to learn that organising a touring section run is like trying to herd cats past kennels and through an industrial estate occupied solely by fish factories. Thanks to him, the club had a choice of runs to mark its diamond jubilee. The common strand was the start and finish points. Very sensible. However, it seems he'd left just the tiniest element of doubt elsewhere on the route which was enough to cause chaos. The point at which the different runs split was where it all went wrong.

The result was typical touring section disintegration with riders all over Cheshire, each run convinced they were on the correct and official route. Of course, with the prospect of food and beer at the end of the ride it was not surprising to see that all the riders made it back to the pub. And all within about ten minutes of each other. Funny that. Having criticised other touring section members for their over-use of the car on club runs, I feel it only fair to castigate myself. Unable to make the start of the official diamond jubilee rides, I'd planned to meet up with the tourers' run as it headed back to Alti. A couple of calls on the mobile as I waited by the roadside soon established the bunch was not likely to be passing my way any time soon (see the paragraph above).

So it was off to the OMT in rather less miles and a lot less company than I'd expected. Not ideal, but at least I'd got out and had made the all-important get-together.

The afternoon flew by and I was soon clock-watching, preparing to avoid riding back in the dark. But what's this? A lift home you say? How can I refuse? Who wouldn't want to remove the risk of getting rained on? So it was I had a lovely ride home in the warm courtesy of John and Carol Pardoe. Shaming enough, you'd think? Not really. When I checked my cycle computer the following day I'd covered just 12.67 miles. Ouch. What a way to mark 60 years of club tradition.

The weekend to Hartington was a great chance to ride some fresh roads. Well, if we could have seen further than the ends of our noses it would have been. Thick fog blanketed the Friday and Saturday rides, robbing riders of any sense of scenery. Pete had organised the on-road runs courtesy of his GPS. And because of the weather, he'd been forced to make some last-minute adjustments on the lap-top before we set off. Impressive. With the apparent knowledge of a local we were soon disappearing through holes in walls to pick up a cycle trail here or a back lane there. On the Saturday, the super-cold fog had helped keep the trail surfaces nice and compact; indeed they were probably safer to ride than tarmac because of the extra traction.

But on Sunday one particular trail seemed a bit, err, looser. Not only did it nearly have me off at one point, the bike must have picked up about 40lbs of mud by the time we got back to civilisation. I checked on the map when we got back, trying to re-trace where we'd been. It took me ages to work out why I couldn't find it straight away. Fool. I'd been looking for a cycle trail. What we were actually on was a bridleway. That explains a lot.

Tourers who made it to the weekend away in Shropshire were blessed with some of the best of the late summer sunshine. This was a very sociable weekend which doesn't involve high mileages. But less than ten minutes after leaving the digs on one run we were pulled up with a puncture. How does that work? You ride thousands of miles across all types of terrain and road surfaces and don't get so much as a nick in your tyre. But roll out of a pub car park down an A-road and there's a thorn the size of a six-inch nail stuck in your tyre. The joys of cycling.

Still on the subject of weekends away, Johnny Coles showed how the tourists do it old-school style. As we waited to saddle up for the day's ride, he came out carrying a very small bag. By "small" I mean something the size of a rolled-up towel.

"What's that John?" "My stuff for the weekend," he says.

Incredible, he's probably got more stuff in his saddlebag than he could fit in that bag. Mind you, it was so cold he was probably wearing most of what he'd brought.

John Carberry



Hartington in the Mist

"Hartington Hall Youth Hostel lies in the middle of the beautiful White Peak, Derbyshire, an area of limestone uplands criss-crossed with dry stone walls and carved by rivers into steep sided dales. Walk from the Hall into the famous Dove Dale or the nearby Tissington and High Peak Trails – these are just some of the ways to explore this highland countryside"

No, of course these aren't my words; I've stolen them from the pamphlet. I'm sure they won't mind. I couldn't compose a better opener. On instruction from both the editor and the tourist secretary, I'm in a rush to pen this before the Christmas deadline. "You do the write up", as he drove off home for a hot bath – master of delegation. - I'll pinch another paragraph!

"Hartington Village". The village of Hartington, just a short walk down the hill from the hostel is very picturesque and hugely popular. With its own duck pond on the village green, it has several gift shops, post office / tea room, pottery, and two excellent pubs both selling Real Ale. Surprisingly tourism is not Hartington's main industry – but cheese! The factory, the only survivor of seven in the area, was first opened in 1870 and now supplies the world with a quarter of its Stilton – including M&S! A little shop in the village is dedicated to the sale of this delicious product."

Sounds a bit too good to be true? Not really – Hartington Hall dating from 1611, and now a YHA is a stunning building perched on the edge of the lovely village. Fifteen Seamons and friends spent a late (end of November late) weekend in very cosy en-

suite rooms. Very pleasant, if a tad more expensive than the traditional youth hostels of old. However the advantages of all day restaurant / come Real Ale bar, log fires, leather settees, and full central heating everywhere is worth the extra pennies. They even let you run a tab for the duration – very handy, especially if you know Reg's room number!

Why November?

I've often puzzled over the wisdom of "club weekends away" after the clocks go back. The shorter daylight hours confines the "run scope", and leaves long evenings to fill (*or is that the attraction?*). I've not changed that opinion, but this was a cracking weekend. For reasons beyond our control the Stephen Park / Gisburn weekend arranged for September was cancelled. (*By them -due to Health & Safety issues? - Me thinks they remember Andy*). A recent Sunday run to Hartington coupled with Andy Burn's enthusiasm, got this alternative venue off the ground. I packed expecting to get wet each ride, so another two full sets of everything went in the bag. It turned out to be completely dry but extremely cold. I hadn't really thought about weather forecasts, lets face it – it's hardly stopped raining for two years. This weekend was cold! – Well below freezing each night. I should have put all my clobber on at once but with four thin summery layers – I was one layer short every day. Foolish me, but we've not had November frosts like that for years, have we? Long John's are going on the Christmas list!

Friday

Manifold Trail. A hard core of six took Friday off work. The plan to get there ASAP, and get on the Manifold Trail to meet and lunch at The Yew Tree Inn, at Cauldon. A pub that really deserves a sepa-

rate article. – Just call in once before you, err--- before you forget. A “must do” pub! Six working Pionolas gives you a taste. Pies that look of similar age but I believe are local and magic!

Andy Burns and I (Gordon), caught up with Wilkie, the Coles brothers and Pete Devine. We’d taken our mountain bikes and set off down the disused railway track. The water meadows along the Rivers Dove and Hamps were a wintry white out of unexpected frost. The autumn leaves now in wet clumps and frozen solid as were the puddles. With care it was ride able. The patches of freezing fog were noticeably cooler than the contrasting clear blue sky and bright if rather weak sunshine. The fog patches clung all day over the River Manifold, with the striking Thors Cave only visible as a shadow at the last moment, high above you like a prehistoric monster. We returned to base and some warmth as the light faded.

Eating In

We joined Reg, Vera, Gareth, Dave Barker and Marysia for 3 different curries or fish & chips at the hostel restaurant. Gareth Blease had ridden out and planned to ride back home on Sunday – on fixed wheel. John Carberry had landed. Others were battling rush hour traffic to get there before the food stopped at 8 o’clock. Sue Burns, Karen and Ros made it through thickening fog. Sue, on four wheels, managed about the same time the tourist had taken on two wheels in October. As I wondered whether Alan Sherliker (Andy’s friend) was coming Friday or Saturday, the front door opened and in he walked. A bit spooky - but great to see him again.

The dramatic weather instigated various plans and alternatives for Saturday. A tarmac run (with ice!). A “Full On”, off road run! (Is that good English?) A trail section. A walking group or two?

With Plans A & B, weather dependant, for each, the permutations were mind boggling. Maps rustled in traditional fashion, but then a first I suspect – a laptop and Sat Nav made a discrete arrival on the weekend away “list of essentials”. However this useful and pricey bit of kit had recently developed water retention problems. “It’s just trying to blend in” was one comment. As bed called, even tomorrow’s start time depended on who you asked. Nothing different there then!

Saturday

Saturday dawned with thicker fog and more frost. Leaving the warmth of the Hall was proving difficult, but eventually all got going. Gear cables and rear mechs needed de frosting. A quick source of warm water was found. On this occasion the traditional source for this rare occurrence has been vehemently denied. Perhaps it’s just, they weren’t seen!

Gareth and Vera set off to walk a local circuit of Dales. Dave and Marysia took a more linear path to lunch in The George at Alstonefield with a few dozen other ramblers, returning via Narrow Dale.

Tissington Trail

I took the rare opportunity of a run with Sue Karen & Ros. All on knobby tyres we ventured south down the Tissington Trail. We hadn’t gone far when we met Andy and Alan out for some “Full On - Rough stuff” coming the opposite way. They’d gone wrong already! Alan’s job is a youth leader and takes out groups of youngsters on mountain bikes and outdoor activities etc. A very responsible task needing good navigational and leadership skills. ASBO Andy had obviously proved a bigger challenge. Sorry Alan, but I did promise you a mention in the write up.

The trail is all on a disused railway line. Panoramic views and sunshine above the mist in the Dove Valley and Staffordshire beyond. Further on - we plunged into freezing fog. Again, I was a layer short and suffering. Silly me! As we descended into Ashbourne the fog became permanent and very chilly. By 1pm we swung into a bustling Ashbourne Market Square amongst the well wrapped Saturday shoppers. The first café will do. The girls shot in whilst I worked out the best way to secure four bikes with a one foot, pig-tail cable lock. (Four front wheels will have to do!). In I went. A synchronised display of Carbo loading ensued. With one eye on the clock, as 2 o’clock approached I suggested we get moving – “it goes dark just after 4pm”. Karen disappeared into the shop next door. Ros walked straight into the market stalls, and Sue wandered around the corner! Oh No! I hadn’t foreseen this scenario. I stood like a paralysed sheep-dog that had just blown it – big style. As one re-appeared, another disappeared. What could I do?

This never happens on the Sunday runs. I had visions of plastic bags appearing and I was the only one with a ruck sack. Assertiveness wouldn’t work. My shepherding skills aren’t good, but I’ve noticed if you get one sheep going the way you want, the rest usually follow. We finally got going. Phew!

I knew time would be tight. I didn’t fancy getting caught in the dark, in open country, miles from a road in freezing weather. That’s the time you’ll get that really awkward puncture. A slight thaw had goosed the track and the pace was a tad slower than I’d hoped. To top it all, it’s a long, long uphill gradient most of the way back. I also noticed my mobile was out of range. I kept my concerns quiet and we rolled in victorious, about 20 minutes before the light went completely.

Everyone else made it too. A long hot shower thawed my leg bones.

The "Road run" had ventured down the same trail to Ashbourne, then climbed west to re visit The Yew tree at Cauldon. After lunch they re traced Friday's route back up the Manifold track and got back intact. John Coles saw blue sky northward and went solo that direction up the Trail and ended up in Longnor.

Eating Out

The plan to "eat out" (what plan?), became inevitable as we hadn't booked at the hostel restaurant. The two evening emporiums in the village were very busy - the locals' book. Eventually we split into two and all got excellently well fed. Me - 12oz Gammon with chips. Heaven! Mr Carberry and Sheriker took on the "Mixed Grill" challenge. Between them they devoured most of a cow including all those unpleasant bits from its insides. Offal is not my cup of tea! The fact that it's "local" makes no difference. It's "Local offal for local people" in my book.

Wolfscoote Dale, Berrisford Dale, Narrow Dale, Lathkill Dale, Biggin Dale, Dove Dale, Mill Dale, Longnor, Mayfield, Thorpe Cloud, Wootton, Carsington Water, Tissington, Waterhouses, Fenny Bentley, Alstonefield, Gypsy Bridge, (What wonderful names!). Between us, we had been everywhere! Walks and ride anecdotes were exchanged followed by a surprising rush of early nights, started by the Johns - Coles and Carberry. Outside it was colder and mistier than ever. Inside it was soporifically warm with two real ales to choose from and a well stacked wood burning stove.

Sunday

A heavy frost but clear skies and bright sunlight greeted me as Keith threw back the curtains. "Come on, it's 8 o'clock" he announced! Keith claimed to have been awake all night - for someone awake he has a good snore! Breakfast melée was followed by another choice of runs and walks.

Walk 1. The Barkers were car assisting, to walk more Dove Dale. The spectacular bit from Milldale to Ilam and back. Another "must do" before you hang up your boots. Best done out of high season.

Walk 2. Fed up with the chill factor on the bike, I plumped for the walk along the ridge following the Dove valley north. With Reg, Vera and the girls we strolled on the frosted ground admiring the world. Sheep, full of more local offal, well they are everywhere. Of more interest - Flushed up by a couple of healthy resident Kestrels looking for smaller prey, a flock of Fieldfare making an early appearance from their Russian breeding grounds, suggesting a hard winter to come. We dallied at Pilsbury Castle. Huge ancient mounds once the site of a defendable retreat. We often cycle nearby, but you can only see it properly by foot. Back along the valley floor, passing

several streams appearing from the limestone caverns below. Another gourmet snack in The Devonshire Arms and a raid on the cheese shop. The girls found the local "tourist shop" and Sue appeared with a thick creamy cardigan to replace the one Andy had recently "boiled". (He's a star!). Knitwear - now that's a use of animal bits I approve of.

Road Run. The road run had covered Monyash, Youlgreave, and Elton. Returning via the High Peak Trail. Mr Carberry managed a diversion into the hedge but remained clipped in and vertical. The track by the way, is six feet wide, perfectly flat and as straight as any other railway line. He blamed a frozen rut??

Road Run 2.

Gareth had set off for home.

The Trail Run. Keith and Andy had High Peak Trailed as far as Middleton Top (I think) on frozen shale. They returned through softening gunk just before the light faded. Both looking quite pleased with themselves. The rides had re appeared, "gunked up" to glory. Even with fair mudguard clearance Keith suffered the "ground to a halt" effect of the thawing trail, numerous times coming to a stop to de-clog. Even the huge stone trough set up as a bike wash, got clogged up.

Dispersal into the Sunset.

A quick struggle with frozen car doors and in went the bikes. The trip home was topped by the best sunset I've seen for years. Right over The Cat & Fiddle the whole western sky was displaying amazingly. If I'm not careful I'll be writing poetry.

Back home for a hot bath, cup of tea and watch United skittle City on the box. How good is that?



Gordon Peake

Meet your Clubmates

To say that the member featured here is an All-rounder is an under-statement He is as much at home riding the muddy trails as he is riding the Marmotte in the Alps or the End-to-End on a tandem. In this, our Jubilee year, he is a multi-champion and our Club B.A.R. Meet Dan Mathers:

When and where were you born? Nov.8th 1972, Crewe, Cheshire.

When did you first start cycling, and what was your first club?

Age 3, Sheffield Triathlon club, then Seamons CC.

What is your favourite touring area?

Western Scottish Islands/Outer Hebrides

What is your favourite meal?

Bacon and cheese oatcakes.

What were you like at school?

Liked a good laugh, mostly in trouble.

What kind of books do you read? Sci-fi.

What kind of music do you enjoy?

Guitars, drums and vocals – pop, rock or folk.

And your favourite type of TV program?

Big sporting event, eg Tour de France.

Which newspaper do you read?

Telegraph.

What is your ideal holiday destination?

Anywhere I can ride a bike in the sun, probably California.

Do you have any hobbies, apart from cycling! Chopping firewood, mending things and reading.

Who would play you in a film of your life?

David Tennant.

What is your greatest fear?

Being overtaken by Neil Skellern!

How would you describe yourself in a Lonely Hearts ad?

Energetic, fit, and useless at time-keeping – high maintenance with expensive tastes.

What is your favourite training ride?

Work commute: Trans-pennine to Lymm, Warburton Bridge, Dam Lane, Gorse Covert, Birchwood.

What is your most unpleasant characteristic?

Impatient.

Which characteristic do you most dislike in others?

Laziness.

Who would you most like to have met and why?

Keith Stacey when he was in his twenties and thirties, to have raced against him!

What was your most embarrassing moment?

Stripping off wet-suit in 1st televised London Triathlon – caught on camera with nothing on underneath...

Four words to describe yourself:

Over-optimistic, enthusiastic and compassionate.



(Ed: Compassionate/? **Compassionate**???) Will any member of the half-day section verify this alleged softer



OUT WITH OLD & IN WITH THE NEW!

Retiring Secretary Carol & Chairman Harvey hand over the reins to the new regime - Chairman Mike McConville & Secretary Ian Udall

This year's AGM was a record-breaking occasion with 41 members attending – best ever! – with a record number of changes to the Committee, and with a record number of committee members now in office. The AGM finished in record time, being over by 10.30 p.m.

New Committee:

President: Keith Stacey

Chairman: Mike McConville

Treasurer: Johnny Coles

General Secretary: Ian Udall

Membership: Mike Brooks

Time-trials: Dan Snape

Social Secretary: Dave Williams

Road-race Secretary: Louise Eden

P.R.O: Allan Blackburn

Webmaster: Allan Blackburn

Development Officer: Darren Buckley

Magazine Editor: John and Carol Pardoe

Touring Secretary: John Carberry

Members: Gordon Peake and Harvey Maitland

Auditors: Daniel Laffly and Stuart Kay.

The Club owes a debt of gratitude to Carol Pardoe who stood down as Secretary after 12 years, and to

From the new Chairman - Mike McConville

The Evolution.

After many years of Harvey and Carol guiding the club with a very steady hand, they both decided to resign at the same time. Thanks for all your efforts over many years, I will be tapping into their experience whenever necessary. It is an honour to have been voted in as chair-

man, considering I only joined the club in 2004. I became Time Trial secretary shortly after, a role that I have enjoyed for the past few years. Keith Stacey was elected as president for two years. Ian Udall has become club Secretary, Dan Snape has taken on my old role as Time Trial Secretary.

Four new committee posts were created. Web Editor is Allan Blackburn who has also taken on PRO. Membership secretary is Mike Brooks, Magazine Editor is John Pardoe and Club Development Officer is Darren Buckley. Steve Booth has very kindly volunteered to run the evening "10"s again next year.

Thanks to all the committee for volunteering their time to run our club.

There have been many discussions within the club over the years about how to develop novice / junior riders who get in touch with us, so that their cycling skills and fitness levels are good enough to join in with the main club runs that leave Altrincham every Sunday morning. Darren Buckley has volunteered to lead this new section. It is very much in the planning stage at the moment and at present he is sorting out all the legal requirements of taking a group of teenagers out on a ride. He is also looking into all the grants that are available to finance coaching programs and first aid training that are needed if we intend to run this section properly.

The hope is that by the spring we will have a junior/ novice runs list in place for every other Saturday afternoon.

Darren has already had a look around the club for volunteers and has found two or three; there is always room for more volunteers, so if you would like to help with this new venture please contact Darren ASAP.



ARI F. RODIER SEAMONS!

A quick look at the BBAR's team backing

Keith Stacey is not the first Best All Rounder produced by the Seamons Cycling Club. In fact, he is only the third. His predecessors were Alan Rogerson and Johnny Pardoe..... but their national honours were won on three wheels. The tricyclists' BAR is run and won without publicity or acclaim, but it usually requires a series of very good rides to claim the handsome Major Liles Trophy.

Alan won the three-wheeler BAR in 1963 and was succeeded by John in 1964. John was very disappointed when strained knee ligaments, a legacy from this year's national 24-hour championship, prevented him from competing in a 12-hour event and winning the Major Liles Trophy for the second successive year. "It would have been a unique double for the club," he said, "to produce both Best All Rounders in the same year".

Loyalty and that nebulous quality "club spirit" are strong factors in the success of the Seamons CC. Near the end of the 1965 season when the BBAR battle was at its height, Keith Stacey elected to ride in his club's open 25-mile event instead of defending his position in the national contest.

Five years with the Seamons have turned him into the complete clubman. He has been social secretary for three years, organizing all the club-room activities, and this year he is the club chairman.

Keith's entry into the BBAR battle was purely accidental. In July he entered the Salford Phoenix "25" only to discover on the day that entries closed that it was a 1.3.0 limit event. Rather than miss a week-end's racing, he took the only alternative and rushed down to the house of Gerry Gorman, event secretary of the Abbotsford Park "100" and became a last minute entry. And so the young Seamons speedman, who used to have a reputation of blowing up in "fifties" and who had no intention of riding a "hundred" this year, suddenly found himself a BBAR aspirant with 1.54 and 4.7 rides.

The experience and confidence he has gained this year I would rate him a "racing certainty" to break the 4-hour barrier in 1966. I think, too, that this genial blonde giant with the magnificent physique could easily become one of our greatest time-trialists and dominate the scene in the manner of Frank Southall and Ray Booty.

During the last week in July and the first two

weeks in August when the time-trial battle was hotting up, a party of five Seamons members were enjoying a tour in Norway. They included Malcolm Judge. Malcolm (erroneously called Mark and Mike in race reports this year), joined the Seamons club in 1953 but, being a bit of a lone wolf, left to rejoin in 1956.

He had a good season in 1957, but he says: "I'm more of a tourist than a racing man and I don't suppose I've ever tried all that hard really - not until the end of this season, anyway. I was certainly trying in the Lancs. RC 12 hour."

His efforts brought him second place in that event behind clubmate Stacey and set the Seamons thinking about the BBAR team title. The battle ended ignominiously on the last weekend of the season when the Harrogate CC secretary rejected Judge's entry. Malcolm is a very amiable character and his main reaction is a shrug of the shoulders that says "that's life." He genuinely believes that he could have done a ride that would have brought the team title to Cheshire.

One of the busiest Seamons members is undoubtedly Jim Boydell, 5th in the BBAR table, 2nd in the CTC championship, and Manchester area best all-rounder this year. Tall, slim Jim has organized every open event promoted by the Seamons CC and is a committee member of the Manchester DC. Jim joined the Club in 1958. In 1960 he was awarded the Wagstaff-Trophy given to the best first-year rider in the Manchester area. Until this year Jim, 24 years

old, has concentrated mainly on short-distance events, but he got caught up in the BBAR fever. His winning ride in the Manchester Wheelers "12" was a particularly fine effort.

The Wagstaff Trophy has been awarded to Seamons riders twice since Boydell's effort. Keith Stacey won the award in 1962 and Neil Hepburn in 1964. The club makes a habit of producing good young riders and has won the individual and the team awards in the Withington Wheelers Novices "25" on numerous occasions.

Next year's event may be won by young Philip Johnson. If he is as efficient at riding his bicycle as he was at collecting my six-penny clubroom fee when I visited the Seamons clubroom he should have no difficulty!

Another young rider who should do well in the future is Maurice Webb, and two youngsters who are already beginning to go places are Dave McIlroy and John Firth, both of whom beat the hour this year. John is the son of Reuben Firth of Altrincham Ravens and Bronte Wheelers fame.

The Seamons have a lower age limit of 13 years but they are considering lowering it. Very young members bring many practical problems with them but the alternative to very young new members seems to be no new members at all. Thousands of school-children have bicycles and pass their Cycling Proficiency Tests but only a very tiny percentage find their way into cycling clubs and the cycling game. The Seamons feel that if they can attract these youngsters while the interest and enthusiasm engendered by the Tests is still alive they will have tapped a valuable source of supply.

The present membership of the club is between 35 and 40. Only one, Sid McMullen, an ex-Birkenheader now living at Altrincham, has ever been a member of another cycling club.

A turnout of about 15 riders is usual on clubruns and in the winter they always take a football with them. Football matches with other cycling clubs in the Manchester area are eagerly sought.

The Touring Trophy is contested as keenly as the racing trophies where the Doug Hartley Trophy competed for in specified local events of 25, 50 and 100 miles takes precedence over the George Arstall Trophy which is awarded to the

best placed rider in the BBAR competition.

There have been suggestions that the four clubs in the Altrincham area should amalgamate. The clubs concerned have discussed the idea and rejected it. Jim Boydell is one who thinks that eventual amalgamation is inevitable.

If the amalgamation does come no club will supply more to the venture than the Seamons CC with its fine club spirit, its enthusiasm and its sound administration.

Johnny Helms

This article first appeared in 'Cycling' magazine in November 1965 and, yes, it was written by THE Johnny Helms of cartooning fame. Philip Johnson (Phil) went on to become a very fast short distance junior and took the Welsh Junior '25' mile Championship.

The Wagstaff Memorial Award has been won by Jack Lewis (1966), John Woodhouse (2000) and Dan Mathers (2005) since this article appeared.

MEMBERS ARE REMINDED...

Club subs are due: £20 or £25 for family membership. Nominal fees for younger riders and social members.

Please note new Membership Secretary: Mike Brooks. 22 Claremont Avenue, Timperley, WA15 7PF, or you can pay him Friday nights at clubroom

Club clothing: this can be ordered through Tim Seddon: 0161 941 7606.

Maintaining Standards: Don't forget to send your claims for racing standards and any club records to our new Time-trials Secretary, Dan Snape: 0789 2680246. No claim - probably no certificate at the Annual Dinner!

Cerrig camping barn weekend to coincide with Llangollen: March 7-8th, contact John Carberry: 01565 650842 for more details

Celebration Diamond Jubilee Mugs are coming soon to a clubroom near you.

In The Beginning ...

In compiling this resumé (wrote the late Bob Richardson) of the very earliest days of the Club, I would like to acknowledge the help of some notable members of that period, namely Reg Herbert, Alan Spence, Frank Murphy, Bob Hill and Reg Blease.

In 1947/8 a Community Centre was opened in Oldfield Brow by the efforts of the late Councillor Arthur Vesey (JP and ex-Mayor of Altrincham), on the premises of what had been a former local school - called "Seamons Moss". Among the early members of the Centre were a small group of younger people who rode bicycles for pleasure (cycling was one of the few means of travel in those halcyon days and many people rode bikes to some degree).

As the group rides became more regular the participants decided that they wanted to become a recognised cycling club and affiliate to the National Cyclists Union. This they did. The question of a title for the new club also arose and the name of Seamons Cycling Club appeared to be appropriate. In choosing an emblem for the club badge it seemed natural to choose a squirrel, surrounded as the Centre is by oak trees which were then frequented by the red variety of this animal. It was only sometime later that we realised that this choice was somewhat unusual as an emblem for a cycling club. In our ignorance of the world of organised cycling, we had assumed that because the Altrincham Ravens CC had that bird as their emblem, it would be normal for us to choose any motif that took our fancy. Incidentally, it appears that the choice of a raven for that club was almost as casual as ours, being the name of a cycle stocked by a local dealer at the time the "Ravens" were formed.

Although the cyclists became a semi-autonomous section within the Community Centre, we soon began to clash with other interests in the Centre because of our unique need to have control over some of our finances for affiliation fees, etc. After some turmoil and heart searching the Club members left the Community Centre en mass and re-formed at St.



Margaret's Church Parish Room (now long demolished).

The first Club jerseys were royal blue, each with an individually handmade squirrel sewn on the back, using yellow dusters as material. Although beautifully designed by artist Reg Herbert, some of the results were far from artistic, resembling anything from a rat to a bear.

The first Annual Dinner was held on December 10th 1949, some 13 months after the Club's formation, at the Woodlands Private Hotel in Middlewich, to which most members were bussed out. At both that venue and the following year's event held at the Unicorn Hotel, Altrincham, the members provided their own entertainment which included a piano accordionist, jazz band, a conjurer. There was also a Glee Club who had rehearsed for weeks but who were off-key on the night owing to an intake of alcohol and a one-act play performed by the young women members and written by one of them. In the early years the members also raised money by holding public dances, raffles, and jumble sales in church halls.

The club runs used to start at the Wheatsheaf Hotel, Altrincham, and the number of participants rapidly grew. These were nearly all young teenagers of both sexes, which led eventually to a crisis of crowd control and so alarmed the committee that a limit on the number of members was proposed, but not agreed.

One of the reasons for starting a new club was in

order to take part in races and this the members did, as well as having a strong touring section. There were time trialists and track riders, both at Fallowfield and on the many grass track races held around the country at that time. Bob Hill may recall riding back from winning at a Fete in Work-sop with his prize, a small carpet, on his back. An early annual event was the Boxing Day race, of about 5 miles, against Sale Harriers following a paper trail on road and fields (sometimes ploughed). I witnessed one club champion out-sprinted to the line by a runner. The winner's prize was to have the first cup of tea from the pot.

The Club was blessed with good photographers who provided an interesting record of some occasions, as for instance a night photo taken in the barn where riders were to sleep before a Club Championship "25" the next morning, and photographer, Ray Holmes, used a magnesium flare for the flash. Now I shudder to think what could have happened but at the time it seemed a normal thing to do.

With the present dearth of women members it is notable that the Seamons CC then boasted (and I kid you not) a wonderful array of feminine beauty from which number there were eventually at least six marriages to other club members.

A Club magazine was published from the early days and has continued spasmodically up to the present superb offering.

I could go on about the many good times, and occasional reverses that the Seamons CC has experienced over the years but suffice it to say that it is enough to offer some enlightenment about those days when none of us had any conception of what we were starting.

Now fifty years later we have a proud, active club with a record membership heading for the 21st Century on (as we say in the game) a flyer.

Another reminiscence on the early days comes in a letter from Frank Murphy....

Dear Bob,

I don't have any physical memorabilia of the early days of the Club, but your letter, and a chat with Reg Herbert, raised lots of warm memories. The conversion of the Seamons Moss school

building into a social centre was the catalyst. I recall chatting with Alan Spence whilst walking along Oldfield Road. Stretford Wheelers was my parent's Club and far too staid for me, and I believe that Brian Dixon had found the Altrincham Ravens was all racing and card games. The idea of a new Club emerged - initially between those living nearby. You gave weight, experience, and some discipline to our (slightly) younger enthusiasm - I'd have been 17 or 18.

When we all started to ride together the big difference was that we rode hard and long - 07.30 am start from St Margaret's Church (Bowdon), and coming back in the dark, in pairs, with lights (except for Jeffrey Robinson, who always had one light missing, and so had to keep in the middle). I recall a Saturday afternoon ride to Ludlow Youth Hostel, with a Sunday return through Cheshire, with tea at Middlewich, I think. Every ride turned into an impromptu race! Even, but a bit mellowed, after the girls began to join in numbers.

My memories include buying flat caps in Beddgelert with Reg Blease and about eight others, racing down from Congleton to the Milk Bar at Wilmslow when for the only time in my life, I dropped George Arstall! Christmas Day afternoon rides to Derbyshire Youth Hostels, Brian Dixon doing a 1.05 or 6 on his first "25". Tues-



The Flat Cappers

day evening rides to the Fallowfield race track, coming back at twice the speed (can you remember Alan Bannister and Cyril Cartwright and Reg Harris and Arie Van Vliet?) Fridays (was it?) were Club Nights at the hut at St Margaret's. Doug Hartley joined, which boosted racing confidence greatly; Reg Herbert sketched the Squirrel logo and then all of us sewed it onto our sweatshirts.

None of this is about the process of creating the Club, about which I can remember virtually nothing. Bob Hill was a busy secretary. Newsletters were produced at an early stage, some-

how we became affiliated to the to the RTCC, and everyone mucked in and helped out.

Dennis Chapman, Reg Herbert and I had some fine continental tours, and my last serious bit of cycling was in accompanying Dennis on his "training ride" to Cape Wrath in North West Scotland. At that time, I had just finished obstetric training at St Mary's, so for a week I really suffered, but after two weeks I was just as fit as he was. Soon after that, medical school became paramount, and I quit biking - until retirement, that is. What now seems unbelievable was the emptiness of the roads in the 40's. We exploited a 'window of opportunity' when there were virtually no cars and ordinary people stayed at home on Sunday. Well there is a lot in this about me, and not much about the Club. but I hope that it stimulates your memories and you find something useful in my recollections.

Regards,
Frank (Murphy)

Compare and Contrast, as they say... Previous page; relaxing after a run, early fifties style - In a barn on a bed of hay. Move forward almost 60 years and young Robert Crampton enjoys the home comforts of The Dragon Hotel, Montgomery



1 Your Father
2 One was 20p the other 10p. (read the question again - carefully)
3 You can't dig half a hole!
4 Cleave
5 Bill
6 By using Roman Numerals: XIX remove the 1 and it becomes XX
7 First fill fill the 3-pint jug, then empty the contents into the 5-pint jug. Refill the 3-pint jug and pour the water into the 5-pint jug until it is full. The water left in the 3-pint jug will then be 1 pint.
8 Bernuda
9 Underground
10 Bees, Bets, Bats, Hate, Have, Hive

Answers to Quiz:

ON THE RUN

Not only can someone breath whilst riding on the half-day section runs - he can actually think, remember and commit the day's events to paper. Is such a thing really possible? Our correspondent writes....

Two Mills/Delamere...

The weather had turned rather cold and wet so the run was shortened to Delamere Station cafe. Dan and Keith took the honours and were met by Dave McIlroy and his gang. On the return leg Dave Williams suffered a double puncture and has now secured some new tyres. Tim Seddon also had double misery. He broke one spoke and then another. Fortunately he didn't break any more or he would never have got home. Tim has now booked the car for a trip to the Ribble shop for some new wheels and tyres.

Meerbrook

Very cold start to the day. Keith Stacey's brake levers were so cold they had fused with his fingers - before he even got to the start!

Dave Williams' son Laurence filmed the run for a college project. As this goes to press he is busy editing - the documentary will have more beeps than a Gordon Ramsey cook-along. I did mention turning it into one of those cycle-training videos - you know the sort, where for a small fee you can beat Dan Mathers up Gun Hill.

The wintry conditions didn't let up, and several riders decided to call it a day long before the hill.

It was the thought of tea and pancakes that focussed Basil Leroux's mind as he charged up the hill. Now he just has pancakes once a week. Judging by his photo on the website he used to have pancakes every day...

Young Dan was missing for the day. He was going for a Brazilian - no, that's wrong, he was going to watch a Brazilian play for City against the Reds. I forget what the score was, but Ronaldo got sent off, so that's OK!

Rushup Edge

Another cold day. Keith took the honours from Dan Snape. No toast at the Otter Sanctuary, so John Barrie made do

With the bargain of the day - a round of bread and butter for 25p.

Mel Bailey enjoyed seeing the Hale prime, which

UP THE ROAD

First Words from the New Road Race Secretary!

As the new Seamons CC road racing secretary, I'm making it my mission to get more of you out there road racing next season. Why? 'Cos it's fun, you'll enjoy it and the few of us that do road race need some team mates!!

If you like exhilarating head on competition, trying out tactical manoeuvres and working as a team, road racing could be for you!! Let's face it, you half dayers do it naturally every week on the burn up into Hale. Come on, give it a go!!

Before I tell you how to get started (if you don't already know) here's a taste of what it's like.....

Report from Nige Harrop on his 2008 season: 2008 has been a good season, having finally shaken off a virus that spoiled 2007.

I've ridden in 19 road races and finished in the first 6, six times. If my sprint finish was better it would have been a lot more!

Veterans events are organized into age categories and I compete with the over 50s in the 55 – 59 group. So what have been the highs and lows?

Third place (2nd in the Age Category) in the TLI Cycling Stone Whs RR in April, behind two top riders who only managed to get rid of me with a few miles to go. We were five minutes ahead of the bunch!

Fourth in the TLI Cycling National Champs in N Wales; a small group sprint finish this one!

A third place in the LVRC Gerry Balshaw Memorial RR at Chester. This was a National Series event so the competition was fierce. Three of us got clear on the last lap and once again my dynamic sprint finish didn't disappoint!

The low point, apart from my sprinting ability, was crashing quite heavily in the BC Bike Factory GP. To add insult to injury, even though it really wasn't my fault, I was the only one left sliding along the tarmac!

Any chance of a few team mates next season?

Report from Lou Eden on her 2008 season:

This year has been really tricky for various reasons, not least, new job, new house.....too many people getting married andthe dreaded Team Halfords!!! I only made it to 3 National Series Races this year which was really disappointing, but with so many Saturdays taken up with weddings and hen-dos, I had to accept what I could.

I've been racing at a National Level for 3 years

and unfortunately for us mere mortals, ladies races are not categorised, which means I get to race the professionals. All the National Series Races were dominated by Team Halfords this year. Set up to support Nicole Cooke on her Olympic journey, this team really worked!!!

Sharon Laws, Jess Allen and Jo Rowsell dominated my first race of the season, the Cheshire Classic. Nicole Cooke was on the start list but didn't turn up – was I wrong to be relieved??

Three of the girls made a break 6 laps in. I hung in there as the field of 65 girls was blasted apart and on the tenth and final time up Acton Bridge hill, I found a sprint from somewhere and grabbed myself a 12th place!!

My second National Series race in Bristol was a similar story but I found the hilly course very tough and placed 22nd out of 60. My third and final points series race was the Capernwray race, later in June, another hilly course, but one I am much more familiar with and it was fun. Rowsell dominated the field again but I managed a respectable 14th place for a few more BC points.

My main aim of the season was the National Championships at the end of June. I really wanted to improve on my 31st place of last year and I was up for it. I knew Cooke, Pooley, Heal, Laws and Rowsell would be giving it some welly and guessed they'd make a break on the 3rd of 6 laps. I knew where it would be too – on the nasty hill about half a mile long and 20% gradient. Ahhhhh.

I think it was Emma Trott or Sharon Laws that kicked at the bottom of the hill. My legs were burning trying to follow them, my lungs nearly exploding. I could see Cooke and Pooley edging away with their entourage of Halfords girls. I was still in the mix though. A gap had emerged but I was with the chasing group of 15, and not in bad company either. The through and off started, we were actually trying to chase Nicole Cooke down!!!! It was hell on earth, but I got into a rhythm and found myself doing extra turns, I couldn't believe it. I had two of the Global Racing team with me, a couple of Pinarello sponsored girls and I was shouting at them to come through. Then disaster struck. We hit THAT hill again and my chain came off. Ahhh!! I tried adjusting the gears to flick it back on, but no... the group was moving away and my bike was giving up on me. I had to get off and get the chain on, but I was shaking and panicking. I lost

vital time and by the time I was back on, the group was way down the road and I had no chance of catching them on my own. The rest of the field was 7-8 mins behind, so no point waiting and finishing in a disappointingly low position. Better luck next year. Nicole won for the 9th year in a row!! And went on to even greater things as we know....

If any of this has inspired you to give it a go, read on to find out how to get started and which races you could target, from local, low key races to BC points races.

With BC now starting to look at the possibilities of repeating the track successes by implementing a similar structure for the road, there is no better time for talented riders to get immersed in the sport

Road Racing – Come on, give it a go, you know you want to!!

There are various organisations that run road races, each offering slightly different types and levels of racing. It can all seem a bit confusing and complicated at first, but hopefully the following article will give you a bit of background about the world of road racing, tell you what it all means and how to get started.

The first organisation I will talk about that runs road races is British Cycling (BC). This is perhaps the most well known such organisation and offers a variety of races. Its events ranging from short Youth and Juvenile (under16) races of 20 km or less, through to club level events for adults of between 40 km and 100 km, to Elite-level one day races of 200 km or more. The majority of adult racing takes place on public roads, though there are an increasing number of circuit events, either on roads closed to other traffic or on specially constructed circuits, some which are shared with other sports like motor racing and kart racing, others are purpose built for cycling. All under-16 racing takes place on traffic-free closed circuits.

The BC Road Racing system can sometimes seem complicated so I'll attempt to explain it here – hang in there!! There are different classifications of race, open to riders of differing age/ability categories. Many races carry ranking points which are sought after by riders hoping to make it up to the next ability category (cat). The ability categories are 4th cat, 3rd cat, 2nd cat, 1st cat and elite. A 4th cat rider is a new BC licence holder, a 3rd cat rider is a rider who has gained at least 10 but less than 40 points in a season whilst holding a 4th category licence. 2nd cat riders have gained 40 points in one season as a 3rd cat rider and 1st cat riders have gained 160

points in one season as a 2nd cat rider. You also have to earn a certain number of points in a season to retain your ranking from the previous year.

BC road races are also categorised based on the distance/duration, rider categories and Regional/National status. Are you still with me?

These are National A, National B, Regional A, Regional B and Regional C. This list very broadly follows a decrease in the distance/duration and rider categories and also has an associated decrease in the number of BC licence points available to win. More details of the race categorisation can be found on the BC website http://www.britishcycling.org.uk/web/site/BC/roa/road_guide_home.asp

BC Points are awarded on the basis of the result gained (usually you must be in the top 10-20 places to gain points) and the level (i.e. status) of the event. These points go towards a rider's licence category and towards their National and Regional rankings and the National and Regional rankings of their club or Team. Phew!! After all that, to race in a BC event you must be a BC member and therefore hold a BC race licence. This year the club has 20 free Bronze BC memberships available to people who have not been a BC member before. So if you fancy having a go, drop me a line and I'll give you a form to fill out for free membership!! I've picked out a series of races based in the North West, run by sub-division of British cycling – Cycling Development North West (CDNW) that could be a good starting point for novices. All of these races are open to beginners (4th Cat riders). A list of the dates can be found on the BC or CDNW website <http://www.cdnw.org/> but here are a few of the key local ones you might be interested in.

15/03/2009 – CDNW Event 2 – Chester RC – Saighton

03/05/2009 – CDNW Event 6 – Manchester Wheelers – Great Budworth

07/06/2009 – CDNW Event 9 – Buxton cc/Sett Valley Cycles

12/07/2009 – CDNW Event 11 – Liverpool-Century – Pinbo

Most of these races are 65 km for beginners and cost £14.00 to enter.

If you don't fancy racing BC races, why not try the League International (TLI)? This organisation offers age related rather than category related racing. <http://www.theleagueinternational.com/>. Many races can be found locally, including a great mid-week series around Cheshire.

The mid week series is fantastic fun. The races

in this series are generally shorter than BC races and can be treated as training or a chance to try out some kamikaze tactics as it's a very friendly and fun atmosphere. The full TLI calendar can be found on the website but the mid-week (Tuesday night) series dates are: 28/04/09, 05/05/09, 12/05/09, 26/05/09, 02/06/09, all starting from Lower Withington church hall. There's also the Siddington Road Race on 19/05/09 and we are thinking of running a Seamons RR under the TLI around Cranage towards the end of June.

To race in TLI events, you need to be a member.

Membership forms are available on the website.

If you're slightly challenged in the age department (sorry Nige!!) the League of Veteran Racing Cyclists (LVRC) offers races for veteran cyclists (over 40 years of age). Race dates can be found on the website <http://www.lvrc.org>. But this offers a great opportunity for more racing against your own age group!!

Hopefully after all that I've not totally confused you or put you off!! Come on, what are you waiting for – let's get the Seamons road racing team up and cycling !!!



1948 - 2008

You and your guest are cordially invited to the

Seamons CC

Diamond Jubilee

**ANNUAL DINNER
AND PRIZE PRESENTATION
SATURDAY 7th FEBRUARY 2009**

CRESTA COURT HOTEL

ALTRINCHAM

18.00 – Jubilee Drinks Reception

18.30 – 3 Course Meal & Coffee

Prize Presentation

Guest Speaker

Raffle

DJ

For tickets please return the attached form with your drinks and menu choices, a cheque payable to Seamons CC and an SAE for your tickets to Louise Eden or Sara Blackburn.

Tickets - £25 (not including wine)

Please cut out or photocopy this menu requirement and send it with your payment (in full) to either Sara Blackburn , 6 Crowton Avenue, Sale, M33 4LY or Lou Eden at 7, Pheasant Drive, Wincham, CW9 6PX

Name of Guest	<i>Jubilee Drinks Reception Choice</i> (Real Ale or Sparkling Wine)	<i>Main Course Choice</i> (Lamb or Chicken or Vegetarian)	<i>Dessert Choice</i> (Cheesecake or Sticky Toffee or Special Diet)

DINNER PRESENTATION RECEPTION
 sparkling Wine

DRINKS
 Soup
of fresh cream
 Chicken
with red wine & mushrooms
 Lamb
with Redcurrant Jelly
 Cheesecake
Served with Fresh Pouring

pudding
 Custard
 Mints

Diet Options available

Pre-order :
 £15.25 per bottle
 'Middle' Hardys £15.25

Time Trialling Matters

First.... A report from the club Time Trial Secretary at the AGM.....

The pages of the club record book have been very busy this year. The ladies' 25 record started the year at 1:04:26 Sara lowered it to 1:04:00 in June. In September it was improved twice on the same day, Louise recorded a 1:01:55 to be just bettered by Sara who did a 1:01:20.

The Ladies 50 mile record was held by Louise at the start of the year the mark being 2:19:47. Sara lowered this to 2:17:10 at the start of July, Louise bettered this twice, her best time being 2:09:51 which was done at the end of August. Dan Mathers extended Malc Judge's 40 year old 24 hour record from 455.79 miles to 455.95 miles.

The Wednesday night 10's proved a great success again. The winners of the points competitions were Louise Eden and Roy Myers. Dan Snape was 2nd again and he managed to compete in all 16 events. Harry Streuli picked up the best newcomer award. Thank you to Keith Bailey for timekeeping for the past 2 years, Thanks also to Reg Blease, Dave Barker, John Carberry, Gareth Blease and Pete Devereux who all turned up regularly to marshal at the far turn. Thanks also to our chef pusher-off Phil Holden.

The Club 10 and 25 championships were held at the start of June. 27 riders took part in the 10 on 4th June, Ian Udall and Dan Mathers were joint winners recording a time of 22:55. Keith Stacey won the vets competition. 6 days later. 20 riders took part in the 25, Dan won with 56.31 Ian was 2nd and Allan Blackburn was 3rd. Keith again won the vets and Sara Blackburn won the handicap and the Ladies championship. Again, thanks to all the marshals who turned out, without their help we would not be able to run these events. Ian Udall is the club 50 champion doing 1:57:40, Dan Mathers picked up all 3 of the longer distance championships, doing 4:06:00 for the 100, he completed 251.99 miles in the 12 hour and 455.95 miles in the 24 hour.

Phil Holden is the vets champion at 50 100 and 12 hours

The club hill climb was on October 5th, Paul Smith was the winner in 2:45, Rob Crampton(2nd claim) was second, and Ian Udall was 2nd Seamons member, Simon Dowling 3rd.

Ian volunteered to run the club open 25 in August, which he organised magnificently and then the Cheshire highways agency interfered and

reduced it to a 10 at very short notice.

Ian has again volunteered to run next years 25, he will be taking bets at the back of the room later on why the event won't happen, my money is going on aliens landing at Jodrell Bank.

Snippets from the CTT National Council at Derby, Sunday 7th December from Ian Udall

Sheila Hardy has been elected Chairman, replacing Peter McGrath, who has held the position for 11 years and has decided to stand down. Sheila works for the British Horse Society, and has professional contacts with Government departments over vulnerable road users, something that will doubtless be extremely useful in protecting the future of the sport.

CTT is to mount an publicity campaign in 2009, buying a page per month in CW to present "advertorials", essentially articles on time trialling paid for by CTT. This is the vanguard of a campaign to be built on the post-Olympic interest which aims to funnel some of the new sports cyclists into time trialling. This has some potentially interesting impacts on the club's own development programme, but the details of Manchester District's response need to be discussed.

The Chairman of CTT has been given the power to order an Appeal Hearing in the event of a suspected miscarriage of justice in Disciplinary Hearings.

An advisory note is to be added to the handbook recommending that a rear light is used during all events. The rationale is that EU motor construction standards are under discussion to make daytime running lights mandatory; the concern is that the glare from modern xenon lights from oncoming vehicles will render cyclists even less visible to motorists than currently.

Accident statistics are to be added to the Annual Report to demonstrate that actual risks are lower than perceived.

Many other points were discussed, e.g. a reduction in the minimum open surface area requirement for front wheels to 42% (which would permit Zipp 1080 wheels to be used), but these were all defeated when put to the vote.

An Up & Down Weekend

With a little bit of (almost) flat thrown in for good measure.....

1 - FUN TEN 2-UP

Not fun, not ten, and for Cath and Carol, not 2-up (something happened to Carol's legs). Louise's partner, Dave, was a little kinder, and allowed Louise to hang on, and they still won by miles – well, a lot of seconds. It was very windy, but there was a good turn-out, with prizes for all, and a bungy strap presented to Cath and Carol to keep them together next



Reg & Vera still find it fun
(or was the grimace mistaken for a smile?)

2 - HILL CLIMB

Paul Smith was a worthy winner going 13 seconds faster than last year.

RESULTS:

Paul Smith 2.45; Ian Udall 3.03;
Simon Dowling 3.10; Dave Williams 3.23
John Barry 3.43; Allan Blackburn 3.45
Louise Eden 3.52; Gareth Blease 3.54
Nigel Harrop 3.57;
Rob and Sheila 5.12 (tandem)
Malc McAllister 5.20

2nd claim Robert Crampton, aged 14, was 2nd fastest only 18 seconds behind. 13 year old sister Jessica gave some of the men-folk a fright – and Louise! - climbing with great determination to record 3mins 34 secs. Guest rider, Dave Walker (Sleaford Wheel-

Paul Smith heads for victory (right) and the group is all smiles (below) before they head off to the Ryles Arms for a good roast lunch. After all, it's downhill all the way from now on.





CLUBRUNS



DATE	HALF DAY	TOURING SECTION
Jan 4th	Poole Marina	Dones Green
11th	Delamere	Sutton Hall
18th	Rose Farm	Blakemere Craft Centre
25th	Astbury *	Hayfield
Feb 1st	Blaze Farm	Gawsworth (Hollands)
8th	60 miler to OMT **	Alsagers Bank & OMT **
15th	Buxton	Frodsham
22nd	Dagfields Farm	Mow Cop
Mar 1st	Two Mills	Beeston
8th	Llangollen	Cerrig Weekend (7-8th) ***
15th	Meerbrook	Nantwich Marina
22nd	Beeston	Common Barn (Rainow)
29th	Audlem	Audlem
Apr 5th	Blaze Farm	Buxton
12th	Tattenhall	Easter 50 in 4
19th	Castleton	Paddock Farm
26th	Two Mills	Chester

Just a reminder: On the weekend between Christmas and New Year, the half-day section run will be 'impromptu' whereas the tourists say they are going to the Cat & Fiddle. Hmmm?

* M&DTTA lunch to follow

** Anniversary Rides day after 60th Dinner

*** Camping Barn Weekend and Llangollen Thrash

LAST LAUGH



"Another non-starter. What's wrong with everybody today?"