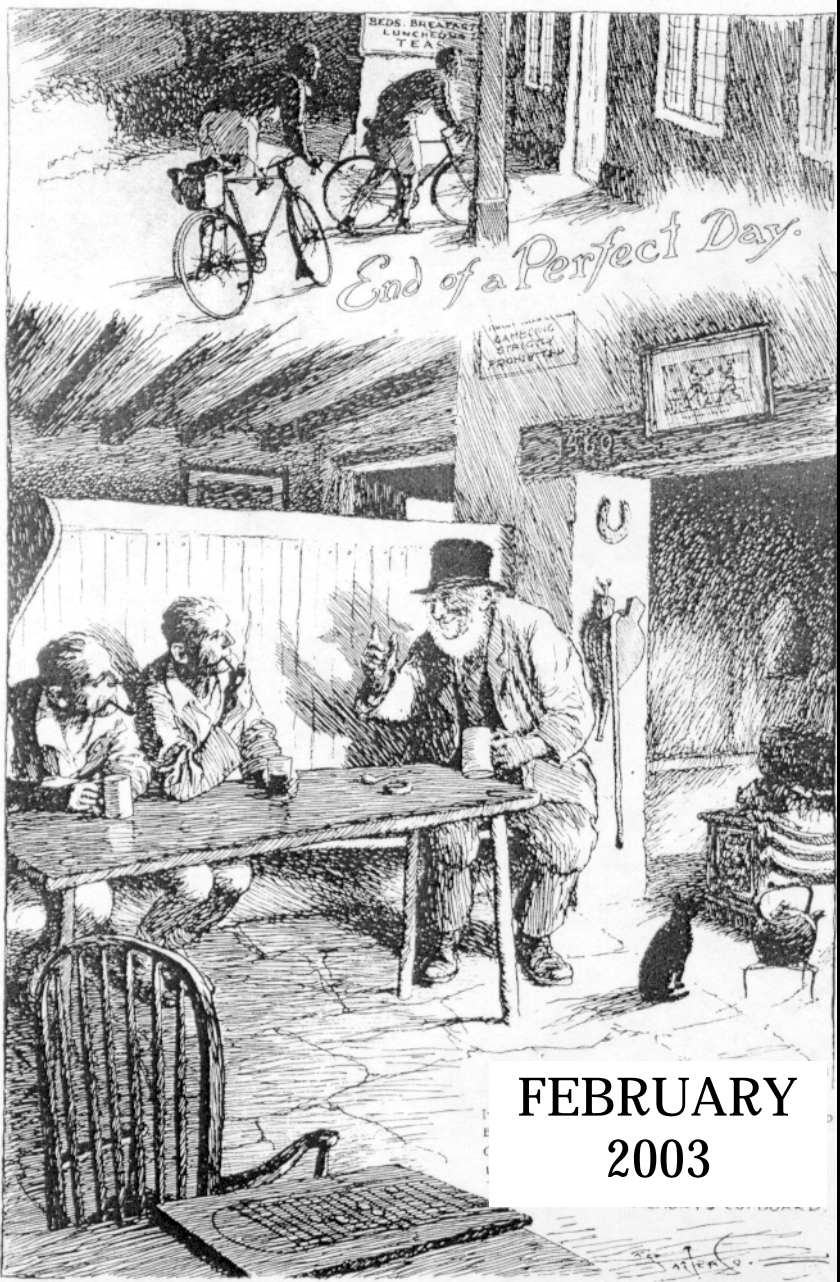


THE SQUIRREL



End of a Perfect Day.

FEBRUARY
2003

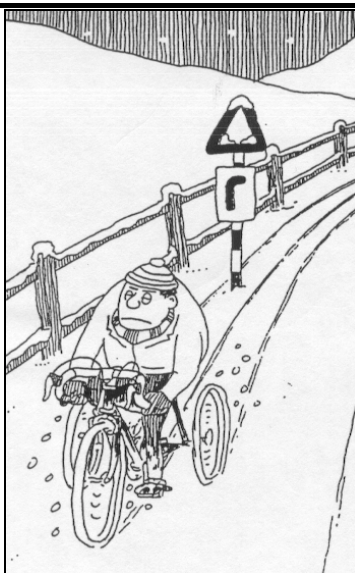
EDITORIAL

The Guest of Honour at this year's dinner dance is Graham Trunks and for those who aren't aware of it, Graham is the editor of the excellent 'Northern Wheel', that eagerly awaited quarterly that keeps us all up to date on the happenings in the Manchester DC of the CTC and all the clubs that go to make up the organisation. It's lively, opinionated, informative and a welcome addition to our reading matter. Cycling Weekly it ain't. Readers can't fail to have noticed a certain antipathy in the editorial pages of 'The Wheel' to those who are now in charge at CTC headquarters. Letters fly back and forth between Salford and Guildford and in one of the latest Kevin Mayne (the main man at HQ) promised to come up and meet 'Seething of Salford'. Mr Pardoe had an even better idea - invite them both to the club dinner, sit them on the top table and see what happens. Well, it was not to be. Kevin Mayne, a very busy man, declined the invitation pleading a prior engagement so we can look forward to many more exchanges in the pages of Graham's magazine as the battle of the old 'winged wheelers' and the modernisers continues unabated. At least all our guests won't need umbrellas for the soup course.

We're losing not one but two of our young riders this month. As mentioned elsewhere, Chris Siepen is off to pastures new to try road racing but Mark Bailey isn't just crossing the Mersey - he's off to China for three months. A couple of these will be spent with a family and doing some English teaching, then it's a move to gain experience in the Chinese medical system before returning home

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This is the cover of a card sent by Johnny Pardoe at Christmas and it took a little while to see the 'funny side'. Look very carefully!

Cover: End of a Perfect Day by Frank Patterson. Montgomery weekend maybe?

'The Squirrel' is the magazine of the Seamons Cycling Club. Editor - Jim Boydell 44, Winchester Drive, Stockport, SK4 2NU. a0161 442 6370, or e-mail Jim.Boydell@btinternet.com. Website <http://www.seamons.org.uk> from where the on-line version of this magazine is available.

BITS and BITS

AS IF ONE DODGY BIT OF Gay Boy inuendo wasn't enough to make our members wary of entering strange pubs, another story reaches your editor's unsullied ears. This time the incident occurred much nearer to home. In fact much too near for the Stockport based scribe. The scene was the Arden Arms in the town centre and the reason for our members being there was the roller racing evening with the Stockport Clarion. As regulars they, apparently, were well aware of the clientèle that the pub attracted and that it was inviting attention to stand at the bar for any extended period. Definitely not to be attempted whilst wearing cycling lycra gongs.

Unfortunately Gordon Peake was unaware of the subtleties of the message he was giving out as one after another the 'friendly' locals engaged him in conversation. A concerned Clarion rider whispered in his ear and the resulting movement away from the bar was the swiftest bit of action that we saw. And that included the roller racing.

THE RIDE HOME for the three stalwarts who had ridden from Altrincham proved interesting as Peter Coles just disappeared from sight and wasn't seen again for several days. In a scene reminiscent of the 'X' Files, Gordon, Roger and Peter (note the ET in his name, spooky or what?) were riding along and then quite suddenly Peter wasn't there anymore. Despite retracing and waiting a few minutes there was no sign of the recently departed. So what did the two do? Report it to the police? Mulder & Scully? Nope, they just rode home and went to bed. Back in the safe haven of the Old Market Tavern a couple of week's later, the story was being re-told. Weren't you worried, Gordon was asked? "Nah," came the reply, "he usually turns up again after a few days."

SADLY THIS WAS NOT TO BE the only case of abandoning a member to his fate for within a couple of weeks Roy Myers was left at the side of the road at Kelsall on the way back from a Sunday clubrun. After a

couple of previous 'incidents' during the day, the last straw came with complete mechanical meltdown and the rest of the group had no alternative but to leave him to be collected by car. Trouble is nobody's seen him since. Where are you Roy?

AN INTERESTING discussion seems to have taken place on a recent clubrun when the subject was 'Genes for Meanness'. What prompted the discussion I know not, but as one of those involved was Gareth Blease, whose ability to recycle other people's cycling cast-offs is legendary, it should have been worth listening to. The acid test will come at the Jan 10th club jumble, where, it is rumoured, Gareth is bringing some stuff to **dispose of!**

BOUNCE. THAT'S WHAT YOU really need. Falling off your bike or just simply falling over aren't half the problem if you've got 'good bounce'. Johnny Coles still seems to have retained the ability. After a fall on a recent off-road ride (no damage), he then took a tumble whilst out off-road walking with his wife, Barbara. Unlike a year ago, when Barbara ended up with a broken leg in Iceland, Johnny seems to have suffered nothing more than a loss of dignity. Still, they both crammed in their misfortunes into 2002 and start off the new year with a clean sheet.

ROGER HAINES HAS taken to his new committee role with enthusiasm. Within a week there was a new chalk board for 'current events' on the wall and the winter competitions were under way. Darts and Table Tennis are progressing and if you don't turn up you're out. "Them's the rules" Holden is Roger's fully paid up enforcer so a speedy resolution to the titles is confidently expected.

WHO IS THE phantom poster placer? The question being asked as a series of posters sprung up in the Old Market Tavern prior to the

MORE ABOUT THEO.

It was in the late 1950's, possibly 1957, when Nick Welch and myself purchased our first tricycle conversion sets from Theo's scantily stocked shop in Timperley.

I took mine home to 103 Norris Rd. Sale, and with the permission of my late Mum, set about converting my B.S.A. Tour of Britain racer into a trike in the front room. All went well until I tried to get it through the door. It wouldn't, it was too wide. So I then set about dismantling the machine until I could. I eventually did, and the rest, as they say, is history.

After my first marriage, we were on the look out for a Dalmation pup, and answered an advert in the local press. The address was Brooks' Drive, the breeder none other than Theo Parsons. What a contrast, from master frame builder to master dog-breeder.

Johnny Pardoe

RIDING ABROAD?

Elsewhere Peter Bell makes the point about having adequate insurance but assuming you have that sorted out here are a couple ideas that might be of interest....

Ideal Travel now has an interactive website at www.idealtravel.net where you can search for deals safe in the knowledge that they are a company that understands the needs of cyclists.

An e-mail has popped into my inbox from a couple who are about to start cycling holidays in the lee of the Pyrenées. Based in the Vallespier valley it is about an hours drive from Perpignan (served by Ryanair) the renovated old farmhouse has room for 12 with 5 separate rooms, all en-suite. There's a swimming pool, accommodation is half-board and everthing is included, if you want, from transfers, bike hire, vehicular back-up. Packages can be arranged to suit particular groups and the company is calling itself ACTIF Cycling Vacations. More details when their website is up and running.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

News reaches us of a serious motor accident on the Chester Road near Plumley in which both Vice-President Reg Blease and his wife, Vera, received nasty injuries and their car was a write-off. Reg was released to go home even though he sustained a broken sternum whilst Vera was detained in Wythenshawe with more extensive injuries. It is understood that Vera may be transferred to Hope hospital for more specialist treatment. To be driving along minding your own business only to find a car suddenly heading towards you at speed on the wrong side of the road must have been a terrifying experience for both of them. We can only hope they both make full recoveries and are able to resume their normal lives as soon as possible. Our very best wishes go to both of them.

Reg and Vera are the sort of members who don't shout about things from the rooftops they just get on with their lives and support the club whenever asked. Dave Barker is the same and even though he has stepped down from the chairman's job he still is actively involved in all aspects of club life from opening up on clubnights to organising many aspects of the dinner and running the best clubman and tourist trophy competitions. All this has taken place whilst caring for his wife, Mary, who has had a sustained period of health problems, the latest of which was a stroke suffered in early January. Mary appears to be responding well to treatment and once again I am sure that all club members would endorse the good wishes sent and hopes for a complete recovery.

Further afield, from Anglesey, news comes in that Arthur Thoriby is not in the best of health and has suffered a number of falls. This has necessitated in him moving into a rest home for a period. Arthur was a stalwart of our touring section back in the early eighties, when he was also President of the club, and even further back to the mid-fifties. Many of our current senior members started their riding in the club on his Sunday runs and weekends away and will no doubt want to wish him a return to health and independence.

CLUB SUBS NOW DUE !!

Don't forget the £5.00 re-join fee after Feb.

Meet your Clubmates

"It was a game of two halves." Much loved by football commentators, the same could also be said of the racing career of our first clubmate. Back in the Forties he was a man to be reckoned with featuring well up in the prestige short distance events. Then marriage, children and running his own business became the priority before returning to the game and joining the Seamons for the first time. Almost 50 years after his last successes he was to produce some equally memorable rides that he doesn't even mention. In 1996, at the age of 74, he got within 8 seconds of his 1949 best. A week later he went even faster to record 1.11.35 for '30' miles and set yet another age record. The '30' average speed was 25.146 mph and if he'd managed that in the '25' it would have given him a time of 59.39. Truly remarkable rides from a remarkable rider....**Bev Chapman.**

When and where were you born? March 3rd, 1922 in Urmston.

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

Early 1939 with the Altrincham Ravens.

What was your first race? An M&DTTA '25' in early 1940.

What was your first win? The Handicap in the above with 1.15.05. It was won by another Raven, Harry Jones with a 1.12

Which performance do you rate as your best? 59.41 in 1949 when comp record was 58.39 (BB Francis, Solihull RC). Also a 2.06.45 '50' when comp record was 2.03.28.

What is your favourite meal? A good sirloin steak with veg or salad.

What were you like at school? Very average, good at sport, woodwork and art.

What kind of books do you read? Those about great sporting people, biographies and car books.

What kind of music do you enjoy? Big Band - Glen Miller, Basie, Goodman Quartet.

And your favourite type of TV programmes? Sport and factual programmes. Plus the odd 'Columbo'.

Which newspaper do you read? Telegraph, Cycling and Motor Sport.

What's your ideal holiday destination? Spain; Calpe or Majorca.

Do you have any hobbies? Meals out and spending time with my motoring and cycling friends.

Who would play you in a film of your life? Stirling Moss or Michael Schumacher.

What is your greatest fear? Anything happening to my family - and losing on 'standard'.

How would you describe yourself in a Lonely Hearts ad?

Victor Meldrew housekeeper wanted.

What is your favourite training ride? Stretton, Tarporley & back to Knutsford, then up to Holmes Chapel and round the viaducts (twice), Chelford, up Artist's Lane then on to Matthews for a snack before riding home with Jim Boydell trying (very hard) to force me on the wheel.

What is your most unpleasant characteristic? I'm always right - except when I'm wrong.

Which characteristic do you most dislike in others? Rude people and bad timekeepers.

Who would you most like to have met, and why? Frank Sinatra, a great pro and entertainer.

What was your most embarrassing moment? Crashing a car at Oulton park with all my friends watching.

Four words to describe yourself. Old bugger. Very old.



Christmas '25'

At least there was no ice. In fact, as days go for a Christmas '25' it wasn't bad at all. In fact as days go it was a damned sight better than a few we had last June. Before the 'serious guys' got under way (four inside the hour!) there was time for those who were more into the Christmas spirit to show their paces. Or lack of them. What matters here is FUN. The club was well



Hula Girl takes off!

represented and the previous week's dry run for the Christmas Dinner Run proved invaluable in making sure that costumes 'worked'.

So it was that the club's contingent was led off by Malc McAllister as 'Radio Active' of the Science Cycling Club. A minute later and Rob Morton and Dave Attwell 'bewitched' the spectators at the start as they wound up their

tandem as 'Toil & Trouble' of the Strife CC. Then up popped Phil Holden as the 'Hula Girl' from the South Sea sea sea as it were. Our turn-out was completed by Alex Young riding a tandem 'not quite alone'. As Jason and the Dragon's Tooth, Alex had a stoker who had lost a bit of weight. In fact he was just a skeleton of cleverly articulated white painted tubes wearing a crash

helmet. It seemed a lot more docile than the ones created by Ray Harryhausen for the film Jason & The Argonauts but looked every bit as good as it pedalled its way round the Byley course. Thankfully the fancy-dressers only had to complete one lap (14.4 miles) before heading for Byley village hall where they could exchange their numbers for a festive mince pie and a drink.

Spectators didn't even have to do that. If you ended up at Byley Cross Roads then Santa Hodgins offered you a dip in his Christmas Hamper where you might find a flask of coffee, some mince pies and even a tot of whiskey.

At the other end of the spectrum, the 'Glutton for Punishment' award would have to go to Chris Hopkinson of Peter Read Racing. He first rode a tandem with Richard Thoday of the Matlock CC, did 58.43, jumped off and on to his solo to face the timekeeper for the second time. This time he managed a 1.02.39. The things people will do for two mince pies. Your editor had to dash (maybe not quite the right word for the level of fitness at this time of year) off home to return for the Carol



Toil & Trouble - You can say that again.

A VERY GOOD YEAR



Deserved Winners - a boxed pair.

Service at Chelford, so missing the prize presentation. Alex Young reports that Derek Hodgins, in handing out the awards, paid particular tribute to Phil Holden's courage in the way he had dealt with the results of his injuries and joined in with the hearty applause



Radio Active blasts off!

Most bikies have plans, objectives, aspirations or hopes for the coming year and so it was with me, for in '02 I would reach my 'three score years and ten'. So, after a little thought, I decided that my objective would be to do 10,000 miles - all of them quality with no 'utility' ones because they are really just a means to an end.

Trips to a very hot Italy and Majorca in the spring were great (apart from Dave Mac's hospitalization). But, for me, easy access into Wales, Shropshire, The Dales and Derbyshire along with clubruns and a few Audax events provided me with many satisfying rides during the year. Inevitably a year's cycling will provide some highs and lows, or perhaps for us peaks and troughs. And so it was on the day I did my longest mileage of 129 miles in the Northern Dales Audax when a day which had been delightful was suddenly marred by the accidental death of one of my earlier riding companions.

Dave Matthews' 'Tour of the Berwyns' was blessed with a lovely warm sunny day but for me it was a total disaster. I had been so looking forward to to this particular event but had repeated cramps in both legs all day, a legacy I believe of electrolyte depletion from the previous week in hot Italy. The fastest audax was the Ironbridge in the company of a group of Weaver Valley lads who, fortunately, knew the area better than the none too clear route sheet. This resulted in a fairly rapid 18.6 mph average.

Probably the hardest and hilliest ride was the newly introduced Manchester Velo version of the Étape du Tour. This was held on a rare, wonderfully hot and sunny day taking in 103 miles of what felt like every hill in Derbyshire. It will now be obvious that I used the car frequently to get into fresh territory but nevertheless the vast majority of riding was from home with my favourite run being to Longnor.

Altogether during the year I did seventeen century rides and a total of 11,327 miles which well exceeded my original target and was certainly more than I have done for well over 40 years. Final thoughts looking back over the year are of the beauty of the countryside on the 'right day' and the importance of the correct type of holiday insurance. Long may those of us who have reached a certain



While The Cat's Away!

Our annual holiday in France last year was interrupted, temporarily, when Carol flew home to attend her daughter's wedding - not that I was complaining - she left me in the Southern French Alps for four days. After I dropped her off at Nice airport I headed back into the mountains to a campsite just south of Guillaumes, 60 miles North-West of Nice. Some years ago we both completed the classic "Circuit des Trois Cols", a challenging 130 km route based on Barcelonnette. I had always fancied another crack at it, on my own, and this was my chance.

After two days of indifferent weather, wedding day dawned, calm, misty, and with good weather forecast by the "météo" this was it. I left the campsite around 8 a.m. heading North for St. Martin. It was cool, 8 degrees in fact, as I rode through a misty Guillaumes, climbing steadily towards the first major col of the day.

From St.Martin the road rears up towards the summit of the 17 kilometre Col des Champs, at 7,500 feet. I virtually had the road to myself and after two and a quarter hours of climbing from Guillaumes I only saw two cars and two other cyclists. Although the climb is steep, I really enjoyed sharing the mountain with the mountain

goats, alpine cattle - the bells! - marmots, the occasional Alpine chough, and an abundance of wild flowers.

My plan was to ring Carol from the summit on my newly acquired mobile phone. No chance, no signal! What a let-down, in fact it's been letting me down ever since, but that's another story. A cautious descent followed, on the steep, winding, rough and pot-holed surface (French for pot-hole = "nid de poule", hen's nest), down towards the valley and the medieval town of Colmars. It was now warming up as I headed along the valley towards the next climb, the 7,400 feet Col d'Allos. I reached the summit after 4 hours of riding, feeling good, and was so much looking forward to the fabulous 17 kilometre descent I know so well, I failed to stop for food. A disastrous oversight.

I managed to make contact with Carol from a phone box at the foot of the final climb, just before she left for the church. She sounded envious, but she had a job to do. Sixty-three kilometres to go and a superb climb to come, the 30 kilometre Col de la Cayolle, a climb we have both completed and enjoyed many times, but NOT THIS TIME...I blew big time, in fact I can't remember most of the climb, I should have stopped for food on the Allos. Why do cyclists keep making the same mistakes, after a life-time of experience?

By now it was hot, and certainly not the best time of day to be climbing this giant of the Alps, especially when feeling below par. I struggled on to the village of Fours St.Laurent, stopping at the bar for emergency rations. I can't even remember what they were. Whatever it was it



I came round at the summit, just in time to enjoy the 35 mile descent back to Guillaumes. On the descent I was to see the two cyclists I had crossed earlier in the day, obviously completing the circuit in reverse. After 87 miles and seven and three quarter hours of riding, with the temperature now 27 degrees, I slumped into the first bar for a few well-earned drinks.

The local leaflets describe the route as one of the all time classic circuits of the Alps, and now, after having completed it twice I can understand why. It is a true test of both climbing and descending skills over a tortuous route, not for the

got me to the 7,450 foot summit, after some six and a half hours of riding. Could I stake a claim on the "Hammering of the Year"? I thought, probably not, there were no witnesses. To this day I know in my own mind I was a worthy winner.

faint at heart. Having said that, and despite my bad patch, the Alpine scenery was at times stunning, the weather superb, culminating in one of the most memorable and rewarding days I have ever spent in the saddle. Oh, and by the way, Carol enjoyed the wedding too.



A shadow of his former self after the ride



November 1945 and Ken Joy attacks the London-Brighton record. Hope he didn't get too distracted by his feeder. Then again, maybe she was the incentive and was waiting for him at the finish.

This picture and the one on page 28 are the only cycling subjects from a series that tells the story of the '40's in photos.

FROM THE ARCHIVE

It is hard to believe that it's forty years since Alan "Koj" Rogerson was the first of two Seamons tricyclists to win the Tricycle Association's National Best All Rounder title, yes, even before Keith Stacey won his coveted B.A.R. title in 1965 on two wheels. It was in 1963 when Alan hit peak form in the T.A. National "100", held over a sporting course near Shrewsbury. In a class field Alan caught JP for 5 minutes at about 60 miles. We finished together, after a real battle, Alan recording 4.45.10 for a superb win, taking course and event records on the way.

He rounded off his season with a 2.16.05 "50", and 229 miles for the "12", to win the title. On two wheels Alan was a former Club Champion at 50 and 100 miles, and the 12 hour. In 1961 he was Club Champion, winning the Doug Hartley trophy. He left the Club to join the Barrow Central Wheelers trike team when he moved North, but has always kept in touch, attending most Club dinners over the last forty years.

He remains actively involved in the sport and last year took part in the Tricycle World Championships in France. Although he now lives in Lower Darwen, he has re-joined second claim, and likes to join us at the velodrome on occasions. He has the dubious honour of being my best man twice!



ROLLER NIGHT

As you can see on the facing page, the revenge match between the Clarion and ourselves took place at the Old Market Tavern. With only three riders turning up for the Clarion we had to 'loan' them Mark Bailey for the evening. The contest started with a 'flying start' 500 metres (one lap) with Steve Davis up against Mark. Steve came home in 18.71 seconds to put the club one up. After Ian Brown (Clarion-20.82)) had just shaded John Woodhouse, Duncan Hewitt (Clarion-20.47) pipped Tim Seddon and Paul McAllister (18.31) had edged out Julian Mortel (Clarion), suspicions were raised that all victories were on the red rollers.

When an ominous screech started coming from the blue rollers these were confirmed. Frantic efforts to replace the roller revealed a shattered bearing only then to reveal the rear tyre on the same bike was shredding due to the heat that had been generated. A quick discussion with 'promoter' Roger Haines saw an early break being taken and out came the buffet. The Tavern did us proud and with some of the surplus money from the Christmas Hot Pot we were able to treat our guests well to sandwiches, quiche, pies and drumsticks. No wonder the turnout was good and the cycling enthusiasts filled the room and most of the bar area.

Meanwhile Derek Hodgins, Jim Boydell and Keith Bailey went into action and the complete assembly was dismantled before the unused front roller was substituted for the failed rear. Further activity, with a tyre from Wilkies touring bike being pinched, spanners from Peter Coles, oil can and track pump fetched from the Baileys and we were on the roll again. Event 2 saw a 2000 metre pursuit in which Steve beat Julian (1.26.43), Duncan beat John (1.38.99), Paul beat Mark (1.29.59) and Tim beat Ian (1.38.35) to leave the Seamons as victors 5 to 3.

The call for personal challenges saw a re-match of the Mark McAllister v Rob Morton event but this time Rob was either fitter or had drunk less and his 500m flying start time of 22.22 was just too good for Mark. Then, to round off the evening - the ultimate challenge. Eddy Robinson took on John Thorogood. John's 30.26 proved best on the night but it must be pointed out that Eddy was without lights, leggings, sou-wester



competitors as the
gruelling test

lco

Tourist Trophy 2002

.....and a preview for 2003.

As expected, and indeed as was mathematically certain, the few remaining events had a limited effect on the outcome of last year's competition. There was however just enough room for John Coles to squeeze past Roger Haines and retain the Lil Windsor trophy. He did so by completing both the November and December off road rides, while Roger missed the former, courtesy of his bad knee.

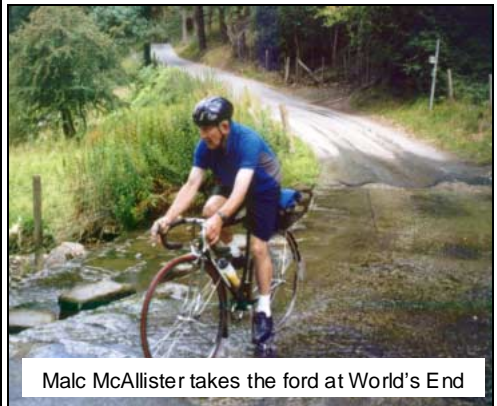
Conditions were dramatically different for the two rides. On a beautiful, sunny November morning John and Dave Barker met at Jackson's Boat and followed the Trans-Pennine Trail to Hyde. I don't recall anyone waxing lyrical in these pages about the Tame valley east of Stockport. Fair enough, it's not in quite the same league as Wensleydale or the Dordogne, but you couldn't get to either in less than an hour on your mountain bike, the autumn colours were spectacular, the Pennines were set against a perfect blue sky AND, turn your head a little, you could gaze on the architectural splendour of Stockport's tower blocks. We diverted up onto Werneth Low, then down to Compstall and parted company, John to Marple and a full tourist point, Dave back to Sale, half a point and a chat with Warren Frost in Bredbury.

The Middlewood Way carpark, 27 December, very, very wet. Surely no one else will show up. Miraculously six heroes/sad gits (according to taste) emerge from five vehicles – John Coles, Roger Haines, Reg and Gareth, Malc McA and Dave B. Lyme Park, down to the canal, New Mills, Sett Valley Trail, Hayfield: for the old hands it was reassuringly familiar, just wetter and muddier than ever. At this point I had to retrace. Colesy was in uncompromising mood. This time there was no short cut to the reservoir and up the cobbles; instead it was a case of half way up Kinder and down to the reservoir before eventually docking at the Moorside at 1.40. The new hands were relieved to discover that the return route in the afternoon was shorter, flatter and better equipped with tarmac. Seven

members and a guest enjoyed a winter solstice break in Montgomery. Read Mark Bailey's story elsewhere in this edition.

The upshot of all this is that John Coles finishes top of the pile with 10 points. The also-rans were Roger Haines 9½, Peter Bell 8, John Pardoe and Andy Wright 7, John Thorogood, Keith Wilkinson, Reg Blease and Dave Barker 6.

Newer members might appreciate a short explanation of how the Tourist Trophy is organised. The nominated events are listed each quarter. They fall into five main categories. First, our own off-road series, with a range of starting places, some local like Jackson's Boat, some more distant, such as Settle or Chirk. The latter are, in effect, car-assisted runs. Second, our on-road series, including a 50 in 4, a 100 in 8, the Club Audax ride to Llangollen, coinciding with the annual thrash on the first Sunday in March, car-assisted runs and one or two epic club runs (Matlock and the 19 Gates). Apart from the car-assisted runs, these all start from Altrincham, usually at 9 o'clock; it is just a matter of turning up and doing the ride. For the 50 in 4 and the 100 in 8 we operate with a fairly loose concept of riding time which corresponds quite closely to the Audax minimum riding speed of 15 kph (about 9 mph), giving a total elapsed time of 10.40 for the 100. (On Audax,



Malc McAllister takes the ford at World's End

see below). We actually run three editions of the 100 each year, usually in April, June/July and September, the route takes in Delamere, Tattenhall, Audlem, Alsager and Astbury and there are those who are so taken by it that they ride all three.

keep a supply of forms at the Club room. But apart from that there is minimal formality. You can be confident that you will have a good (long) day out, on an interesting route, in good company; and you have a clear target, say, 200 km at 15 kph or 13 hours 20 minutes.



Bring on summer! A glorious day up at Clewlow Cross

Third, Club week-ends. We aim to organise four or five of these, including camping or bed and breakfasting at the York Rally in June.

Fourth, local Audax rides, selected from the national programme of events. Audax UK is the British wing of the international long distance cyclists organisation, Randonneurs Mondiaux. The Club houses several addicts, Peter Bell, Fred Foster, Dave Matthews and Dave Barker, so check things out with one of them. The events range from 100 km (novices or ultra-hilly), through 200 km (the 'classic' distance), 300 km, 400 km, 600 km to ultra-endurance rides like Paris-Brest-Paris (1200 km) or London-Edinburgh-London (1400 km). Don't worry, there is no expectation that, having embarked on the 'shorter' rides, you will progress to the big ones. Two of the above have had no difficulty resisting that temptation.

We run one 200 km event, the Tour of the Berwyns, which is on 31 May this year. We had nine finishers from the Club last year, and we hope to have a bigger entry this year. See Carol Pardoe's story in the last Squirrel.

The main point about an Audax event is that you need to enter, using an official entry form, usually two weeks before the event. We will

Finally, there is a mixed bag of organised rides with a range of organisers. These include CTC groups, other cycling clubs, and commercial-type set-ups. Examples of these rides are Manchester-Blackpool (and back, in most cases), the Manchester 100,

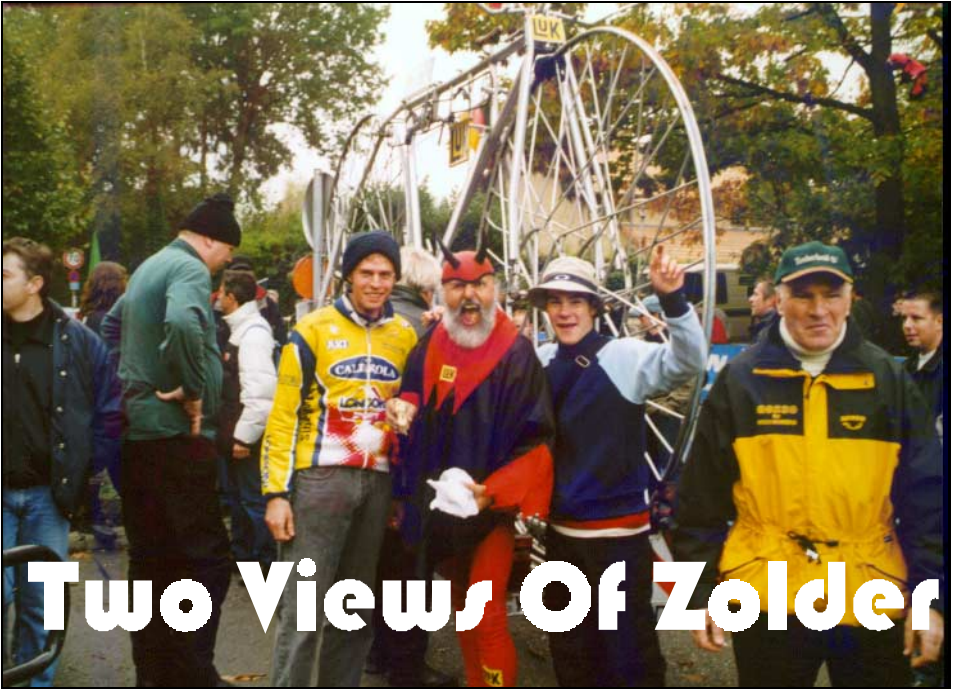
The Four Counties Tourist Trial, Wild Wales and the Flintshire off road challenge. Once again, you will need to enter, and we will try to get entry forms.

Successful completion (eg Audax or 100 in 8) or full participation (eg Club week-end off-road ride) earns one tourist point. Two points are awarded for an End-to-End or ultra-endurance ride. Needless to say, there is room

for endless debate about what counts as 'successful' and 'full' and half points reflect some of this ambiguity. The room is, naturally, the back room of the Old Market Tavern at 10.30 on Fridays after Club night. So come along and join the fun.

TOURIST TROPHY 2003

26th Jan	Off-road Jackson's Boat
15th Feb	North West Passage Audax 120/200Km Rochdale
23rd Feb	Newport-Audlem or Radway - Audlem 102/152/200. Marple Club Audax Llangollen, Rack- hams 0800hrs
2nd March	Clwydian Audax 205Km
22nd March	Corwen
6th April	Chirk Audax, 200Km, Poynton
13th April	Alton Towers Audax 160/200Km Holmes Chapel
23rd April	Club 100 in 8, Altrincham Plains Audax, 300Km, Poynton
And of course.....	
31st May	Seamons Tour of the Berwyns



Two Views Of Zolder

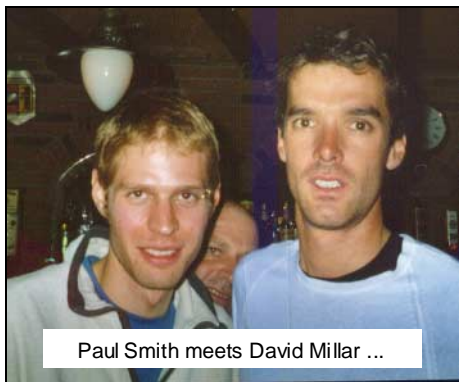
After a long and arduous ferry trip across the English Channel taking 13 hours, Keith Bailey, Paul Smith, and myself were more than eager to leave the boat at Zeebrugge port. We had arrived in Belgium to see our first glimpse of pro-racing (Paul's second). Paul and Keith immediately set off to catch the action of the World Cycling Championships at Zolder, while I travelled to Gent to meet and stay over with a friend for the first 2 days.

The first day of racing consisted of the women's and espoir's road races, which drew a considerable amount of interest judging by the number of fans crowded around the circuit. There was no shortage of food and drink, as everywhere you walked stalls selling Belgium's traditional food of fries and mayonnaise confronted you, and we all enjoyed sampling the traditional Belgium beer of course! The next day was the World Junior championships, and it was great to see 'our lads' racing, among the riders were Chris Penketh, and Matt Brammier, two excellent junior riders who in the past I have raced against. They rode an excellent race to finish in the top half of the bunch, and did well to

avoid the many crashes that happened, as squeezing well over a hundred riders onto a purpose built motor racing track was bound to cause a few problems!

After the day's racing ended, I travelled from Gent to meet Paul and Keith in Zolder, and we ventured out onto the streets of Hassault (the main town near Zolder), where we found a nice 'English' style pub. After sitting down for a quiet drink we were forced out of our seats when one of the locals decided he wanted to test how hard the floor was – collapsing off his chair in what looked like a fit! After finding ourselves some more seats, we were approached by some young Belgian people (much to myself and Paul's delight there were two nice girls too!) and spent the rest of the night drinking and chatting with them.

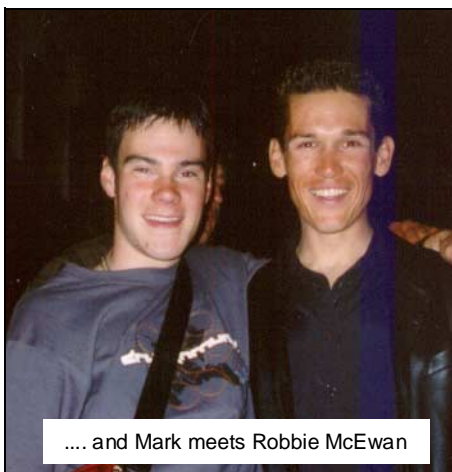
The next day was the big event; the elite men's road race, we were all up at the crack of dawn finishing our muesli in our freezing cold tent, and drove up to the course to check out the atmosphere before the start. The course was absolutely packed, people lined the track from



Paul Smith meets David Millar ...

start to finish so after forcing our way to the barriers we finally settled down to watch the start of the race. The crowd became increasingly excited as all the big names rode past to the start, with the Belgian's all receiving a hearty cheer, we were deafened by the resident Italians' roar of 'Cippolini!!!!' as the big guy rode past. The race itself was fantastic. We made our way round the course, watching the riders along the way, ensuring we made it back to the finish for the final sprint. We were rewarded by a perfectly executed ride by the Italians, who set Mario Cipollini up to receive the title of World Road Race Champion.

However the excitement didn't end there, as that evening after a meal in a local restaurant, we decided to drop into the Irish bar in Hassault. The three of us couldn't believe our luck as we bumped into a whole host of pro's including



... and Mark meets Robbie McEwan

Sean Kelly, Robbie McEwan, and David Millar! 'i'll never wash this hand again!' Keith grinned after shaking Sean Kelly's hand at the bar. Eventually after bagging a few photo's Paul and I decided to call it a night and headed off back to the tent!

The next day we were due to catch the ferry home at around 6.00 in the evening, so after packing up the tent we decided to go for a quick ride round the Belgium lanes. We had an excellent ride, ending up at a café in a nearby town for tea and sandwiches. The only downside to the day was we left no time to purchase some essential 'cheap' Belgian Beer, to add insult to this, the duty free on the ferry back home was trying to sell us wine at a higher price than our local Victoria wine!! So after four days of top class cycling we headed back home; all of us had enjoyed the experience, and to top it all off we even got a picture with the famous 'Devil' that you see near the end of every stage of the Tour de France!

Dave Matthews went to the same event but did it his way.....

The 2002 cycling world championships were held on an extended version of the Zolder car race circuit near Hasselt in Belgium. A Graham Baxter package tour from Knutsford M6 services seemed to fit the bill for an interesting long weekend which took in all the road races, with the option of taking your own bike to ride the course (actually not possible---see later).

We left J19 of the M6 on time at 08:15 on Thursday but then got stopped for 5 ½ hours due to an accident south of J20 which we reached at 2:00pm. This delay meant we arrived at the hotel in Hasselt at 04:00 the next day, all a little tired and travel weary. Imagine how pleased we were to find that the hotel had messed up the bookings and had insufficient single rooms. This led to a fine stand off as to who would have to share a room, which was finally resolved at 04:30 in favour of the only member of the party who had brought a bike.

Friday morning was spent sleeping and unpacking the bike, prior to cycling to Zolder for the U23 men's road race. On leaving the hotel it

The Squirrel

was immediately apparent how serious the Belgians are about cycling. Fully one metre from the hotel door I entered the cycle track which led to anywhere in Belgium or Holland on protected well marked routes.

Zolder is a handy 15k from the hotel, mostly riding alongside a huge canal. Just as I turned off this to find the circuit I was joined by a Belgian cyclist, on the obligatory Colnago, who offered to guide me to the entrance. There we found a large barrier with an even larger gun-toting policeman guarding it. The gist of the ensuing exchanges in Belgian, as translated by my new friend, was that you could take a "sit up and beg" bike into the race area, but not a race bike. Thus my colleague set off to ride 45Km home as there was no way he was leaving an unlocked Colnago at the barriers. Fortunately I had a less alluring bike and a big lock that chained it to the barriers in full view of the police.

The rest of the afternoon was spent walking the circuit to find the best vantage points to watch from---and marvelling at the speed the riders were achieving on the damp and greasy circuit. Maybe that was how they kept warm, as in sandals and thin Autumn kit I was absolutely freezing. The race was won by Francesco Chichi of Italy, with a spectacular pile up of bikes and bodies behind him.

Saturday was my day for a ride through the Limburg forest. Can you believe 1600Km of dedicated cycle ways, all maintained to a high standard by local cyclists---the friends of the Limburg cycle way. I took a route north east from Hasselt, joining the Swiss national cycle team at a café stop and to watch the finish of the junior men's race and the ensuing massive pile-up. Eventually my route looped back west to the Zolder circuit after 60k of fabulous, quiet and very safe cycling, including time for a deluxe lunch that was somehow reminiscent of the hotel breakfast bar. The route to the circuit from Zolder was blocked off to all vehicles about 3Km from the entrance. At this point bikes were waved through and so I left the motorists arguing in vain to drive on with yet more, large, gun-toting policemen. When I reached the circuit inner barriers the women's road race was under way, so I spent the afternoon walking the circuit and finding good vantage points for the men's race the next day. Nicole Cooke showed well in the

race, but her dreams of a good finish were wrecked by yet another big pile-up on the last lap. On the way back to the hotel the heavens opened and I arrived back at the hotel looking like a drowned rat. However the Belgians rose to the occasion by storing my bike in the manager's office so that it could dry off properly! They even mopped up the pools of water on the floor without a murmur.

Saturday was the big one, the élite men's road race, so it was off early on the coach to watch the signing-on ceremony. Unusually, Cipollini seemed very subdued and was not giving any interviews. The race lasted 5 hours, which gave adequate time to walk all the circuit and view progress on the many video screens that had sprung up since the solitary one on Friday. The race has been well documented---suffice to say that after a good break by David Millar and 2 others, it was then brilliantly controlled by the Italians with some help from the Germans---allowing Cipollini to sprint for the win.

At the end of the race, I was with a group of Italians who broke through the barriers and jogged down to the presentation area to watch Cipo get his medal---my one and only experience of being a "tifosi"

The next day it was back to England on the coach. We watched videos of the Tour of Flanders which showed that even in 1910 the Belgians had cycle tracks down both sides of the



Remind me again - what is your name? Carol seems to be saying as John Woodhouse pays his subs. Wonder why?



Another good attendance up at the clubroom as the late Geoff Horrocks' immaculate gear was put up for sale. With other members also setting up stalls another £107 was added to the 'Gentleman's Fund'. Peter Coles, Gareth & Reg Blease and Keith Bailey seem keenly interested.

360 DEGREE CYCLING

John and Carol can do it; so can Dave Matthews and George Skelton. Do what? Point their wheels to any point on the compass and set off for a bike ride. The rest of us can only do it if we are prepared to take on central Manchester, Stockport, Salford, Bolton, Bury, Oldham etc. These psychological barriers are almost as effective as was the Irish sea when I started riding a bike on the Wirral.

But things are starting to change as John Coles and I have started to find out. The TransPennine Trail, or National Cycling Network (NCN) Route 62, is known to many of us as a stress-free way to or from Lydm or Warrington and to others as a perfect linear pub-crawl. In the other direction we have now established that we can get from Sale or Stretford to the ex-Presidential Palace in Heaton Norris in 45 minutes flat, traffic free almost all the way. After that a list of mouth watering destinations beckon; Brinnington,

Denton and Hyde, along a superb succession of tracks in or near the Tame Valley. Then you are into the Broadbottom and Charlesworth area and you can either divert into the hills or continue along the NCN 62 to Hadfield and Longendale.

NCN 6 incorporates the Fallowfield Loop Line. This is pretty well complete from Chorlton to Debdale. From there it is a straightforward matter to get on to the Ashton canal, destination Uppermill, or divert down the Peak Forest canal to Marple and beyond. The Sustrans website (well worth a visit - www.sustrans.org.uk) provides a clear guide to what is available and what is planned. By 2005 Manchester will be at the hub of a comprehensive network of routes. NCN 62 will go East-West; NCN 6 will go North-South; other options will include NCN55 to the North-West; NCN 66 to the North-East and Regional Route 65 to the East North east. All of which should add up to 360 degree cycling for many more of us.

It Never Rains In Montgomery!



Day 1 After a delightful drive down the motorway, and a well needed fuel up on bacon butties, at a 'reputable' café stop along the way Rob Haigh, Keith and Mark Bailey, Chris Siepen, met Rob Morton, and Andy Wright at the Dragon Hotel in Montgomery for the fourth Christmas weekend away.

The atmosphere was full of Christmas spirit when we arrived (no not the alcoholic stuff!), and everyone was keen to stuff their gear into their rooms and get off riding in the lanes. So, our intrepid gang set off into a cold grey day, and soon the familiar slope of Long Mountain greeted us. 'What's it like?' asked Andy as we approached the foot of it, 'Get a head start' was Mr Haigh's advice. So we set off only to find Andy at the side of the road in deep conversation with a local farmer! Oh well it was his first time up so we'll let him off.

Our aim for today was the Stiperstones pub on the border of Shropshire and Wales; we made our way up past 'The Bog' which was a source of much amusement to young Mark (really it's just a hill!). Descending down to Stiperstones was a white-knuckle ride, as riders weaved in and out of

patches of thick ice. Upon reaching the main road an attack led by Chris and Mark caught the attention of Rob Haigh and the three raced off up the road where Chris won the first sign of the weekend.

Upon entering the pub we were surprised to see the legendary fire, whose heating abilities have dried our sodden gear for the past 3 years, was out! All breathed a sigh of relief as Rob pointed out there was a fire in the lounge too. After the morning's exhaustion we were all ready for a hearty meal, Keith and Rob were so hungry they decided to finish off the cheese and crackers left by our table's previous occupants. Chicken, lasagne and pies filled the table; Rob Morton being the only disappointed party as his hotpot turned out to be in a very, very small... pot. However Mr Wright came to the rescue donating half his steak and kidney pie.

After eating we struggled off up an uncomfortable climb, all thankful that we hadn't given in to the urge to have that delicious looking Xmas pud. By the time we reached the Long Mynd our stomachs had somewhat settled, and a good thing too, don't take the

'Long' in Mynd lightly, otherwise you'll find yourself in for a bit of a hard time! On reaching the top, we stopped to wait for Andy, and were shocked to see him ride up accompanied by a police car – they do say us Seamons lads have a bit of a reputation - Andy assured us no foul work was underfoot! We were rewarded for our efforts up the Mynd by a fantastic descent down by the Gliding Club, at 25% this couldn't be taken lightly, and everyone's brake blocks received a thorough workout. The day ended with Chris taking the highly contested Montgomery sign.

I think everyone was glad to be back at the hotel after a hard day on the bike and we all shot straight into the pool, then the sauna; well it was our holidays after all. After our evening meal we decided to go and sample the nightlife of Montgomery. We had no idea we'd be getting live wrestling down the local, as a feud broke out between two Welsh regulars. Instigated by a casual glance at Mr A's wife, Mr B really got to grips with the vending machine, as he was thrown into it; leaving him with a painful looking eye. Our lads sat by quietly staring down into their pints; after all we needed to conserve our energy for tomorrow.

Day 2 We awoke to a splendid breakfast, and also to the arrival of 2 more riders, or should that be victims? Dan Mathers and Alan Kemp came to join us for the remaining two days and, after polishing off cereal and a fried breakfast, we were ready to set off. The itinerary today was Church Stretton via Bishop's Castle. On setting off we all thought Dan was not content with leaving his luggage in the hotel, and had decided to take it with him, however he assured us that the 'bag' contained his provisions for the day and would also be excellent training for his next Polaris Challenge. Who says cyclists are sane people! After an hour or so of riding it became clear that Andy, after 5 months off the bike, wasn't enjoying the pace and neither were our arms after taking it in turns to push Andy up the 'nasty' rises. So himself and Rob Morton set off on their own path to Church Stretton. Riding out of Bishop's Castle it also became clear that Dan's bag wasn't going to slow him down, as he and Alan raced up the hill together.

To Keith's delight we soon encountered a lane of 'perfectly pruned trees' as he put it, but our admiration soon disappeared, as the noise of a chainsaw accompanied a falling branch that very

nearly brought a short end to our weekend! 'Thanks for the warning!' shouted an angry Dan, to which the young lady in the hard hat replied 'Didn't you hear the chainsaw?' Charming eh?

The pace was quite genial, until we reached Church Stretton and an attack from Dan, Mark and Chris split the bunch. Surprise, surprise, Chris got the sign again; I think we should bring in a new rule that he who wins the most signs gets the first round in the evening, that might slow him down! Dinner was at Mr Bun the Bakers, and who should we meet but Andy and Rob who had just arrived too. I think from the state of Mark's face they realised they had made the right choice, as he set off to the toilets to chip off the mud. After having our fill, we reluctantly left to tackle the infamous Burway; reaching gradients of 1 in 4 this was one we weren't looking forward to. Keith commented on the excellent value of his meal, as he had another chance to taste it halfway up the hill!

Today Chris revisited Linley hill (remember the ambulance incident anyone?) Fighting back a cold sweat Chris made it to the bottom in one piece, and after hills, hills, and more hills we finally reached Bishop's Castle and stopped for tea and cakes in Poppy's café. Once again we met Andy and Rob there and we began questioning whether they had an innate psychic link with us. Rob Morton fancying himself as a bit of a detective pointed out a large swing on the ceiling, 'that must've been a bloody big parrot!' he exclaimed. It was only on visiting the toilets that we discovered there was indeed a parrot residing in the café... just call him Ace Ventura!

We had a pleasant surprise at our evening meal, when 2 bottles of wine arrived courtesy of Reg Herbert and his wife, so we would all like to say a big thanks to Reg for such a kind gesture. After finishing our meal and having a chat with our benefactors we walked over to the pub for a few drinks. A small miracle occurred tonight when Mark bought a round; jaws dropped as the hand went in the pocket and produced a £20 note. Father, Keith, was said to be in shock some hours after the event. We amused ourselves with games of pool, Dan even beat the locals and we were thinking of asking him to lose his next game in case someone was looking for an excuse for another fight!

Day 3 The final day came, and although our goal was somewhat shorter and easier going, Rob



victorious after a well-timed jump ensured he took every sprint of the weekend. Who says he's been eating too many black puddings! (Sorry Chris!)

After 3 days of riding we were all satisfactorily knackered and ready for home, so we showered and packed our kit away, thankful that we would soon be in for some well-earned rest on Christmas day!

managed to fit in some 'little gems' that our legs would certainly not forget. We were on our way to Clun via Newport. A breakaway at the Anchor Pub left Mark trailing behind, claiming he was 'analysing tactics' for the next sprint, meanwhile Rob, Keith, and Dan were chasing down Chris, and Alan, who claimed he was only trying to sneak off the front!

The first port of call was a pub but one look at the menu put Keith off. We had to drag Dan out though as he was all for the special Christmas offering. We ended up in a café with what can only be described as an ex-actor from Children of the Damned; if this girl smiled it might've cracked her face! Everybody was in a jacket potato mood with Rob and Chris going the full monty with soup too. However after Dan and Mark waited over half an hour for their jackets the others begrudgingly changed to sandwiches. Alan was obviously very excited to get his tea, as he completely missed his cup and gave his legs a bit of a hot rinse. Our cheery hostess was spurred into action, and Alan clutched the wet cloth to his leg with a sigh of relief. Luckily the sandwiches took a lot less time to prepare, and everyone was happy, especially Keith 'Cheese Demon' Bailey, when he found out that Chris didn't like 'that nasty blue cheese', and quickly relieved him of it.

We set off back to Montgomery on a thankfully shorter route, with aching legs and all. Soon we had passed through Bishop's Castle, and the pace began to warm up indicating that the infamous Montgomery sprint was getting near. An early break by Chris caught the attention of Mark, who jumped onto his wheel. The two were eventually pulled back, until a second attack made by Mark ensured it would be a 2-man sprint. However it was Chris who emerged

TOURING SECTION FIXTURE LIST 2003

March 14/15/16 – Weekend away to "The Orpheus Caving Club Cottage", an 18 bed cottage situated right on the Tissington Trail in the Peak District National Park.

Easter 3-Day (18, 20, 21 April)

18th = "The Mobberley 8" – Join a cast of 50 to 60 people on bikes for a tour of all Mobberley's Pubs. 11.30 am from the "Bleeding Wolf" – Hale.

19th = Rest day!

20th = Easter Sunday 50 in 4 – 10.00 am start from Rackhams.

21st = Easter Monday family fun ride to the "Millstone" at Higher Whitley. 10.30 am from Rackhams

May 9/10/11 – Shropshire Weekend

Camping weekend to the "Engine and Tender" pub, Broome, nr Craven Arms, Shropshire. This is also Robin Haigh's "stag" weekend – enjoy 1, 2 or 3 days in this glorious part of the world. The mileages will not be excessive and the pub provides very good camping facilities, good food and real ales. Large caravan may be available if you do not fancy camping. This will be more of a social event.

Bank Holiday Rides

In addition to the Easter Bank Holidays detailed above there will be family fun rides on 5th May, 26th May and August Bank Holiday. Venues to be decided.

TOURING SHORTS & LONGS

The excesses of Christmas, New Year's Eve and a January 1st run clearly had an effect on the tourers' self-respect. Some might say it was bad enough they felt no shame in calling a ride out to the Antrobus Arms, in, erm, Antrobus, a "run", but surely all must agree that an earnest conversation about underpants was just too much.

I shall spare the blushes of those involved in the exchange but the conversation revolved around what can best be described as a "value pack" of undies. While I can't quite capture the indignant tone, the line: "I bought 'small' and they're never going to fit. Do you want them?" speaks volumes. By way of securing the deal, the donor pointed out that they had never been worn and that the bag they came in could also double as a useful map protector. Sold!

One purchase may prove to be the making – or undoing – of the touring section: Runs Tsar Wilkie's new cycling computer. Fed-up with loud criticism that runs are either too fast or too slow, Cap'n Wilk has brought in technology to arbitrate the dispute. Now, if only it could keep a count of how many people are still in the group so we don't lose anyone...

Roger Haines, long an enemy of technology, has no need for such devices. A recent knee injury has let him know just how fast we are going. According to Mr H anything above 10mph and he knew we were going too fast. Good job it wasn't his drinking elbow!

Meanwhile, Peter Coles came in for some stick for his new cycling addition – an Ultegra groupset. Generally, the group was impressed, with nods of approval and murmurs of welcome. But not one hard-faced individual. In a comment akin to something you might hear in *The Emperor's New Clothes*, Peter was gently reminded that while he had a top-end groupset, he had a touring-end bike (and was, of course, limited to the new regulation speed of 15mph).

Still on the subject of "new", there's been another outbreak of new bikes in the touring section. Eddie Robinson has been showing off a new Orbea – complete with a range of typical Eddie-extras, additions his brother Heath would be proud of. Keith Wilkinson, meanwhile, has built up a new bike. Not only is the frame from a reputable maker, it was bought properly and not found in a skip like his other bikes. He's so proud of it, he's pledged not to take it out until the weather gets better; which could mean we'll never see it. And then there's Peter Devine. Like a boffin working in a secret lab, he's been fettling a new bike – since August! He too says it'll only come out when the weather's right.

Sounds like Roger to me.

After years of hearing the mantra: "We must reach the published destination", cold weather and gravity got the better of the tourers when Mow Cop threatened. Late elevenses at the garden centre ended up being an appetiser for lunch as the group Soviet decided a pub stop nearer sea level was a much nicer prospect. Indeed, and just what the doctor ordered. Except Carol Pardoe was not with us. Poor old Carol. Believing the hype, she had made her own way out and got to the top of Mow Cop to meet us. Oops.

THE GOOD SAMARITAN

Today I went out on my first run in months with Dave Mac's section and got smashed to pulp. At Northwich I split off to go to Warrington. Two minutes later I punctured, then I punctured the spare tube and my pump broke in half. About to ring the Samaritans when Alan Kemp rode by and stopped to offer help. Realising the situation he rode home, jumped into his wife's car and returned with a track pump to try to repair the bike. To no avail. Loading up we went to his house where he gave me a life-saving cup of coffee only to discover that the battery of his Estate car was flat. He put it on charge until it was capable of starting the engine and then with my bike in the car he drove me home.

I offered to reimburse him but he would have none of it. He said "you're a Biker and that's enough". Had he not been the gentleman he is, I would have been in dire straits as I was mentally and physically exhausted and I was unable to call on Vivienne as she had been called into work. Without Alan's help I would have been lost. Can I request that a mention be made in the Squirrel as a public "Thank You" to Alan.

Thanks, Jim Grace. Sunday 12th January

CLUB SUBS

Members are reminded of the resolution passed at the last AGM to deal with a problem which has proved extremely tiresome to the secretary over the past few years. A stubborn minority of members seem unmoved by the numerous reminders about subscriptions and expect to turn up on runs or race in the club's name whilst not technically members.

There is now an initial joining fee and a re-joining fee of £5.00. Any member more than two months in arrears (not paid by end of Feb) is deemed to have resigned. They will be required to pay the re-joining fee in addition to their subs before taking part in any club activities. Please do your best to lighten the load on your club officials and save yourself some money.

ONLY IN IRELAND!

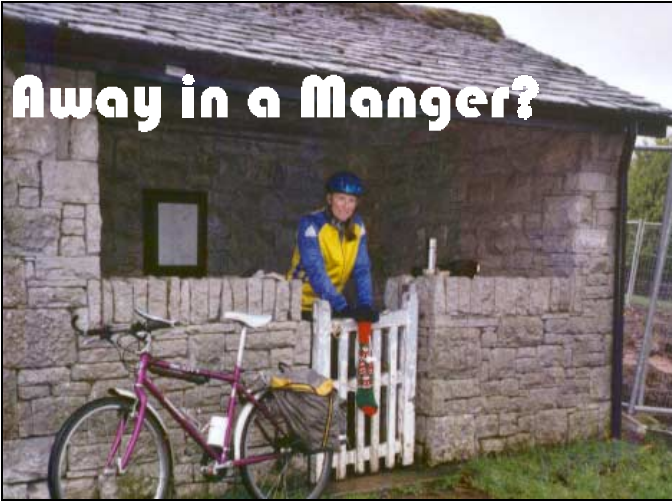
It was the start of the first of a series of one week summer tours, over a period of years, to more or less circumnavigate Eire and I was to take part with my great friend, the late Denis Chapman. Denis was very good at planning tours and, as he had visited the Emerald Isle on previous occasions, I was very glad to leave the planning to him. As we cycled away from Dun Laoghaire on the first day the rain was 'stair-rodding' down. We passed through Glendalough and Arklow in the mist and without stopping. At the end of a long day, Denis calmly informed me that we had completed the first TWO days riding in one because he didn't think that the weather made it fit enough to stop except to eat.

Day two was warm and sunny and we made our way to the salmon fishing village of Ballyhack at the mouth of a wide estuary. Here we were to sail on a two-bike ferry across to the village of East Wall on the other side and then on to our destination for the day. It being Sunday, the locals were relaxing and chatting in the harbour area as we approached. On enquiring about the ferry we were told that it was on the other side and that we were to put the flag up which would alert the ferryman to our presence. This we did with some trepidation because the flagpole was about six feet high, on top of a low stone wall and with a much higher grey wall behind it. Not only that but the 'flag' was a dirty old handkerchief about the same colour as the wall behind it. What we needed now was a breeze to make it flutter but there wasn't a breath of wind so it just hung there, lifeless.

Half an hour passed, which brought us to mid-day, with still no sign of movement in the water. Still, the place was pleasant enough, there was a store open, so we decided to have a picnic and take some photos while we waited. By 1.15 there was still no sign so Denis enquired when the ferry might be coming. "Oh, he'll be having his dinner now, sorr" came the reply. At this point I intervened and explained that when we had crossed we were cycling on and had some way to go. To which came the reply "Well, if you're in a hurry and if you give me a sixpence, then Oi'll phone the ferryman." Within five minutes of the phone call the ferry came chugging up towards the jetty and then came the punch line. The ferry man called up to us - "will you be taking the flag down, then there will be no misunderstandings."

Story by Bob Richardson

Away in a Manger?



A window of blue sky beckoned us on Christmas morning. We left the present-opening till later and, after a hearty breakfast, set out from Chestnut House, our B&B in Crosby Garrett. The undulating road to Appleby was blissfully quiet, just a heron or two gliding overhead, mist coming and going over the fells.

A hot drink from our flask, sitting by the river in Appleby, was our next treat, listening to the carol singing from the church across the road. People walking their dogs wished us "Merry Christmas". Delving briefly into technology with our mobiles - in public as well! - we enjoyed a chat with our various daughters and grandchildren, happy in the knowledge we would have peace afterwards, peace and goodwill, goodwill from our families letting us escape on this special day.

The road to Maulds Meaburn was very up and down, the fields full of sheep, a welcome sight after the devastation of foot-and-mouth in this area last year, and all so lovely and quiet. After a really steep descent down to the stream running through the village, we spotted a stone-built bus shelter, just the job for our picnic lunch. There was even a bench inside, and a table with newspapers on it, mostly the Sunday Times and the Cumberland Herald, marked with the villagers' names; we guessed the bus must deliver them as there was no shop in the village. A couple of families passed by on their way to the pub, and wished us "Merry Christmas".

On then to Orton, with a fabulous 40 m.p.h. swoop down to another attractive bus shelter, all artistically painted inside - what a good class of bus shelters round here for Audax riders! A good climb then took us up above the tree-line and past Sunbiggin Tarn, where a few widgeon were making their funny creaky call across the water. The Howgill Fells stretched away to the south, disappearing into an eerie mist. Down again, then past an impossible looking clapper bridge - I was glad we didn't

have to use it - and turn towards the pale afternoon sun, with the Settle-Carlisle railway just below us. "Home" was beckoning, with afternoon tea by the fire, a hot bath, and Christmas dinner served in style. Perfect.

Story & Pictures by John & Carol Pardoe



Maybe not a manger but pretty close!



The Riders.....

Mulled Wine a-go-go

complete disarray, the phone rang yet again.

"Don't tell me you are only five minutes away," I shrieked; to which my bemused father-in-law asked "Why?" As soon as I put the phone down from explaining to him, John phoned to say that he was five minutes away. In the nick of time, the helpers arrived. The garage got swept and decorated, the mulled wine proved drinkable at the first attempt and we managed to find the teaspoons.

Out of the blue, John said: "Why don't we ask the club over for tea and biscuits when they do the Hot Pot Run?" At what point in the conversation this idea developed into mulled wine and fruit cake I can't really recall but five phone calls later, when I had discovered from friends that mulled wine could be made with pre-prepared spice sachets and needn't require me to stand by the oven stirring chopped fruit and alcohol for hours on end, I agreed.

Just as I was about to breathe a sigh of relief that all had eventually gone according to plan, John managed to persuade me to combine my fear of heights with my unrivalled ability to take photographs of everything except what I am aiming the camera at. It was up the step ladder for me to capture the event on film. That took some explaining to the neighbours, believe me.

I have to admit that I had spent the year trying to shrug off the feeling that Christmas 2001 had been lacking a certain something, missing out as I did on the fun of decorating bikes with tinsel for the Hot Pot Run 2001, due to illness. This, I decided would be just the thing to put that right. The day of the Hot Pot Run arrived and extra help had been enlisted in the form of a very excited sister-in-law (Teresa) and a very laid-back niece (Imogen). The promised gingerbread cyclists didn't materialise – but Teresa assured me she will bake them in time for next year (!)

Then, as quickly as they had arrived, everyone left to answer the call of the Hot Pot – leaving me to spend a very merry afternoon getting tipsy on leftover mulled wine-soaked orange chunks, and counting the days until the Mobberley Eight.

Story and Pictures by Gail Carberry

An added bonus was Harry the Dog, who had been specially bathed the night before and who can normally be relied upon to cause mayhem. In the end he was so overcome by the sight of 25 cyclists sweeping round the corner of Bracken Way that he was unusually subdued for most of the morning and only perked up when Carol Pardoe gave him the attention he had clearly been denied. John had been given the task of "fixing" the route from Altrincham so that everyone arrived at about 11.30 am. This timescale became shorter and shorter every time I answered the phone until, with the Hired Help still not having arrived and the kitchen in



...and the bikes.

Christmas Dinner Run

Once again the catering lads did us proud and High Legh village hall rang to the laughter of over 70 members as they tucked into the expertly prepared Christmas fare. A new addition to the catering staff turned out to be a professional chef as new boy Paul Thomason waded in with the old hands to get to grips with ingredients of a super hot-pot. The previous day saw all the preparation carried out by the dedicated band and on the day they were joined by other volunteers to get the hall ready, decorate the tables and, most important this, set up the drinks.

This year the first drink was free as the queues at the table demonstrated but before long we



The fancy-dressers line up.

were all seated and looking forward to the food. We weren't to be disappointed and there was more than enough for even the most voracious. The poppers were popped, crackers pulled, silly hats worn and the sing-song sung. The fancy-dressers strutted their stuff to the plaudits of the crowd and before you knew it, it was all over for



Ozzy Osbourne and a bit more substance abuse. Chairman Harvey seems to approve.



Vera Blease, aka Dick Whittington, but where on earth did she pick up that manky looking cat?

An Australian Tour

Why? Why go for a cycle tour of Australia? Distances can be vast, it can be hot and arid, and winds can be very strong. Australia was the only major English speaking country that I had not visited, and the opportunity to miss six weeks of the English winter was very welcome. My knee continues to deteriorate, and my walking is very limited: cycling seemed the best option.

Planning: Return flights have to be booked before departure, and so it is necessary to have a good idea of route and rest days before you leave. I used the excellent Lonely Planet Cycling Australia guide, which describes a number of routes, including the East Coast Explorer, which goes from Melbourne to Brisbane via Sydney in 31 days. Details are given of accommodation and food stops. My only complaint about these routes was that they often used unsealed (dirt) roads. Early trips to wineries convinced me that my laden touring bike needed to keep to sealed roads(tarmac). I decided to cycle from Melbourne to Sydney, with an extension along the Great Ocean Road and an excursion inland, crossing the Great Dividing Range twice. I followed Lonely Planet routes about 60% of the time, and devised my own for the rest. I arrived in Melbourne on October 29th, and left Sydney on December 10th after cycling 1500 miles in six weeks.

Food and Lodging: Accommodation was available in -Backpackers and Youth Hostels

-Caravan Parks

-Pubs

Cooking facilities and washing machines were available in the first two: I cooked where possible to keep costs down. Typically, a bed for the night cost £10, and food was cheap. A main course in a pub cost £5 to £8. It is rumoured that I am addicted to beer. My trip proved this to be false: I am addicted to hops. These are almost totally absent in the bland, cold liquid the Australians call beer, so pub lunches were out. But cafes and small country general stores sell excellent hot pies for about £1. Meat is cheap, and Australians have had the original idea of using good meat in their pies.

Information: Tourist offices were unfailingly helpful. They provided good maps and details of food and accommodation. This was very necessary on one route where there was no shop for 60 miles and the only accommodation was 3 miles off route.

Wine and Wineries: I visited about 20 wineries on my tour, and had some interesting tastings and conversations. Subjects included fire-fighting in Australia, and life in Rumania under communism. I was impressed by "cool climate" pinot noirs on the Mornington Peninsula and in the Yarra Valley. The shirazs and cabernets were generally not to my taste: they were very different to their French equivalents. I enjoyed the Rieslings and Semillons among the whites.

Australians: My idea of Australians was largely based on the image of their sportsmen. This is of flinty faced individuals of undeviating purpose and tremendous application who give no quarter, going round at the end of the game counting the dead and bayoneting the wounded. The reality is quite different. I found Australians very helpful and welcoming, and very willing to help a passing tourist. On two occasions, Australians went out of their way to give me a lift (with my bike) to take me where I needed to go (to a camera repairer and a bike repairer respectively). In a remote country hamlet with no shop or pub, a family gave me an excellent evening meal with unlimited wine, bed, breakfast and sandwiches for the next day for £15 when the two listed bed and breakfasts were unavailable. A caravan park owner cooked my meat and asked me to join his young family for their evening barbecue, providing all the trimmings free. This friendliness generated very warm feelings, particularly when I was in some difficulty at the time. My only problem was with the very strong Australian accent. My hearing is not good, and at times I found it difficult to understand what was said. I did not dare to interrogate a man in a rural pub in Victoria who said he was down from New South Wales

crocheting sheep.

Melbourne and The Great Ocean Road:

Melbourne is an attractive city with wide streets, and is easy to cycle in. I enjoyed the Melbourne Cricket Ground (100,000 capacity), which is also used for Australian Rules football, and was the site of the 1956 Olympics. The old sections are progressively being knocked down and rebuilt. The other striking visit was to the gloomy 19th century Melbourne gaol, where Ned Kelly was hanged. His last words were "Such is life". I also took a combined bike and train trip to visit several wineries in the Yarra Valley.

To start the cycling proper, I took a train to Warrnambool, about 200 miles west of Melbourne. This is the start of what is modestly called The Great Ocean Road. This is the best-known coast road in Australia, and is a fine route along the Shipwreck Coast, with a good limestone coast and many sea-stacks. A series of pinnacles called the Twelve Apostles is one of the most photographed sights in Australia. Nature does not stand still, and the number has now been reduced below twelve. The Shipwreck Coast is a reminder that Australia is in the Roaring Forties. Winds are very strong, and dominate the weather and cycling. The prevailing winds are west to southwest, giving cool weather on the coast with some rain. When the north wind blows off the interior, temperatures can rise to 35°C.

The route goes south of Melbourne via two ferries and across the Mornington Peninsula to Phillip Island, home of Australia's biggest natural tourist attraction. (The Sydney Harbour Bridge is unnatural) This is the Fairy Penguin Parade. (No kidding) At dusk, hundreds of penguins come out of the sea, waddle up the beach and along paths to their burrows, which can be up to a mile from the sea. This is highly organised: you stand on viewing platforms to see it all, but the penguins do not seem to mind. From Phillip Island, I cycled along the coast to Sale (sic) and Bairnsdale. This was flat country, and with a good following wind, I did 80 miles one day.

The Great Alpine Road and the Mountains: Is there no end to Australian Greatness? It would seem not. The GAR goes across the Great Dividing Range. I had one very hard day when I climbed 1500 metres, which was just about my

limit. In the middle of it a cycling group who had a van offered me a lift. I refused: foolish pride. The names along the road were great fun: I stayed at Dinner Plain, crossed Jim and Jack Creek and Flourbag Plain. A horse thief called Bogong Jack was an early user of the road. The Ovens valley on the other side of the range was green and pleasant, with many imported deciduous trees – a nice change from the ubiquitous gums. Bright and Beechworth were both attractive and well-preserved Victorian gold rush towns, and Milawa and Rutherglen provided more winery visits. At Chambers in Rutherglen, I met Bill Chambers, 5th generation winemaker, who is described by Robert Parker as "the undisputed king of fortified wines in Australia". He invited me to stay the night, which was very generous. I then cycled up the Murray River valley to Khancoban, where the big hills began.

Now we come to the difficult bit. Since crossing the Range, it was very hot: 35°C in the shade, and hotter on the road. This brought out the flies, previously absent. They swarmed around you at any speed below 6 mph. All this was a bit enervating, and I had to re-cross the Range. Unless I was prepared to stop in an intermediate campsite with no tent, the next day would involve 2500 metres vertical ascent in a day: much too much for me. So I hitchbiked, quite easily, to the pass called Dead Horse Gap, where there was a herd of brumbies (wild horses). It was easy to freewheel down from the pass to Thredbo, Australia's main skiing village.

The Ascent of Mount Kosciuszko 2228 metres Kosciuszko is Australia's highest mountain, and a chairlift from Thredbo does most of the climbing. So I could not resist the temptation to join the hundreds of others who walk to the top each day. It is a gentle walk through fine, rolling country. There was still a fair amount of snow and a few snow patches had to be crossed.

Two Giants and a Swagman: There were many more touring cyclists on my tour of New Zealand than I met in Australia. However, three of the Australian ones stand out in the memory. The two giants were both Dutch, both over six feet tall, fit, and thin as rakes. Both were riding mountain bikes and carrying camping gear. I met them both on three separate occasions. Dennis, aged 25, had done a similar route to myself, and was going on to New Zealand. Dolf, 23, had been in Australia for 10 months, and had cycled

The Squirrel

10,000 kms. He was superfit, and did the 2,500 metres of ascent in one day, fully loaded. He is probably good enough to get into the Seamons (or even the Ravens). And the Swagman? He was going the other way, but we stopped to talk. He was in his sixties, and again was on a fully loaded mountain bike with trailer and camping gear. He said he was "of no fixed abode". The major difference to the others was that his bike was fitted with a 30cc petrol motor. Perhaps I should get one too.

Canberra and Sydney: When I dropped down from the mountains, the flies vanished, and I rode over high, grassy plains to Canberra, where I spent an interesting couple of days seeing the sights. The new Parliament Buildings are very high tech, but rather soulless. They are built on top of a hill, but are underground, so as not to dominate the city. Why not? The guides to the public buildings were excellent, and taught me a lot about the Australian political and legal systems.

From Canberra, I had two tough and hilly days to the coast, and then two days up the coast to Sydney. The last day was very dramatic. I started at 6.45am, and had a trip through a national park for the first 30 miles. National parks are usually hilly and covered in eucalyptus or gum trees: this was no exception. I then took a ferry to Cronulla, and was soon on the shores of Botany Bay. A short detour took me to Captain Cook's first landing place in Australia. Then back round the shores of Botany Bay, the last five miles being on a lovely cycle path along the beach, with fine views of the city, getting closer and closer. I was then projected on to a three-lane motorway, which amazingly was open to cyclists, and a tunnel under the airport. Initially there was no hard shoulder, and fast traffic joining from slip roads was quite a challenge. Somewhat shaken, and pretty tired, I arrived in Sydney, and knocked at a backpackers hostel. The door was opened by Dolf, my Dutch friend, who was also staying there.

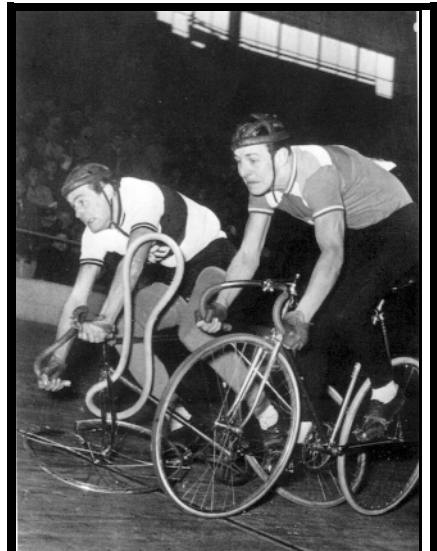
I needed a rest day. I was staying near the Sydney Cricket Ground (SCG), and England were playing New South Wales in a one-day game, so I went to watch. It was great fun, but England lost comprehensively. Somewhat to my surprise, I found cycling in Sydney quite easy. Perhaps it helped that I was there at the weekend. I was only a couple of miles south of

the centre, and used my bike to get around. Cycling is an excellent way of moving from one tourist site to another. Sydney Harbour is magnificent. I did all the standard tourist things, cycling over the Harbour Bridge, visiting the walkway on the other side, and touring the Opera House and the Art Gallery. I also took a ferry to Manly on the north side of the harbour. On my last day, I did the Sydney Olympic Explorer ride. This follows the Olympic road race course, and visits many of the beaches around Sydney, including Bondi Beach.

Conclusion: It was a magnificent trip, thoroughly enjoyable and an excellent way to see Australia. On consideration, I think I went at about the best time for the areas I visited. The temperature was about 15°C for the first fortnight, and I often wore my rain-jacket in the mornings to keep warm. It was very hot (35°C) to the west of the mountains, but once I had re-crossed the mountains to the east, temperatures remained at a very pleasant 20°C right up to Sydney.

Story by John Mercer

John took slides of his visit which I am unable to reproduce. Maybe we can persuade him to come



Dec 1949 - Zurich - Swiss Champs Sprint.
Von Beuren wins as his bike collapses

Meet your Clubmates

You will see from the answers to the questionnaire that our subject has been with the Seamons for a long time. After an auspicious racing career which took him to 5th place ('65) and 8th ('66) in the BBAR he later turned his talents to working on behalf of the club in particular, and cycling causes in general, to some effect. A highlight was the promotion of the National Championship '50' on Cheshire in 1970 on behalf of the club and the district. As editor of our magazine 'The Squirrel' he produces an outstanding publication which is read and appreciated well beyond the confines of the club. As our TT secretary he has set a high standard and at this time, as his term as President came to a close, it seemed a good opportunity to put him on the spot. So, let's be hearing from **Jim Boydell**.

When and where were you born? January 26th, 1942 in Timperley.

When did you start cycling, and what was your first club? 1957, Altrincham & Sale CTC. I joined the Seamons in 1959

What was your first race? Club '10' ,1959, Carrington in 25.14

What was your first win? Club Champs '25' in 1960 with 1.02.00. First open was the Westwood '25' in 1.00.01 in 1962.

Which performance do you rate as your best? 1.54.49 on Boro, finishing only 2 minutes adrift of Baz Breedon who was comp record holder at the time (1.50.03). In Cheshire it would be 263.05 in the Wheelers '12'; I think, the area record at the time.

What is your favourite meal? In the States, a really nice steak but in this country a good Indian meal takes some beating.

What were you like at school? OK until I was 16, when I discovered the bike. Then it all went pear-shaped.

What kind of books do you read? All of Bryson's, anything humorous but must have a 'human' side. Currently reading about the construction of the Brooklyn Bridge. Incredible.

What kind of music do you enjoy? Blues, soul, 60's rock and Chris Rea is a favourite. Sinatra in the Nelson Riddle years.

And your favourite type of TV programmes? No favourites but anything that interests me.

Which newspaper do you read? Sunday Times (takes all week).

What's your ideal holiday destination? America for motoring and hospitality, France for cycling and food.

Do you have any hobbies? Like obsessive collecting or shutting yourself in a room model-making? No thanks.

Who would play you in a film of your life? James Stewart; I suspect there's a bit of the 'George Bailey' in me.

What is your greatest fear? It's been said many times before - anything happening to my family.

How would you describe yourself in a Lonely Hearts ad? Hope I never have to.

What is your favourite training ride? Training? Ah, yes, I remember that. Vaguely.

What is your most unpleasant characteristic? I'm (very) intolerant of people who only 'take' and won't put themselves out for anyone else.

Which characteristic do you most dislike in others? Bullying - in all its forms.

Who would you most like to have met, and why? Nobody in particular, celebrity doesn't interest me at all, but I'd like to time-travel to Paris at the turn of the century and America in the early Fifties.

What was your most embarrassing moment? Dozing off when my boss was giving an after-lunch presentation. Then he asked a question and addressed it to me. My response was "Remind me of the answer you want" effectively removing all the remaining rungs on my promotion ladder.

Four words to describe yourself. Self: Opinionated, enthusiastic, loyal, impatient. Wife's view: Intelligent, loyal, persistent, confident. Take your pick.

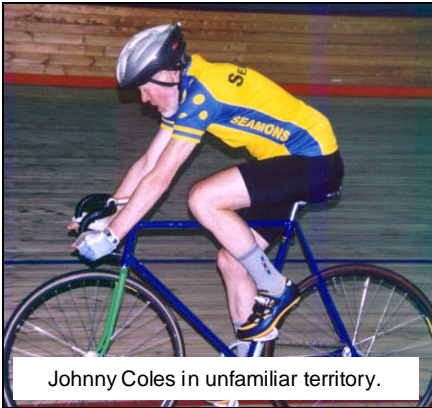


TRACK CHAMPIONSHIP 2002

Three track nights have been held this winter and once again Paul McAllister has run out a worthy champion, his smooth pedalling style being ideally suited to the boards. Back in November traffic chaos on the Mancunian Way meant that riders were still arriving nearly an hour after the session began. This meant that only one (scratch) race could be held for the championship which Paul duly won. Things got better for the next session in December and with over 30 riders to be fitted on the track they were divided into two groups - premiership and division one.

First off was the flying one lap; with riders circling the track first one fired off to be timed over the last 200 metres and then others followed in turn. Paul McAllister took up where he had left off last time and his 12.62 was almost a second too good for the next home.

Full Result: P McAllister 12.62, Richard Williams 13.31, Colin Levy 13.45, Paul Smith 13.74, Simon Williams 13.77, Paul Thomason 14.55, Gareth Blease 14.90, Alex Young 15.18, John Pardoe 15.41, Dave Barker 15.42, Andy Wright 16.67, John Coles 16.68, Gordon Peake 16.78,



Johnny Coles in unfamiliar territory.

Carol pardoe 17.13, Peter Devine 17.24.

The Div1 riders then took to the track for a handicap and if it proved nothing else, it proved that Colin Levy and Paul Smith should have been in with the Premiership group. Riders were set off

at suitable gaps based on their flying lap times and for a while it looked as though the front markers might hold off the back markers over the six laps. On the last bend however Colin and Paul overhauled the slower riders to take first two spots. 1 Colin Levy, 2 Paul Smith, 3 Gordon Peake, 4 Carol Pardoe, 5 Pete Devine, 6 John Coles, 7 Andy Wright.

After a suitable breather the premiership lads were back on the boards for a 30 lap scratch race. A steady start saw the bunch in tact for the first 15 laps until Paul Mc put the hammer down and it promptly fell apart. First Alex Young, then Dave Barker and Paul Thomason dropped off and as they did so Simon Williams found himself in the wrong place. Despite trying hard over the next few laps he couldn't make the last few yards onto the back of the reduced bunch. With Richard Williams helping Paul keep the pace high only Gareth Blease from the club could stay in the seven strong bunch. Then with a lap to go Paul turned the screw yet again and Richard had no answer with Gareth finishing in third spot. That completed the points for the night with Paul once again on maximum and only the last session in January to come.

The final session saw only one race that counted to the Championship and once again Paul McAllister proved unbeatable in the 24 lap scratch. It was a close run thing though as both Robin Haigh and Simon Cox had put in an appearance and made the racing really hard for all the others as they filled runner up and third spots. So, once again Paul McAllister proves that he's the one to beat on the track and retains his championship, this time with maximum points.

All of these sessions have proved a great success and with an average of thirty riders we have covered our expenses. Our thanks go to

BIKESHAK NEWS Neil Walton reminds us that there is a 'Test Ride Day' in Hayfield on Sunday Feb 16th. when Marin and Trek bikes will be available for testing under real conditions. Also, the successful 'Night Rides' continue through Feb, March and up to April 3rd. Lighting sets can be hired for £5.00 per session. More details from Neil or Mike on
0161 929 9355



TESTING TIMES

It's not often that we get a real race to report on at this time of year, but we almost had a team in the Christmas '25'. We DID have a team in the Fancy Dress section but unfortunately there was no such prize in this section.

Steve Davis did us proud in the Open event with a great 1.00.47 for 5th place. Paul McAllister wasn't far behind with his 1.02.57 for 10th and all we needed to take the team award was a short 1.16. Maybe next year will see some more brave souls tackle the event from the Seamons. I hope so, as entries were well down this year and it really is a great social occasion and a credit to Derek & Barbara Hodgins and their band of helpers.

Now, thoughts turn to the 2003 season and no doubt, as this is written, the racing lads are looking forward to receiving their RTTC Handbooks. Sorry - correct that their CTT Handbooks. These are usually available in mid-January, closely followed by the M&DTTA handbook which has details of all the local events. This year there is a new innovation from the M&D in that there will be season long points competition with a significant cash prize (at least £50) for the winner at the end. There will be cash prizes for the first three and the first three teams.

For this year fourteen qualifying events have been nominated and it is your **six best** placings that will count. Here's how it will work....

At '10','25',and '30' the winner will get 25 points down to 6 points for 20th place. All other finishers will get 5 points.

At '50' miles the winner gets 30 points down to 6 for 25th, again all other finishers get 5 points.

At '100' miles winner gets 35 points down to 6 for 30th and all others get 5 points.

You don't need to register for this competition, as event promoters will send result sheets to the tally-keeper (Ian Ross of the Nova CC). All you have to do is enter and make sure you finish. It would be really good to see the Seamons up there at the end of the season. Here's a sneak

preview of the proposed events:-

March 22nd - M&DTTA '10'; **April 5th** - SLRC '10'; **April 26th** - M&DTTA '25'; **May 10th** - Glossop-Kinder '25'; **May 17th** - Duks '50'; **May 31st** - Warrington '50'; **June 6th** - Nova '25'; **June 18th** - VTТА '30'; **July 6th** - M&DTTA '100'; **July 26th** - M&DTTA '50'; **August 9th** - VTТА'25'; **August 23rd** - Seamons '25'; **August 30th** - Stretford '25'; **September 13th** - ABC '25'.

The club's own calendar will look pretty much as last year's, with most events on the same weekends. The major exception is the West Cheshire '12' hour which is now on Sunday August 31st. This improves the shape of the calendar and allows any club '12' hour riders to ride our own open '25' the week before (August 23rd).

Championships: '10' - **May 21st**; '25' - **June 10th**; '50' - **July 26th**; '100' - **July 6th**; '12' - **Aug 31st**; '24' - **July 26/27th**; Hill climb - **Oct 5th**.
Now you can plan your holidays!

With Steve Davis as TT Sec I'm hoping there will be greater contact between riders so that he gets to know your results and also that we get more complete teams entered in events. This was a real frustration in 2002 when we had the riders doing the rides needed on the same day - but in different events. Steve's only a phone call away (0161 777 9159) or an e-mail to his new address - stevebikesit@aol.com.

Just as we went to press, news comes that we may well be losing Chris Siepen, one of our best young riders for several years. Since his move to Bury, both home and job, it has been increasingly difficult for Chris to get the best out of the club. Add to this his desire to have a real go at road racing then it became obvious that he may well do better in a different type of set up. We wish him well and look forward to seeing his name in lights. I can't pretend that we're not disappointed to see him go but he's always

CLUBRUNS

DATE	HALF-DAY	TOURING SECTION
Feb 2nd	Malkin's Bank	Spen Green
9th	Meerbrook	Horwich (Squirrel Inn)
16th	Delamere	Beeston
23rd	Tattenhall	Charlesworth
Mar 2nd	Astbury*	Northwich (Return to 09.00 hrs start)
9th	Kingsley	Alsager Bank
16th	Malkin's Bank	Appley Bridge**
23rd	Buxton	Meerbrook
30th	Beeston	Manley
Apr 6th	Marton	Hope
13th	Summertrees	Chester
20th	Poole Marina	Easter Sunday '50-in-4' (Start 10.00 hrs)
27th	Paddock Farm	Whitmore
May 4th	Delamere	Audlem
11th	Malkin's Bank	Paddock Farm***
18th	Tattenhall	Tattenhall

The off-road rides have been planned for this quarter by Johnny Coles. Tel; 865 1575

* Llangollen runs - Club Audax leaves at 08.00 and the 'thrash' at 09.00 hrs.

** Weekend away to the 'Orpheus Caving Cottage' in the High Peak. Contact Keith Wilkinson for details on 0161 902 9325

*** Weekend away to 'Engine & Tender', Broome, near Craven Arms, Shropshire. This is a camping weekend and includes Robin Haigh's stag weekend. Contact Wilkie as above.

LAST LAUGH

