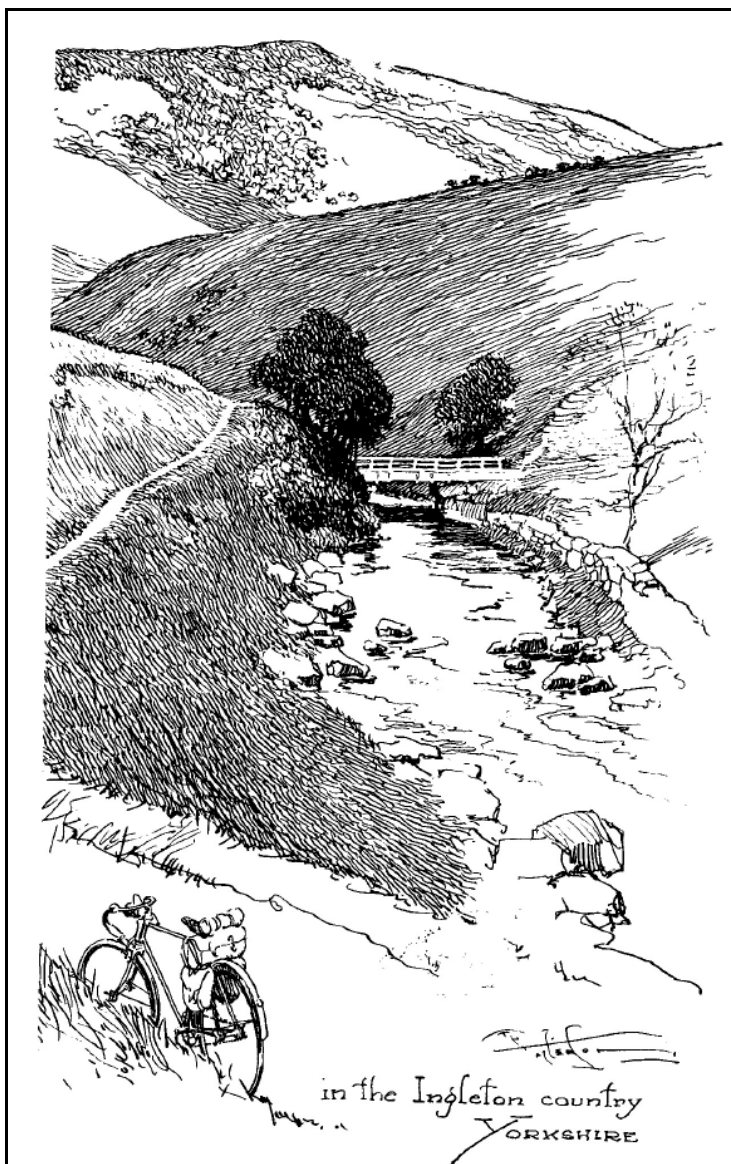


THE SQUIRREL



in the Ingleton country
YORKSHIRE

SEPTEMBER 2003

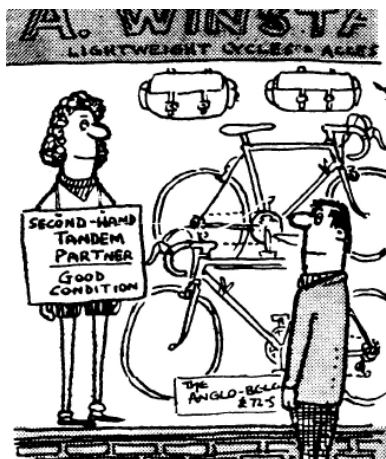
EDITORIAL

"It's a funny old game." somebody once famously said of football. Well, it's not just the overblown and over hyped so-called 'beautiful game' that springs its surprises, as cycling provides some of its own. Take our own club for starters. At the beginning of the year Tim Seddon was giving everyone a hard time with Steve Davis also going, reportedly, better than ever. Paul McAllister was doing his own thing in north Manchester. Sure enough as the season got underway the early victories went to Tim with Steve and Paul scrapping it out for second. Then Steve got the upper hand and Tim's season started to fall apart. Paul just carried on notching up the odd placing and team counter. Soon it was a battle between Paul and Steve and over the shorter distances Steve took the championships and Paul the club records. At '50' and '100' it was no contest, Steve well in control whilst lopping a whole 10 minutes off the '100' record. Then it all went horribly wrong for Steve as a mystery illness struck, his form dipped alarmingly and, sensibly, he called it a day in late July. Now it's up to Paul, Dave Bates and Roy Myers to keep the colours flying in local events for team awards and we wish them all the best.

The Tour de France was similarly affected (and yes I have got it right - Seamons first) with all the pundits forecasting another win for Armstrong. In the end they were right but it was a damned sight closer than any would have believed and without a team time trial...who knows? For the first time Armstrong showed signs of vulnerability and how the others went for him! This made for a great race with the outcome uncertain until the last minute. It also allowed the champion to show that he can take the pain and fight back. Nobody who saw his attack on Luz Ardenen could fail to be impressed with Armstrong's grit and determination and the sporting gesture of Ullrich. Perversely, this closest of victories could be his best and the one that finally wins the hearts and minds of bike racing fans everywhere. Then the Premiership started and as the prima donnas rolled about the turf in mock agony, the so-called professionals trying to get others sent off, my mind went back to the Tour. To Alpe D'Huez where half a million people lined the roads from all over the world and there wasn't a moments trouble (and no litter either) and those heart stopping incidents on Luz Ardenen. I know which I'd call the beautiful game. How about you?

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BITS AND BITS

April lulled us all into a false sense of security with some great weather. Summer had arrived early; well until May that is. These months seem to have got reversed and just as the horizons were raised and mileages increased, so the weather went downhill. For John Thorogood rather more went awry when he took part in a charity ride to Birmingham to visit 'The Bike Show'. Starting from Wythenshawe the riders soon realised this was going to be no doddle and the less able started to fall by the wayside. A stiff headwind was the culprit and a 100 mile ride in such conditions is not for the faint hearted. As befits a Seamons rider John made it all the way there but his time of eleven hours wouldn't light up the record books. Even more important, it meant that he arrived there at 5.45 pm—and the show shut down at 6.00pm. "There weren't even any road bikes to look at." said a dejected John. Which of course could be good thing in this instance as he didn't miss much.

It's all supposed to be a bit of fun but when you're struggling and tired then..... On reaching the Ice Cream factory at Tattenhall on the 100 in 8, Johnny Coles was not in the best of states. And there were still another fifty miles to go. The fact that they would be wind-assisted didn't ease the pain and when he found two forks in front of him on the table he shouted a bit angrily, "I suppose you think I can't tell the difference between a knife and a fork!" It didn't help when Gareth then accused him of deliberately not telling him when his bottle fell off earlier in the ride, so that he'd have to go back to retrieve it, and then have to chase. JC agreed he had hoped it might tire him a bit but I suspect it was more a case of old road racing habits dying hard.

ONCE AGAIN 'The Big One' eluded Dave McLlroy. Everyone who goes to Majorca likes to get this ride under their belt; the round trip from the north of the island and taking in Soller, Puig Major and Lluc. The younger riders might even take the little detour down Sa Collobra. Last year

Dave missed out when he crashed on a descent during the ride and he spent the rest of his holiday and some months afterwards in hospital and on sticks. This year Dave found himself in the role of rescuer rather than rescued when Andy Wright's freewheel packed in. There was no alternative but to return to Alcudia with the freewheel working intermittently and Dave providing the power in the other periods. Better luck next time, Dave.

AT LEAST THAT GROUP all stuck together and returned to base 'in toto'. No such luck for Peter Coles on the Shropshire Staggy. Offered a lift to the weekend by Keith Wilkinson, Peter gratefully accepted. He might reasonably have assumed that a lift back was part of the deal. Maybe it was but it also made an assumption about the state of Wilky's memory. As is usual with the touring section the runs start off with everyone in a group but seldom end up that way. The trip to Ludlow on the last day of the weekend was no exception and Peter arrived back at the field sometime after Wilky only to find that his lift home had disappeared. In fact it was heading north on the A49 with Wilky blithely unaware of the lack of passenger. Realisation dawned at Shrewsbury, so what did he do? Turn back? No way, he carried on homewards with just his guilt for company. And Peter? He was lucky that Roger and Siân were staying another day so a quick call to a neighbour to feed his cat and Peter's last day became his next to last. The cat however has still not forgiven him.

SAT IN THE CAFÉ at Matthews Garden Centre and chatting to a fellow cyclist, it became apparent that he was in the long recovery period after having broken a bone in his leg. As is common these days the various bits had been connected together with pins and screws. Recent re-occurrence of pain had led to a visit to hospital and a subsequent X-ray. "Ah" said the specialist on viewing the plate "You appear to have a screw loose." Almost a pre-requisite of being a cyclist in today's car obsessed society I would have thought.

Chatting to Trevor Bracegirdle a few minutes later, I enquired how Phil Lawton of the Stretford Whs. was getting on. He had suffered a similar injury earlier in the season and had ended up in the next bed to Dave Holt of the same club in Trafford General. At least it made the visiting a bit easier. Apparently Phil had gone back in for further treatment only to be told that it had to be postponed as they "couldn't get the parts". There is obviously a gap in the market here for some enterprising bikie. If you could source a supply of lightweight titanium bolts, screws and plates in various sizes and sell them as a kit to bike shops, the discerning rider would be able to send out for them on demand. Bearing in mind the previous story, some Loctite wouldn't go amiss either.

WORD REACHES YOUR editor's ear of a story that really tickled him. By the time you read this the display put on by local East-Manchester cyclists at the Ashton under Lyne museum will have finished. If you missed it you missed a treat but amongst the many who did visit was Hilda Fox of the Dukinfield CC. Along with some friends Hilda was looking at the photos depicting life in those halcyon days when cars were mercifully absent and the bike was the de facto method of transport for the masses. Another visitor (male) turned to his companion and declared that those featured in the photos "would all be dead by now." Hilda was in fact with one of the ladies featured in the photos and was quick to round on the unfortunate man with the indignant retort "Oh no we're not, we're here." Priceless. I wonder what his reply was?

NOT A MUSEUM this time but the National Trust's water mill at Nether Alderley. How many times have you ridden past it? Have you ever been inside? A recent visit confirmed it to be a very interesting building with an even more fascinating history involving the man and family that built it. Added to this is the fact that the building appears much larger inside than outside and houses not one but two working overshoot water wheels, one above the other. Whilst the mechanics and the history were interesting in themselves it was a small snippet in the talk given by the ranger that answered a question I had wondered about for a long time regarding a café that was a favourite of many club riders until it closed some years ago.

The master of the house (and builder of the mill) exercised his rights over the local young females as was not unusual in those days. 'Droit de Seigneur' I believe it was called. Problems arose however if a child was to result, as it did, as illegitimacy was totally unacceptable in the social climes of the day. Should the master be deficient in male offspring then there was a great temptation to adopt any 'bastard son' to ensure continuation of the line. The solution was for the young lady to be taking a walk and witness a 'miracle'. She would spot a large bird descending from the sky and in its claws was a newborn baby. Having landed, the bird was startled by the approaching human and flew away leaving the child to be adopted by the master and brought up as his son. The bird was of course an eagle.

PRIOR TO THE CLUB'S (almost) mass exodus to the Alpe d'Huez no doubt the scenes in my own home were being repeated elsewhere. Passports checked, insurance checked, clothes, bikes etc etc. Returning home with the travel money my wife's eyes lit up. "Are those all Euros, or are some of them 'my-oes' " said she with more than a hint of menace. Well, what do you think?

IN THE LAST ISSUE tribute was paid to the new found technical expertise of Cap'n Wilkie ("clicky levers and everything"). Maybe it's time that someone in that section took the electronic neophyte Gordon Peake in hand before he wreaks any more havoc. Gordon had visited the Ashton exhibition referred to earlier and enthusiastically e-mailed all the club members in his address book urging them to pay a visit. Nothing wrong with that, except he accompanied the short message with a scanned copy of the advertising poster. Some thirty minutes later the thing had finally downloaded - to be followed by the same message twice more. That's an hour and a half of BT pay as you go time it cost me. "Oh, no. Not you as well" groaned Gordon when tackled in the Old Market Tavern.

Still none of us should have been surprised. John Pardoe had loaned him a copy of the Haigh Stag Weekend video only to have it returned with a Bill Oddy bird watching programme recorded over the top of it. Let's face it, if you can't master the video recorder then there's not much chance with a computer.

Meet your Clubmates

At the back end of 1960 something special happened when a young 15 year-old, more interested in scouting than cycling, joined the club. Determination and talent were soon evident, rather more so than mechanical aptitude. "I.E....I.E" (inefficient equipment) was the cry as, once again, our new member's bike would fail and the clubrun was halted. This didn't last long and as his interest in the sport grew it became apparent that we had someone with real talent. Racing started in 1962 and 'zero to hero' took just three years. That's from Novice winner to BBAR winner; a feat which I don't think has ever been equalled. In 1966 he took the National Champs '100' and was runner-up in the BBAR. In 1967 he was selected, rode and finished the two-week long 'Milk Race' taking on the best 'Pro's' from the Eastern block countries. A near ten year stay in Africa followed a year later leaving the great unanswered question - what might **Keith Stacey** have achieved during that period...

When and where were you born? Sale, 29th March, 1945

When did you start cycling and what was your first club?
About 1960 with the Seamons CC, my only club except when I lived in Africa.

What was your first race? Withington Whs Novices in 1962

What was your first win? See above (I think Keith did a 1.04-Ed)

Which performance do you rate as your best? National '100' Champs in 1966 which I won on 87" fixed in gale force winds.

What is your favourite meal? Either an Indian or Chinese take-away with my family.

What were you like at school? Absolutely average.

What kind of books do you read? Thrillers and biographies.

What kind of music do you enjoy? Easy listening, Chris de Burgh, Classic FM.

And your favourite type of TV programmes? Debates, news, correspondents and DIY.

Which newspaper do you read? The Times

What's your ideal holiday destination? Touring Europe by car and hiring a bike en-route.

Do you have any hobbies? DIY

Who would play you in a film of your life? Edward Fox (not really, more Robin Williams!)

What is your greatest fear? Anything happening to the health of my family.

How would describe yourself in a lonely hearts ad? Six-foot cycling 'has been' who still 'wants to be' seeks female companion with usual domestic skills (ie painting, decorating, gardening and bike cleaning).

What is your favourite training ride? Gawsworth, Leek, Onecote, Longnor, Buxton and Macclesfield (only to be undertaken when *really* fit).

What is your most unpleasant characteristic? shouting in the bunch about Keith Bailey's black socks.

Which characteristic do you most dislike in others? Arrogance and intolerance - especially by motorists against cyclists.

Who would you most like to have met, and why? Any multiple tour winner (Anquetil, Merckx, Indurain, Armstrong etc) to ask them what motivates them to suffer so after the first few wins.

What was your most embarrassing moment? Forgetting the punch line of a joke I was telling in the middle of a speech at a club dinner.

Four words to describe yourself ? 'Stace the Ace' (once)



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

I enjoyed the article written by Don Smith as I was closely associated with that era. As Don mentions, his forté was track racing but he was also fast in time trials, winning the early season classic Lancaster CC '50'. He also caused a minor sensation in a '25' on Cheshire when he pushed Stan Higginson of the Halesowen (the '25' mile national champion at the time) hard to take second place and in doing so relegated Stan's twin, Bernard to 3rd place. This was in the period when the Higginson brothers were travelling round the country notching up first and second places on a regular basis.

With regard to the Helsinki Olympics, the Fallowfield based riders, Cartwright, Newton and Smith together with a fourth strong rider should have been the final selection on merit without question. This would have put the England squad in with a great chance of Gold instead of the Bronze. I personally believe that the final choice had everything to do with satisfying regional pride and was not the best team. It was a travesty to omit Cyril Cartwright.

As for the 'one size fits all' training schedule to which Don refers, it was well known in the Seamons at the time that his training was centred on having plenty of rest. This involved getting early to bed along with, if memory serves me right, relatively short, intensive, rides. I well remember starting out from Altrincham on a training ride with Don at about 7.30 pm. As we approached the top of Bucklow Hill some four miles out, he decided to go back and sleep instead, turned in the road and left me to get on with it. Don Smith was a class act.

Bob Richardson

Sir,
I write in response to the article 'Campaigning Issues' in the May edition. I recently calculated that if all the motor vehicles in Britain were to be propelled over a suitable cliff, eg Beachy Head, at the rate of one per second, this process would last from New Year's Day to the following Christmas. What a happy Christmas that would be for cyclists, pedestrians, hedgehogs and other small creatures. What a boon to time trialists - all those empty motorways.

Alas, an impractical scheme due to the hazard to

shipping created in the English Channel. However when riders receive abuse in future from motorists a retort of 'Beachy Head' might be a suitable response.

Yours Mathematically

Prof. Albern Schnitzer

(The editor formally known as Eric Furniss)

LATEST NEWS

From Karen Sutton, CTC DA secretary....

This year there is a change to the entry requirement for the Beard Cup hill climb. Due to new regulations, each rider must submit an individual entry form. The entry form is available on the Manchester DA website:

www.cyclingmanchester.org.uk

(Please go to the "DA Events page to find the Hillclimb details and entry form.)

From Stuart Kay to all his clubmates.....

Our new address is as follows:

King Edward's House, 39 East Street,
Tynemouth, North Shields, Tyne and Wear
NE30 4EB Tel 01912572097 Mob 07739 588224

Mike Brooks is now on e-mail and can be contacted at mike@brooksmusic.fsnet.co.uk

Malc McAllister continues to make good progress after his accident and is now able to get about on walking sticks. He joins a lengthening list of members who are held together by stainless steel plates and screws and we'll soon have enough to run an event where that's the qualification for entry. The club sends its best wishes Malc and we look forward to seeing you in the OMT soon.

Good to see Wynne Clarke out at the Club '25' even though she still needs a stick to get about after her knee operation. If anyone can make it back onto a bike it will be Wynne despite being the wrong side of eighty.

Hill Climb is again on Withenshaw Lane with lunch at the Ryles Arms to follow. Date is October 5th so pencil it in.

Montgomery weekend is scheduled for 6th/7th/8th December (Sat/Sun/Mon) with Robin Haigh taking names now.

Tourist Trophy

Highlights galore since the last Squirrel. We had one of the best attended week-ends ever to celebrate Robin's imminent return to marital bliss. Twenty or so camped out at the Engine and Tender at Broome, three miles from Craven Arms, while others stayed nearby. John Pardoe's excellent video captures the touring and boozy quality of the week-end. However those unfortunate or unwise enough to go on the hard-riders' run have been heard to complain that John did not quite succeed in capturing what they went through in those unforgiving South Shropshire hills on the Saturday. It is worth pointing out that the hard-riders did even fewer miles than the tourists on the Sunday.

The York rally continues to attract large numbers. Two rumours: first that after Monday's ride home into a fearsome headwind, everyone is going by car next year; second that John Thorogood managed to keep out of strange ladies' bedrooms.

No fewer than four editions of the 100 in 8 (or so) have been run off, resulting in twenty five successful rides, twenty four if Darren Buckley doesn't get his application in smartish. Great to see you back, Darren, and best wishes from us all for your ongoing recovery.

Gordon Peake is starting to challenge Fred as the year's mile-eating super randonneur. On Manchester-Blackpool and back he racked up 140 for yet another personal best. John Thorogood and Peter Yeoman must have been close to this on the Manchester Birmingham ride in April.

Stop press: as of Friday night just gone (22 August) according to a text message, we were within 55 miles of having another successful End-to-Ender. In a specially commissioned article in the next Squirrel, Alison will provide a riveting account of the ever-changing patterns of sunlight and shadow on Dan's back, with a unique insight into the daily spread of sweaty patches. Unless of course I'm wrong in making

the casual sexist assumption that he was on the front of the tandem. If so, in the next Squirrel, Dan will provide.
Congratulations to both of you.

At the end of all this Dave Matthews has opened up a three point lead. He has 12 points to Andy Wright's 9. Roger Haines and Dave Barker are on 8; John Pardoe 7.5; Keith Wilkinson 7; Gordon Peake 6.5; Carol Pardoe and Peter Coles 6. The end of an era? John Coles is languishing on 4.5

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

- | | | |
|------|---------|---|
| Sept | 7th | Llangollen clubrun
Northern Dales Audax , 208/118 Km
leaves Arnside. |
| | 14th | Beard Cup Hill Climb, Diggle
Bill Bradley Memorial, 161Km
leaves Southport. |
| | 20/21st | Cheshire Cycleway 2-day |
| | 20th | Audax 201/131 Km, Uppermill |
| | 28th | Mary Townley Loop, Rochdale, car
assisted off-roader.
Fleet Moss Audax 200/153/104 Km
leaves Cloughton, Preston. |
| Oct | 12th | Flintshire Challenge, Mold. |
| | 19th | Audax 200/130 Km, Holmes Chapel. |

....And don't forget the Montgomery weekend in December. Details from Robin Haigh.

And finally, here is text of a postcard from Richard Hayward (first past the post in 2002 and in the front group of the Tour of the Berwyns in 2003)

"Dear David (Matthews),
Thanks for the post Berwyns photo and thanks again for organising this great event. It really is a classic.---Thanks for all your time and effort, much appreciated. See you next year.

Ps. Entry fee should be at least £5.00.

2004 event has now been finalised as Satur-



The Dropped on Factor

For some reason, during an "after run de-brief" in the Old Market Tavern I related a memory from my youth, when the Sale Nomads (theatricals) used to run Club Treasure Hunts. They became popular and fairly sophisticated. One Sunday morning twenty or so cars left Sale at two-minute intervals and headed for the Cheshire countryside. The route on that occasion went down the narrow lane from Oldfield Brow to the Old Tree in Dunham. Some unsuspecting local trying to make progress in the opposite direction met several cars and had to keep reversing to a passing place. Eventually he stopped the next car and asked quite exasperatedly, how many more were on the way. He then sat tight for half an hour. Every time I use this lane I smile, at the thought of some poor innocent, stuck on the bend for ages whilst cars full of lunatics came past.

"We ought to do a Bike Treasure Hunt some time", the beer said. Well it certainly wasn't me! No sooner had I spoke, I knew I had dropped a clanger. Roger "Red Coat" our enthusiastic Social Secretary homed in like a shark smelling blood. "Good idea - get it sorted". I tried keeping quiet for a few weeks, and thought I'd got away with it." I've told the committee" it's on the Bank Holiday in May. Have you got it sorted Gordon?". If only I'd have gone to Spain with John Carberry ! Anyway it gave me about two weeks to pull something out of the bag.

The Planning

With some well-timed encouragement from my "good lady wife", Karen, we set off in the car from Rackhams. Karen scribbling notes of road names, lefts and rights and ideas for clues. About six hours later we arrived at the Bull in Mobberley and sat inside with map and pen. Prior to this trip I had spent quite some time mulling over the map, and trying to decide how to keep it a "ride", not too many stoppages etc etc, after all it's a cycling club. Optional Tea, Pee, Food and maybe a little Ale all have a bearing on the plan. Had I begun to take it all too seriously?

Two evenings on the Word processor (boy does this come into its own when you keep changing and adding bits), and it was all on two sides of A4 paper. Longer in distance than originally planned (35 miles) it needed "testing" on the bike. Roger offered to help, until I made it clear you can't "assist" and "partake". So my help went out the window. So on the following Saturday I was up, horribly early, to test run. I took a camera and snapped every clue (stops a lot of quibbling!). Three hours - piece of cake! Of course, I knew exactly where I was going, what and where the clues were, didn't stop to eat, didn't puncture, hardly stopped, and didn't bother collecting the six treasures. After all they could easily find a feather, rabbit pellet, beer mat, etc., couldn't they?

The Day of the Hunt.

At 7.30 I woke to glorious sunshine. Brilliant. I optimistically, printed off some extra copies. Cup of tea - back to bed. At 8.30 I woke again, pouring down! At 10.20 I joined a dejected looking Reg on the wall at Rackhams, a bit damp and looking dodgy, the weather didn't look very promising either. Reg thought (or perhaps hoped) he had missed us. By "start time" we had been joined by Keith, Roger, Pete Coles, the Pardoes and the McAllisters including Mark. Ten in all. Considering the forecast (more heavy showers), not too bad.

Four teams, instructions issued, and Off at two minute intervals. Reg had already attracted a policeman's attention, diving headfirst into the litter bin looking for "Treasure 1." An M/T Crisp Packet. John P wasn't sure which was Regent Road and looked like staying in Altrincham. The McAllisters - Well they just shot off!

I, of course was now redundant for a few hours, so joined Keith and Reg as the last pair, for the ride out.

At Regent Rd newsagents, in went Reg for Polo mint(s) Treasure 2. I thought I might have made this too easy.

At Dunham Park I moved up the pairs with the intention of getting a photo shot as they passed. Spirits were "up". Weather holding as I chased down Roger and Pete, the first off. I chased from Dunham to High Legh and never caught a glimpse. I couldn't believe they were making such good time. I was reduced to a sweaty blob and decided they must have gone adrift. I stopped and waited. The McAllisters came around the corner first, I got my camera ready and looked down the road. Gone! Straight into High Leigh Garden Centre. The Pardoes and Reg and Keith duly passed and got photographed. Still no Roger & Pete. I decided they must be flying and it was time for me to retreat, collect Karen from work and get to the finish. I didn't want to be missing when the flying duo reached The Bull, bang on 2pm I suspected. It later came to light that Roger had left Rackhams and popped home first. Not to collect any treasures of course, that would not have been in the "Red Coat" spirit!

When I reached home, Timperley had experienced a heavy downpour. Karen said she wasn't riding to Mobberley in this weather. She is very sensible, which explains why she has never been caught at Rackhams at nine o'clock on a Sunday morning. We loaded the car with some

prizes including a nice bottle of Whisky donated by my Mum and Dad. (Two more treasures). The bottle had sat on our table looking at me all week, but had survived.

We made it to the Bull by five past two. I was at this point still expecting Roger and Pete to fly in at any minute. However first in at 3.15pm were Keith and Reg, much to their surprise. Roger and Pete at 4.15pm. The McAllisters at 4.45pm. I had made it clear there would be no time penalties - within reason. Firstly I think it can make it a little dangerous and secondly "it's only fun". The Pardoes had been encountered on route and Carol had had a little puncture trouble. Four in all. Enough to take the "fun" out of the best of days. With not far to go and confident on the clue tally, they had abandoned.

OK, my timing estimate was miles out, but where better to spend three or four hours than outside one of the best pubs in Cheshire in what turned out to be a beautiful sunny afternoon. Unfortunately I had the car. So I played Mr Sober whilst Karen relaxed. Told you she was sensible.

THE RESULTS

Keith and Reg stormed in with 25 points from a possible 26. Including the Rabbit Pool!
Pete and Roger scored 23. No rabbit poo, and full the history of a church but not the date built as requested.

Malc, Wynn and Mark just a couple adrift. Missing the "Spinner and Bergamot" clue whilst standing beneath it. Well be honest, did you know that Bergamot is a herb? Bob Richardson will, I'll bet.

1st Prize. The Whisky, was quickly conceded by Keith when he was informed that the honour also included organising the next Treasure Hunt. So Reg left smiling, with a bulging saddle-bag. The rest got conciliation prizes.

Despite the uncertain weather and dreadful forecast all agreed it was a good day out, and "different". Further than that, you will have to ask those that took part.

Dare I admit to Roger, actually enjoying organising it? Certainly not!

If anyone wants a copy, and have a go, I've got plenty left over.

Story by Gordon Peake.

THE TREASURE HUNT

(another view)

A typical May Bank Holiday Monday, with sharp showers, blustery winds, Seamons spread all over Cheshire, and punctures - all mine! Gordon set us off in teams of two, at 2 minute intervals with our "Kit": pencil with rubber on the end, list of clues and treasure to hunted for, and plastic bag to contain the treasures.

We all saw each other now and again, peering up at a church for a date, scratting in a ditch for a feather/dandelion/rabbit dropping...dithering at a junction, putting capes on, taking capes off, riding smugly off having sussed a clue, or occasionally talking to each other: "Have you spotted the severed heads?" "What is an aromatic herb?" "It goes with the revolving lure in Comberbach."

The hot cup of tea at the Ice-cream Farm in Great Budworth was more than welcome after my first puncture, mended by JP, even though I had been shouting at him for not paying attention when I read out the clues. Malc and Wynn suddenly appeared from nowhere, on the tandem, with Mark in attendance, trying to look interested in the topiary clue. "How did you get behind us?" "We called in at the garden centre." "That wasn't on the list!" said Keith accusingly.

The lady serving tea was very helpful when we asked if she knew the vicar's name and the date on number 59. "Yes, the vicar married me, and yes, the lady who lives at number 57 will be here in 15 minutes to help me out, so she can tell you."

Being honest we did, of course, proceed and check for ourselves.

Puncture number two on the way to Pickmere revealed glass in the tyre. A mile further on it was flat again. Having swapped saddle-bags since the club-run on the tandem on Sunday, we found we had run out of inner-tubes. JP rode on home to get the van, and I walked for a bit, the sun was nice and warm. Then Roger, Pete and Siân caught me up and Pete handed me a brand new inner. Well, I couldn't refuse. JP appeared round the corner of The Smoker in the van, just as we finished mending the puncture. He had spares, a picnic, and even a spare bike!

We all found what was hidden down Plumley Lane, and who was welcome at the golf course, but did you know that trespassers at Plumley Station will be fined £1,000? Roger and Pint Pot were pouring over the map in Free Green Lane, so I offered to trade my knowledge of the route for the final clue which I couldn't get. They wouldn't tell me, so I rode on. Over Peover School was more difficult to find, as it is now called Peover Superior. As I scanned the walls for a date my tyre deflated for the fourth time... I sat in the sun and ate my banana, waiting for John to come and rescue me again.

Everyone else made it to The Bull's Head, Mobberley, where Gordon and his wife waited patiently for hours to check everyone in. The winners were Keith and Reg. Thank you, Gordon, for a really well-prepared event.

The Woman in White

The subject of Wilkie Collins' Victorian mystery novel. Mysterious assignments with Fausto Coppi in the 1940s. And now the cause of consternation, alarm and despondency on Alpe d'Huez in 2003.

It's race day. I'm less than halfway up, ahead of me masses of riders; it must be the same behind, only it is risky to take a look. Suddenly behind me and to the left, there is a strange clanking and rattling which is getting louder and louder. It comes level with me and I glance

across. "Bloody hell". Sorry about that, but it is (a) accurate and (b) the only possible response to this bizarre vision. White helmet, white tennis-type two-piece top and shorts, white trainers on a white shopping bike, out of the saddle pushing an enormous gear and, at a guess, somewhat middle-aged. Very quickly she is out of sight in the sea of riders up front.

Click, click as mind engages gear. The time is maybe 11.30. At 7.30 I had taken a stroll into Bourg d'Oisans from the camp site for a coffee and a supply of l'Equipes. A handful of riders

were embarking on the climb. One of them had been the mysterious woman in white and I'd wished her a cheery "Bonjour". Which left me with two possible theories. Given the speed at which she had gone past me, this was her third or fourth ascent of the Alpe that morning. Or it had taken her about 4 hours to reach the point at which she had passed me, in which case her progress was, to put it mildly, erratic.

Establishing which was the case was a bit tricky. You have to ask people and to do this you more or less have to admit that you were dropped out of sight on Alpe d'Huez by a middle-aged woman on a shopping bike. It took me about a day to broach the subject with Johnny. He said he hadn't seen her (he would, wouldn't he?), but apparently Dan had; and just after she had passed him, she dived into the side and disappeared among the spectators. No one else will admit to being passed by her which may mean they are liars but (if the strongly preferred theory holds) would equally mean that the only time they were anywhere near her was during her lengthy spells of rest and recuperation. And even if she spent 95 per cent of the morning recuperating, she still must have provoked thousands of "bloody hells" in dozens of languages. Nice one.

Story by Dave Barker
Photo by Stuart Kay



Recovering from his ordeal, a more cheerful Dave and club mates await the arrival of the man in yellow rather than the woman in white.

MIKE QUINN

Members who knew Mike will have been saddened to hear of his death a couple of months ago. Mike died tragically whilst on holiday in Spain doing one of the things he liked best, scuba diving. Mike was 'an occasional member' who would pop up to the club out of the blue, disappear then re-appear on a clubrun, usually overweight, trying to burn us all off out of Ashley only to slip back out of the bunch having tried to start something he knew he would never finish.

It fitted with the character of the man, always making jokes and his presence felt. You certainly knew when he was up at the clubroom or in The Old Market Tavern by the laughter that surrounded him. He had a serious side too though and on retirement from the police became heavily involved in the schools' cycle training project. At Mike's funeral, attended by several club members, we learned of many other talents as various speakers relived their memories and his family can take much comfort from the obvious affection in which he was held. One thing is certain, there can't have been many other ceremonies that started in such splendour as an immaculate mounted police escort led the cortege into the crematorium.

Carol,

I was very sad to hear of Mike's death last Friday. I remember Mike's help in clearing out the furniture of my late mothers house. His eye's lit up when he spotted two old air rifles. Being an ex-copper (traffic police) I naturally thought that giving them to him would put them in safe hands. I later found out that he had a problem with the fauna in Brooklands -and was blasting the local squirrels with the guns, not what you would expect from a Seamons member.

I also remember him for several stories when he was in the police. Apparently they used to gauge the size of large holes in the road cased by collapsed drains by the number of buses that could be fitted into one...

Some of his jokes were very funny but unprintable for polite company.

Mike was always very helpful, and although we did not see him too often, I did enjoy his company.

Andy Wright

(another appreciation overleaf)

CAROL,
MIKE WAS ONE OF THOSE PEOPLE THAT ONE MEETS ONLY OCCASIONALLY IN LIFE, IN THAT AN IMMEDIATE RAPPORT WAS EASILY DEVELOPED. THUS FROM THE FIRST DAY OF MEETING HIM WE GOT ON FAMOUSLY. I REMEMBER THAT MIKE, ON THE OCCASIONS HE COULD GET OUT REGULARLY, BECAME QUITE FIT ,CONVERSELY WHEN HE HAD BEEN ABSENT FOR A PERIOD OF TIME HE WOULD COME OUT AND TAKE A PASTING, AND YET HERE IS THE PUNCHLINE--- NO MATTER WHAT THE CIRCUMSTANCES HE ALWAYS MET YOU WITH A BEAMING SMILE AND A HEARTY GREETING FOLLOWED BY HIS LATEST JOKE. I WILL MISS MIKE AS HE WAS ONE OF LIFE'S MORE PLEASANT EXPERIENCES AND WAS A MAN'S MAN.
GOD SPEED MIKE WE WISH YOU WELL AND WERE PROUD TO BE ASSOCIATED WITH YOU ----- CHEERS, JIM GRACE.

Both these testimonials were received by our secretary, Carol Pardoe, shortly after Mike's death. His memory lives on however-several times a day on BBC North West News! If you can spot him, he's in the group of Seamons riders that cross the bridge outside the Lowry. He's the one who's laughing.

Wedding of the Year!

Bowdon church, celestial choir, campanologists (bell-ringers to you and me) and a cast of thousands. Well, hundreds anyway. Robin & Sue really pushed the boat out for their wedding at the end of May. Many of the club members were invited and we enjoyed a great day with the sunshine literally appearing for the first time as the newlyweds walked out of the church. A good omen and well deserved. Then it was all down to the Cresta Court and the peculiar sensation for John Pardoe and myself of being in the same room as the club dinner, with as many guests, a number of them cyclists and - NOTHING TO DO! Except enjoy ourselves of course. The carvery meal was first rate, Keith Bailey proved he really can make a speech (his story



Keith Bailey(L) finally makes it as 'Best Man' in a two-up with Robin Haigh



Robin, bride Sue and daughter Rebecca

of Robin's fastest acceleration from a standing start whilst tree felling was a cracker!) and a rocking disco to finish the night. On behalf of all those club folk attending can I thank you both for a truly memorable day and wish you all the best for your new life together.

But Who Was Compo?

In a setting that mimicked an episode of the last of the summer wine, four good men and true arrived at Manchester airport to embark on a holiday. Terms of reference were confused, (you cannot be all things to all men). To 'Mike the Pint' Brookes, it was to be a low key affair with few miles interspersed with frequent injections of San Miguel. Conversely Dave 'the Metronome' McIlroy's interpretation was as many miles as possible interspersed by nothing. Preliminary tactics were flawed; Dave Mac wanted to be at the airport before the pilot in case he overslept and Dave was needed to take over. Conversely Mike, wished to get out of bed and be the last person aboard before they closed the doors. At times of crisis a hero emerges and thus 'Andy the Doc' Wright steps forth.

In hindsight this was nature working at its best regarding natural selection, also helped on the way by the fact that from the four of us Andy was the only person that had an IQ. that recorded double figures. Ultimately, using negotiating skills not out of place in the West Bank, a compromise was reached and we all arrived at the airport at 6 am, only to find that our flight was delayed by 4 hours and instead of flying out on a DC10 we would be travelling on a Douglas Dakota. Needless to say we arrived safely and speaking for myself I had a truly great time in company that could not be faulted. We all got on well and apart from banging Dave Mac. on the head to remind him that we were there to enjoy ourselves and not preparing for Le Tour we never stopped laughing. So much so that discussions are taking place regarding next years trip.

Of the four, I am without doubt the least travelled and on a sober note was saddened and embarrassed that the louts that roamed Alcudia at 4 am shouting obscenities were invariably British. On a more positive note it appears that Majorca has embraced the cyclist and the cyclist embraced Majorca. The hotel we stayed at was excellent, the roads are brilliant and thronged with cyclists whilst the weather was superb. It begged the question and supplied the answer as to why, in cycling terms, we cannot compete with our European brothers. In conclusion, who knows? One Day we might have an annual Seamons training camp. **Story by Jim Grace**

Harry's (still) Game

Along with a (very welcome) offer of assistance in the M&DTTA '100', long-time member of the South Lancs RC, Richard Thomas, included a letter written by his wife, the equally well known Millie. I wonder if this might strike a chord with some older club members.....

"My daughter and family have lived in Kent for a number of years and presently live in Pluckley, famous for the filming there of "The Darling Buds of May" and also for the number of ghosts (allegedly the most haunted village in England). As we go down there six or seven times a year we keep two bikes down there and get out into the local lanes as often as possible. On our most recent visit in early April to look after their 'menagerie' whilst they went off skiing, we were able to get out nearly every day.

One particular day we set off to visit one of our favourite coffee stops in Headcorn and as I leaned my bike against the wall someone behind me said "Out early this morning." After exchanging a few words he said "You come from up North don't you, whereabouts?"

"Cheshire" I said.

"Where in Cheshire?"

"Wilmslow."

"Oh, I come from Hale, came down here in the '50's." He then mentioned the Seamons Moss Institute and said he used to be in the Seamons CC, referring to a chap called 'Blease' and Bev Chapman (who I understood has phoned him from time to time). He then said "I've just bought a new bike, aluminium job and the best I've ever had. I'm ninety you know." This really surprised me because he looked years younger and was very up to date as far as cycling was concerned. His daughter, who was with him, told us that he didn't do much cycling now although he still did his shopping by bike using panniers he had bought in 1936 for 2/6d (12½p).

So, if any of the club's elder statesmen remember Harry Jones he is still alive and well and living in Kent near Headcorn.

Richard & Millie Thomas. SLRC



THE ROAD LESS TRAVELLED

With only one day free from the shackles of Trailfinders, I was determined to get away and explore, and had the perfect outing in mind. The weekend before, I had intentions of doing the route, but due to poor weather decided to postpone. That Sunday however, I still managed to put in a 60 mile cycle around Loch Awe, the longest body of water in this incredible country of ours. My pal Mark came along for the ride and towards the end wished he hadn't. Complaints of legs going numb, sore arms and neck and general malaise caused me much amusement. Luckily this latest cycle ride involved unavoidable rocky sections, unsuitable for road bikes...he had a reprieve!

And so, late on Saturday night saw me arrive at Spean Bridge, 10 miles north of Fort William, where I knew of a little forest track by a river where I could park the car and get some sleep. At times like this it's easier to snooze in the back of the car, Dad's Volvo estate providing plenty of space to create a snug den. At 7am, the alarm went off, and I popped out of my sleeping bag to see clear blue skies outside. Excited and eager to go, I munched my breakfast of fruit scones, bananas and apple juice, pouring over the map as I ate.

At 8am, I was off, heading out of the forest, through Spean Bridge, and climbing the main road up to the Commando Memorial, a mile out of town. The shrine was beautiful in the morning sun, especially so as it was framed by the peaks of the Aonachs and the cliffs of Ben Nevis, with a low-level mist hanging gently in the cool air. "United We Stand" read the inscription, and I bowed my head in respect as I passed by. A few miles further along saw me arrive at Gairloch, a

beautiful introduction to the Caledonian Canal and locks that I'd be passing through en route to Fort Augustus.

The next section felt other-worldly, as I rode along the Great Glen Cycle Way looking across shimmering Loch Lochy at the dark green hills below wispy skies. It reminded me of scenes from Lord of the Rings. At one point, the track converged with the main road for just a few metres before climbing high over greater unsettled ground. I admit to having a moment's hesitation about whether to take the smooth black tarmac and give myself a break, but my conscience got the better of me and reminded me that this wasn't what I had come for...

So, after dropping back down to canal level, and waving at a few folk on the boats chugging alongside the bike path, I came into Fort Augustus, a pretty town draped in flower baskets and divided by a series of locks, giving way eventually to the mass of Loch Ness. After 26 miles of broken sun, it decided to fully expose itself just in time for an early lunch stop by the water's edge. I checked the bike over, checked myself over, and set off to find the start of the most difficult section of the route, the Corrieairack Pass. You may be aware of the military history in this part of the country, so you probably know all about General Wade and his impressive road-building skills. Well, the one I was taking was his longest and highest, constructed back in 1731 and designed to connect Fort Augustus with the south, over a 700+m pass. The road has been declared an ancient monument now, and is protected, with damage to it carrying the toll of prosecution from the Secretary of State. As I looked at what was ahead of me, I began to doubt whether what I

had read about it being bikeable was true. Football-sized boulders and uneven trenches laced the road, no more than 6 feet wide, and completely impossible to cycle on. I put the bike on my shoulder and walked and, after half a mile or so, the path became better, and rideable, but only in my second-lowest gear! I don't use the lowest available out of a stubborn point of principle!

For the next 8 miles to the summit, I battled it out with the General's road, stopping only for photos, except for the last few hundred metres which had me beat, the bike unable to cope with a path that looked like it was suffering from a severe case of landslide trauma. The rains came on, the wind howled, and then in front of me appeared the crest of the hill...it was all downhill from here, literally! Unfortunately, the idea of coasting down the other side was out of the question, a network of 11 tight zigzags connecting the top to the more level ground below. Where I had thought the path poor before, it was even worse here, and with handlebars clutched tight and brakes firmly squeezed, I bounced, bumped and snaked my way down. That was until I fell!

The wheel jammed in against a rock and a trench and threw me off, cracking my leg in the process. I got to my feet, noticed blood on my leg and quickly wiped it off to inspect the damage. Badly bruised yes, broken no. Coincidentally, I just happened to be near the half-way point, and dreaded to think what my plan would be had I broken a limb. Back on the saddle, and with no more mishaps, I reached the base and headed for flatter ground. In the distance I noticed some cars parked in a layby, which meant a smoother road surface ahead. After 13 miles of being shaken to the core and with pumped forearms and wrists that felt like they were about to snap, I reached a single track road and thanked the man above!

Without wanting to stop and break momentum, I took a few sips of water, which tasted like the finest drink on the planet, and broke into some chocolate....bliss! The rain came back on and the skies had darkened noticeably since the approach to the Corrieyairack summit. The land I was now in felt uninspiring and desolate, surrounded by bleak rounded hills and a cold wind-swept loch. Eleven miles further on though, I rolled into the small settlement of Laggan, where I stopped to sort out my walkman for the last section. Disappointingly, the fall I had taken earlier

meant that my walkman had died on me, the metal casing squashed and contorted! With 50 miles (mostly off-road) in my legs, and 30 left to do, I was looking to the music as inspiration and company...not now.

A few minutes along the A86 though and my



mood picked up...this felt like the smoothest road on the planet, and the wind was behind me! On top of that the road was fairly level, never really climbing at any point, and provided wonderful views across a loch which was dotted with sand banks and sparkled in the afternoon light. Apart from the occasional heavy shower, I enjoyed myself a lot, and the miles fell away in quick succession. I know when I'm tired when I start hallucinating about food and sure enough, scampi and chips featured a lot in my mind! At the back of 4 o'clock, after 80 miles / 130 km and over 3000 feet of ascent, I came round a bend, with rain bouncing off the road, and noticed a sign ahead of me which read "Welcome to Spean Bridge"...I was home. I dried myself off at the car, munched on some fruit and changed into some warm clothes, before heading for the Nevis Bar in Fort William. The piping hot home-made potato and leek soup tasted so good I can't possibly describe it, and the scampi and chips had me light-headed! The beer flowed easily and sitting there in the comfort of the bar, I realised the truth of that old adage... "the simple things in life are best." Then I realised just how much I'd had to put myself through in order to experience that!

Story and Photos by Patrick Roman

TOURING SHORTS & LONGS

It was just a scratch – well, that's what it looked like to us. Peter Coles had a York Rally to remember thanks to a tumble on a most innocent-looking section of off-road during one of the organised rides. His club-mates – down the road and oblivious to the crash – may have lacked a blue light and a paramedic's kit but that didn't stop them high-tailing it back to the scene as soon as they were alerted. (Apologies to the rest of the peloton who may remember a sudden bunching of riders). What we lacked in medical knowledge they made up for in other helpful administrations such as: "How come you hit the one hole in the road 150 other people managed to avoid?", and "Nah, that doesn't need hospital treatment, some antiseptic spray will do it". Back at the rally, St John Ambulance had a different view and it was off to York District Hospital for The Pot. Now friendship only goes so far when there's, err, riding to be done.

The first cracks appeared in the waiting room several hours later when we decided we couldn't do anything to help Pete so we may as well go to the pub and get something to eat. The hospital then decided Pete needed to stay in overnight – minor surgery was required to winkle out a piece of stubborn stone. Bad news for Pete, great news for "hardy camper" Wilkie. With Pete in hospital it meant he wouldn't be needing his hotel room, thinks Wilk. So while Pete's getting used to the pain of his injury, contemplating the prospect of a general anaesthetic and steeling himself for an uncomfortable night in a hospital ward, Wilkie's mentally laying out his pyjamas in the Holiday Inn and thinking about the tune he'll be whistling in the shower. "He wouldn't have wanted it go to waste," said Keith, maintaining another of the touring section's traditions; thrift.



Peter wonders what all the fuss is about. (Wilkie pinching his hotel bed not pictured).

For those who said that staying in a hotel at the York Rally was the thin end of the wedge for the touring section – you were right! Next year, there will be no riding out for us. Oh no. On the basis that we've done that, we're taking cars next year. They will have bikes in. Well, that's the plan this week.

A trip to York would be a spin around the Peovers for tough old Peter Yeoman and John Thorogood. They decided it would be a good idea to ride to the big bike show in Birmingham. The planning stage went very well: they picked a route and organised a stop-over before the ride back. So far, so good. What they didn't bank on was the distance and the length of time it would take to get there. Now, after all that effort, you'd be pretty annoyed to arrive with only half-an-hour before the end of the show. And then you'd be really hacked off that the show was more about mountain-biking and BMXing than about roadies. But imagine you then discover that the bar's shut. Pete and John are not going there again.

(Continued on page 17)

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(Continued from page 16)

Seeing the Tour de France in the flesh, in it's hundredth year, in Paris has a lot to commend it. The crowds, the atmosphere, the riders up close, a good spot on the right side of a racing-line exit, the sense of speed, the air of expectation. And so it was for three-and-a-half hours while we waited for the first of the Prologue riders to come past in hot pursuit of glory. In what seems like just over an hour-and-a-half, another 100 riders whiz by. Fantastic. Even better, they're going so fast you can hardly see them. Before we know it, we're down to the last 60 riders – and some of those we've heard of and are going to recognise. Ullrich, Millar, Botero, Beloki, a flash of yellow. It's all over.

Now to find out who won. Could we find any TV coverage of the greatest bike race in the world, in the capital city that was hosting its historic opening day? Could we buggery.

While it was a blessing to not have to put up with Duffers wittering on about cheese, it was clear from the pictures of racing cars and tyre changes that German Eurosport was not showing le Tour. (Mind you, even though I don't speak German, I think you could have laid the race-car commentary over some cycling pictures and ended up with something more intelligible than Duffield when he gets excited.) Let down by an old analogue satellite set-up, we were Tourless in the heart of the Tour.

"That'll explain the price of the room, then," said Mrs Carberry.



Is this a stage profile I see before me? No, it's a puzzle book, actually. Gail Carberry shows no shame on the streets of Paris as she awaits the arrival of the peloton on Stage One.



A hard day's marshalling for a Cancer Research charity ride justifies another trip to the pub for the tourers. At least they waited until after the event. And no, Rob is not using the walkie-talkie to pass drinks orders through to the bar.

Story & Photos by John Carberry



The Shropshire lads (And lasses!)

Billed as a 'Robin's Stag Weekend' the trip to Shropshire proved once again that you can call an event what you like but if the Seamons are involved in numbers then how it turns out is anybody's guess. This one proved no different; when did you last hear of women on a stag weekend?. Sorry, I'd better qualify that: women who kept their clothes on. And gerbils. Be honest, there can't have been many stag do's where the gerbils went too.

I suppose it would be best to start at the beginning but where is the beginning? Or the start? As is usual (Dave Barker referred to it as the Fragments in the last issue's tale of the caving weekend), there were as many versions of the event as there were people on it. Mine started with loading up the caravan on the Friday morning ready for an afternoon start down the A49. A great run in warm sunshine until Church Stretton was reached. Ominous clouds in the distance and that tell-tale grey cloak over the looming hills meant only one thing and the weekend was to deliver it in copious quantities.

Still, it held off long enough to get there and find the first surprise. Chris Siepen, already tented at the bottom of the field and ready to 'get a few hours in' had seen the impending rain and opted to sit it out. He helped me with the caravan awning and the cups of tea and Eccles cakes seemed a better bet as the first downpour ham-

mered against the window. Next to arrive were 'organiser' Keith Wilkinson, John Thorogood and Peter Coles who had motored down and had no difficulty finding the place. That was because Keith had sent everyone instructions on how to find the place. Note that. He hadn't actually read them or checked them having been there before. This was to cause a variation in the popular 'Seamons all over Cheshire' rant.

We five adjourned to the welcoming décor of 'The Engine & Tender' for our evening meal and a welcome pint. Next down was John Pardoe and his 91 mile ride avoiding all the main roads into a headwind had clearly taken its toll. As we manfully made our way through the gigantic meals put before us, Carol arrived in the motorhome and spirited John away for a welcome lie down. Then Keith Stacey, the Baileys, the Haighs and Dan Mather all appeared and the numbers had reached a healthy looking fourteen. By the time we went to bed 'healthy' was probably not the most appropriate word.

Eight am, Saturday morning and the sunshine was bursting through the blinds out of a clear blue sky. Paul Smith had turned up, then a couple of vehicles bearing the Haines entourage and Gordon Peake and Phil Holden. Roger bore that well rehearsed and now famous 'I'm not happy' look which turned out to be because we weren't all camped in the orchard with most of

us opting for the big field and the wonderful views. Still he couldn't make too much of a fuss as Siân was asleep in his motorvan having just finished a night shift in Tesco's and the gerbils are notoriously sensitive to bad 'karma'. Perhaps he should have got his priorities right and concentrated on his reversing as he aimed the rear of the vehicle complete with bike carrier and three bikes at the hedge.

"How was I to know there was a little house halfway up the hedge?" moaned Roger as Phil's bike was disentangled from the electric supply point. Damage was restricted to a buckled front wheel and Phil seemed quite philosophical ('He bent it, he can straighten it') as Roger set to work with a spoke key. A few minutes later and it was done. Well, good enough. "I'll make a proper job of it tonight" said Roger adding, worryingly, "When I've had a few pints."

Peter Bell (I've been all over the show), John Carberry (Bloody instructions) and Dave Matthews (God knows where I've been) all arrived at the last minute with a beady eye on Wilky's throat and by shortly after ten o'clock and the first hint of rain, the touring section were off and heading north to Aston on Clun. The fast lads looked as though they were going to take no prisoners as they headed south towards Leintwardine but with a promise to meet up in Bishop's Castle for lunch. It was a nice thought. Not very likely but nice.

The tourists, a dozen strong, ambled up the Hopesay valley heading for Edgeton



You broke it, you fix it.

accompanied by a barrage of baa-ing as one flock of sheep after another warned of our approach. By the time we reached the B4385 though the rain had become persistent and we stopped to cape up before heading for Eyton, Plowden and the Long Mynd. It was (almost) the last we saw of Peter Coles until lunch. I don't know why; maybe it was roll-up time, maybe the words 'Long Mynd' had struck terror but more likely he is just too familiar with Cap'n Wilky's map reading and knew that something would go wrong. It did.

Asterton and Wentnor came and went as planned but as we dropped over the East Onney river we turned north instead of south. Alarm bells rang as we saw the sign 'Bridges 1 mile' and a swift about turn saw us head south towards Bishop's Castle. Through 'The Green' and Walkmill and just ahead the unmistakable sight of Peter Coles, Goretex flapping, in the distance. "Next right" came the instruction from the back and we dutifully turned north yet again as Peter's diminishing form headed for the warmth of the Three Tuns. Looking at the map later, it was obvious what we should have done as we approached Norbury. We didn't. We still headed north over Norbury Hill (320 metres) and dropped down to a junction. The signpost announced 'Bridges 1 mile.' Murderous looks were aimed in the direction of the man with the map as the rain seeped through our defences.

Back through 'The Green' ("Haven't we been here before?" said a bemused voice) and the bunch split into the much famed 'fragments' as we ploughed on to Bishop's Castle. No calls came from the back and none would have been heeded anyway as we reached the steep and twisting roads that give this hillside town its charm. As an organised clubrun that turned out to be the end. Three of us opted for the Poppy House café and the others the Three Tuns. They came out first, didn't see any bikes in front of the café (they were round the back), assumed we'd left and set off. We came out, realised they'd gone and headed for Broome. John & Carol fancied a flat ride back and stuck to the B road whilst I peeled off over Wart Hill. Meanwhile the other group had fragmented further with Peter Bell and Dave Matthews deciding against the impromptu 'Seamons Pool Championship' in the Powys Arms and Peter Coles staying on there after the others left.

(Continued on page 20)

The Squirrel



Planning the route, Carol and Wilkie.

(Continued from page 19)

So, one group of twelve left, five 'fragments' returned and the serious carousing was yet to start. Those of us at The Poppy House had, briefly, met up with the fast lads who arrived as we were leaving. To our 27 miles, with no stops and no incidents, they had covered 44 miles, had a broken chain, Chris Siepen apprehended by the long arm of the Welsh law, two café stops and were, after lunch, heading for the Long Mynd and the Burway. Brave souls.

Later, as I sat relaxing in the caravan, a red-eyed Keith Stacey staggered in having covered a very hilly 74 miles. "I must have been on some harder clubruns — but I can't remember any," said Keith before collapsing on the bunk. "Cup of tea?" said I breezily having covered only half that distance.

By seven o'clock, the appointed hour for our meal, we'd lost a rider (Peter Bell) who'd had to return home and gained one (Dave Barker) who had ridden down and was to ride straight back the next day. This left us with a good 'field' of twenty for the carousing and the meal. Ah, yes, the meal. Steaks, gammon, chicken and duck even, all were more than generous in their proportions. The mixed grill however was king and only for those not of a nervous disposition. Or else had covered seventy four miles over Shropshire's hills. Keith's Stacey and Bailey had no hesitation in ordering — but would they be man enough to eat it. "Does it come with black pudding?" asked Keith S somewhat unnecessarily. "My God," said Keith B "there's

enough meat there for a week." suddenly spying a previously ordered meal. A huge pork chop plus lamb chop plus beef plus sausages plus egg plus chips were soon placed in front of our heroes and to their credit they managed the lot. It has to be said that Keith S had less trouble getting over this particular mountain than Keith B.

Amazingly, and despite the size of the meals, most opted to have a look at the dessert menu. It didn't stop at looking either as a succession of cholesterol laden dishes were placed before our more gluttonous members. Later we adjourned to the snug, whilst others went straight to the games room, and the serious drinking started. I suppose that's not strictly accurate because a considerable amount had already passed some lips as the tourists wandered about the lanes. One, nameless, soul almost let the side down by asking for a pot of tea but Robin got his own back by only ever getting pints in when half's were asked for. "They've run out of glasses." was his less than convincing explanation.

Soon we were all in the games' room enjoying the juke box selection, Roger's impeccable air-guitar work and Mick Jagger impressions and the increasingly rowdy pool challenge matches.



The condemned man ate a hearty breakfast!

(Tip— don't even attempt a shot if you have to bend down anywhere near Phil Holden when he's had a few.) By 12.30 am most had had enough and headed for bed but the iron men stayed on. What would they be like in the morning?

Perfectly all right apparently as they piled into various cars at 8.30 am the following day and headed into Craven Arms for a 'full English' fry-up before the day's run. I opted for a short trip to Church Stretton with the fast lads, surmising (correctly) that the previous day's (and night's) efforts would have blunted the speed. It had, and a pleasant ride in glorious sunshine took us to the lower reaches of Wenlock Edge and round

to Stretton just as the heavens opened. Third time lucky with a café we stocked up on tea (extra teabags supplied with the hot water!) and scones before heading back via Little Stretton, Minton, Hamperley, Pillocks Green (really), Horderley, Edgton and Hopesay and quite a few more showers.

Back at the Engine & Tender it was showers of a more welcome type before tents and awnings were taken down, bikes stashed and into the pub for sandwiches and coffee to round off a great weekend. This could become a regular feature. If it does, don't miss it.

Story & Pictures by Jim Boydell

Berwyns Audax

A great start again at Willington Hall, where Margaret and Carol were checking in the riders at 7 a.m. There were pots of tea and coffee set out on white table cloths - a great welcome for riders before the start at 8 a.m. A resident of the hotel strolled sleepily into the room and asked, "Is this breakfast?" "Yes, if you're ready to ride 200 km after it."

No "hammering of the year" for Peter Bell this time, he's been on isotonic injections all year, and rode strongly all day, as did Alex Young, (Young Alex on the start sheet). Peter and I got the feeling he could have jumped away at any time, especially over World's End, but we all finished together - a feat in itself for the Seamons.

We were joined by a blast from the past in the shape of "DJ" Dave Unsworth from the 60's illustrious feeding team of The Establishment that nursed the likes of Eric Matthews, Keith Stacey, Jim Boydell, Malc Judge and yours truly through many an epic ride. He enjoyed his day of nostalgia, but did let slip that he had 1,200 miles in his legs for May alone.

There were the usual tearaways at the start, who no-one saw again till the control at Chirk, where the President checked them in. They were rather a long time in the café, and when Carol checked, one of them was phoning Dad. He duly arrived and took them home! They were only young. Not like another young lad, from

Oxford, who had never ridden that far before, and wondered why he ached all over - he was on an alloy racing frame. Despite his discomfort he said he would be back next year.

Then there was the couple who entered thinking it was flat because there were no triple A points (Audax speak for special climbing status). They had never heard of The Berwyns, and had not heeded the information on the entry form, "6,000 ft of climbing"!

The Macclesfield Wheelers just pipped the Mid-Shropshire Wheelers in time spent enjoying themselves in the café. The Port Sunlight with Andy Wilkinson had the longest day, not out on the road, but lingering in the evening sun at Summertrees, the final control, enjoying Barbara's free tea and scones, and entertaining us all with their endless wit, and plans for how they were going to spend the Saturday night, and whether they should have a wash first...

Special thanks go to Dave Barker for manning the control at Brenig, and to Clive Rock, who not only did the control at World's End, but then moved on to Burwardsley till the end. Appreciation was expressed by the riders of Keith Wilkinson and Roger Haines at Corwen, who had thought to provide water, although it was reported that they were drinking something else... The sun shone non-stop - again! Thank you Dave Matthews, for master-minding the whole show, and maybe we can get even more Seamons riding next year - a great day out!

Story by John Pardoe



Marital Bliss On The Romantische Strasse

The Romantische Strasse, or Romantic Road was originally a tourist concept for car touring. It runs south through Bavaria from Wurzburg to Fussen on the Austrian border for 300 miles, and links a number of tourist highlights – medieval walled towns, baroque churches, and castles. It has now been developed as a cycle route, much of it on dedicated cycle tracks. The country is attractive, and since the route is largely along river valleys, there are few hills.

So why not do it with your wife? Marital cycling problems and disagreements are notorious. One couple in the Ravens got a young puppy so they would not have to cycle together on club runs. And there were additional problems in our case, quite apart from my bad knee. Sylvia is athletic, but she has not done much cycling. She tore her knee ligaments skiing this winter, and because of this had only cycled fifty miles this year before we left. She insisted we were going on a cycling holiday, not a cycling tour.

This reminds me of Don Whillans, who was go-

ing on an international climbing expedition to Everest led by a German, Dr Herlighoffer. A friend pointed out that Whillans was unfit and over weight. "I will get fit on the walk in" said Don. When he got to Base Camp he heard that Germany had just beaten England in a world cup football match. One of the German expedition members chided him "Ha, Englishman. We have just beaten you at your national game!" With typical tact, Whillans replied "Aye lad, and we beat you at your national game – twice"

We cycled the seven miles from Sale to Manchester Airport at 5am, and caught a plane to Frankfurt. There is a cycle path along the River Main from Frankfurt to Wurzburg, but Sylvia preferred to go by train. This was easy. Our train had a rear coach with a cycle sign with space for about a dozen bikes. Here we met our first German touring cyclists. There were four of them, with heavy hybrid bikes and panniers. One of them had a cat in a cage on the back of his rear pannier. Can you imagine John Thorogood taking his cat touring? Each small station had bike racks containing 50 to 100 bikes. It was evident that cycling is much more popular in Germany than in Britain.

The cycling was excellent, gentle and undemanding, through attractive agricultural countryside. It was either on quiet lanes or on dedicated cycle paths, both about ten feet wide, and with beautifully smooth surfaces, vastly better than in England. Why did British Roads ever let Jim Ogden retire? On the second day, on cycle paths up the beautiful Tauber valley, more cyclists than cars passed us going the other way.



The fairytale Neuschwanstein

Most of the cyclists were “normal” people, rather than dedicated lycra-clad cyclists. The route was well waymarked most of the time, but even so we sometimes went wrong. We took two guidebooks, the Lonely Planet Bavaria Guide, and the Cyclists Guide to the Romantic Road (Cicerone Press phone 01539 562069), and German cycle maps, scale 1:150,000 which show all the long distance cycle paths. They are available from Stanfords in Manchester. They also show which sections are on dirt road. This was potentially useful: Sylvia soon decided she did not like dirt roads, and she has ways of making her opinions known. The only snag was that quite often the route has been changed, making dirt road avoidance more difficult. After the Tauber valley, the route crosses the Danube, and goes up the Lech valley to Fussen.. This is flat to begin with, through arable country, but becomes more and more Alpine. The last two days are quite hilly, through hayfields with glorious Alpine views.

The route passes through a large number of very interesting medieval towns and cities, many of which were once independent principalities. There are over a dozen medieval walled towns, with the walls still intact. Many of the town halls and churches are outstanding. Rothenburg, Dinkelsbuhl, and Nordlingen are the most celebrated walled towns. Nordlingen is in the middle of the Ries Crater, which is fifteen miles wide and was made by a meteorite fifteen million years ago. Augsburg and Wurzburg are rather bigger cities, with magnificent Baroque buildings like the Prince Bishop's palace in Wurzburg and Augsburg Town Hall. There are some lovely country churches, some with 500 year old carved wooden altars. But perhaps the best-known sight

is mad King Ludwig's 19th century castle at Neuschwanstein in the Alpine foothills near Fussen. This is the castle on which the Disney castles are based, and so has had a great influence on the way the world thinks of castles.

There are arguments for doing the route in either direction. The cycling guide describes it from south to north, while we decided to do it the other way and finish in Fussen. Our major reason was that we would rather spend any extra days at the end in the Alpine area.

This gave me one of my best ever cycling days in a sixty-mile circuit. From Fussen, I cycled into Austria up a charming back road by the River Lech, and then up a long hill to an Alpine lake. I went along this for five miles, and then over a very gentle Alpine pass to Linderhof. This is a magnificent Rococo palace also built by King Ludwig: all gilt and mirrors. From there it was an easy down hill ride to Oberammergau, where I visited the Passion Play Theatre, seeing the costumes and stage sets. The ride back to Fussen was through fine Alpine country with five miles of dirt road. Sylvia did the same trip by bus, leaving Fussen at the same time and getting back a quarter of an hour later.



Romantic Linderhof

There is a daily bus from Fussen to Wurzburg along the Romantic Road. This takes bikes, which have to be prebooked. We took this, leaving at 8am, and arriving in Wurzburg at 6pm. We had time to see the sights next day before getting a train direct to Frankfurt Airport. This was stated to take eight bikes, but twenty were squeezed in.

It was a very good trip. Even Sylvia enjoyed it-some of the time.

Story by John Mercer

Meet your Clubmates

In 1948 three Hale Barns youngsters and close friends joined the Seamons within a short time of each other just as it was founded. They became known as 'The Three Musketeers' and whilst Roy Davenport and Bob Bertram ceased to be members years ago, our club mate is still going strong and taking part in all facets of the club's activities. Only last year he took to Manchester Velodrome's famous boards for his first crack at track riding. One of a select band that met his future wife, Vera, through the club he is a '100 per cent Seamons man', always unassuming, always willing to help. Founder member and current Vice President, **Reg Blease**, has played a stalwarts part in the development of this club.

When and where were you born? 16th Feb, 1932 at 13, Knutsford View in Hale Barns.

When did you start cycling and what was your first club? With the inauguration of the Seamons CC in October 1948

What was your first race? A club '10' probably on the Hale Barns course but first open was the M/C Clarion scratch novices in 1949. I did 1.17.06

What was your first win? Chester and Back place to place. In 1951 three riders took part and I was fastest.

Which performance do rate as your best? Paramount Whs '50' in Sept. 1951. I was 9th overall in 2.15.52 and was second counter in the team win.

What is your favourite meal? Roast beef dinner cooked the old-fashioned way.

What were you like at school? Middle of the road, passed a scholarship to get into Bradbury Central School

What kind of books do you read? Kama Sutra, Sex for the Over-Fifties and a little of the Bible.

What kind of music do you enjoy? Anything except Rap and Opera.

And your favourite type of TV programmes? Sitcoms, documentaries, sport and travel.

Which newspaper do you read? Any but very little of them.

What's your ideal holiday destination? Anyplace in the British Isles but not big cities.

Do you have any hobbies? Yes! Looking after the elderly - Me!

Who would play you in a film of your life? Harold out of Steptoe & Son.

What is your greatest fear? Bringing the bunch down when sprinting for the Hale sign.

How would you describe yourself in a lonely hearts ad? Lonely.

What is your favourite training ride? Chester and back via Delamere.

What is your most unpleasant characteristic? Impatience.

Which characteristic do you most dislike in others? Lazy B*****s of both sexes.

Who would you most like to have met and why? Beryl Burton to get some tips on how to ride a bike like she did.

What was your most embarrassing moment? At a training course where I was filmed standing in front of 40 strangers trying to 'sell myself'.

Four words to describe yourself? Ponderous but Poised, Practical with Potential.





TRAIL QUEST

First it was the Treasure Hunt, then it was the Trailquest. Both were superbly organised events with lots of thought and effort put in by Gordon Peake and Mike Brooks, both enjoyed good weather but neither was able to attract more than ten entries. A great pity as it's scant reward for organisers and makes you wonder whether they'll bother again. The Trailquest in particular was limited to two hours so there wasn't even the excuse that it kept members from their precious pints on a Bank Holiday.

Even more than the Treasure Hunt, the Trailquest had the potential to distribute members all over Cheshire and no two participants tackled the puzzle in the same way. Unless you were too chicken to try it on your own, that is and needed a mate for company. So how does it work and what skills do you need? Well, first of all you need to be able to read a map. Quickly and accurately. Then you need to plan a route, take note of obstacles that prevent you getting from say point A to point B and ride as fast as you are able between them. Finally you must be aware just how far away from 'home' you are at any time and leave enough of that precious com-

modity to get back within the allotted span. Are you reading this Dr. Andy Wright?

So, there we all were at the Rope & Anchor for the 12 o'clock start. Except Wilky that is. He was at Rackhams confirming once again that he only gives instructions and never reads them. Still, those who were there were given their maps and a series of places to visit. The accompanying sheet detailed what had to be found at each place and how many points each was worth. Most were valued at 5 but the occasional 10-pointer could make all the difference in the final analysis. It proved impossible to guess what the answers might be but that didn't stop Roger and Siân from trying. Again and again. Then we were off, in all different directions trying to make best use of the time available. Ah, yes; the time available.

Some of us were not listening too carefully when this was explained. In the case of Andy Wright I don't think he was listening at all. The rule is that you gather all your clues (and associated points) and head back to finish WITHIN two hours. For every minute (or 'part thereof' said a rather smug Brooksie) over this you're docked 5 points. This would prove to be decisive in the final result. I set off, unaccompanied, in the direction of Dunham Woodhouses heading for The Swan with Two Nicks and just past there is a narrow lane heading for the canal. A bemused Peter Coles was heading towards me as I searched for clue 1. As I headed on for the next one Peter's partner for the ride, Gordon Peake, was finding out what it was like to be the contestant rather than quizmaster. On to Arthill and clue 2 just adjacent to the tunnel under the M56. There was a 10-pointer the other side of the A556 and this led to a calculated gamble. Heading for Ros-

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therne the lane to Newhall Farm (and clue 3) drops you off right on the Chester Road. Getting across it is something else but the rewards were a tempting 15 points at Rostherne's post office and then Mere. Mike Smyth could have guessed the first one having lived there for some time "where is a later collection made?" but I had to look for the gap in the traffic and make a dash for it. Approaching the post office Rob Morton was on his way back and our paths would cross a further twice before the finish. On to Mere, then back to Hoo Green and a detour up a little used lane for 'Transco's emergency Number'.

A short haul to a bridleway near Rowleybank Farm was next where you had to identify 'a piece of countryside furniture'. The trouble was, there were three. A signpost, a gate and a stile. When in doubt put 'em all down. Backtracking to Mere Heyes farm and a dilemma. The road just disappeared on reaching the farmyard. Then I spotted a grassy cobbled track and took a chance to exit at Winterbottom and ...Rob Morton again. He was deep in conversation with a tractor driver and the gist of it was that the road we intended to take over the M6 was private and there was no way through. Later we were to find out this was untrue but in the meantime I backtracked yet again with Rob then we went our separate ways with me heading for Arley Green.

Having picked up the answer (Electricity Post No?), the next port of call was to be Hobbs Hill, back across the M6. The shortest way was via a bridleway past 'The Ashes' but was it passable? A nearby householder, who was cutting his hedge, suggested this would be the more 'exciting' choice. No contest then. Exiting some minutes later with lacerated and well nettled legs proved him right and as Hobbs Hill came into view so did Gordon Peake and Peter Coles from the other direction. The next place to visit was obvious to all of us. What was written on the 'leaning signpost' at the side of the M6? From here it was a short hop to the next nearest clue. The trouble was that it was on the other side of the motorway with no certain way of getting there. Were the tracks shown on the photocopied map passable? Were they even there? Peter and Gordon decided to find out, I looked at my watch. Time to head for home but with possibility of picking up two further clues in High Legh and maybe even getting back in time. The points were gained but as I hammered down Agden



"More Exciting " he said, and so it proved.

Brow it was going to be close run thing. Back to the bridge at The Swan with Two Nicks, just as a great group of walkers congregated on the far side. I stood patiently as the seconds ticked by before picking up the bike and heading for the other side. All to no avail.

"Two minutes twenty six seconds late, that's, er, 15 points deducted" said Mike with rather too much pleasure, as I handed over the clue sheet. Some time later Mike informed me that my score was 75 points minus the 15 penalty ones. One by one and two by two the competitors returned until eventually there was only Andy Wright out on the road. The trouble was he was already twenty minutes over time and 100 penalties adrift. Some four minutes later he appeared, unconcerned, and handed in his sheet. Total points scored 80, the highest on the day, total points lost 120, highest on the day. Nett result: minus 40 - lowest on the day. I doubt he'd make the same mistake again.

Thanks, Mike, for a great afternoon's sport. I hope the low numbers this year don't put you off a similar event next year.

Story & Pictures by Jim Boydell



TESTING TIMES



M&DLCA Invitation '10' May 3rd

After a couple of weeks off the bike following a viral infection, Tim Seddon got back into competition in this 'event with a difference'. Although you ride independently your time is added to that of a lady competitor and the lowest aggregate wins. Tim's time of 23.20 was paired with that of Lynn Skellern (28.30) from the Congleton but it didn't feature in the prizes.

Chesterfield Spire '25' May 3rd

Paul McAllister posted his best of the year in this event recording 56.46

Stone Whs '25' May 4th

Held on the fast but hilly J5/7, Tim continued his return to competition with 1.00.15

Glossop Kinder Velo '25' May 10th

A better turnout for the club here but the fast men were absent so no chance of a team win. Dave Bates was our fastest entrant but was DNS, Roy Myers was next best and he punctured. It was left to Ian Udall (1.03.11), Nigel Harrop (1.05.54), Alex Young (1.09.16) and Dave Attwell (1.16.16) to carry the flag.

Ravensthorpe CC '10' May 11th

Paul McAllister took his regular trip east to 4th place in this event with an excellent 22.12

West Cheshire '50' May 11th

First '50' of the year for any club member, so this is the standard to beat. Steve Davis took 5th with his 1.58.48 and Dave Bates finished in 2.07.25.

Stretford Whs '10' May 14th

Paul McAllister's 22.25 was the club's fastest with Tim Seddon not too far behind in 22.50. First outing on Cheshire for Vin Fitzgerald saw him just miss the 20mph barrier in 30.13

Dukinfield CC '50' May 17th

Dave Bates led home the club's contingent in this event with 2.04.55. Roy Myers finished in 2.15.00 and Rob Morton rode round with no training in 2.29.30

National Championship '10' May 18th

Would there be a new club team record in this event? A windy day on the Coventry based course ensured that times were not that fast but there were other surprises in store when Paul McAllister came out on top in the club with his 22.01. Steve Davis finished in 22.21 and Tim Seddon in 23.17 in an order that was a complete reversal of the first few tens of the season. It makes the club Championship '10' a very interesting prospect just three days later.....

CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP '10' May 21st

What a night! Two years ago on a beautiful, warm spring evening we had twenty riders and another twenty members out for a memorable evening. It was oh so different this year. The day had started off dry but just got worse and by the time of the event the rain was persistent with heavy spray off the roads, dark skies and a wind that was stiffer than it appeared at the start. Talk of 'bags of oxygen in the air' and 'faster than it looks' were proved wrong and the eleven hardy souls who braved the conditions were rewarded, if that's the right word, with times they will mostly want to forget. The islands and sharp turns (all nine of them) contributed to the slow times as the riders wisely took no chances. Even so, Richard Williams slid off on the next last island grazing his arm and taking a chunk out of his skinsuit before remounting and continuing to take a well deserved silver.

So what happened to our established short distance riders? Both Tim Seddon and Paul McAllister could have been expected to take medals but both were under the weather and had only ridden the National as they had entered some time before. It was not a night for heroics. Roy Myers was left to take the bronze, his first club medal, and, in the absence of the Bates-Devereux veteran mafia, Richard Williams stepped up to take his first gold in this category. Once again Reg Blease surprised everybody by riding his first solo event for some time and recorded a 'plus' with his 32.03 at over 70 years of age. Didn't surprise Vera though—"he's just barmy" was her succinct appraisal. I suppose that went for everyone who turned out on such

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an awful night but thanks to those that did for giving us a meaningful championship.

1	Steve Davis	22.53	
2	Richard Williams	25.02	+02.18
3	Roy Myers	25.18	
4	Allan Blackburn	27.17	
5	Nigel Harrop	27.24	
6	Gareth Blease	27.31	-02.01
7	Alex Young	28.45	+01.31
8	Malc McAllister	29.03	+01.13
9	Dave Attwell	30.35	- 00.05
10	Paul Stringer	31.16	
11	Reg Blease	32.03	+00.12

Vets Champion: Richard Williams



Cracking early season form - Steve Davis

VTTA Merseyside '10' May 24th

Only two of our older vets in this one with Dave Attwell finishing in 28.56 to Vin Fitzgerald's 29.13

Holme Valley Whs '50' May 25th

Steve Davis crossed the Pennines and was rewarded with a good day and a 1.51.40 personal best and 5th place overall

Horwich CC '50' May 25th

Back on this side of the great divide Paul McAllister found the going somewhat tougher to finish in 2.06.09

Brough Whs '10' May 31st

Dave McIlroy (24.15) and Mike Brooks (24.52) produced their fastest of the year as a reward for travelling to this fast northern course.

Warrington RC '50' May 31st

The only '50' mile races in Cheshire seem to be on a Saturday evening which limits them to the middle of the season. The classic Harry Barker event could still only manage a field of 50 riders and fastest of the club was Dave Bates in 2.06.21. Roy Myers bettered his previous season's best with 2.12.10 and Malc McAllister finished in 2.33.07.

Congleton CC '25' June 1st

Less than 24 hours later and Roy Myers produces a personal best with 1.00.04. Delight must have been tinged with hint of what could have been as Roy is not the fastest round corners and islands. Still it was good enough to take 4th place in the 'A' category section

Merseyside Whs '25' June 1st

Pete Devereux managed a 1.06.47 in this event but his plus of +14.30 got him the Vets prize on standard

Club Championship '25' June 3rd

Once again we were blessed with a fine night and as expected Steve Davis ran out a worthy winner in 56.35

1	Steve Davis	56.35
2	Paul McAllister	59.05
3	Dave Bates	59.46
4	Roy Myers	1.01.34
5	Colin Levy	1.04.36
6	Gareth Blease	1.05.34
7	Pete Devereux	1.06.02
8	Nigel Harrop	1.06.24
9	Phil Holden	1.07.50
10	Alex Young	1.09.04
11	Malc McAllister	1.13.10
12	Dave Attwell	1.13.39
13	Paul Stringer	1.19.24

Handicap: Roy Myers in 54.09

Veterans: Pete Devereux +15.15

Congratulations to the prize winners, in particular to Roy Myers for his handicap win, and to Phil Holden for his fantastic first competitive event since his accident with a fine 1.07.50 - probably the ride of the night. A special word of encouragement to Paul Stringer in his first ever '25' - keep going Paul, it will get better.

Nova CC '25' June 7th

A good turnout for the club in this event with Steve Davis again leading the lads home in 56.33. Paul Mc was 2 minutes back in 58.28 and Dave Bates another minute in 59.15. Roy Myers (1.01.22), Richard Potter(1.04.35), Dave McIlroy (1.04.40), Alex Young (1.08.57) and Vin Fitzgerald (1.15.25) completed the contingent.

Chester RC '25' June 8th

You can't accuse Steve Davis of not getting the racing miles in because some 12 hours after finishing one event he was off to another. His 56.48 was good enough to take 2nd place as well. Dave Bates finished with 1.00.44 and Pete Devereux 1.06.02

Cheshire Rc '50' June 14th

Dave Bates started to find his 50-miling form with a fine 2.01.11. Roy Myers improved his PB to 2.07.20 and Rob Morton improved to 2.22.28

Condor RC '17.5' Mountain TT June 14th

Paul McAllister was our lone contestant in this with his 50.03 but would it blunt his speed for the next day's '30' and a possible club record...

North Notts Olympic '30' June 15th

Apparently not! A great ride to lop a shade under two minutes off the club record as Paul flashed over the line in 1.06.02 for 3rd place and relegate John Woodhouse's two year old record to the history books. A great ride but Steve Davis was not to be outdone just a few miles west....

Burton & District CA '100' June 15th

Conditions were obviously pretty near perfect down in the Midlands on this morning and Steve also took advantage of some fast roads to take a whole 10 minutes off the existing club record. Alan Heggs had held the record since 1978 with his 3.57.03 now to be replaced with the 3.47.26 of Steve Davis and the third club record of the year.



Club records at '10' & '30' Paul McAllister

Southport CC '25' June 15th

Dave Atwell was our sole finisher in this with 1.15.15. Pete Devereux managed a 'short course' mention on the result sheet. So what happened there then?

Crewe Clarion '10' June 17th

Paul continued his great run with 22.19 in this Cheshire event.

VTTA M/C&N/W '30' June 18th

It was no secret that Steve Davis was going for another record when he entered this. Paul Mc's 1.06.02 the previous weekend had made the task almost impossible though and in the end Steve's 1.08.31 was good enough for 2nd place but not the record. Nigel Harrop (1.19.28) and Malc McAllister (1.36.23) on his trike completed the club's turnout.

Kent Valley RC '10' June 21st

Revenge was not a long time coming though and Paul's 20.57 club record set in April lasted just two months as Steve flashed across the line in 20.47 to set a new personal best and club record. Vin Fitzgerald also recorded his best for some time with 26.55. At 77 years of age that gave him +07.11 and several admiring nods.

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Prescot Eagle '25' June 22nd

Ever the modest one, Steve Davis was almost apologetic when he reported his first win for a while. His 58.17 was too good for everyone else but the scratch man had punctured on the line and I suspect Steve would have liked to have beaten him fair and square. Dave Bates (1.01.33) and Pete Dev (1.08.03) gave team backup.

Manchester Whs '50' June 28th

Another great ride from Steve Davis bodes well for the following week's '100' champs. His 1.55.47 took 2nd place behind the great Gethin Butler. Dave Bates just missed out on a 25mph run with his 2.00.31 but once again there was no third man

VC Chesterfield '25' June 28th

Paul Mc was back at the top of the tree after this event when he finished with a 53.07 personal best and the nearest anybody has got to Robin's ten year old 52.58 club record. Would you bet against it going this season?

Dukinfield CC '25' June 29th

A good day it would appear for most. Roy Myers was the fastest of the club riders in 1.01.38 but it was Gareth Blease in 1.04.40 (best for some time) and Phil Holden in 1.04.48 a personal best ever that were perhaps the most pleased. Malc McAllister's 1.11.19 was his best for a while as well.

Nova CC '25' July 5th

Once again Paul McAllister pulled out a good ride to finish in 57.53 but Roy Myers just can't get closer to that magic '59' that he so longs for. Maybe it was the thought of the next morning's championship '100' that preyed on his mind....

M&DTTA '100 July 6th

The club championship, DK Hartley, M&D Middle distance champs and the Cheshire Points series. All these were at stake in this event. Steve Davis was favourite for all of them and in the end it turned out to be a successful ride. Not without its problems though. Steve had succumbed to a mystery illness earlier in the week and really shouldn't have raced. That he did and then competed in the M&D '50' a couple of weeks later to make sure both he and the club featured in the final table was testament to his



Phil Holden starts the '100'

guts and determination. Roy Myers was talked into riding for the team award but in the event a terrific performance from Phil Holden saw Roy relegated to 4th place. Nonetheless Roy's potter round should ensure that the club takes the M&DTTA Middle Distance team award.

Full Result:	1 Steve Davis	4.22.57
	2 Dave Bates	4.28.40
	3 Phil Holden	4.49.47
	4 Roy Myers	4.58.26

Dave Bates took the vet's award with + 60.09 and contributed to the Seamons CC team win.

Prescot Eagle '10' July 12th

Dave McIlroy (24.12) and Mike Brooks (25.15) made the trip over to the D course together and came back with their respective best rides for some time.

Westmead Team '88 '10' July 12th

Paul McAllister continued his fast ways with a terrific 21.39 to take 2nd place and with Tim Seddon taking 4th in 22.14 and Roy Myers breaking the 25mph barrier in 23.57 we had yet another team win. Phil Holden completed our entry with his fastest for some time in 25.53.

Phoenix CC '25' July 13th

Pete Devereux was our sole entrant in this Sunday morning event and his trip to Liverpool turned out to be well worthwhile with a ride that saw him take 1st place on standard in the Vet's section and a 1.05.43 ride

Manchester Whs '25' July 19th

Paul McAllister notched another 2nd place with 57.01 and Roy Myers crept closer to his goal with 1.00.53. He must get there soon, surely? Vin Fitzgerald at 77 years of age turned in a splendid 1.17.43.

VTTA M/c&N/W '10' July 23rd

Pete Devereux took 4th place in this veteran's event with +5.31 (26.14) in an event that was notable for the age record set by Jack Brownhill of the Abbotsford Park RC. His 33.09 was recorded at the age of -wait for it- 91 years old.

VC Chesterfield '10' July 26th

There's just no stopping Paul McAllister as he lowered the club '10' record yet again. Another three seconds off for a 20.44 and Steve Davis's 20.47 is history and doomed never to make the club handbook.

M&DTTA '50' Club Champs July 26th

Back on Cheshire and the scrap to become the 2003 club '50' champion was in full swing. Despite a loss of form Steve Davis did what was necessary to secure both the club and M&DTTA middle distance trophies with 2.01.20 and lead the club to another team win.

- 1 Steve Davis 2.01.20
 - 2 Dave Bates 2.02.38
 - 3 Roy Myers 2.05.49 (personal)
 - 4 Nigel Harrop 2.09.54
 - 5 Phil Holden 2.14.27
 - 6 Dave Attwell 2.28.50
- Vet Champion – Dave Bates +30.37

Crewe Clarion '25' July 27th

Although Paul McAllister was again fastest of our trio with a fine 56.28, it was Roy Myers who



A smiling Roy Myers pictured in the M&D '100'. "Just ride round for the team" we cajoled him. And he did. On the tops all the way, he beamed his way through the convoluted Cheshire lanes to help the club take the M&DTTA Middle Distance Team Award

took the plaudits. After a personal best '50' the night before he was back on the start line and against all the odds managed his very first ever 'inside the hour' ride with 59.58. Never were congratulations more deserved and here's to many more. Gareth Blease also managed his fastest for some time when he finished in 1.04.48

The rest of the racing will be in the next edition.



CLUB RUNS



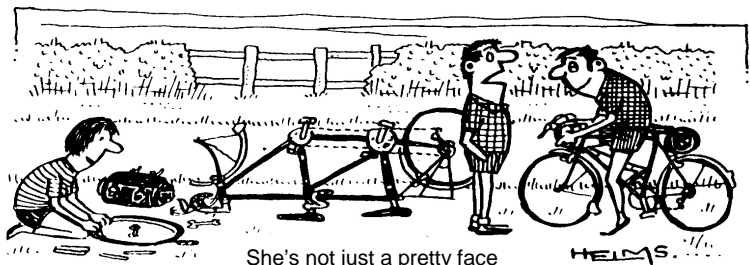
	DATE	HALF-DAY	TOURING SECTION
Aug	3rd	Paddock Farm	Ipstones
	10th	Byley Hall	Tideswell
	17th	Poole Marina	Whitchurch (Also 100 in 8)
	24th	Kingsley	Parkgate
	31st	Buxton	Hartington
Sept	7th	Beeston	Llangollen
	14th	Meerbrook	CTC 'Beard Cup' Hill Climb
	21st	Delamere	Cheshire Cycleway 2-day *
	28th	Poole Marina	Edgeworth
Oct	5th	Club Hill Climb **	Club Hill Climb **
	12th	Beeston***	Chester***
	19th	Marton	Chelmorton
	26th	Summertrees	Meerbrook
Nov	2nd	Malkin's Bank	Appley Bridge
	9th	Astbury	Mystery Tour
	16th	Delamere	Beeston
	23rd	Beeston	Hayfield
	30th	Cat & Fiddle	Malkin's Bank

* Car assisted two-day based on Tilstone (Sat & Sun)

** Hill Climb on Withenshaw Lane with dinner at Ryles Arms to follow

*** Day of the Flintshire Challenge

ASTAUGH



She's not just a pretty face

HELMETS