

THE SQUIRREL

The News, Views & Reviews of the
Seamons Cycling Club



When Nothing Goes Right Go Left

A Special Edition

Covering articles submitted pre-lockdown

2021 Spring Edition

The return of the Squirrel, the club's very own magazine.

☆ In this issue we will catch up with some great short stories and letters that have been submitted in 2018 & 2019. We will have some articles of more recent times too.

Hello and welcome, It's been a while. I hope you and your loved ones are all keeping well. If you are here and reading this, I am grateful.

Over the last year or two, many members of our great club have been asking if or when the next Squirrel mag will be published. Well, with all the lockdowns that we have had so far time has now been made available to resurrect this fun club publication. This issue is also my first test at using my computer in this way, be gentle with me.

Breaking News!
CYCLIST ADDICTED TO EATING
BREAK PADS SAYS HE CAN STOP
ANYTIME

This magazine is truly a club magazine and that's because it is written entirely by you. If you have been a member for a while you are already familiar with this punchy little package of club life. If you have remembered a story that deserves its place in the immortality of the online Squirrel, get writing.

If you are a new member, you might want to tell the world how your first ride with the club was accidentally with The Half Day group, thinking it'd be a short leisurely Sunday ride out to the pub ... I chuckled to myself at the thought of that one, or you might have a question that you think others may have too. Again, get writing.

Whatever you've got to say please email TheSquirrelMag@gmail.com Subject SQUIRREL or if it's a news item SquirrelNewsdesk@icloud.com and title the subject: NEWS DESK

Marmotte Challenge

By Ian Holmes Yes, I know, this is the other Ian Holmes :-)

I'm a bit of an irregular Seamon's cyclist, and enjoy Sunday club runs but find them hard to fit around family, so i do most of my riding in the week- either to and from work or grabbing a train from work to Macclesfield and finding a few hills before making my way home.

I've never been a natural athlete, but I like riding my bike which is what its all about! With a bit of determination I've managed to do the Etape du Dales a few times (each time setting off as early as possible, getting overtaken all day and returning to an almost deserted car park), and managed to do the three ascents of Ventoux in a day last year to become a member of the exclusive Cingles de Ventoux (Graduate 10659!).

The other year my friend suggested we do the route of the Marmotte Sportive. This starts in Bourg d'Oisans, at the foot of Alpe d'huez, and goes down the valley before heading over Glandon, down into the valley on the other side, a few miles up that valley next to a motorway and rail line (not the best part), then over the Telegraphe, a tiny downhill, then carrying on up to the Galibier. Then it is 30 miles of pretty continuous downhill. After that the finish is at the top of

Alpe D'huez. The whole route is 147k and 5000m of climbing.



Young Ian's legs look forward to the climbs ahead with the joy of a Chipmunk about to be taxed on its nut supply.

DID YOU KNOW?
A MARMOTTE IS A LARGE SQUIRREL THAT LIVES ON THE GROUND. IT CAN BE FOUND HIGH IN THE ALPS & PYRENEES.

We flew to Geneva on Saturday, picked up a car and headed to Bourg, put our bikes together and set off in the dark early on Sunday morning to give us a chance of getting up d'Huez before night fell. I'd looked at the average gradient for Glandon and it is about 4%, just like a long cat and fiddle. except it isn't, its mostly 8-10%, with a big downhill half way up!

After really enjoying the descent we stopped for a coffee and second breakfast, before heading up the alley to the bottom of the Telegraphe. This bit really wiped me out as there was a big headwind, and it was just slightly uphill and energy sapping, we stopped for lunch at the turn up the hill and it was at this point it hit me that I'd bitten off way more than I could chew!

I realised that there was no way I was doing d'Huez that day, so I split from my friend at that point so he had a chance of getting there. It was 34km to the top of Galibier. from here, I had plenty of stops on the way, and a few periods of feeling very sorry for myself which involved sit downs by the side of the road where i was

tempted to hitch a lift,, but i carried on, and it was an amazing feeling to get to the top at

All in all it was a great experience, marvellous views

I'd highly recommend it for a weekend away, even if like me, you are rubbish at hills!



2642m, even though those 34 km took me 5 hours. Next up was 30 miles of downhill which made it all worth it. I made it back to Bourg just as it was getting dark, and I managed to get up Alpe d'huez the next afternoon.

and great descents, although it would have been better if i had been a bit fitter and lighter!

Top Tip
If you are rubbish at hills try a massive mountain instead I.H

Training Zones – Fact or Fiction?

By Alan Chorley - As seen in Cycling Weekly

It's hard to imagine any cyclist who has ever thought about "training" without coming across the notion of training zones. But ask a question about them and you'll get any number of responses about the number of zones, what they are called, and what they mean. That's before you start asking why heart rate zones don't match power zones, and we've not even got into what actually distinguishes one zone from another.

To highlight this confusion Training Peaks, offers to calculate your zones for you, giving TWENTY FOUR different options for calculating heart rate zones and another SIX zones for power!

So, how did we arrive at this confusing mess?

Polar, released the first wireless heart rate monitor in 1982 and began the revolution.

Now the effort of exercise could be measured objectively, and training prescription could be controlled. Good scientific research into exercise will control intensity by relating it to an individual's lactate threshold, $VO_2\max$ or other marker measured in laboratories. Heart rate monitors allowed us to do this outside of the lab by individualising training based on heart rate max or "threshold" heart rate. However, this led to a problem for coaches on how they could write a training plan without knowing each individual athlete's heart rate characteristics. The answer was zones. Setting heart rate training intensities based on a percentage of maximum heart rate allows a single plan to be adopted by many. Lactate thresholds measured in a lab have been proven to relate to physiological boundaries, so basing training zones around this point makes sense, but doesn't avoid the issue of how to measure it accurately outside of a lab.

Similarly, maximum heart rate may be fixed for an individual, but is extremely hard to attain and doesn't itself relate to any physiological landmark. To get the 24 heart rate zone calculations offered by Training Peaks, we have the issue of determining what heart rate percentage determines one zone from. Now for my apologies, this is where I have my little rant. None, Nil, Not a single one of those 24 options offers a heart rate training zone schema based on any physiological mechanisms. 5 zones, 6 zones, 7, etc one even offers 10 zones! They relate to nothing. There is no distinction between one zone and another, if you aim to ride in a zone between 125-135 bpm, and you stray up to 137 bpm it DOES NOT mean anything more than your effort was 2 bpm harder (unless your lactate threshold happens to be 135 bpm but I'll come to that later). By all means ride to a plan based on training zones, but don't believe those zones are anything more than descriptive.

What about power zones?

I'll try and avoid rant #2. Training peaks offers 6 power zone calculations which are all based around "threshold". But what is threshold? Do we mean the ubiquitous FTP? If so what's FTP? I'm still trying to avoid that 2nd rant... FTP is a brilliant approximation of a lab test conducted outside a lab. But it is an approximation, we then do a 20min test to approximate the approximation. The trouble with these is that we are measuring something that is hugely influenced by motivation, almost as much as your physiological limits, and then we base the zones around this non-physiological landmark. We then once again hit the same issues as heart rate zones in that the boundaries between zones are arbitrary and have no basis in science.

Should training zones be abandoned?

No, well yes, but no.... In their current state they are useful in their description of intensity. Zone 1 = easy ride, zone 5 = supramax efforts. But they are not ZONES, none of the current heart rate or power zones schemas use have anything that actually distinguishes one zone from another. However, there are 3 distinct physiological zones where the body responds to exercise differently. It's not a new discovery, the critical power model and exercise intensity domains were first introduced to sports science in the 1960's, but the difficulty in determining these intensity domains meant there was very little interest until recently.

So, what are these zones, and can they be used for training?

Critical power is a very distinct boundary, it is the maximum intensity that can be attained from aerobic energy sources. Ride at just 5 W above it, and heart rate will rise steadily until VO₂max is reached and exhaustion ensues. Anaerobic resources will be consumed, and efficiency decreases. Ride at or below critical power and heart rate will plateau and exercise can be sustained, in theory indefinitely however in practice muscular fatigue and core temperature rises limit duration to around 20-30mins. Critical power really is the truest boundary and demarcation of zones. The second and lower boundary is the lactate threshold. This is not FTP. Lactate threshold (also know as LT1) is the when the body's response to exercise first begins to deviate from a baseline steady state. It is an intensity that can be maintained for around 4 hours or more assuming adequate fuelling and hydration. It should be noted that this is still what you would consider a hard effort.

These two boundaries give us 3 distinct zones where we will get notably different times to exhaustion and different training adaptations. Ideally these boundaries are measured in a lab setting but critical power can be measured with a power meter, a turbo and a huge dose of will power. There are a couple of ways to do this but a 3-min all-out test is the simplest, but the most likely to induce vomiting. Simply sprint as hard as you can for 3-mins with every pedal stroke being as fast as possible, this should mean you start off with an all-out sprint utilise all your anaerobic energy supplies and finish in a world of pain at a steady effort. At around 45 seconds you'll know what it feels like to be in hell. You'll need help for this test, somebody to shout encouragement and not let you have any mid-test recovery (power should never increase during the 3mins), they'll need to tell you when time is up (no hints along the way), and they'll need to catch you when you fall off the bike. The lower boundary Lactate threshold isn't so easy to determine, you'll need either a blood lactate analyser or a breath gas analyser. It's probably going to sit around 75% -80% of critical power, but you'll know my disdain of approximations from the earlier comments.

So yes, there are real physiological boundaries that really can be used for training zones. But there's only three zones, and none of them are "easy" or "recovery".

Do not get hung up on the boundaries of your training zones.

There are 3 physiological zones below lactate threshold (moderate), between lactate threshold and above critical power (heavy), and above critical power (severe).

These zones can be used as genuine training zones.

Yes, I've put a request in to training peaks to add these as zone options.

You can measure critical power at home – but its tough!

Conclusion To Alan's Training

Here's the annual picture of ~~a smug~~ a dedicated and hardworking Alan Chorley collecting loads of trophies again

If it's not him its the other one, his mate, Ade Hughes - the evergreen Federer & Nadal duo of our Club's Time Trialling scene



Notice Board

Some New Items Now
in the Club Shop



Leg warmers - £25.60



Neck Buff £12



Quick Change Kilt £20



A Week in Scotland in May, to the Cowal Peninsula

...and I'd recommend it for cycling.

By Andy Whitehead Edited very slightly by the editor

It's the bit of land northwest of Glasgow, between the Clyde and Loch Fyne, above the island of Bute : you either get to it by ferry from Glasgow (Gourock) to Dunoon, or by going-up past Loch Lomond then turning left and taking the scenic route over the Rest And Be Thankful.

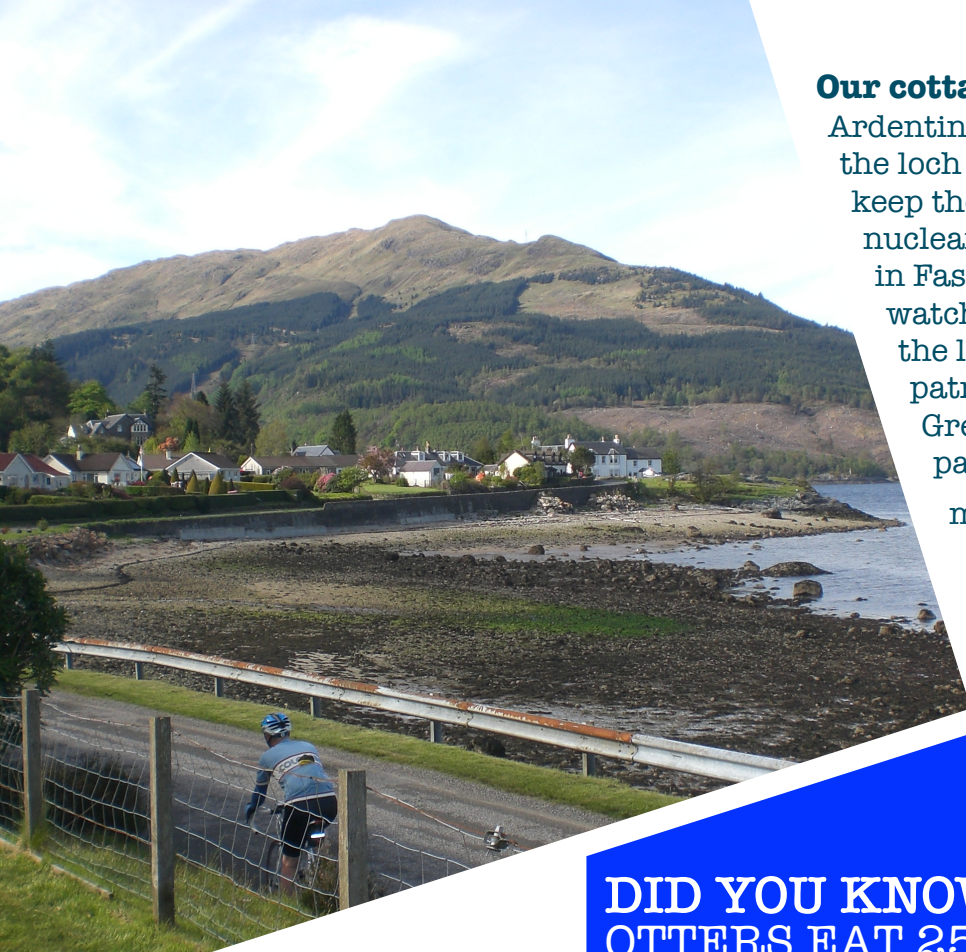
The week was really to take Barney, our new Labrador, away for our first holiday with him, so dog-friendly cottage, dog-friendly pubs and restaurants, lots of forest walks, swimming in the sea (him not me - brr !), etc but I took the bike and was allowed out for a couple of days.

The roads are almost deserted, no traffic and what little there is gives you lots of room because there's no-one coming the other way - it's great.

Some roads are singletrack-with-passing-places but what are obviously (Andy's Opinion) locals, driving tatty-old cars give way to bikes and what are obviously (Andy's opinion) tourists, in expensive new-registration 4x4 tanks expect the cyclists - (meandering tourists on bikes) - to give way, but isn't that the way everywhere...

There are huge heavy logging trucks but they give you plenty of room and ..roadworkers wave you through and shout encouragement ! (on one day I thought the road surface on one road was shocking, later on the week I did it again and found the road crew resurfacing it ! And proper resurfacing, not surface-dressing...)





Our cottage was in a village called Ardentinny, with a glorious view over the loch to RNAD Couport, where they keep the Trident missiles for the nuclear submarines round the corner in Faslane naval base. So we could watch seals, dolphins and sharks in the loch - plus the naval police patrol boat keeping the Russians/Greenpeace away and one day a pair of Sandown-class minesweepers 😊

It also has a very nice pub/restaurant and there's a choice of going-out either by the coastal route or the 20%er over the pass - so I nipped-out one night after tea and did it from the South and then back round the coast : 20miles.

It was a hot sunny week, so we agreed that as the next day was forecast to be cooler and

overcast, that might be better for a longer ride

Hmm, except that it became clear after I rode round the corner on the coast road that 'overcast' actually meant 500ft cloudbase and so I was in and out of it as I

went up and down : but it was damp rather than wet, and it was warm enough for just a gilet and armwarmers that pulled up and down depending whether I was climbing or descending.

So Ardentinny - down the coast to Sandbanks - over the single-track B-road to Loch Striven which has several 20% sections - Tighnabruaich - Otter Ferry - the old singletrack coastal B-road to Strachur - Glen Esk - Ardentinny : 80miles and over 10,000ft of climbing.

Otter Ferry is one of my most favourite beautiful places in the world, an absolutely exquisite view across Loch Fine (and the Sandpiper Inn is nice too), but today's damp weather didn't do it justice.

So later in the week when I had my other day off the leash (Barney's ?), I went round the other way, and in much better weather : over the pass from the South again - up Glen Esk - Strachur - Otter Ferry - over what the man in the Sandpiper called 'the mountain' which is a C-road (what the hell is a C-road ? It's actually C11 and is sigletrack with grass growing in the middle, goes steeply straight up one side of the hill and then hairpins steeply down the other side to Glendaruel and must be 25% in places) - the single-track B-road to Loch Striven and then Sandbanks - then it occurred to me that whilst I'd done the-

**DID YOU KNOW?
OTTERS EAT 25%
OF THEIR
BODYWEIGHT IN
FOOD DAILY**

---☆ "Otter Ferry is one of my most favourite beautiful places in the world, an absolutely exquisite view"

Scotland In May Cont'd...

- pass into Ardentinnny from the South twice, I hadn't done it from the North - so partway back up Glen Esk in order to go over it that way (my curiosity satisfied - signs both ways say 20%, but it's steeper from the South and a longer slog from the North) : 60miles and 9000ft of climbing.



I really enjoyed our week - there's some excellent cycling up there on good roads with very little traffic. Quite a few roads are one-way-and-back, but that means you see the scenery twice - and there's a lot of that scenery and not too many towns/teashops so you need to plan ahead a bit in taking food&water.

What you could easily do is take the ferry over from Dunoon to Gourock, down the coast a bit to Wemyss Bay, the ferry over to Rothesay Isle of Bute, round Bute, ferry from Bute to Colintrave back on the Cowal and then ride back on that Loch Striven B-road

That'd be a different day out ! Ferry fares would be about £15 for a foot-passenger, bikes are free : looking online, several bike blogs suggest it as a ride out from Glasgow, this would just be a different start-end.

If anybody is interested, I can recommend the cottage we stayed in - fairly basic and old-fashioned, but everything you need and the location was great, the view out of the window of the loch stunning.

Tom Pidcock

by John Pardoe

By now you will have caught up with the fact that Tom has, in the words of “Cycling Weekly”, got it all. Whether it be cyclo-cross, circuit racing or road racing, he is a champion, a multi-world champion. Tom has already attracted the attention of world tour teams (now joined Ineos), not only because of his impressive palmares, but he has panache by the bucket load. Whether he is doing wheelies or one armed superman celebrations across the line, bunny-hopping up flights of stairs then letting his back wheel slide out for fun in the final lap of the Junior Worlds, he’s got style, a style that resembles the great Peter Sagan. Never has a rider’s future looked so bright.

He does of course come from good stock as his Dad, Giles (middle), was a Seamons member in the 80’s, with an impressive record himself, so it is running in the family:

Club cyclo-cross champion (Mike Smyth trophy) 1983-4
Roller racing champion 1982
R.W.Chapman club “10” points champion 1983
Llangollen trophy 1985
Junior Time-trial champion 1983-84
Junior B.A.R. 1983-84



Giles also had the audacity to redesign the club kit to a spots and stripes combination which survived for a few seasons.

I can imagine that Giles is a very proud Dad, and we wish his son, Tom, every success for the future. I am sure that we will all be observing his career and undoubted talents closely with interest

John and Carol, Enjoying Lunch sitting outside Dunvegan Cafe, in Isle of Skye, in the sunshine of 2018...Happy Days!

Carol contributes to The Squirrel, with “**Cafe Corner**” as she has a knack of finding the new or best places to enjoy a coffee and cake whilst out on the road.

It's great to **look out for Carol's posts on Face Book** as she is always **up to date with opening hours**, in normal times, so you don't turn up to an eatery that could be closed for lunch.

You will often see John and Carol, along the road cheering on club members during a race.



Ed Baldwin

There is a lot of focus on recycling and **saving the planet** right now and rightly so. With lockdown I chose to **seriously tidy up the garage** and bike room. I ended up

with a large amount of **old bicycle parts** dating back to 2006; yes I know, for some, that is practically brand new. **And that is exactly my point.**

A lot of items were, in my view, unusable to me in their current state.

I decided to see if I could give them a second home listing them on eBay as “**not working, use for spare parts**”. Giving the items a fair description with a little personality, I started the bidding at **£1 each - made available to be sold worldwide - postage £2.90.** If

they sold, then great, they've got a chance of being mended and re-used. If not, I've given it a good try and off they would go to the recycling tip.

I sold old tyres, slightly bent rear mechs, jockey wheels, brakes, saddles, cassettes, a wheel, a turbo trainer, even a pair of tights. A saddle that I described as having “**been to the moon and back**” - was not quite ready for retirement” had early offers and was sold & posted on the next day.

From the items I would definitely never use again I **had received £295 within ten days.**

I then got the bug, and sold my good condition “spares”, knowing they would stay on the shelf until there wasn't any room again if I did't. **My total haul £405 .**

If you've not done it already why not give it a go?

Report on C&NW CTC/ Audax Rides Berwyns Rides May 19 2018



The weather was glorious as we signed in for the event at **Willington Hall Hotel** and it remained sunny and warm all day.

Tour of the Berwyns 210Km; 3100m climbing (Following a review of GPS data, the amount of climbing in this event is to be reclassified as 2650m; 2.75 AAA in future)

There were approximately 50 entries for this event, which whittled down to 41 starters on the day, including half a dozen riders from Seamons CC. Additionally Joe Hughes of Chester RC rode the event as a “permanent” starting at Chirk at 05:00 to join us at Willington Hall by 07:30. He successfully completed the ride at Chirk later that afternoon.

All riders returned safely, in times varying from 09:15 (chapeau! to Paul Buckley) to 13:28 (32 minutes inside time limit) by a team representing C&NW CTC who suffered in the unfamiliar heat. 4 riders were declared as members of C&NW CTC. One rider was clocked through Prospect Café and Corwen controls but then vanished without telling us---which means that the Organisers had to wait at Willington Hall for an extra half hour in case he returned. Very thoughtless!

There is now an increasing trend for riders to ride on GPS and thus miss the info controls. These controls are to be amended to make them as obvious as possible. This is not a treasure hunt; just a means of obtaining proof of passage.

Berwyns Audax 2018 Continued...

On a more disturbing note, we discovered one person, who had not entered, **riding with his mates** 🤔. This rider was apprehended at Prospect Tea Rooms 🚔 where the entry form was completed and a late entry fee extracted 💷 😊.

On a positive note, all riders said it was a cracking route and how much they enjoyed the ride and stunning scenery---which is what really matters!

Prospect Panorama 135Km; 1000m of climbing

Following a flat ride through Farndon and Cross Lanes, this event takes the long climb from Johnstown up to the beautifully situated Prospect Tea Rooms above Llangollen, exactly as for the 200k, but then short cuts back from the Panorama via Sun Trevor to Chirk. We now have a relocated café stop here in the Castle Bistro following the demise of the nostalgic Milk Bar, haven on many rides over the last 20 years or more.

There were 36 entries for this event with 24 starters all of whom returned safely . Our secretary Lowri was the only declared as a member of C&NW CTC though your organiser, due to lack of time, did ride the hilly section from and to Bangor on Dee.

A very successful set of events in which all returning riders said how much they enjoyed the day out. It is intended to repeat these rides in 2019 on Saturday June 1.

Many thanks to John and Carol Pardoe of Seamons CC and for operating the start , the control at Prospect café and signing in the early finishers.

This was our first event to provide immediate validation of rides at the finish which saves a lot of hassle for the organiser and having to address 50+ envelopes for returned brevet cards. It is intended to operate in this way at all future Auk events organised by myself.

Also thanks are due to Brandon Edgeley for his assistance all day whilst studying to become an accredited AUK organiser **and especially to Willington Hall** for hosting us throughout a long 15 hour day.

12 Hours is a Long Time

by Ade Hughes

My plan for the 2018 Combined Association 12 hour had started pretty much immediately after finishing the same ride the year before. A week out and I was starting my taper and loading up on my carbs. Despite loving my food, by the end of the week I was sick of it – it isn't as much fun as it sounds!



The weather forecasts were pretty mixed – some were showing persistent rain, most were showing high humidity and decent temperatures. All were showing a very windy day. Not what you really want when planning to ride for 12 hours with a deep section front wheel and disc rear. I was up at 3:45am and I had two cartons of Instant Oats porridge. On the bike I would carry two bottles behind my saddle and tuck 2 or 3 items of food inside my skinsuit. By the end, in total, I would consume around 6,000kcal and still be in deficit. I planned four stops to change bottles and get more food – these were at intervals of around 50 miles.

The fantastic support team I had (Dave Barker, Neil Rothwell and my wife Liz and daughter Kate) made these stops really quick and efficient, and added to some ad-hoc nature breaks meant that there were only just over 6 minutes where I wasn't moving, and that included 3 unscheduled stops at temporary traffic lights on the course. I have to say how grateful I was for the support even though it seems like a very short time. It's hugely important and actually contributes to the whole 12 hours because it removes another level of stress knowing that there is somebody there if you need them.

The course was split into 3 main sections. The HQ (and start) was at the finishing circuit on an industrial in Wrexham, which as glamorous as it sounds really isn't. The first section, which I quite enjoyed, was a rolling ride over to the A41 and then down through Prees Heath, Ternhill and on to Espley. We then did two out-and-back loops to Shawbirch roundabout via the dreaded Peplow "pave"! On the plus side that was much better than the three and five times in previous years. However, it is still a teeth-chattering surface that is at best irritating and at worst can shake bits off your bike. Luckily the only thing I lost this year was an emergency nurofen I'd taped to my bars!

It was windy at the start, but dry and reasonably warm. I opted to wear a baselayer but because of the wind I also cut a small square of emergency tinfoil space blanket and wore that across my chest inside my skinsuit. That would allow me to ditch it later on when it got warmer. However, there is a reason that conspiracy theorists wear hats made of tinfoil - it definitely blocks the data signal from your HR strap to your bike computer! There were spots of rain on the way out to the first circuit but it wasn't until the Espley - Shawbirch leg that it started raining. It was cold and wet at Espley and I was glad of my extra layer, and then a few miles down the road it was warm and dry. Then I'd return to Espley and it was cold and damp again! Thankfully that was the last of the rain and it brightened up and got warmer as we rode the day circuit.



Ade saved himself for the big day.

"I never felt like I was going to bonk"

I knew what I could do for 12 hours and I rode at that pace. I also knew that I wasn't very good at eating and drinking so I forced myself to do it. I had a list of things to eat and the times I would eat them taped to my bars. I set auto-lap on my computer to beep every hour and when it went off I ate something off my list. Towards the end I felt a bit sick - I'd eaten a lot of sugary carbs and couldn't face any more, but between that and the carb loading I never felt like I was going to bonk.

The day circuit was the same as last year - a 22 mile loop around Redbrook, Welshampton, Quina Brook and Tilstock. It was a headwind on the first part into Welshampton, with temporary traffic lights for non-existent roadworks, and then rolling country lanes for the rest. Apart from near Quina Brook the surface is reasonable and it's a lovely route. However, after my 5th time around the circuit I was well and truly fed up with it. The temporary traffic lights stopped me dead twice, made me slow down significantly twice and sprint like an idiot once, which is not a good idea with over 100 miles left.

I did encounter some problems. My left knee became increasingly sore during the ride. It had started a couple of weeks before - just the odd twinge here and there but it wasn't going. Walking up a big hill in the Lake District the week before didn't really help either - it was worse after that. So after about 50 miles I was riding with knee pain. Luckily for me (!), the pain in my elbow completely distracted me away from my knee. Any bit of poor road surface sent a shooting pain up my elbow as it jolted on the pads and I was left with two large bruises by the time I had finished. Added to that was the general pain in my shoulders and neck and I was struggling to hold position for more than 20 minutes at a time before I needed a break. I tried to ride in position into the wind and then take a break when it felt like a tailwind. It was a bit of a drag back to the finishing circuit - after 200 odd miles it felt VERY rolling and there was also a quite steep descent, which was interesting in a very tired state on a very windy day. There was also a set of traffic lights at a junction, preceded by temporary lights on a hill just before them. I got stopped at the temporary lights and it was a >400W effort simply to get the bike going again up the hill - definitely not something I needed at that stage, it hurt a lot. Other riders later reported the lights were showing green in both directions resulting in problems for them as traffic blocked the lane. The finish circuit was a 9-ish mile loop around the HQ. Past the HQ felt fast, downhill and possibly a tailwind. Then a left turn onto what was quite a rough surface section with a bovine crossing point. Lucky riders just had to ride through cows* *t, unlucky ones had to wait for the cows to finish! Another left turn onto an ascending drag into the wind, then back down onto the industrial estate via a short section of fast dual-carriageway. The wind remained most of the day only really tailing off towards the very end - it was unpleasant riding into it and unpleasant battling for stability when it was coming across from the side. I'd say it was pleasant when it was a tailwind but it never feels totally equitable! It seemed to get warmer and warmer. The last two years I've been freezing at the end but definitely not this year.

It takes a fair bit of mental strength to ride for 12 hours. I can only do it by breaking it down into smaller chunks. So I focused on each hour. I forced myself to do calculations in my head to keep track of the pace I needed to do, and I set myself little goals like "ride the next section at this power". All are mental tricks to keep you pushing through the pain and discomfort. I also tried to say thank you to each marshal I passed, although at some fraught times I know I missed a couple. The event was organised and marshalled superbly well, and they all provided great support as riders passed.



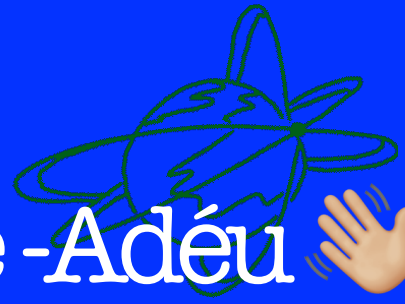
Carol Pardoe, Dave Barker, Neil Rothwell, ADE looking as fresh as a daisy, Liz and Kate.
Photography possibly by John Pardoe (apologies if it is another photographer).

The final surging morale boost came when I entered the finish circuit. Even though there were still a couple of hours left it was quite emotional and a massive lift going past everyone at the HQ - my supporters now joined by JP and Carol. In fact, looking at the data, my power and speed picked up noticeably and I finished very strongly despite the pain and fatigue. My target was to get to 270 miles and beat the club record. My official distance was 272.21 miles. I couldn't have done it without the support of great clubmates and my family - thank you all once again.

**Thanks for that story Ade. I totally feel your pain.
With my computer skills it took me 12 hours to edit it 😂💧**

The End

Until Next Time - Adéu 🖐️



And stop nicking my kid's milk

Please don't eat my Mom 🙄



Lads...
Lads...
LAADZ!! Easy up a bit, I had pilates this morning



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