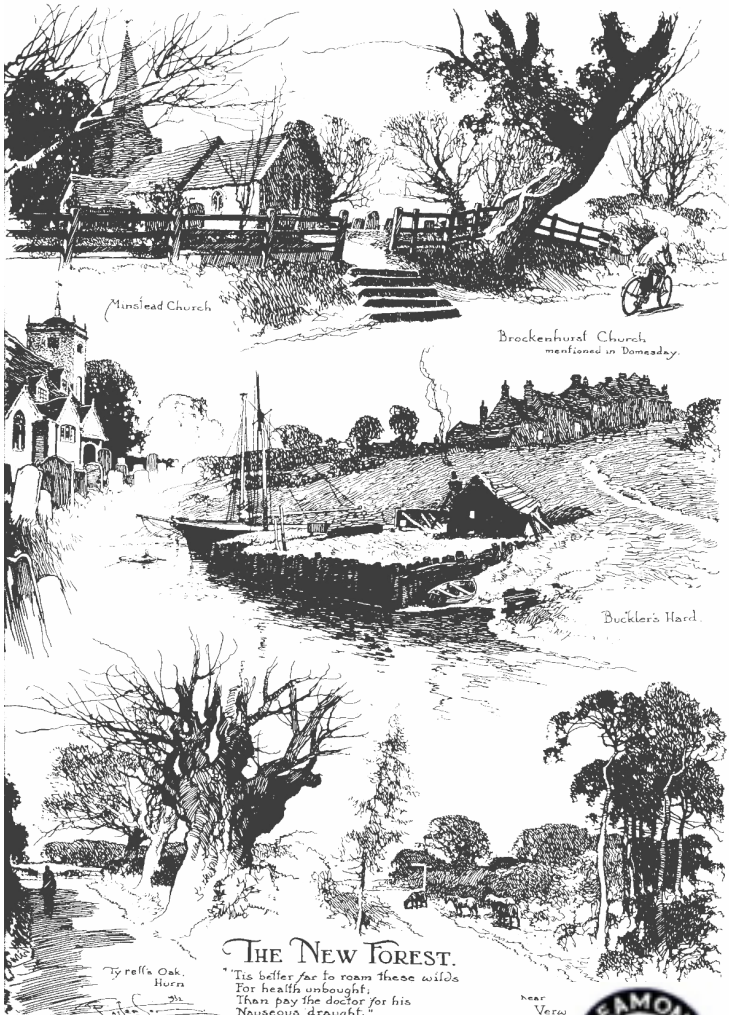


# THE SQUIRREL



## MARCH 2004

# EDITORIAL

Another dinner passes by, our 55th, and from the comments received after the event, it will go down as one of our most successful. The choice of a live band was a welcome departure from the usual disco (after we got the sound level right!) and it gave the 'non-dancers' something to look at. And they were something to look at. The natural break was filled with the spectacle, probably the right word, of micro-bike racing, itself a sight that took many of us back to the 60's when this was a regular feature. The bikes are ours and will no doubt make regular appearances so get training. With 150 attending, we reached our target and are on course to cover all our expenses. Thanks go not only to the organising gang but also to all of you who supported the event and gave generously to the raffle.

No sooner have the prize winners collected their pots than the season to determine their new winners gets under way with the first event on Feb 28th. Over the years the season seems to have stretched and most riders are at their keenest when the weather is at its worst. It's probably no coincidence that a number of our riders have had enough by August and wind down. Will this year mark a departure? The '10' and '25' championships have been moved back by two and three weeks respectively so a later, more measured, start to the season is possible. I hope some riders take advantage of this and we still have some successes to report in September. So, to the annual plea - Steve Booth does a great job with the website which is always bang up to date. Well, as up to date as he can make it if he gets the information he needs. Please call, or e-mail, him with your results and any other bits of news. If you're e-mailing then it's no more trouble to copy it the magazine editor. Please do.

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Not been cleaning your bike again by any chance, have you dear?

Cover: New Forest by Frank Patterson. Still offers some pleasant, quiet, cycling routes. 'The Squirrel' is the magazine of the Seamons Cycling Club. Editor—Jim Boydell, 44 Winchester Drive, Stockport, SK4 2NU. ☎ 0161 442 6370 or e-mail Jim.Boydell@btinternet.com. Club website at [www.seamons.org.uk](http://www.seamons.org.uk) from where the on-line version of this magazine is available in PDF format.

# BITS AND BITS

Why don't we ever go over to Hayfield and round Glossop? " someone had asked our new half-day runs organiser, Robin. Well, despite the fact that there is usually a fair amount of urban riding and it often seems to rain when we go there, no reason at all. Against that though the Glossop Cafeteria, as it is somewhat optimistically called, is seriously cheap. OK then, thought Robin, I'll stick a visit in. In January. A really bad day and nobody will ever ask again was no doubt his reasoning. The forecast was not good but in the event it turned out a lot better than expected. Even Robin enjoyed himself despite the fact that he shouldn't have been there. "When I chose the date for this run, I thought I'd be on days and working" he confided as we rode back through Hayfield and headed for the delights of the A6. And they've not even introduced any new shift patterns for the firemen yet.

The last committee meeting before the dinner is the one at which some tricky decisions have to be made. Who will get the Most Meritorious, the Reg Herbert Trophy or be nominated for the prestigious Hammering of the year award. All the nominees will have deserved their recommendation, none more so than the 'Hammering' award. Whilst these delicate issues were being discussed the serious mood was interrupted by a suggestion that we should perhaps have a 'Hammered of the Year' award as there would be no problem in deciding the 2003 winner. Phil Holden's 'magnificent' performance throughout the whole of Saturday ( and into Sunday morning) on Robin's Stag Weekend) will probably never be surpassed. And if it is, I don't want to be anywhere near.

By the time you read this the lucky(?) recipient of the Hammering of the Year trophy will have been decided. As it is written though it is still a two (or three) horse race. For those not able to attend the dinner, a few words to outline the case for Paul Smith. The embarrassing debacle which he bravely admitted to in the last issue (and in his own hand too!) was followed by an

explanation that really deserves an award category of its own, though I'm not sure what that might be. At the National Championship Hill Climb he is alleged to have remarked that he got his gearing wrong because "I did my practice run up the hill in my car." I understand that this was not the preferred method used by all the other competitors.

It's the day of the traditional off-road run between Christmas and New Year and as usual the meeting place is the car park on the Middlewood Way. Johnny Coles is already there when Roger trundles up in his campervan. Preparations ensue, bikes unloaded and rations stashed away just as another van pulls into the car park.

"Is that your van?" the driver gruffly demands, stabbing his finger in the direction of Roger's palace on wheels. Not sure quite what the best response might be, Roger tries the conciliatory "why; is there a problem" approach.

"No, but if it is yours, I should have followed you in the first place, I've been all over the b\*\*\*\*y show."

It turns out the latest arrival is a prospective new member that nobody had yet met. He had been inadvertently following Roger all the way from Altrincham and had taken a different turn in Poynton. Probably a first outing with the club that he won't forget - and they'd not even started on a Coles'y special yet!

You have to be careful what you print in this magazine as it can provoke a most unexpected response. In a previous issue I made a reference to 'flint catchers' and wondered if any of our younger members would even know what they were. Several weeks later a package drops on the doormat and on opening it I find a pair of the aforementioned items. No note, no explanation, no 'who from'. So, not much call for these items in Ashton on Mersey then nowadays, eh Pete?

## The Squirrel

**O**verheard at the Fancy Dress Christmas '25' ... Rider 1 "You know next year's fancy dress is pirates"  
Rider 2 "That might present a few problems for some."

Rider 1 "Well, when I'm house clearing, every time I find a bit of a pirate costume, I'll put it to one side and come the end of the year I'll take them all up to the clubroom."

Rider 2 "Find a lot of pirate costumes do you, Roger?"

**T**he fearsome beast came out of the south, from beyond the lakes of Rossthun, beyond even the doomed forests and open spaces of Tarrtun and from the very heart of the dreaded kingdom of Kernutsfrydd. It breathed fire on those that dared disobey and let it be known that there was no escape from the One Eye That Sees All. A terrible vengeance would be delivered upon those who would not bend their knee and utter those penitential words that would placate the displeased Gods..... "OK, OK, I'll get a mudflap fixed for next week."

**I**t made me feel so much better! Having been shot off the back as the pace hot-ted up on the run home the previous week it was good to receive news from the Buxton run. After a trip over the brickworks and Long Hill the group were returning over the Cat & Fiddle, now into the teeth of a gale. By the time the top was reached a split had occurred and the four in the lead took shelter behind the pub wall. As they waited some members of the GB squad rode past, having just overtaken the remnants of the club group, and Robin couldn't resist. He was onto his bike and swiftly followed by Paul Smith, Keith Bailey and Keith Stacey went after the exalted ones. They soon latched on and followed the wheels down the hill. Just before the bottom one of the GB riders attacked and the Seamons lads went after him, Robin went steaming past and the GB rider just sat up, unable to match his speed. Robin was on his mountain bike. As I said, I feel a lot better now.

**W**e had been forewarned about the tonsorial eccentricity of our guest of honour before the dinner and he didn't let us down. His striking bright red mohican was difficult to miss and Johnny Pardoe was quick to poke some gentle fun. As if

to make amends before the dancing got under way, a couple of special presentations were made. Gethin's partner, Gillian, was presented with a bouquet of flowers and Gethin a giant pair of wooden blue and yellow scissors. Gethin was unfazed, as you'd expect from a guy who pranced about with a red mohican and couple of balloons stuck up his shirt to the strains of "I really love your tiger feet."

**M**ike McConville learned a valuable lesson the hard way on a recent Friday night. Don't answer your mobile phone in the Old Market Tavern as it approaches closing time. In particular, don't ever say "Hello love." The comments came hard, fast and loud and were accompanied by the sound of clinking glasses and raucous laughter. No doubting where he was though.

Or was there? It set my mind thinking that there was an opportunity here to raise a bit of money for club funds. We record a few versions of this, say for instance birthdays and Christmas, etc, Peter Coles, converts it and Steve Booth uploads it onto the club website so it can be downloaded on to your MP3 players. Then all you have to do when the "where are you?" call comes is press play. Don't try this with one of those new-fangled camera phones though because the very next question might be "All right,



What's this? Can it be true? See later.....

# Meet your Clubmates

Our first clubmate has been around almost as long as the club, is our longest serving President and a life member. That probably narrows it down and the fact that he is a dedicated trike man even further. Indeed, all his best racing exploits were on three wheels: National Champion and BAR in 1963, he also held the York to Edinburgh RRA record and still holds the Northern RRA record for '12' hours on a tandem trike with 246 miles. He's also played as drummer with a jazz band and badminton to county standard. To celebrate his 60th birthday he rode from Lands' End to John O'Groats in 7 days which no doubt helped his yearly average of over 10,000 miles. He is **John Pardoe**.

**When and Where were you born?** Sale 1939

**When did you start cycling, and what was your first club?** Altrincham & Sale CTC, 1955, Seamons 1956

**What was your first race?** Seamons vs Sale Harriers (cyclists v runners) 1957

**What was your first win?** Tricycle Association '25' in 1958 with 1.11.36

**Which performance do you rate as your best?** T.A. National '100', 1965, 4.44.56 which was course and event record.

**What is your favourite meal?** Salad composé on the summit of the Ventoux in the knowledge that it is downhill all afternoon. Magic.

**What were you like at school?** Loved Geography and sport. Not much good at anything else.

**What kind of books do you read?** Travel & exploring maps. Biographies. Latest was 'Every second counts' by Lance Armstrong. Brilliant.

**What kind of music do you enjoy?** Trad Jazz, celtic, folk, classical & 1920's dance music (Al Bowley etc)

**and your favourite type of t.v. programmes?** Antiques Road Show, Question of Sport, Bill Oddy & Fred Dibnah. Our own holiday videos.

**Which newspaper do you read?** Daily Telegraph on Mondays during the racing season.

**What is your ideal holiday destination?** France, France & France plus Scotland and Shropshire.

**Do you have any hobbies?** Photography (inc travel videos), keeping the club and Manchester ladies archive, music, bird watching & creative cooking.

**Who would play you in a film of your life?** Someone energetic with a sense of humour. Gerry Lewis perhaps.

**What is your greatest fear?** Feeling old.

**How would you describe yourself in a lonely hearts ad?** Mountain goat seeks shapely nanny with own tripe to enjoy the ups and downs of life.

**What is your favourite training ride?** Audlem, Wrenbury, Cholmondeley, Bickerton, Malpas, Tattenhall, Beeston and Vale Royal—about 80 miles done weekly.

**What is your most unpleasant characteristic?** Leaving carrot peelings in the sink, apparently.

**Which characteristic do you most dislike in others?** Bad manners, impatient and intolerant motorists.

**Who would you most like to have met, and why?** Not who, but when. I'd like to have been there when John Arnold did 457 miles on a trike in the 1953 National Champs '24' as he carved his way through a field of solos to take 2nd place. They wouldn't give him a medal.

**What was your most embarrassing moment?** On the next to last day of my End to End ride I walked out of a café in Aviemore without paying.

**Four words to describe yourself:** Man of the mountains.





## FROM PEDDLE TO PADDLE

Retiring Vice President Reg Blease proves it's not all about rain-sodden weekends in Shropshire when he takes the laurels in the "Eleven Metre Pool Paddling In An Inflatable Backwards Championship" on holiday in Cyprus. Rumoured to become an established Olympic, event his time of 9.372 seconds (it wasn't serious, mind) saw off all challengers - despite the fact that everyone else was younger than him - proving once again that there's no substitute for all those steady winter miles if you want to come good in the summer.



## MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Another member to add to your growing list of e-mail addresses. After many years of computing, Dave Bates has finally made it onto internet. Or rather Linda has allowed him to sign up. You will find him at (strange one this) [g0lzl@tesco.net](mailto:g0lzl@tesco.net) . Now that's Dave's radio ham call sign so to spell it out it's g (george) 0 (zero) l (lima) z (zebra) l (lima) @tesco.net . Got it? A bit simpler is Nigel Harrop's e-mail address. He is at [nigelharrop@btopenworld.com](mailto:nigelharrop@btopenworld.com)

We are extremely pleased to welcome another two members to the club.

Claire Bridge has been riding with the touring section for a few weeks now and acquitting herself well into the bargain. She was able to demonstrate the female priority when asked what sort of a bike she rode. "A yellow one" she replied. Good choice, Claire whose address is Ravenscar, Prescot Rd, Hale, WA15 9PZ. Tel 0161 928 8104.

Tim Mitchell meanwhile has been testing himself with the half-day section and again showing he has the potential to handle our speediest group. Tim lives at 44, Longford Rd, Chorlton, M21 9SR. Tel 0161 881 2360.

Welcome to both of you and we hope you enjoy your time with the club.

Roy Myers has now moved (to Wythenshawe) and Paul Smith (to Denton) is in the process of doing so. Their new contact details are in the 2004 club handbook. Allan Phelan has changed his phone number to 0161 973 3229.

It's disappointing to have to report that the operation on Wynn Clarke's knee has not proved a success. Far from offering Wynn the prospect of a return to cycling, exactly the opposite has occurred. She is now virtually housebound and waiting for an appointment in early March to see if anything further can be done. I'm sure all members of the club wish this indomitable lady well as she comes to terms with life without her beloved bike. Let's hope it's temporary setback.

Club Handbooks are now out, so if you've paid your subs you should be receiving one in the near future. Proof of CTC or BC membership is required for all riding members.

# TOURIST TROPHY 2004

The old year ended on a high note with a memorable Montgomery weekend. There were seventeen out, which made it the best attended yet and by common consent the Sunday was one of those dream days out on a bike, one for the memory bank, whether you went on the fast-pack bash to Bala, the betwixt-and-betweeners to Knighton or the tourist run to Wenlock Edge.

There was, of course, no significant change to the top of the table. Dave Matthews emerged a comfortable and worthy winner. But, just to make sure he joined the weekend on the Sunday to pick up another half point.

The New Year saw two recruits for Audax, Rob Morton and John Hurley. Both rode one of the two pipe-openers from Wood Lane - a hilly to Carsington Water. You'll never guess who did the flat one on the same day - Dave Matthews.

Best wishes to former (2000) winner of the tourist trophy, Fred Foster, who is in for surgery as this goes to press.

If you're going to make an impression in this year's Tourist Trophy here are the early season events that will garner points in the competition:

March 7th Llangollen Club Audax.  
**Altrincham at 0800 hrs**

- March 27th Clwydian Audax, 205 Km  
**Corwen**
- March 28th Merseyside DA Tourist Trial  
**Norley 66 or 88 miles.\***
- March 28th Chirk Audax, 200 Km  
**Wood Lane**, Poynton
- April 4th Chester and Nth Wales Audax  
**Kinnerton**, 50 miles.\*
- April 4th Horseshoe Audax, 310 Km  
**Wood Lane**, Poynton
- April 17th Plains Audax. 310 Km  
**Wood Lane**, Poynton
- April 17th Audaxes at 305, 203 & 110 Km  
**Corwen**
- April 25th Club 100 in 8  
**Altrincham** at 0900 hrs
- May 15th 4 Rivers Ride, 203/164 Km  
**Shrewsbury**.
- May 22nd Seamons Tour of Berwyns, 204Km  
**Willington Hall**

Plus the Caving Club weekend, Dent weekend, all other club weekends, car assisted runs, 50 in 4 etc. See the clubrun programme.

A supply of revised audax entry forms available at the club room where the audax calendar will be on the notice board.

\* Dave Barker has the entry forms for these

## COMING UP SOON (and not so soon)

- March 5th At the clubroom 8.30 sharp bring all your unwanted gear for the club's annual CYCLEJUMBLE.
- April 18th Sunday. The Bike Show Ride. See separate announcement
- July 3rd Saturday. Altrincham Festival. See separate questionnaire.
- Dec 12th Sunday. Christmas Hot Pot. Fancy Dress theme - 'Pirates'. Get sewing and parrot hunting.
- Dec 19th M&DTTA event. Give those pirate outfits another airing.
- Feb 5th That's 2005! The dinner has been booked as we return to our usual weekend

## CLUB CLOTHING

Some club clothing is available 'off the shelf'

- Club Tops Long sleeve, long zip at £45.00 in various sizes  
Long sleeve, short zip at £44.50 in various sizes in Airfirm (heavy) or Airlux (lightweight) materials.
  - Bibshorts £31.00 in various sizes
  - Skinsuits £56.00 in various sizes
  - To Clear.....Thermal top, Large, one only, cost originally £57.00  
Gamex cape, Large, one only, cost originally £34.50.
- Reasonable offers accepted for these last two items. Contact Harvey Maitland on 928 6050

# M&DTTA Luncheon

Once again the Seamons had a good turnout at the M&DTTA dinner with seventeen of us sitting down to the excellent meal at the Middlewich Masonic Hall. The 'cabaret' was once again provided by Derek Hodgins with wife, Barbara, prompting where necessary. Well, most of the time actually. As usual most of us were there on bikes and a ride out is certainly desirable if you are to do justice to the mountain of food that is on offer. Carrot & Orange soup (more, sir?), Hot Pot (more sir?) , Bread rolls (more sir?) and a choice of three desserts, pavlova, sticky toffee and profiteroles (care to try a different dessert sir?) would test even the most hungry of cyclists.

It was perhaps as well that we didn't carry off the lion's share of the raffle prizes as we had a fair few awards to collect but we managed a couple and the plant that Roy Myers won may have looked nice in his new home. Trouble is it was difficult to fit in his back pocket and, being a cyclist, he probably wouldn't have watered it anyway. In an unselfish gesture, he passed it across the table to Dot Young who will no doubt nurture it.

So to the prizes. Mavis Ross of the Nova CC still has her name in the record books with her 30 mile time of 24 years still standing, and was a fitting choice to present the awards. Steve Davis took his first ever Middle Distance Championship and led the winning team of Dave Bates (3rd individual) and Roy Myers (5th). Dave Bates also took the Best Veteran award. The club also took the team award in the '100' with Steve taking 2nd place and Dave Bates and Phil Holden completing the squad plus the '50' with Steve, Dave and



Roy. Phil Holden took 4th spot in the BAR with barely half a season racing after a break of four years since his horrendous accident. His determination in the face of many setbacks was rewarded when it was announced that he was to be presented with a special National VTTA award. Each year the VTTA presents the trophy ( based on a splendid old-style acetylene lamp) to the person who in the opinion of the national committee has demonstrated some exceptional personal characteristics. Phil had been nominated late in 2003 by the Manchester group and his award will be presented at the National VTTA luncheon in May.



Phil Holden receives one of his certificates.

## WORLD CUP TRACK MEET

If you want to catch the only world class meeting at the velodrome this year then Easter is the time to go. On Good Friday, Easter Saturday and Sunday there will be top class racing each day. Starting on the Friday the session commences at 13.00 until 16.40 then again from 18.00 until 22.30.

Saturday starts at 09.30 until 15.10 and then 16.00 until 20.20 with heats in the morning and the various finals in the afternoon/evening.

Sunday starts at 09.00 and goes right through until 15.30 when the whole event finishes.

Visit [www.trackcycling.com](http://www.trackcycling.com) for further details and to book tickets or call **0871 230 2621**.

Sample prices: Saturday (all day) £18.00 adults and £12.00 under 16. Booking fee of £1.00 and 0.50p respectively





# XMAS HOT POT

They were all waiting at Rackham's, eager for the off on the Christmas Hot Pot run. Was it the lure of the unlimited hot pot or stop at Carberry's garage for unlimited hot punch and mince pies? Who knows? There were still ten minutes to go before the off and a healthy band were already there. OK, maybe not that healthy. Apart from the ordinary bike riders there were sufficient cowboys and a couple of Indians to add that festive touch. Oh, and a Royal Canadian Mountie too. "I thought you were in fancy dress too." was the remark directed at me rather accusingly. "I am, or rather will be in five minutes.." I replied.

There was no way I was riding from Stockport to Altrincham in a cowboy outfit, especially when the route took me through the middle of Wythenshawe. Off with the back pack and out came the hat, chaps, guns, weskit etc for the transformation. None too soon, as the command 'wagons roll' echoed round the store entrance and we were on our way. The various traffic lights split the group up before we got out of town and as Wilky headed off into the sunrise, Lowawatha, riding next to me, grunted "Um, not good medicine, Chief Riding Fast upsetting gods of 12mph riding." As we are all too aware, when these gods are upset powerful bad medicine can afflict the bunch. A posse was dispatched to round up the fugitives and a semblance of order was restored to the proceedings before we reached Ashley. A detour round Rostherne and a regrouping at Tatton Park entrance gave John Carberry chance to ring wife, Gail, with his an-

nual "What time do you want us there?" query. "If at all." was unsaid but hung in the air. The answer was short and involved a slight modification to the route to extend the distance. 'Nuff said.

We came at Bracken Way from the opposite 'posh' end this year. Quite what the BMW polishing residents made of a whooping, hatchet brandishing red indian and a bunch of 'ye-hah-ing' cowboys will perhaps never be known but at least they were entertained by the Rawhide chorus....."Rolling, rolling, rolling..." Not altogether appropriate, this, as a little later on the words tell us "through hail and wind and weather, as long as we're together..." Together? On a touring section clubrun?

Once again Gail had done us proud, with hot punch, mince pies, stollen cake (always a favourite) and other goodies. We were joined by another squaw 'Little Laughter' alias Mini Ha Ha, or rather secretary Carol in a cunningly modified table cloth. Photos were taken, though we didn't manage to get Gail up the step ladders this year, and a certain reluctance to continue the ride was detected as the rain pattered down. Decisive action was called for so moustachioed US Marshal Wotta Twerp rose to the occasion and herded us on our way. Calm once again returned to the 'leafy' suburbs of Knutsford as the Wild Bunch (more 'Slightly Annoyed' than 'Wild' me thinks but it doesn't have the same ring to it) headed for the open country.

## The Squirrel



This part of the journey seemed further than it should have been and no doubt the strong headwind didn't help matters but we just arrived as the clock struck twelve and the half-day lads hurtled into the village hall yard. No doubt they were as mindful that the 'Hanging Judge' Richardson would be on the lookout for late arrivals as we were. The room was as splendidly seasonal as ever and set up for the expected near seventy member turn out. A lot of effort by a variety of members goes into this day and the result is a credit to them all. Hot pot, French baguettes, red cabbage, fruit pie and cream, wine, beer, tea, crackers and party poppers—and all for a fiver. And that's without the entertainment.

Ah, yes - the entertainment. This takes the form of a fancy dress judging contest and, until this year at least a general sing along. Carol and Johnny Pardoe had provided some words to well known songs and with the occasional guitar strumming and mouth organ blowing we'd had a jolly time. This year our 'professional musician', Mike Brooks had been persuaded to star on the pianoforté and a new songsmith added a couple of tunes. Then there was the remarkable sight of a Mountie and a red Indian dueting to Mule Train, whilst (almost) simultaneously smashing their own heads with tin tea trays at the appropriate whip cracking moment. This had to be seen, and heard, to be believed. In fact I still don't believe it. As this was performed by Phil Holden and Roger Haines, it could be argued that there was no chance of any brain damage. For this period the hall did take on the appearance of a wild west saloon, the bare floor, the upright piano with the grizzled, vest

sporting, pianist complete with a motley assortment of dishevelled looking cowboys and indians. It almost made those dressed in lycra look normal. Almost.

The fancy dress competition was introduced by our Chairman, Harvey, and the winner announced after the 'clapometer' (which cannot lie) had given its verdict. A resounding victory for Roger Haines as 'Red Indian' was probably down to his seriously impressive chopper, not to mention his bow and quiver full of arrows. The complete line up was; Sian - Squaw, Carol - Minehaha or Cherry Key (work it out), Phil Holden - Mountie, and a posse of cowpeople. Rob Morton - The Loan Arranger, Dave Attwell - Wotta Twerp, Malc & Wynne McAllister as Not so Butch Cassidy and the Line Dance Kid and the three Life Members as the Good, the Bad and the Ugly. The next week would see the Fancy Dress section of the Christmas '25' take to the roads round Siddington and among them would be a contingent from the club. Would the result be the same? Who would take the first prize there? Revenge was being plotted and its success depended on some of those arrows....

There then followed a special presentation to our oldest founder member. Bob Richardson had celebrated his 80th birthday the week before and throughout his period of membership has been a stalwart of the club in particular and of cyclists' rights in general. Still as enthusiastic about our sport as ever, it was a pleasure to see him at the function he created and ran for a number of years as he was presented with a giant 80 tooth silver painted chainwheel signed by the club members. The generous round of applause was well deserved and was a fitting tribute to the Grand Master of the Seamons.





## **BUT IT HAD TO BE DONE**

Back in July 1998 the "Etape du Tour" took one of its more difficult routes over a distance of 189K from Grenoble to Les Deux Alpes. In the process, the Col du Glandon 1908m, Col de la Croix de Fer 2068m, Col de Telegraph 1570m and Col du Galibier 2647m are traversed. The event is remembered for the extreme heat which led to only 2200 finishers from the 5500 riders who started off from Grenoble.

Seamons had two riders on the course---John Pardoe who arrived at Les Deux Alpes in spite of the handicap of carrying a video camera over the cols and yours truly who succumbed to the heat near the top of the Glandon. (It is rumoured that John's success was partially due to Carol riding over the Galibier from the south side to bring a stock of his favourite butties to Valloire to fuel his ascent of the Galibier---now accompanied by Carol as well as the video camera on the return trip).

My failure on this circuit was not to be taken lightly, and I had made efforts to return to an event covering this route every year since. Options are the Marmotte (which starts in Bourg d'Oisans and finishes up Alpe D'Huez) or the Brevet Randonnee des Alps which starts and finishes in Grenoble.

Every year since 1998 some difficulty has prevented me getting back out to the Alps in good enough condition to do the ride, during the few

# Cream Crackered

months that the cols are passable. Eventually there did seem to be a realistic chance in 2003, enhanced by the moral support of a big team of the Seamons going to Bourg d'Oisans to watch Le Tour.

My original plan was to stay with the club all week after the Alp D'Huez Tour stage on Sunday and then ride the BRA. However, this was very tight timing to ride the event at the weekend and drive back to be in work in Liverpool on Wednesday.

So when I woke up at 5 am on Thursday after the Tour was well gone and saw a few low clouds in the sky giving respite from the 35 degree heat, the round of "Les Cols Mythiques" was suddenly on. Grabbing food, drink and bike I drove the short but exciting 10K from our gite down to the campsite. The car was left near the sleeping campers with a note showing that I had left for the cols at 7:15am.

The early part of the ride to Rochetaillee and then up to Allevard was pleasant in the early morning cool. I found a café there which had coffee but no food, so broke the rules by eating my own fruesli bar.

The ride up to Col du Glandon and the Croix de Fer is a long steady haul on which I was accompanied by two Dutch Lads. These guys had a support team travelling with them, which certainly cuts down the weight and clutter on the bike.

Once over the Croix de Fer, there is a 40 K descent to St Jean de Maurienne which was uneventful but allowed plenty of time for the sun to come out and start to warm things up.

The valley is then followed south east to St Michel de Maurienne at the foot of the Telegraph. It is possible to get a solid meal here at the "Café Rapide", which I did to ensure energy for the Galibier---but suffered the consequences of a full stomach on the lower Col du Telegraph.

## The Squirrel

The Telegraph was hot and exposed. I was reminded all too forcibly of the many cyclists who collapsed with heat stroke at the side of the road here during the 1998 Etape. Today I survived the heat and gradient by riding for 30 minutes and then taking 5 minutes rest under a tree. Three stages like this got me to the summit and the short descent to Valloire at the foot of the Galibier.

The Galibier from the north side is a monster col rising 1200m from Valloire. I rode up using the same technique of 30 minutes ride; 5 minutes rest. The road surface is very good and as I ascended the heat became less oppressive---but the phrase "cream crackered" kept floating through my limited consciousness. I wonder why?

The last bit of the col rears up over some monster hairpins and then suddenly you are there. For me this was a five year dream realised at last. A couple of photographs and then it's all down hill (well mostly apart from a drag after the Barrage) for 40K to Bourg d'Oisans.

How does it feel to be back after such a hard day? Well if the Club President wipes your face with a cloth straight out of the washing up bowl and you enjoy it---it must be good!



Once again we have a contingent heading for the Alps in July with the specific aim of watching the unique time trial up the Alpe D'Huez. Three pitches have already been booked on Camping La Piscine which is literally right at the foot of the great climb with John & Carol Pardoe on one, Dan and Ali Mather another and Jim & Dee Boydell on a third. Dave & Margaret Matthews are staying in a gîte on the Col D'Ornon not too far away. Dave Barker has already booked his flights to Geneva and is riding down as last year, with a space reserved in an awning. If you are interested in seeing this great spectacle and maybe even riding the demanding route of the Marmotte like Dave Matthews did last year, then get up to the clubroom and have a chat. Ferries and flights are good value at the moment so what are you waiting for?

*Story and photos by Dave Matthews*

# Letters

Dear Jim,

I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to my friends in the club for their good wishes on the occasion of my recent birthday. In particular I am very moved by the presentation made to me at the Christmas Hot Pot, which same was a first class collective celebration. This was yet another assurance that the future of the Seamons CC is in good hands.

Sincerely,  
Bob Richardson

Dear Jim

I thought you might like this for the Squirrel, it highlights the highly developed sense of direction we cyclists possess.

It was Saturday 31 Jan, the horrible one that rained all day and never let up. I managed to convince my better half that a ride in the peaks was in order, and if time permitted perhaps we could visit Hewitt Cycles in the afternoon. I was

after a new helmet and he had a few last deals hanging around from Christmas. Before setting off on the ride I rang Hewitt's and checked the opening times, 6pm on a Saturday; excellent should have plenty of time.

What followed was a great ride around the Derwent and Ladybower reservoirs in what can only be described as heavy precipitation. The up side of all this rain was nobody else had been courageous (stupid) enough to venture out so we had the trails all to ourselves. The ride passed without a hitch and after a few hours we were on our way home, drenched to the skin and with bin bags full of wet kit.

Time was getting on, we would have to be quick if we were going to make Hewitt's by 6 pm. No time to waste, a quick shower and bowl of soup was all that was allowed in the briefest of visits home. From arriving, to getting back in the car to Hewitt's was 20 minutes at most. Hewitt's I recalled is somewhere in Northwich, so off we set, driving through yet more horrendous rain.

On arriving in Northwich I couldn't quite remember the road so we drove around a few times, with short sorties off into various housing estates and the like. Eventually it all began to become familiar, I triumphantly announced to Anita that we would be at the shop in five minutes as I definitely knew where to go from here.

And so it was, after five minutes we pulled up outside the shop, wiping the mist off the side window we could just make out the words "Dave Hinde", and adding insult to injury, it was SHUT!!!

Needless to say I will be making the trip to Hewitt's alone next time!

Cheers, Colin Levy

### MEMBERSHIP

Not paid your membership yet? Oh dear. From March 1st, you will have to pay the re-joining fee of £5.00 as well as your annual subs. Constitution rule 8 refers. You may not enter any events, of any description, in the club's name until you have paid up.

## TRACK NIGHT JAN 2004

The track night at the velodrome just after New Year was well supported and, as usual, the two hour session just flew by. The riders did their share of flying too and our Track Championship once again goes to Paul McAllister as he romped to victory in all the events on this evening and the preceding November session.

A scratch race and an individual flying start 250 metres provided the competitive element to the evening with the rest of the time divided between the various groups of beginners, intermediates and 'elite' riders developing their track craft. The twenty seven had a go at the flying start with a lap warm-up to test the nerve of those heading for the top of the banking to gain maximum advantage and then giving it their all for the last 250 metres. Matt Crampton, an elite regular and in the GB squad, is a 2nd claim member and showed us all how it should be done. He's already taken the 'White Hope' sprint for up-and-coming riders down at Herne Hill last Easter and his 11.96 seconds was the standard against which all other rides should be judged.

1 P McAllister	12.81	2 Nick Crampton	13.50
3 R Williams	14.03	4 S Williams	14.09
5 J Boydell	14.62	6 R Morton	14.64
7 S Dwyer	14.71	8 M Adshead	14.72
9 M McConville	15.25	10 K McLelland	15.31
11 P Thomason	15.31	12 J Barry	15.65
13 G Blease	15.72	14 A Young	15.75
15 P Holden	15.87	16 A Thompson	15.90
17 D Barker	15.91	18 N Norris	16.38
19 D Tickle	16.50	20 P Devine	16.78
21 R Crampton	16.82	22 G Peake	17.03
23 J Hurley	17.25	24 K Daly	17.47
25 S Graham	17.82	26 S Daly	20.00



We shall be looking for some suitable dates to hire the track in 2004/5 and hope to get the same level of support and keep the cost down to about £5.00 for track use. Hire bikes add another £7.00 - what great value for a night out.



Once again the club put on a great occasion to celebrate our 55th Dinner Dance and Prize Presentation. If you weren't there you missed a great night and some great sights. And they don't come much greater than.... well you'll have to wait for that bit later on.

After last year's disappointing disco and against the backdrop of rapidly falling numbers at most cycling club dinners, what could the committee come up with? Last year we had just over 120 attending but ideally we would like 150 to give the Belgrave suite at the Cresta Court some real atmosphere after the dinner. Could it be done? Inadvertently the Cresta did us a favour and let our regular weekend go to someone else. The nearest date available was Feb 14th - which just happened to be St Valentine's night. So, how about something completely different; no disco but a live band. Yes, real people playing real music. Robin Haigh knew of an outfit called 'The Brotherhood of Glam', a 70's style outfit and a deal was done. Then, at the committee meeting before the dinner Johnny Pardoe turned up with a micro-bike which he'd borrowed on approval. This brought back memories of '60's dinners when miniature hand made racing bikes (complete with dropped handlebars) had been a feature on several occasions. Johnny had obviously had a practice and after several others had a brief acquaintance in Robin's lounge and hallway a consensus was reached and Johnny was asked to purchase two. These would provide some light relief during the interval when the

band was not on stage. The meal was selected, a repeat of last year's successful lamb and sticky toffee pudding (not on the same plate), and we were all ready to go.

Gethin Butler, '24' hour Champion and End to End record holder was our Guest of Honour and caused a few palpitations when he arrived just before the soup course (carrot & coriander) to join the President's table along with Charles McCulloch, our open '25' winner, and Karl Austin the M&DTTA '100' winner. Then we were off. A few moments silence for those who have graced our celebrations in the past but were, sadly, no longer with us, was followed by grace and another excellent meal served to the 150 who sat down. Some cross toasting brought various people to their feet and then Gethin gave us some insights into his progression from riding a '50' (this seemed to be among his first events at a tender age) with a 35 mile ride out and back, to the End to End record and Paris-Brest-Paris, the longest audax ride in Europe. It was no surprise to find out he'd done it faster than anybody else from Britain.

Then it was time for the prize presentation and once again Gethin came up trumps. As Jim Boydell read out the names and list of achievements Gethin scuttled up and down the table gathering the various cups, medals and certificates. Starting with the touring certificates we gradually worked our way through the serious and not so serious ( Robin took the Tripe Trophy

Cake for his 'Lifetime Achievement Award' in the Llangollen and Paul Smith the 'Hammering of the Year' for his Nat Champs Hill Climb performance) until we reached our two major prize winners of the night. Steve Davis was, once again, a worthy winner of the D K Hartley Trophy for Club Champion and to great applause, Phil Holden took the walk up the stage for the George Arstall BAR Trophy to complement his 12 hour and Best Clubman awards. It was a walk he could be forgiven for thinking he'd never make again but he did and no doubt he'll be there again. Dave Matthews thanked all the members, organisers and supporters in the final speech of the evening and the room was cleared ready for dancing.

This gave us plenty of opportunity to wander round the display of Seamons Club Life photos, so painstakingly put together by Johnny Pardoe and buy raffle tickets from Harvey and Robin, who did a great job of selling. Then, the noise. To say that most were taken aback is probably an understatement. A combination fancy dress, painted faces and 70's music played at, well, pretty loud seemed to stun the assembled mass who ventured back into the ballroom. Three numbers went by and nobody got up to dance. Robin and Sue bravely got up to lead the way (always a difficult job, this) before one or two others joined them. It was touch and go for a short while, then our President, Carol, braved the bass and ventured to the stage. "Could you turn the sound down a bit? Well, quite a bit really." They did and the transformation was almost instant. Once you weren't frightened that your insides were going to be pulverised, the floor filled up



And the band rocked on.



Gordon Peake reaches the far turn.

very quickly and they finished their first 'set' to great applause. Then it was time for the bikes. Johnny Pardoe and Jim Boydell got the chairs positioned and a series of impromptu head to head pursuits was organised. We started with Gethin (5'8" without his vermilion dyed mohican haircut) against Charles McCulloch (6'4"). Well who would you put money on riding a mini-micro bike. Wrong! As Gethin struggled to get the hang of it, Charles pedalled smoothly to victory. MC Jim Boydell came up with some cunning pairings including Big Tim against little Chris Siepen, Steve Davis's daughter against an auntie (yes, in evening dresses!), Cap'n Wilky against Peter Devine. We even had female members of the bar staff having a go but couldn't persuade the Glam boys to get astride. What a sight that would have made; Ozzy Osborne versus Noddy Holder.

The second set that the Glam Rockers gave was even better than the first, the dance floor was packed the whole time, and a series of encores took us to 12.30 when they finally bowed out. Many were still reluctant to go home and sat around talking after one of the most successful dinners for a while.

Congratulations to the organising team, in particular to Harvey for driving the whole thing along, to Paul Stringer for help with the raffle, to Robin for his support and finding the band, to Steve Davis for organising the medals and trophies (and polishing them all!) and finally to Johnny and Carol for all the hard work they put in behind the scenes to ensure yet another great success.



For those that had still got some money left after the Christmas Spree there was plenty of opportunity to give the wallet an airing when the clubnight once again shifted down to Neil Walton's Altrincham Bike Shak. From 7.30 pm until 9.30 pm the shop was ours to wander about in with tea and biscuits on hand to make the already pleasant experience even more so.

Many came armed with lists on bits of paper but went off to the pub with hands full of carrier bags and tyres draped over shoulders. When Neil joined us after shutting up the shop he had a big smile on his face so it looks as though the evening was mutually beneficial.

# SHAK ATTACK



Mike McConville, Steve Booth and Phil Holden discuss the merits of a Bike Shak machine.

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## RIDE A CLASSIC –TOUR OF THE BERWYNS

The third running of this 200K event in its current form is to be on Saturday May 22<sup>nd</sup> 2004 starting from Willington Hall, 5 miles East of Chester.

Willington hall is a beautiful country hotel and provides one of the finest starts to any Audax event. We are very lucky that the owners are enthusiastic to host the event, providing good, safe parking and a free cup of tea to start us off.

The route is initially along winding Cheshire lanes until we meet the first hill over the border in Wales called descriptively "the steps". This provides a warm up for the ascent of Worlds End and then a beautiful series of lanes to the Central Hotel at Corwen.

Beyond Corwen you follow a valley road and

then get into the hills proper over the Milltir Cerrig pass to Llangynog with its two pubs. Another series of hill roads eventually leads you back to civilisation and the welcome café at Chirk.

After Chirk there is a "conversation piece" short hill and then a series of scenic, undulating lanes lead back through Cheshire to the finish at Summertrees Café for tea and scones (included in the entry fee). A short descent then takes you back to the start point at Willington Hall.

Due to popular demand, the value for money entry fee and the wonderful weather to date, the entry limit has now been raised to 100 riders. Why not get your entry in early and join us for this classic ride. Contact Dave Matthews or Dave Barker for entry forms.



# TOURING SHORTS &

# LONGSS

To the uninitiated, the rambling confusion that is the touring section can appear to be rolling grace, wafting through the lanes of Cheshire, sinevy limbs describing beautiful circles as they spin an effortless cadence. These innocents would likely marvel at the semi-neat lines of riders, almost all dressed in club colours, their machines recently cleaned and fettled to something looking a lot like, but not quite, mechanical perfection. And they would be even more impressed if they knew how much discipline was required to keep a group of a dozen riders synchronised when five of them were called John.

That's almost a John each.

Runs guru Wilkie is taking the aesthetics of cycling just that little bit too far these days. Firstly, he started turning out in matching blues and reds. Consistently. Then, he gets a new bike. A red one. And then he builds it up with red and black accessories. But that wasn't enough. He wasn't happy with his bidon. Too mean to buy a new one that matched, this was a taxing conundrum for our esteemed leader. Next time he's out on the run, what is sloshing about in the bottle? Water with a touch of cochineal in it. Perfect. I swear the thought of how good he looked gave him an extra rev all day.

New member Claire Bridge is already learning what it takes to be a tourer. Parsimony, mostly. The tell-tale skipping of chain on block revealed it was time to replace worn-out componentry. So, off to the shops she goes. But with the new chain on, the skipping continued. Claire may have claimed she didn't know it was best practice to replace both worn chain and sprockets at the same time. But we all know the truth. Not five minutes with the tourers and she's looking at ways to save money by cutting those corners.

And tradition remains alive with another addition to the tourers – oversized luggage. Andy Burns' was on his first run with the tourers when his rack-pack was examined to ensure it contained more than just a "get you home kit". Sure enough, there was plenty in their to get you home, and maybe squeeze in a visit to friends on the way. "Andy's tent" is now as regular a sight on runs as is the sound of his knobby tyres, humming like a Land Rover in the bunch.

First there was Roger Haines' Magic Knee – the one that could tell if we were going faster than 12mph in the morning. Now it turns out John Thorogood's got a built-in speed detector too. A playful Jim Boydell had sneaked up behind John and proceeded to push him along. As the speed went beyond the mach one of touring – 15's – Jim noticed it was getting harder to push. Was this terminal velocity in action? No. An oblivious Mr T had realised he was going "too fast" and had applied his brakes. Now, is that why our runs take so long to complete?

Last year, Gordon Peake started earning himself a bit of a reputation as a super-randonneur after completing the audax run to Llangollen. Well this year, it looks even more serious. While there's not much evidence of him actually training on a bike, it's clear he means business as a touring force to be reckoned with. What gives it away? The beard. It starts off with a bike, then it's a bike and a saddlebag. And then it's a bike, a saddlebag and beard. I've seen the photos in the CTC magazine. If he gets plus-fours and a Greenspot, Touring Trophy hopefuls may as well concede it now.



# Montgomery Revisited

Dominated by the ruins of its 13<sup>th</sup> century castle, Montgomery, formerly the capital town of Montgomeryshire, with a charter of 1227, is today a placid, village-sized town, that is, until the annual invasion of Robin and his merry men from the Seamons.

Day one:

Roger Haines decided on a lone visit to sample the delights of The Six Bells at Bishop's Castle, whilst Siân caught up with some well-earned sleep, after her night shift. Captain Wilky, meanwhile, chose to make his own way to Stiperstones, leaving the bunch to follow the now traditional haul over Long Mountain, which seems to get longer and steeper each year.

At the summit, Peter Bell was celebrating the fact that he had overhauled both Steve Davis and Dave Bates on the climb, both clearly over-gearred for the terrain. These are moments to savour in one's senior years.

On the steep, winding, narrow and very slippery descent a brake was touched, and down came the front runners. Nick Crampton smashed his brand new watch, and Dan Mather re-designed his tights, but apart from hurt pride, there were no lasting injuries.

On reaching Minsterly, a split occurred, and

Robin chose to take his posse over the rough stuff route, while the senior citizens took the direct, but still hilly, route to the Stiperstones Inn, joining Wilky and eventually the others for lunch in front of a roaring log fire.

Another split in the afternoon saw Robin taking Keith Bailey, guest rider Chris Siepen, Matt Crampton, Dan, Dave and Steve over some of his favourite tortuous climbs around Church Stretton, while the rest of us enjoyed a more leisurely route.

With eerie light fading over the Long Mynd, Dave Barker was clearly enjoying himself, with cries of "Wow!", "Fantastic", "and still 9 miles to go". Yes, unfortunately, muttered Mike Brookes, clearly below par on this occasion.

Day two:

Today Captain Wilky and friends were on a mission, to a pub. Well, what's new there? But this time to suss out a possible venue for a forthcoming weekend away - The Sun in Culmington in Coverdale. The pub boasts facilities ranging from caravanning and camping to bed and breakfast. Later Roger was enthusing about the half inch thick ham, served by "stormin' Norman", and the ale was dark and delightful, just like Siân (Roger's words).

This was followed by a tail wind back to Montgomery which included a further visit to The Six Bells at Bishop's Castle. Now there's a surprise! Meanwhile Robin and the "A" team chose an 81 mile brute of a route taking in Lake Vernwy and Emily's tea-rooms, over to Bala for lunch. A return trip over the Milltir Cerrig, into the teeth of a strong Easterly wind proved to be a testing run, 6,800ft of climbing (according to Steve Davis's altimeter watch).

JP's group was joined by Dave Matthews for the day, and we chose a circuitous and scenic route to Knighton for lunch. Conversation ranged from the amount of butter used per day in the bread factory where Dave currently works, to a thorough and rare insight into the history of various types and styles of telegraph poles, as studied by Peter during his many years with British Telecom - all riveting stuff - really! Peter was also guilty of "sadism by proxy" (wow, Dave!) - secretly hoping that the "A" team were experiencing the same Easterly that we were. They were! After searching Knighton for cafés to no avail, we asked a local. "Right behind you" came the reply. Oh dear, another senior moment...

Our route back to base took in Bucknell and Bishop's Castle, where we helped boost the profits at a very quiet Poppy House, with Peter remarking, "I could eat cake all afternoon".

A slight diversion over the Kerry Ridge brought us back to Montgomery just as darkness was falling.

Some of the more hardy enjoyed an après cyclisme dip in the hotel pool, followed by a sauna. The after-dinner entertainment was provided by Phil Holden, with one or two specially selected monologues, and the usual fun and frolics round the pool table down at the local, accompanied by music from the juke box.

Day three:

Monday was like the song, "10 green bottles". Two Daves had gone home, as had Nick and Matt "When's the next one?" Crampton. Captain Wilky, Roger and Siân were off to Shrewsbury for a spot of Christmas shopping! Phil and Mike had places to go and people to meet, and Peter fancied a potter on his own.

So JP joined what was left of the "A" team, on a very frosty morning. Robin took us over the Kerry Ridge to Clun, and Knighton for lunch. The sight of a car on its roof within minutes of setting off was a little unnerving, but we soldiered on, although it was bitterly cold - especially the fast descent into Knighton.

Stopping at a very chic bistro, we were greeted with "We don't serve food until 12". It was 11.40 a.m. Without hesitation JP was off, to the café we had frequented the day before, closely followed by all but two of the bunch. Steve and Dave had headed back to base, and home.

After lunch JP persuaded Robin that the route back via Bucknell and Bishop's Castle for more carbo-loading at the Poppy House, would be a sociable conclusion to another very successful Montgomery weekend.

Thank you Robin, we all look forward to re-convening at the very comfortable Dragon Hotel again next December. See you there!



Blue Skies, two wheels and an open, traffic free, road. What more could you want in .....December! Dan Mathers obviously agrees.

The popularity of this weekend, organised by Robin Haigh, continues to grow and was near maximum capacity this year. If you want to be there in 2004 book your place as soon as it's announced.

## JUST ANOTHER CLUBRUN

After the snow and ice of the previous week, the weathermen promised milder weather for the weekend. Saturday was dismal with miserable rain and dark overcast skies and Sunday was to have squally showers and high winds. Well, thank goodness they still get it wrong. Sunday dawned bright and clear and though the roads were wet, a good run was in prospect. It could even turn out to be a perfect winter half-day run. These occur when the weather holds out, it's not too cold and just after you get home the rains come down and you've got the perfect excuse to curl up in front of the fire with the Sunday papers. Yes, I realise the touring section are still out there but that's their fault for spending too much time in the pub.

Anyway, five set off for the faster all day run and fifteen of us left a few minutes later for the more reasonably placed Malkin's Bank. Amongst them, a surprise face, that of Chris Siepen who had spotted the 'flat' run in the magazine and had come down from Bury. "I'm fed up of riding in the hills all the time." confided Chris. It was a mistake. As we rode out through Ashley Roy Myers disappeared 'not feeling too well' and we were fourteen. By the time Mobberley arrived Keith Stacey sidled up and said, conspiratorially, "I'm going to take them up to Pexhill, Gawsworth, Rushton Spencer and then over the Cloud. You might want to take a group another way." Too damn right.

At Siddington we split and after it settled down we were six and they were eight. "Two false positives and two false negatives." was how Dave Barker explained the ensuing line up. First and second in the hill climb opted for the flat run and two of our more 'mature' riders went for tougher option. Climbing out of Radnor Bank we spotted another two 'yellow-tops' and were soon alongside the Pardoes. Not for long though as Carol punctured and we continued, leaving the repair to husband Johnny. Apparently that's what spouses are for.

We arrived at Malkin's Bank just as Dave Matthews had got to the counter and we had all just settled down with the tea and toast when Keith Bailey and Robin Haigh arrived. An 'early morning incident' had delayed their release from the fire station and a run straight down the A50 had

been necessary to get them back in touch. I groaned. That was all we needed. The firemen, Dan Mather, Keith Stacey and Tim Seddon in the bunch is not a recipe for a sedate run home. There was to be another complication but at the time we were unaware of it.

Then Ian Udall arrived and hot on his heels were the eight toughies. Well, six actually as Chris Siepen and Richard Potter rode straight on and didn't stop. That left eighteen of us to monopolise all the cups and saucers. After the break there was a further refinement as the Pardoes, and Daves' Barker and Matthews headed off for Beeston and fourteen of us headed for home. Not the same fourteen that headed out there you'll note.

All went well as Tim Seddon led us down some unusual little lanes, ignoring the 'dead end' signs, and we eventually ended up just outside Sandbach and heading for Middlewich. It was here that the seeds of disaster were sown. Well, disaster for me that is. Riding alongside Dan Mather he mentioned a softening front tyre but his 'I'll see how it goes on' was a positive sign. "That should slow him down a bit" thought I. By Middlewich itself it was causing problems and we opted to pull in at the '100' finish in Byley Lane. As Dan fixed his bike and we cavorted under the watchful eye of the farm's CCTV camera (The sign says 'NO PARKING OR TURNING IN THIS DRIVE'), the Ashley Touring Club rode by at a brisk pace.

My heart sank. That's all we needed: a 'hare' out in front, a frisky bunch and Dan with hard tyres. We set off and, sure enough, the pace was ratcheted up. Imperceptibly at first, then noticeably as we approached the grind up to Toft. Lucky old Keith Stacey; he turned off up Gough's Lane and his ride was over. We had only just begun. The Ashley riders had been caught just as we turned onto the A50 and the speed really went up. New rider Tim Mitchell lost ten yards and then twenty and before I could get round him it was too late. Not to worry as there were two sets of lights in Knutsford and the old head told me not to waste energy on a chase; the old legs agreed.

"B\*\*\*\*r". The lights in the centre of Knutsford were shrouded and a sign announced 'Lights out of Order'. The now enlarged bunch steamed

through and were lost from sight. I just caught sight of them as they headed down the back lane to Mere and put plan B into action. A tail wind through the park helped and I just got out onto the Tatton Mile as the bunch bore down on me. Upping the speed it was just possible to latch onto the back of the group as the speed reached thirty mph. It was a good mix of Ashley and Seamons and there would be no quarter asked or given. Crossing the brook at the bottom, the road starts to climb and within a mile what was a bunch was now split into several small groups.

Robin and Dan were going head to head with a sole Ashley rider while the rest were spread out behind. The Ashley club traditionally stop at the 'Greyhound' but our lads battle it out to the top

of the railway bridge in Hale. Breasting the last railway bridge before the Bollin, I could see the riders in twos and threes but of Robin and Dan there was no sight. With another nine miles to go for me, there was no point in doing anything other than amble home to Stockport. I certainly didn't expect to see a Seamons rider again that day so it was a surprise to catch up with Dan Mathers as I rode into Northenden.

"So, who got it?" was the obvious first question. Dan looked at me and I knew the answer without a word being spoken. "He gave me a right kicking" said Dan. But for how much longer, I thought.

It had been just another clubrun.

## ALTRINCHAM SPORTS CONVENTION

Dave Barker, Steve Davis and Jim Boydell went down to the college on Green Lane Timperley to fly the flag for the club at this multi sport event. We set up the competition rollers and Steve brought down his state of the art time trialing machine to generate some interest. Controlling the kids as they crowded round was no mean feat and trying to get the message through that you couldn't stop pedalling was even more difficult. One or two were lifted off the saddle as they forgot the warning. Head to heads over one lap (500 metres) were the order of the day and we tried to give as many youngsters a go as was possible. The enthusiasm of the younger riders was encouraging (particularly the young girls) but of 16+ there was no sign. Maybe it's just not 'cool' to show that you care or are prepared to try. Maybe it's



the fear of failure in front of their peers. Whatever the reason it was disappointing that none of the age group we were hoping to attract turned up in the hall. It wasn't just the cycling that suffered from this, none of the sports attracted any interest from this age group. Maybe it's just that football is now so dominant that little thought is given to other sports.

Whatever the reason, our hopes that we might have got some riders to the velodrome session in January were not to be realised. If we are to get any members from this age group at all then a different strategy will be required.

### THE BIKE SHOW RIDE

Charity: British Heart Foundation

Destination: NEC Arena, Birmingham.

Date: Sunday April 18th, 2004

Entry Fee: £15.00 also gets you into the bike show on any of its three days.

Starting Points: Birmingham (48 miles)  
Oxford (86 miles) and London (130 miles).

There are three time bands at each distance for you to aim at and entry forms are available up at the clubroom.

# BLAST from the PAST

Some older members will remember Ian Barnett, who rode with the club in the late 60's and early 70's. Then he joined the navy to see the world and what did he see, he saw the .....

Hi Jim,

I am on an extended leave at the moment in the Philippines and have managed to get a pad in the provinces, ie. out of Manila and the oppressive humidity. I live out here, with my Filipino wife, at a place called Tagaytay, about 56 Km. south of Manila. We are fairly near Taal Lake, which holds Volcano Island (last erupted in 1911 and is still hot at its rim!) and is classed as the smallest volcano in the World. It is a couple of hours trek up there and would make a hard ATB ride up, round the rim and down again, in a modest 25 C. temp. - dodging the ponies taking the few crazy tourists up there. Grace & I walked it, with me giving a good imitation of 'lobster thermidor' on completion. At the finish we had torrential rain to cool us down & a wall of a 10 Km. slab-concrete climb (which makes the Aquila climb, or whatever, in Spain, that they all talk about in the cycling mags, look like a grandmother's birthday treat outing!) to make it back up to the cool air.....thankfully by car which somehow made it to the top on a road that resembled a crazy hairpin-waterfall. One of these days, I hope to make it by bike when I get it all shipped out here.

Plenty of 'Bronzed Bikies' out here, with good, although expensive, imported equipment as it is cool and some of the roads are a little better than the average pot-holed rubbish. I watched a road race a couple of months ago, in Manila, as a selection-series event for the Tour Philippines '04 annual race. They were racing 140 Km. over a 7 Km. flat, exposed route, on main roads, with, thankfully, police outriders - otherwise they would all have been in either the hospital or the cemetery, the way they drive over here. With the heat, humidity & 'sleeping policemen' all over the course, they raced hard. A break on the first lap with one rider, eventually gathering another two, just managed to stay away to the end.

Don Andrews has forwarded through a choice

few of your excellent 'Squirrel' Mags (what a great effort!) when I was in Japan for 14 months & then again just last year. I see that you have your own internet page, so I shall have to tune into that some time.

Japan must be the ultimate 'Cyclists Paradise' - I was in love with the place. Very busy, mostly narrow roads for the motorist, until you get onto the main arterial roads, which have immaculate surfaces. I found where most of the clubs met, fairly near where I was working, on quiet dock roads and, as it was the weekend, no container traffic. They ran crazy boy-racing cars on neighbouring roads, with cars spinning all over the place and it just looked like plain lunacy. It was near Haneda airport, so quite often you thought a plane was going to come down on the long, straight roads. The lads just did lap after lap of a 7 Km. circuit, mostly in clubs & for most of them that was their cycling. I went to two of them and thought I must be mad. Cycling on busy city roads to get to this crazy circuit - was I seeing anything of Japan? - so that was the end of that!

The Professional Kierin track racing is the main thing - I think one of the Brit. trackies went out there to improve his bike handling, etc. - maybe just to the schools. It is a very tough sport, heavily betted on, with most of the proceeds going to the local community around the track, special schools, etc. Typical of the Japanese. During most lunch breaks (10min. for Japs, 60min. for MacBarnett) I was busy translating Jap names on the equivalent to Barts. Maps, that I eventually found in a huge bookshop near Tokyo Station. On some Sundays, if I had none of my ships to visit, I had the ATB packed in its carrying bag & was off on the truly marvellous trains at 04.30 hrs. With three changes of train & approx. 2 to 3 hrs. of travelling I was generally out in some good hilly country & heading for the mecca of 'gated roads'. In the Kanagawa region, just out of Tokyo there were maybe 200 Km. of them. All remote, abandoned, gated roads - no cars!!! Only for walkers & cyclists. With excellent road surfaces, the whole 2 car width road to yourself it was a lot like the IOM, except....much better...and the rain was warm! Generally I got back to the station just at the 18.00 hrs dusk &

crawled back to the flat at anything up to 23.00 hrs. Totally knackered, but happy, I then had my meal to prepare, after a long shower. Monday was never my best day!

There are three modes of travel on the trains in Japan, during the AM & PM busy times: a) cosy sardine. b) squashed sardine. c) crushed sardine. Travel between 07.00 to 07.30 was a must for 'a) mode', & even then it was standing room only! After that it was definitely categories b) & c)!! On other Sundays I was off along the Tama River with its excellently surfaced footpaths, mixing it with walkers, plenty of normal cyclists, tourist cyclists, chain gangs, paraplegic racing wheelchairs....and others! I passed picnicing families, baseball grounds, motorcycle-class circuits, fishermen, model aeroplane enthusiasts, etc. As the river got narrower and rose into the hills there were various tracks, and back-roads where you were mixing it with the cars again.

Still onward into the hills, destination Okutama, and up to 1500 m. through the clouds, quiet, cold and alone rounding hairpin bends that never seem to stop. Japan has only 2% of its land-mass populated, the rest is volcanic & richly forested, so it is just a carpet of trees on rolling hills - quite beautiful. As is Fuji, standing in splendid isolation. The area around Tokyo is very scenic and varied, so once you find those roads it is just pure magic....I never took any time off on holiday when I was there as I did not want to leave! However, I was replaced by a much better Japanese speaking model, who had 20 yrs. experience as Tech.Superintendent....so, very much regrettably, back to sea!

Back home and we have just been tidying up after Typhoon Weng has motored through. A busy time for the coconuts falling, papaya, & other fruits, as we have plantations all round. Altogether a magic place and the sun shines! They drive on the wrong side of the road here & the pollution is unfortunately chronic, with the Jeepney's (main form of transport - very long wheelbase Jeeps) belching it out....but I will just have to try & find some quiet roads and air the ancient 'Seamons CC' jerseys once again! They are 'well travelled' by now.

TTFN,  
Ian Barnett.



## ROLLING AGAIN

Once again the Stockport Clarion invited us down to the Arden Arms in Stockport town centre for an evening of severe trying on the rollers. Steve Davis took the ensemble down and the usual matches followed in which the club's volunteers acquitted themselves with honour in the serious (?) racing. There had been talk beforehand of the 'Olympic Drink' but what was this new event? Devotees of the track will be aware of its less demanding equivalent - the Olympic Sprint in which a team of three riders sets off losing one rider in each of the first two laps. The remaining rider completes the course.

Well, the rules here are slightly different but the effect on the onlookers is the same - rising hysteria as the event reaches its climax. A smart piece of cunning on the part of the Clarion riders saw them take to the rollers with a distinct advantage. We had been confident in the ability of our touring lads here as their 'drinking training' is second to none. Particular attention had been paid over the last few weeks to the speed element and they really were on top of their game. Then it all went wrong. How could this be? Well, the answer seems to be in the 'warming up'.

Conventional wisdom has it that you gradually acclimatise yourself before the big effort. Well, our lads were so acclimatised they were virtually horizontal. The Clarion lads, on the other hand, had cunningly been giving the impression of drinking but were only sipping. UCI rules are vague on this point and the subsequent, almost incoherent, objection was thrown out by the judge who, coincidentally, was also in the Clarion. Sportingly the Seamons lads accepted this and welcomed the Clarion to a return match at the OMT where they would be greeted by warmly shaking them by the throat.

## The Squirrel

Another offering from the weird and wonderful space that passes for Jim Grace's brain. You just know he's of Irish origin, now don't you?

Within the cosy confines of an Altrincham undertakers, a titanic struggle for supremacy is taking place. There are three groups of protagonists, namely

THE CLUBEES  
THE COULDBEES and the  
THE WANABEES

The CLUBEES are a somewhat eccentric group, and are suspected of involvement in the Black Arts such as conversation and camaraderie. They have been observed defying the rule book [and with trembling hand ] have been seen ENJOYING themselves and if that was not enough they even venture without escort into the BAD LANDS, which as every one knows is the East. This is pioneering stuff as it is not contained within the Seamons 180 degree compass.

The COULDBEES are a group formed out of yesterdays heroes that have been infiltrated by a sleeping cell whose religious beliefs are unknown. However, the fact that they are Tri Athletes strikes terror into any Mortal's heart. Their mandate is to go out in the group under cover and return alone having demolished all participants.

The WANNABEES practice Transcendental Meditation with an almost Cult like following and have a similar ethos to the backpacking club, which claims to be a club for the unclubbables. Their numbers are few and they are registered as an endangered species.

In conclusion, as always Good triumphs over Evil and this can be observed by the increasing number of members joining the respective groups. God Speed Walley.

Confused? Please direct all queries to the contributor, Mr Jim Grace, who will be delighted to explore his theories on the various groups of Sunday clubrunners.

For a small extra charge the writings of Kant, Jung, Freud and Wittgenstein will be interpreted and their relevance to modern turbo training methods analysed.

## COMMUNITY CENTRE

On Thursday, Feb 19th, four members attended a meeting in Oldfield Brow to be briefed on the situation regarding the use of the proceeds from the sale of the old community centre. As a group we were favourably impressed by the dedication of the committee that have set themselves up. The decision to build a new centre however we believe is seriously flawed and just not viable in the long term. The group have employed the services of a specialist organisation to perform a feasibility study of this and it may well come to the same conclusion. If it does (study report due in November) then the group will have to find other ways of using the £500,000. To make donations to deserving organisations would require a change to their constitution which would need the agreement of the Charities' Commission. We'll keep you posted.

## ALTRINCHAM FESTIVAL

Altrincham Festival takes place on Saturday, July 3rd and the committee needs to know whether the membership will support an effort to have a presence at the event. This will probably involve having a display on a float, or simply riding on a variety of machines in the procession, followed by a stand on the actual field.

**YES** I think it would be good idea to take part in the festival and I am able to help....

- 1 To prepare before the actual day
- 2 To participate on the day
- 3 Both of these
- 4 I've even got some ideas

Name.....

**NO** I don't think it's a worthwhile venture

Name.....

Please return to Roger Haines as soon as possible or give him a call on 0161 928 6522



# Now and Then

As our founder/life member, Bob Richardson, has just passed the 80 year mark I thought it might be interesting to step back into the minutes to see what he was up to 50 years ago. Well, it turns out that he was Chairman of the club which was, at the time, just five years old. It was no surprise to read in the Chairman's report of the meeting on April 12th, 1954, that Mr Richardson opened his remarks by stressing the need for punctuality (Christmas hotpots? Ed) at committee meetings and that all members should keep on top of their jobs. High standards were a feature of Bob's chairmanship even then and perhaps with good reason. The previous year Bob had to report to the committee that "there had been some damage caused to fittings at the hotel during the course of the evening. He stated that two people had owned up but he felt that more were responsible. He intended to write to the Brooklands Hotel extending an apology for the occurrence and hoped it would not jeopardise our chances of re-booking."

It had proved a difficult year, it appears, as just after the dinner fiasco, Bob had to make the decision as to whether the 'Club radio' could be disposed of as it was now beyond repair. Permission was granted. On a brighter note, a series of club '10' mile events got the go-ahead on the Ashley course (Hale boundary to the water tower in Knutsford) and an entry fee of 3d was fixed (just over a penny).

Clubruns, then as now, caused their problems. In a minute from April 1953, Mr Lancaster complained that "Older members were not pulling their weight on clubruns, quite a number going off in groups on their own. This brought up the question of 'the official clubrun' and the definition of this as laid down in the rules of the Best Clubman competition was repeated. At the other end of the age spectrum, the chairman reported that he "had spoken to the younger members about their erratic riding on clubruns."

Something was obviously going on here because by the next meeting in June, the runs leader had resigned and Mr Richardson recommended 'strong action'. What would this be? Well, I wish we had this problem now....

"The following was decided.

- (a) As from 19th June and until further notice, applications from juniors under 17 years of age would not be accepted." and
- (b) Attendance at clubruns would be restricted to members. Prospective members will be allowed two free runs after which they will be expected to apply for membership.

In Johnny Pardoe's 'Meet your Clubmates' piece, he states that he would have liked to have been present when John Arnold broke trike comp. record with 457 miles. It obviously didn't impress members of the club committee as much, for Mr Arnold only made it in 3rd place on the list of potential Guests of Honour. Tom White, legendary time keeper, was in pole position with P E A 'Nick' Carter as 2nd choice. Nick had won the same '24' hr event with 459 miles on a solo and was national champion.

At the same meeting Mr Richardson urged all members to "re-double their efforts to sell Dinner tickets", as the number only stood at 86. Membership at the time was about 70. The magazine editor, Mr Eric Furniss reported a lack of articles for the magazine which was holding up production. Mr Richardson suggested an effort should be made to publish a news-sheet on the first Friday of each month. Mr Furniss agreed to attempt this.

Our difficulties in getting reports printed in the local press is nothing new as the May 1954 meeting reveals.

"Mr Irving remarked that recently no reports had been appearing in the 'Guardian' (that's Altrincham & Sale - not THE Guardian). Mr Richardson assured the committee that he had submitted reports every week and would continue to do so."

Bob's enthusiasm for the club is as strong now as it was then, still attending all meetings and exhorting us all to try harder. A belated Happy '80th' Birthday Bob and on behalf of all club members, and a big 'Thank You' for all your efforts over the years.

## TOURING CALENDAR 2004

Time to start filling up your diaries as the new season gets under way. Keith Wilkinson has been working hard to produce a varied list of events - a veritable smorgasbord of delights.

### MARCH

March 7th Llangollen Audax, meet at Rackham's 0800 hrs.

Date to be agreed: A return visit to the Orpheus Caving Club hut close the High Peak trails. "Not exactly the Ritz" is Keith's description of the accommodation but it's for one night only and the visit to the pub is a good anaesthetic. Leave Saturday morning 08.00 hrs by car from opposite St Margaret's Church, Bowdon. On the bikes by 10.00 in Derbyshire. Full run on Sunday then return by car.

### APRIL

Easter 3-day. Not the Girvan race. Oh no. Good Friday (9th April) Mobberley Eight. A tour of all Mobberley's pubs in the company of 60-80 people on bikes. Meet 11.00 am at the site of the old Bleeding Wolf or at the Plough & Flail in Mobberley at 12.00 noon.

Easter Sunday (11th April) 50 miles in 4 hours. Start at 10.00 am at Rackhams. This is a good introduction to cycling, at a moderate pace and on flattish roads.

Easter Monday (12th April) Bank Holiday Treasure Hunt. Start 11.00 am from Rackhams. A great day out for the family or treat it as a training day with a difference. Organised once again by Gordon Peake, who did a great job last year, it should be great fun. Be there.

Sunday, April 25th Club 100 in 8, Rackham's 0900 hrs.

### MAY

Actually starts on April 30th but runs until May 2nd. The Dentdale weekend organised by the Manchester CTC. We have 6 places reserved for interested members. (I think I know who you are but please check with me!)

Saturday, May 22nd. Tour of the Berwyns. Only

three Seamons riders in this in 2003, could we make it more in 2004. Superb organisation, great roads and scenery. 200 Km of the North West's finest

### May (contd)

Shropshire Weekend - Date to be confirmed. A different location this year. Sparchford Farm, Culmington, Nr Ludlow. This venue offers B&B, camping and caravanning so something for everyone over the two nights and three days (Friday to Sunday).

May 31st, Bank Holiday Monday, Meet at Rackhams at 10.30 am for a run to 'The Millstone' at Higher Whitley.

### JUNE

June 25th - 27th (Friday to Sunday) The York Rally. Three days of cycling paradise at this now traditional venue on the Racecourse. This will probably be car assisted but if anybody wants to ride out then please let me know. Bookings to Keith or John Pardoe if you want to be in the Seamons line on the campsite.

### JULY

July 4th 100 in 8 hours. Meet Rackham's

July 11th, Sunday. Cancer Research - Ride for Life. Last year the Seamons provided all the marshals for this event and we want to do the same again this year with even more presence on each corner, all in club tops. The ride is based on Tatton Park and over 300 riders took part last year so it offers a good recruitment opportunity. We are looking to have a stand at the start/finish to fly the club flag. Volunteers to Keith Wilkinson along with ideas to go on the stand.

July 21st Clubrun up the Alpe d'Huez

### AUGUST

August 28th/29th. Saturday/Sunday. The repeat of last year's 2-day assault on the 176 mile Cheshire Cycleway. In reality this will be more like 200 miles for most. Drive out to Tilston on day one then ride back to Altrincham. Next day meet at Altrincham and ride out to Tilston before driving back. Debriefing sessions in the OMT on



So, where is it then? The pub that our illustrious touring section leader is keeping a well guarded secret? The orange and the green suggests an Irish connection so is it Westport or Wexford? And is that a little leprechaun I see on the sign?

Actually the pub is much nearer to home in ...Warrington and it can't be far off that a touring section run conveniently goes past the front door. If it's just approaching 12.00 o'clock on a Sunday it's probably more than a coincidence but what a disappointment if the ale doesn't match the exacting standards of the person after whom it is so obviously named.

# CTC or not CTC?

That is the question. Whether 'tis nobler to go out on a Sunday equipped for all eventualities or to pounce and pose on a stripped down machine.....

There can't be many clubs that have the philosophy of the Blackburn & District CTC. Even this long established club would admit that their name doesn't exactly trip off the tongue let alone have that ring of continental modernity. Old fashioned it might be but there's no arguing with the results their philosophy produces. In days when most racers opt for shorter and shorter events and specialising seems to be the norm, the Blackburn lads (and lasses) plough their own furrow. From road races to track to hill climbs if there's a Blackburn & District rider in the field he's to be taken note of. I remember being at the velodrome one evening when some of their riders were competing. You could almost hear the sneer in the announcer's voice when he had to say the dreaded words 'CTC' after one of their riders crossed the line first.

Well, it does my heart good to hear it and when I had the good fortune to be passed a copy of their magazine I couldn't help smile at the full page exhortation to 'New Members'. No pussy-footing around here, just straight forward 'this is how it is. If you want to join us then this is how it will be for you too.' After some general information we get to the real nitty-gritty.....

"Club runs leave the meeting place 15 minutes after the time shown on the runs list. During the winter we try to finish at 6.00 pm but in the summer it is much later. "A" runs are for experienced riders only and are 90 miles plus. **NO-ONE UNDER 18 yrs MAY GO ON THEM WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE COMMITTEE.**

"B" runs vary in length between 50 and 100 miles. Some riding should be done before you tackle one. **RIDERS UNDER 16 yrs MAY GO ON THEM PROVIDED THEY ARE ACCOMPANIED BY AN ADULT OR HAVE THE COMMITTEE'S PERMISSION TO GO.**

You should have the following with you on a day ride:-

- Mudguards - full length (mud flaps fitted)
- Saddlebag (or bar bag, panniers)
- Basic tool kit and pump
- Two spare innertubes
- Front & rear lights in working order
- Wet weather wear (cape/ gagoule)
- Sandwiches ( 2 meals plus spare choc/fruit)
- Money
- Your bike should be in safe working order

# Making Hay - or 12,000 miles

My original objective for 2003 was 10,000 miles. But when I reached 9,996 by the end of October I thought there's just a chance, weather permitting, I might achieve the magical 12,000. Well, there's many a true word spoken in jest, as the cartoon depicts, and after a brilliant year of weather which continued right through November, I did leave it a bit tight, completing my revised target on the next to last day of the year in a snowstorm!

During the year I recorded some 500 miles in Dumfries and Galloway - fast becoming one of our favourite areas for cycling in the UK. Then 300 plus miles in Shropshire and almost 1,000 miles in France. My best month's mileage was November, with 1,425 miles. The longest ride was 130 miles in the Tour of the Berwyns - the Seamons Audax in May. Then a further three rides over 100 miles each, the highest week's average being 366 miles in September. Some weeks were over 300 miles, and 38 visits to my favourite café in Audlem accounted for 2,416 miles.

There were many highlights in a truly memorable year, but Easter on the Isle of Arran, followed by a brief visit to the Mull of Kintyre, in super summer-style weather, figures high on the list.

Meeting up with 14 club mates on the Alpe d'Huez for the Tour, the climb of the mighty Col du Galibier with Jim Boydell and Dave Barker - his 60<sup>th</sup> birthday present from his family - were the other gems to savour - all recorded on video, if you're interested.

Carol and I followed this up with climbs over the Col de Sarenne, the Cornet de Roselend, the Col du Pré and the Saisies from Beaufort, and the Joux Plane from Samoens, these latter two with magnificent views of Mont Blanc in fantastic conditions. Carol also achieved one of her ambitions of climbing the Iséran at 2,770 metres.

This was followed by our annual visit to the Southern Alpine town of Barcelonnette, full of music and life, and surrounded by our favourite cols - the Vars, Allos, Cayolle, all over 6,000 feet, all spilling over with marmottes and wild flowers. We also explored two dead-end climbs



to the quiet and beautiful areas around Maljasset and Fouillousse, near the Italian border.

The rest of my mileage was recorded round my favourite Cheshire, Shropshire and Staffordshire lanes, not forgetting, of course, the weekends away to Broome (Robin's stag "do") and Montgomery. I have to admit that whilst riding on some rather dubious days in December, I did ask myself, "Why?" but then I thought of Lance Armstrong's words: "Pain is temporary, quitting is permanent."

I was just feeling pleased with myself when, on reading through the Christmas edition of the Tricycle Association Gazette, I discovered that mile-eater Pat Kenny had recorded another massive 23,000 miles, mainly on his trike. How does he do that? Nearer home, I remember the late George Arstall rode 19,800 miles in 1958, including riding down to Lands End, up to John O'Groats and back home, all during his 2 weeks annual holiday. On reflection though, I'm more than happy with my 12,000.

## WAKE UP CALL!

Members who go out with the touring section should remember that the time of start reverts to the summer schedule of **09.00 hrs** at Rackham's from and including **March 7th**.

Note: This is not the start of BST so don't alter your clocks!

# Meet your Clubmates

On receiving his first 'proper' bike at the age of thirteen, our second clubmate was so excited that he was reduced to tears. (A condition he has endured ever since when out riding with the Touring Section.) He used this first machine for a hostel tour around Europe, an experience that put him off cycling for years. Eventually he bought himself a decent bike and has been an ever-present with the touring section ever since. An ex-newspaper reporter he now has the unenviable task of putting a human face on the exploits of United Utilities but keeps his hand in by reporting on the antics of the tourists for this august publication. Please find out more about *John Carberry*....

**When and where were you born?** August 20th, Bridgend, South Wales.

**When did you start cycling and what was your first club?** Had a bike since I was four, joined the Seamons, my only club, in October 1998.

**What is your favourite touring area?** Touring? That's the last thing the touring section does! Somewhere hot with a few hills and less traffic.

**What is your favourite meal?** Sausage, egg and chips; or meatballs and spaghetti.

**What were you like at school?** Average—did enough to get by.

**What kind of books do you read?** Mostly non-fiction; or adventure stories.

**What kind of music do you enjoy?** Most types but there's a lot of Yes and Rush in the CD rack.

**And your favourite type of TV programme?** Documentaries/sci-fi. (Anything with Russian sub-titles according to my wife.)

**Which newspapers do you read?** All of them - goes with the job.

**What's your ideal holiday destination?** Anywhere hot and different.

**Do you have any hobbies?** Used to be smoking and watching TV. Now it's just watching TV.

**Who would play you in a film of your life?** John Cusack, obviously.

**What is your greatest fear?** The telly breaking down!

**How would you describe yourself in a Lonely Hearts ad?** TV addict seeks video star for remote control adventures.

**What is your favourite training ride?** Chester, in the autumn sunshine.

**What is your most unpleasant characteristic?** Stubbornness

**Which characteristic do you most dislike in others?** Dishonesty.

**Who would you most like to have met and why?** Chuck Yeager - he's still got the right stuff. I would ask him why he kept going back for more.

**What was your most embarrassing moment?** Many moments. I once had a stand up row in Radio Rentals about their poor customer service when they couldn't find any of my details on their shop computer. I then realised we hired our telly from Granada.

**Four words to describe yourself?** Loyal, nosy, excitable, irreverent.



# CHRISTMAS '25'



Alex Young looks bemused. No wonder; one of his jester's hat protrusions had dangled in front of his eyes all the way round. What, with that and the little bell tingling away he finished feeling quite giddy.

From Top Left: The chase is on! Jim Boydell crosses the line suffering from the arrows of outrageous fortune, followed by Roger and Phil in belligerent mood.

Above: Shouldn't it be the other way round? Indian scalps Mountie?

Below: Father Christmas has seen some things (elves, reindeer in the sky) but never anything like the Seamons rendition of mule train. "It quite spoiled my Christmas" reported M&D President Brian Clayton "I couldn't get that b\*\*\*\*y tune out of my head."

## HANDBOOK 2004

Apologies for the fact that some copies of the club handbook have the centre page stapled the wrong way round. If you are a racing man, please reverse it and use it to keep a record of your open event performances. It really is a big help to the TT Sec if you can do this and hand it in at the end of the season. It also ensures that you get any club standards you may have achieved.





# TESTING TIMES



There's not usually that much activity at Christmas time in the wacky world of time-trialing but this year we had a serious rider to complement the usual fancy dressers. Paul McAllister opted to ride the Chesterfield Spire Christmas '10' and finished with a highly creditable 24.28 for 2nd place only two seconds down on the winner.

Meanwhile back on Cheshire, a less than serious group took on the M&DTTA Fancy Dress '25'. Well it's difficult to be taken seriously when you were dressed like us. A last minute change of course to the Gawsorth circuit due to road-works was an unwelcome jolt to the system and any delusions that we would go the whole hog and ride the full course were soon dispelled. The drag up to Warren and the climb to Pexhill were followed by a swift descent back to Siddington. Who in their right minds would opt to go round again when they didn't have to and there was tea and hot mince pies just up the road? The result?

Fancy Rider (Alex Young)	Xmas CC	43.31
No Pain No Gain (Jim Boydell)	Has Been CC	49.41
Red Indian (Roger Haines)	Tepee CC	51.41
Get Mounted (Phil Holden)	Fun CC	52.41
High Plains Drifter (Malc McAllister)	Spaghetti Western CC	1.2.18
Christmas Cowboy (Dave Attwell)	Snowy Seamons CC	1.5.39

Next year the theme is Pirates of the Caribbean - will you be there?

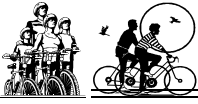
By the time you read this it is quite likely that some of our riders will have entered their first event of the season and we wish all club members who will represent the Seamons this year a safe and successful season. The first results will appear in the next issue due out in June. The racing calendar has been altered slightly this year for reasons 'beyond our control.' Firstly the Championship '10 has been moved

back a couple of weeks to the week we would normally have the '25' champs. This in turn has been moved back 3 weeks and onto a Wednesday, the 30th June. Obviously there will be no ten that evening. So all our club events this year will be on a Wednesday evening starting on April 21st and go right through until Wed August 18th. Once again Steve Booth will be organising things on the night and will be relying on members to turn up and support/marshal the course.

I can't emphasise the need for marshals strongly enough as it is now the case that club events have to be organised to the same standard as Open events with regard to safety. This means that marshals must be on each corner, wearing fluorescent jackets, and that there must be warning signs at the appropriate points to let motorists know what is going on. It all sounds very serious, which it now is of course. Our place on the roads is constantly under pressure and sloppy organising will no longer be an option.

Finally, the '12' hour. This has been in the West Cheshire event for the last few years and for good reason. It is the event in which all the M&DTTA awards are fought for. This year however, the Lancs. RC '12' on Brock will be the National Championship and it seems only fair to make this our own club championship. If you're going to ride a '12' it might as well be in a good sized field with that extra buzz that goes with a National. The event **WILL** count towards the M&DTTA BAR so no worries there and it would be good to see a Seamons rider in the event. Is a team asking too much? The date is August 15th so plenty of time to get the miles in.

Details of the Cheshire Points Competition are now available and there are some changes to the system that Steve Davis won so convincingly in its inaugural year. There are now 20 events to choose from, not 15, and it is your best 10 that count, not 6. The points differential is also increased favouring the longer distances and the West Cheshire TTCA '12' is also included—bags of points on offer there!



# CLUBRUNS



DATE

HALF-DAY

TOURING SECTION

Mar	7th	Llangollen Audax*	Manley*
	14th	Meerbrook	Rivington
	21st	Malkin's Bank	Wybunbury
	28th	Summertrees	Meerbrook
Apr	4th	Tattenhall	Chester
	11th	Paddock Farm	Easter Sunday 50-in-4**
	18th	Radway Green	Hope
	25th	Glossop	Tattenhall***
May	2nd	Malkin's Bank	Buxton or CTC Dentdale weekend
	9th	Two Mills	Whitmore
	16th	Buxton	Paddock Farm
	23rd	Beeston	Audlem
	30th	North Rode	Holmfirth
Jun	6th	Blaze Farm	Tilston
	13th	Delamere	Longnor
	20th	Poole Marina	Southport
	27th	Meerbrook	Millers' Dale or York Rally weekend

\*There will be another impromptu run on the day of the Llangollen Audax for the half-day section. Also the touring section runs move to their summertime departure time of 09.00 hrs. The audax riders will however be leaving at 08.00 hrs for this day only

\*\* The Treasure Hunt is the day after this, Easter Monday, please do your best to support it.

\*\*\* Club 100 in 8 also on this day.

If you want to do some off road rides then see John Coles so they can be fitted in and publicised

**LAST LAUGH**



Someone's going to have to tell Bill about that embrocation he's using.