



BOTTOM GEAR

The OFFICIAL Voice of the SWRC

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Editor
SWRC sponsor
Web Site

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IN THIS ISSUE:-

- * Road Race Report
- * Ferrari for sale
- * Cycling Shorts
- * Annual Report
- * New Members
- * Cyclosporives 2007
- * Time Trial Results

FILL THAT HOLE

Reporting problems on the road (and on off-road trails) gets them fixed and can prevent accidents - That's a fact.

Although it is clearly the local authority's job to fill that pothole or sort out that fallen tree or other hazard, they need to be told about the problem. I wonder how many of you know that the CTC have Launched two web sites to make the reporting process easier. Potholes and road defects can be reported through www.fillthathole.org.uk and obstructing rights of way can be sorted by logging on to www.clearthattrail.org.uk. Both sites work in a similar fashion; you fill out the information (you can even include photos if you wish), locate it on the map, push the button and the appropriate authority gets notified. You can also check to see if 'your pothole' has already been reported. The whole thing is monitored by the CTC who will take appropriate action if authorities drag their heels in getting things sorted.

Remember, any cyclist who is injured by a pothole you have reported will be able to prove that the authority knew about it.

DAY OF THE BIKE

On Sunday 23rd September, 38,000 cyclists of all ages put on a massive show of pedal power in the streets of London taking part in The Hovis London Freewheel. The 14km ride took the participants passed Westminster, the London Eye and Buckingham Palace on closed roads and many riders cycled into London from six 'Freewheel' hubs (local gathering points) guided by more experienced cyclists.

Mayor, Ken Livingston said that the event had been 'a highly visible endorsement for the growth of cycling in London'. He went on to say that 'cycling is good for you and the environment' and he hoped that it would encourage more people to cycle regularly in London. The 2008 event is planned to be even bigger.

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new members who have joined SWRC since the last edition of Bottom Gear.

Alan Malarkey
Paul Hart
Mariana Reynolds
Richard Williamson
Sven Gerhardt
Aubrey Fox
Andrew Dennis
Gordon Beveridge

Winter 2007

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ROAD RACING 2007

Two new club champions this year - Alan Parkinson and, for the vets trophy, Roger Jackaman. Having been soundly beaten by better riders for the last two years, Alan has regained the Road Race title with a busy season not just of racing but also of cyclosporives and blogging. Starting with a lowly 48th place in his first event back in April, he rapidly found form and got two wins and two second places in his next five outings at the Reading Velodrome evening races; other top three positions followed in the summer. The Surrey League 3 Day in August saw some tough riding and Alan, though not collecting points here, was undoubtedly spurred on there by a chance encounter with the club run on the Dunsfold circuit. A week later he gained a high profile 3rd place at the Tour of Britain support race at Crystal Palace. His season was crowned by a win in the club's own Surrey League promotion in October.

Missing out on the club title by just a single point was second cat Andy McKie, winner for the last two years. Having moved up to second category at the end of last year, Andy faced stiffer competition this season but still amassed 65 SWRC points from a series of consistent placings in Surrey League races and evening handicaps.

In third place was Colin Parkinson. Colin's main focus this year was time trialling and he broke club records for 50 and 100 miles and was 20th in the national BBAR competition and first in his age category. But he still found time to do a bit of racing, claiming three wins and a second at the Mallory Park Tuesday League and a second at the Bourne Wheelers Spring Road Race as his best finishes. This earned him enough BC points to get upgraded to second cat. (Unfortunately the SWRC scoring system works against Colin as it gives extra points for Surrey League positions, which Leicester-based Colin can't quite manage to get to. This may be reviewed for next season.)

Veteran road champion Roger had a cracking season riding the Hillingdon

vet series and the LVRC. Although he didn't enter many races his fantastic results - four wins, two seconds, four other top-five places and 7th as his lowest position - gave him the trophy. He was also first over-50, and 8th overall, in the National Police Championship and highest place police rider at the 3-day Tour of Malta. All this allegedly "with no training and loads of hols".

Second this year, after two years as the champ, was Andy Hicks. With the early season ruined by a bad crash, Andy recovered his form through the summer to resume his winning ways, with a first place in August and two seconds in September. This and his other LVRC results make him runner up this year.

Geoff Redhead's LVRC race, the Follicly Challenged, took place in June. For once this summer the sun shone and both races saw good fields, in particular the afternoon race which saw no fewer than nine club riders on the line. Despite a rear wheel blowout 400m from the line, Cliff Dent's sprint made him C-cat winner while Alan Parkinson took 5th A-cat; Colin P, who rode a very attacking race and had a near miss with an oncoming bus, and I came in a few places lower down. Punctures and an incident with a horse unfortunately took out the other club riders. The morning race provided Roger with 5th place with Tony Sayers and Andy Hicks also riding strongly. In a rare organisational error, the marshals' flags had not been brought to the HQ in time for this race. Improvisation was required and at our corner Simon Neave and I constructed makeshift flags from broken tree branches and our red tabards. This proved better than nothing as most drivers did stop for us when requested but a few, not unsurprisingly, drove straight past the two idiots waving sticks at them.

Our Surrey League event was organised this year by Phil Parkinson. Keeping things in the family, brother Alan won the morning handicap race with his trademark sprint after hanging around with me at the back of the bunch for 40 odd miles; I finished still

hanging around at the back of the bunch. John Harris, in his first Surrey League race for six years and going well, suffered bad luck early on when forced to halt by his computer sensor sliding down his front fork and almost into the wheel. Occasional club run rider and potential member Matt, just 16 years old and in his first ever race, rode away from the front group and stayed away until caught by the second group with a lap to go; he continued to ride near the front of the race and at the end only a premature start to his sprint cost him a high place. Our sole representative in the second race was Andy McKie, staying away for four laps in an attack with five other riders. On the last lap he was forced to let the other guys go and got caught, but recovered to break away solo again and came in ahead of the bunch for a top ten place.

Final points tables as follows:

Name	Cat	Points
Alan Parkinson	3V	66
Andy McKie	2V	65
Colin Parkinson	3V	42

Name	Cat	Points
Roger Jackaman	E	73
Andy Hicks	E	49
Cliff Dent	C	10

Race calendars and licence application forms for 2008 can be downloaded from the usual websites: www.britishcycling.org.uk, www.surreyleague.co.uk and <http://www.lvrc.org>. Contact me, SWRC road race secretary, for further information.

Mark Packman

DID YOU KNOW

The first Post Office cycles appeared in 1896, when 100 were bought when the free delivery of telegrams was extended from one mile to a three-mile radius.



DO YOU RIDE TANDEM - Chapter 2

Some of you may remember the article printed in the last edition of Bottom Gear which described the first time my wife, Irene, and I tried our hand at tandem riding. Since then, I have given some thought to purchasing one but being somewhat of a 'tight wad' veered off into wondering if I could build my own. Seeing my original design (see the sketch on page 6), Irene has now completely gone off the idea - I wonder why?

Tony

ANNUAL REPORT

As some of you could not make it to the AGM last month, I have included the Annual Report prepared by Andy Hicks, for the AGM, as a loose leaf insert in this edition.

EPSOM CC vs SWRC TT Inter-Club Points Competition 2007

Held for the fourteenth year with Epsom CC over 4 x 10 and 4 x 25 mile weekend events.

For the 2007 season the rules were changed for the Individual Competition with the best six rides out of the eight now counting.

Keith Reed (Epsom) won the Inter-Club trophy that was presented by Graham Woods, second was Stephen Emmerson (Epsom) and third was Michael Groom (Epsom). Keith was the first ever rider to win all eight events gaining maximum points for the six counting events.

Epsom CC won the SWRC Team Trophy for the fourteenth time in succession.

Individual Competition

K. Reed	E	72
S. Emmerson	E	65
M. Groom	E	48

N. McCormick	E	35
J. Thomas	S	34
S. Neave	S	33
R. Gill	E	25
P. Gadd	S	24
B. Stott	E	21
J. Downing	E	20
M. Sullivan	E	20
P. Harries	E	17
J. Nasson	S	15
J. Fox	E	12
B. Molloy	E	11
P. Cresswell	E	10
R. Coleman	E	8
S. Donne	E	8
T. Nasson	S	6
R. Bigwood	E	5
J. Friend	S	5
M. Pymm	E	4
A. Marshall	S	3

Team Competition (all events with the best six riders from each Club and in each event to count)

Epsom Cycling Club	420
South Western Road Club	120

ON YOUR BIKE

Earlier this year, as part of Kingston Council's campaign, 'Women On Wheels' (which aims to encourage and support women riders in the Kingston area) a group of women riders met for the first time in Kingston market place. The group meets at Kingston Market on the last Sunday of each month at 10.00am and everyone is welcome. (Taken from an article in the local Guardian of Feb. '07.) Not yet a contender to take over from our very own 'C Group' club run which meets every Saturday in Cobham car park, but a beginning.

FRED PARSONS

The following letter was received from Fred's family in October, just after our last edition went to press.

We regret to have to inform you that "Fred" passed away recently in his 92nd year after a short illness. We had

a private family funeral and his ashes are interred at Margate crematoria alongside those of his much loved and deeply missed wife Lucie.

As a young man Fred took up cycling and joined the London "South Western" B section of the Cyclists Touring Club. Weekends would find Fred setting off for long cycle tours. Holidays were spent touring the remote corners of the United Kingdom memorably Ireland and Scotland with Archie Wey. He met Lucie at Richmond Ice rink when he was 21. Romance did not stop Fred cycling and a tandem was purchased for joint holidays and weekends. Together they formed one of the strongest tandem partnerships in the South Western "B's".

Fred's attention transferred to the South Western Road club which he joined shortly after its formation. He took an active interest in the club and in the years that followed was elected into several positions including; Press Secretary, Newsletter Editor, TT Secretary, Social Secretary, General Secretary (longest serving in the clubs history) and President.

Whilst not active in the sporting side of cycling ("if it hurt I eased off") he was a timekeeper for time trials (club, open and National events) and an occasional official observer for the RRA. Fred continued timekeeping after moving to Wiltshire in 1980 until their move into sheltered accommodation at Birchington Margate in August 2000.

Kind regards
Ann Callen, Maureen Parsons,
Geoffrey Parsons and Ruth Gill

NEWPORT TRACK

SWRC now has a growing band of riders who both enjoy and benefit from our track sessions at Newport Velodrome.

The odd foray down to Calshot has expanded to a big boy's velodrome in Newport, South Wales. Like so many things in life I was lucky enough to



have a model to follow. Planning the format for a weekend down the M4 was made straightforward once some suitable dates could be found avoiding British cycling demands and various football and rugby fixtures. The latter causes problems with hotel accommodation as my plan was to encourage as many as possible to make a weekend of it.

The next bit was to sort out track times, which would be convenient to the weekenders but allow flexibility for day trippers. A mid afternoon three hour session on Saturday followed by a second three hour session from noon on Sunday seemed to fulfil the SWRC criteria. It left time for a few drinks and meal on Saturday evening, and a lie in on Sunday - Geoff would be impressed!!

The Express by Holiday Inn is fifteen minutes up the road offered me a great deal and reserved rooms at an agreed price up until seven days before. Even SWRC members have made their decisions by that stage.

Journey times down there were around two and half hours; finding the track was easy. Cycle hire is provided at £6 per session with plenty of choice, the bikes are more than adequate.

I had chosen Chris Davies as our coach as I have known him personally for a long time, this met with high praise.

The Saturday session was aimed specially at novices. For those of you whom to date have not tried this, then similar standard groups can circulate independently of each other, whilst the resting group sit it out in the middle.

Chris soon had all the groups flowing round. If this article has encouraged you to try the next session then as a novice please aim to be there for the Saturday. The reasoning behind this is apparent as the early briefings and procedures for novices take a bit of time.

Proof that this was time well spent was repaid on Sunday when Saturday's novices were circulating with the best

of them.

Sunday's three hour session was superb. We had a small group of novices on the lower levels whilst the stars were continually taken through their paces by Chris. The session gelled well resulting in some big grins and tired legs by the time the final warm down came around.

Those who stayed the night had excellent value from Express by Holiday Inn, a big group meal together next door at the Dragonfly. I had negotiated a twin room for £55 inc of breakfast (the price on the day was £120).

I am grateful to all the riders who supported this venture, and especially grateful to SWRC who were brave enough to underwrite the track hire and absorb the small loss that the weekend incurred.

Consider these points:

- * The whole weekend promotes your club
- * Kids go free, special cycle hire rate too
- * The entire bill per person for a great weekend - less than £100
- * There will be plenty more Saturday club rides from Cobham throughout the rest of the year
- * It is a laugh
- * Dates for '08, April 12th and 13th

Roger Jackaman

TALKING BIKE

I would like to thank Geoff Redhead for sending in this cutting taken from a recent Guardian Magazine.

If a non-cyclist is foolish enough to introduce a cycling topic in conversation with me, I try to remember to ask him or her to stop me when they've had enough and before they have to make a polite excuse in

FOR SALE - FERRARI - £195

Here's your chance to own that previously only dreamt about possession - your very own Ferrari. At just £195, I am assured this is the bargain of the century and you won't need to win the lottery to buy one.

Ok, so it has only got two wheels, but what self respecting SWRC member would be seen riding a bike with more. Yes, you did read me right, the Ferrari in question isA Bike. Not just any bike you understand. This is a limited edition stunt bike costing between £195 and £355 for the 'top spec' model. As you might expect, it is available in any colour so long as it's Red - Ferrari Red to be precise. Now the bit that really put me off when I first read about this machine is that it comes with the well known 'black horse' Ferrari logo - On the bell? - ugh! These were being distributed by online retailer www.exbikes.com from October onwards, so please let us know if you were lucky(?) enough to get one in your Christmas stocking.

order to run screaming from the room. Of course, if it's a conversation with a fellow cyclist, then we just witter on contentedly until fatigue finally sets in or someone starts putting chairs on tables, whichever comes sooner. Either way, when it comes to talking about bikes, I'm riding without brakes.

But there is one conversation about cycling I really don't like to get into. This is the one that starts: "Did you tell me about this ride? Was it on the calendar?"

There are many variations on this theme. A common one is: "What was in that large box I had to sign for this morning?" Which is a mini-version of the dialogue that runs:

"And why do you need a new bike?" This is actually a conversation that can be circumvented, but only at risk of the uncomfortable interrogation that begins: "So, how long have you had this new bike, and when were you proposing to tell me about it?" This naturally segues into a "And how are you paying for this?" inquisition.

The common feature of all these exchanges, of course, is that your interlocutor is a partner or spouse. And that her tone (for the voice will,

ANNUAL REPORT

Purpose of Report

This Report summarises Club activities and achievements in 2007 for reference by SWRC members and potential new members.

The Club is strong & vigorous. It is financially sound, is involved in a wide range of activities and has 124 members, including 21 new members in 2007.

Committee Activity

Elected Committee members met 7 times in 2007 to agree club activities and respond to needs as required. The AGM is an opportunity to thank all Committee members for giving their time for the benefit of the Club at Committee meetings and in fulfilling their individual responsibilities.

Club Runs

The centre of club activities remains our very well attended Saturday morning Club Runs. This has been another year when participation has increased significantly, and in addition to the "A" & "B" groups, there is now a well established "C" Group, with an average of 10 riders. This group includes tandem riders, ladies, new members and those looking for exercise and fresh air, without necessarily straining every sinew and fibre. It is good to see younger riders joining us on Club Runs, sometimes giving regulars a hard time on the hills. On average about 40 riders join Club Runs each week.

One of the highlights of the year was the special Club Run to watch the Tour de France pass over Southwold Hill and see David Millar take the prime which helped put him in the "King of the Mountains" jersey the next day.

All Road Groups continue to start from Cobham (or Betchworth on the first Saturday of each month). We benefit from the amazing knowledge of our Runs Leaders about the side roads and lanes of Surrey, Sussex, Hampshire and Kent, giving us access to some of the best cycle rides in the UK. Those with "the knowledge" include Patrick Cangle, John Harris, Dave Pinder, Sabin Gaztelua, Mark Packman, Ant Friend, Paul Foster, Tony Sayers, Dave Jordan & Bob Maylin. Naturally there is keen interest in getting the best tea and cakes at a welcoming tea stop, and over the last year some new ones have been ferreted out.

Thank you especially to Patrick Cangle

and Dave Pinder, who issue a Club Runs List twice per year. Patrick has even issued weekly Club Run route maps and altitude profiles and has continued to produce new and interesting rides. Patrick is not standing for re-election as Club Runs Secretary for 2008 and this is a good occasion to thank him for doing an outstanding job. He has really "raised the bar" and I sincerely thank him for the great Club Runs that I and many others have enjoyed in recent years. We are fortunate that John Harris has agreed to stand in his place.

Time Trials

It is heart-warming to report that 2007 has been a good year for Time Trials. In his first full year as Time Trial Secretary, Simon Neave has seen participation in Time Trialling increase, and for the second year in a row, 3 Club Records have been smashed. In a truly stellar season, Colin Parkinson knocked 2 minutes and 4 seconds off the previous "50" record set by Paul Alderson last year, 6 minutes and 4 seconds off the previous "100" record set by Paul Alderson last year and added 11.75 miles to the 12 hour record set by Paul Alderson in 2002. The new records are 1.51.31 for a "50", 3.51.11 for a "100" and 267.33 miles for a 12 hour.

Needless to say, Colin's achievements have been recognised with a sideboard full of Club silverware, as he is currently Club Time Trial Champion, Club Veterans TT Champion, holder of the Fastest "10" 2007 Trophy, and Most Meritorious Trophy. In addition, he is the national age-related Champion in the British Best All Rounder (BBAR) competition, and was 2nd in the age-related VTTA National Championship "25".

Meanwhile, Paul Alderson has not been resting on his laurels, having completed (again) the gruelling 1227km Paris-Brest-Paris event in 69 hours 48 minutes in atrocious conditions, having qualified by completing 200km, 300km 400km and 600km events in the months leading up to the main event. Paul was presented with the Special Award Cup in recognition of his achievements.

Last, but far from least, we are proud to have the World Triathlon Age Group Champion, Ruth Hutton as a SWRC Member. Ruth's achievement was recognised with the award of the Club's "Outstanding Performance Tankard".

Road Races

SWRC have an active and successful group of Road Racers including Roger Jackaman, Colin Parkinson, Alan Parkinson, Bill McCombe, Keith Garbutt, Eric Palmer, Andy Swanson, Dave Worsfold, Cliff Dent, Tony Sayers, Pete Sturton, Dudley Samuels, Jonathan Thomas, Colin Parkinson, Andy McKie, Barry Harwood, Mark Packman and Andy Hicks. These members recorded numerous podium places in 2007 including:

* Roger Jackaman won 4 races at the Hillingdon circuit in his age group, was 6th in the SE England Green Jersey Series in his age group and SWRC Veteran Road Race Champion.

* Alan Parkinson won 2 races in his age group including the Surrey League event promoted by his brother Phil Parkinson for the SWRC. Alan was also SWRC Road race Champion.

* Colin Parkinson won the first event in the Mallory Park series and had two 2nd places, ending up with enough points to get his 2nd Category Licence

* Cliff Dent won his age group event in the SWRC "Follicly Challenged Road Race on June 2nd. A total of 9 SWRC riders took part in the events that day

* Andy Hicks won the London & SE England Criterium Championship in his age group and was 3rd in the SE England Green Jersey Series in his age group

* Andy McKie had a year of strong results and only missed becoming SWRC Road Race Champion by 1 point

Road Race Secretary Mark Packman reports good continued participation by SWRC Members in LVRC (League of Veteran Racing Cyclists) events, as well as participation in Surrey League events. The SWRC successfully organised 2 races in 2007: President Geoff Redhead promoted the SWRC "Follicly Challenged" Road Races in July, and Phil Parkinson promoted the Surrey League races on 30th September.

Club Activities

The Club had a very full calendar of events including:

* Club Spring Cyclo sportive March 4th - thanks to Geoff Redhead, Bob Maylin, and many others

* Great "R n B" Party Night 17th March with live bands and DJ at Fetcham organised by Geoff Redhead with help from a cast too numerous to mention

* Training Weekend 10/11th March with overnight stay in Eastbourne organised by

Geoff Redhead

- * Calshott "Track Day" on March 24th - thanks to Roger Jackaman
- * Late April one week trip to Majorca thanks to Gary Smith (alias our sponsor "Evans Cycles"). Several wives came along again this year and the girls walking group is well established
- * Throughout the season there were a series of Club Time Trial Events, including InterClub events with Epsom CC
- * Annual Cycloportive on May 13th - thanks to Tony & Irene Sayers, David & Dee Jordan, Jane Geddes, Gary Smith, Ant Frend, and Patrick Cangle, etc. This event was a "sell-out" and some applications had to be turned down
- * As referred to already, Geoff Redhead organised the annual Follicly Challenged Road Races on June 2nd forming part of the prestigious LVRC White Jersey series
- * June 26th Annual "2 - Up Time Trial"
- * June 23 - 28 week's cycling in Bordeaux, staying with former President David & Penny Wright
- * July 11th - 13th visit to see two stages of the Tour de France staying at Bob Maylin's house near Dijon. An added bonus was that the lucky bikers (Bob Maylin, Dick Farman, Brian Amsdell and David Jordan also managed to get their picture in "Cycling Weekly"
- * Gran Fondo Pinarello trip to Italy 11th - 18th July, thanks to Dudley Samuels
- * 100 mile "Century" ride on Saturday 21st July - thanks to Patrick Cangle
- * As referred to above, thanks to Phil Parkinson for organising the 2 Surrey League Road Races on 30th September
- * 28th September to 1st October Italian trip - Gran Fondo del Prosecco
- * Trip to Majorca in November - thanks to Ant Frend (Ant is a former Majorca "local" and knows the rides). The trip is known as the "Tapas Tour"
- * November - track weekend, see below

Track

Thanks to Roger Jackaman for organising very enjoyable trips to the Calshott (wall of death) track near Southampton on March 24th and to Newport over the weekend of 24/25 November.

Mountain Biking

A regular band of SWRC Mountain bikers meet at Westcott on Sunday mornings.

Cycloportives

SWRC members did very well in this ever more popular area of activity. Paul Alderson was highly placed in the Golden Dragon ride; Alan Parkinson was also

highly placed in the Etape de Britain and 2nd in the SWRC Cycloportive; Trevor Lenthall rode a 'gold standard' White Rose Classic in Yorkshire and the Autumn Epic in Wales; Mark Williams rode a 'gold standard' ride in the Dragon Ride and Mark Packman and Ralph Swallow rode Silver rides in the White Rose Classic. Andy McKie, Alan Brunnsden and Anne Marshall also did excellent rides.

Social Events

- * Our Trophy Presentations Lunch in December was preceded by a bracing walk for all those who opt to join it. These events are organised superbly by Roger & Dawn Jackaman respectively
 - * There was also a dinner in mid January for those who needed to top up their Christmas flab
- "Bottom Gear" - Voice of the SWRC**
Tony Sayers edits and produces "Bottom Gear" in between all the other invaluable things he does for the Club. "Bottom Gear" is a compendium of cycling stories, tips, news and jokes, where all members have the chance to contribute their thoughts and experiences.

Press Coverage

Ant Frend did a great job as SWRC Press Secretary, getting our events into "Cycling Weekly" and the local press. Ant will stand down as Press Secretary after several years of service, and we thank him for all his work. We are fortunate that Richard Williamson has agreed to stand for this position in 2008.

Club Kit

Simon Neave is in charge of a comprehensive list of club kit available to members at very reasonable (subsidised) prices. Simon is usually at the Club Room with kit on the first Tuesday of each month. Many thanks to Simon for his work.

Other 2007 Activities

In addition to the activities noted already, your SWRC Committee has overseen the following:

- * The SWRC Website has been developed and improved - check it out, with special thanks to Peter Wright
- * Alan Parkinson has set up a Web Log (Blog) showing topical Club activities, pictures and even short video clips complete with sound. All SWRC members can register and upload reports onto this site (e-mail alan-parkinson@supanet.com for details)
- * We also have the "swrc.myfastforum.org" website set up by Raymond Hallam
- * Club race equipment has been increased

and renewed where necessary

Charitable donations

In 2007 The SWRC made donations as follows:

- * £200 contributed to Dave Rayner Fund
- * £50 sponsored charity ride by Ann Marshall

Plans for 2008

Expect a similar set of activities in 2008 to those held in 2007, but specifically:

- * Saturday 1st March SWRC Soul Review Gig
- * Sunday 24th February Early Season Cycloportive being organised by Dave Pinder
- * 5th / 6th April Training Weekend - Eastbourne
- * 20th - 27th April Training Week in Majorca - contact Gary Smith
- * Spring visit to Newport Track
- * Starting from May next year there will be a Time Trial at Hungry Hill on the 1st Wednesday of every month through the summer
- * 11th May Annual Cycloportive
- * 5th July LVRC Follicly Challenged Road Race - SE England Jersey Series and Region 9 Divisional Championships (Categories D,E,F,G,H). Event HQ Loxwood Village Hall, Kirdford circuit
- * Hill Climb Championship, Box Hill (date to be decided)
- * InterClub Time Trial Events (dates to be advised)
- * Sunday 21st September Surrey League Road Races at the Alfold circuit

Financial Position

The SWRC remains financially strong, with a healthy margin of assets over liabilities which enables it to offer subsidised clothing to members, make charitable donations, and promote cycling events. Many thanks to Ted Collins our Treasurer and to Les Baillon for auditing the accounts.

Club Affiliations 2007

British Cycling, CTT, Surrey League, WLCA (West London CA) and Southern Counties Cycling Union.

Andy Hicks
General Secretary



in most cases, belong to a female) is querulous, bordering hostile. Knowing this, of course, means - because you care for her feelings - that you try to shield her from what you know will hurt or displease her. The problem with this strategy, however, is that she will misinterpret your solicitude as a ruse of avoidance and concealment, which leads to still more awkward discussions along the lines of: "So, if you made plans to go cycling with X two weeks ago, why didn't you tell me till the night before?"

"Because you would have been all huffy about it and made me feel guilty," is not the right answer. I know, I've tried it. The only course here - given that cancellation is out of the question (make it negotiable and you're screwed) - is abject apology, as pre-emptive as possible, with fervent protestation that you would much rather be spending the time sanding the kitchen floor or going to an antiques market, but you can't let X down, in fact Y and Z too, now. But you will be back by such-and-such a time, and you were thinking it would be nice to try that new gastro-pub.

But be warned: you're really spending your capital here, and for cyclists, this is, at best, a very limited fund. Northern Rock's balance sheet shows rather more credit than your average male cyclist's standing with his partner. I couldn't say for certain that know cases where cycling, rather than, say, adultery, would be cited in the divorce papers, but I can think of a fair

POEM

The following little ditty was sent in anonymously by one of our members.

Cycling is much better
than lots of other sports,
'cos you get to wear skin-tight tops
and sexy little shorts.

Who cares if you don't cycle
up a mountainside for weeks.
Just coast up to some traffic lights
and tighten up those cheeks.

few where the fact that there was a bike-shaped object at one apex of an unhappy love triangle definitely contributed to the final parting of ways.

It's probably not about the bike. Cycling is just one activity among many, which, when pursued with a certain sort of dogged intensity by male enthusiasts, drives the women in their lives to distraction. It could be football, golf, fishing, computer games ... almost anything. But it seems sad that the bicycle should be a vehicle for what is perceived as men's flight from intimacy.

The author is Matt Seaton, whose book, "Two Wheels", is published by Guardian Books at £8.99 - Well, after pinching his article we could hardly not give his book a plug, could we - Ed.

CYCLOSPORTIVE 2007

Cyclosporatives continue to grow in popularity in the UK with more such rides being organised, more cyclists participating, and a dedicated website www.cyclosporitive.org. We ourselves are now a two-sportives-a-year club with events in March and May. Organised by Geoff Redhead and previously advertised as a reliability ride, the early season event has been rebranded as a cyclosporitive. This seems to have worked for more riders, well over 100, entered this year than in the previous editions. Unfortunately the day of the event dawned grim and got grimmer - it was cold, it was windy and it was wet, the rain falling all day long. This led to quite a few DNSs but it was still a good-sized field and everyone ploughed round in the poor conditions. The winning time was 3hr 25m, the best-placed club rider was Cliff Dent at 3:33, while the last riders home took an amazing 6½ hours which was a lot of suffering given the weather. At the HQ so much water dripped from sodden riders that the place was awash, necessitating a major mopping-up operation at the end of the day and a donation of £50 to the hall managers for a floor revarnish. A successful day but also, in the words

of one club member, "probably the worst ride I have ever done."

Come the May event, the weather was no kinder with torrential rain from the off and no let up during the day - an average day in this dreadful summer. This was a shame as the event received over 300 entries this year. Only five years ago, a dozen or so club members, a few Kingston Wheelers guys and a handful of other people would ride this event. Now it is so popular that the insurance policy has required several increases in cover, the logistics of buying refreshments and ferrying them to the checkpoints is discussed at length at several club committee meetings, and the www.cyclosporitive.org website rated the event at 8 out of 10 based on difficulty of the ride, scenic value and organisation (for comparison, the Dragon Ride gets 9 and La Marmotte 10) all tribute to organiser Tony Sayers. Despite the weather, 200 or so riders took to the road on the day. Third overall on the 85 mile course was Alan Parkinson, who stormed round the course with fellow clubmen Ralph Swallow and Trevor Lenthall, eventually dropping both on the return leg for a solo finish. Having wimped out of the long ride at the first checkpoint, I was first club rider back (and 5th overall) on the short course. Special mention must go to Alan Brunnsden, not long recovered from serious illness, who achieved a gold medal time on the 85 mile course which he rode with no waterproof jacket.

It's worth mentioning that these two events are very lucrative for the club, earning us around £3000 (after costs). This money is used to fund a number of purchases and promotions by the club. Another benefit is an enormous cache of bottled water, more than a hundred two-litre bottles being stashed away in a committee member's garage. (This surplus is mainly due to the many no-shows at the second event. It has since been donated to a local fete.)

There was very active participation by SWRC members in cyclosporitives further afield. The highest profile event this year was the Etape du



Britain run over the London-Canterbury stage of this year's Tour. Needless to say poor weather accompanied the event but this did not dampen the spirits of our man at the etape, A Parkinson himself. Setting off with the fast men in the first group at 6am, as befits his talents, progress was initially slow as the group was forced to stop at the many red traffic lights encountered on the way through south-east London. Closed roads maybe, but traffic control measures were still active. After a while the lights were ignored and a 20mph+ pace was maintained out into Kent countryside. This would have been fine all the way to Canterbury except for the lack of refreshments at the checkpoints - the vanguard beat the supplying vans and had to ride through with no bottle refill or food uptake. Famished and thirsty, Alan reached Canterbury in 5h47m and in 42nd place (out of some 5000 riders). Steve Walters, better known to most people as (Wee Willie) Wombat, also had an excellent ride, finishing with an average of 20mph.

Three club men - Trevor Lenthall, Ralph Swallow and myself - rode the the White Rose Classic in June, 115 miles through the Yorkshire Dales and for once a dry sunny day. As preparation for this, the three of us plus Sabin Gaztelua, Andy McKie and Parkinson minor had had a training weekend in Wales a few weeks before. Beset by intermittent heavy showers all day long, we managed a 140 mile ride through the Brecon Beacons and Cambrian Mountains. Hilly was the word as we scaled (among many others) the 25% Devil's Staircase, the 25% Glaschw Hill and the 1827 feet high Gospel Pass - a bit of an epic ride for all of us. All this put us in good stead for the White Rose which had its own fair share of 1 in 4 climbs and descents. After a sleepless night which saw Trevor vacate the double bed he was sharing with Ralph (I won't go into the details), we set off at 8.50am at a cracking pace which saw me dropped after the first couple of hills. Riding at my own pace and drifting in and out of other groups on the road, I made good progress up Wharfedale, over Shaking Moss into Hawes (where

I saw the others leaving the feed station), up the 25% climb from Garsdale Head to Dentdale and then the 20% climb from there to Ribbleshead; past the famous viaduct, over the hills to Malham for the third checkpoint and straight back on the bike for the last two hours. There was no relief as a series of smaller climbs, including the vicious 25% Langbar Bank which forced many riders to dismount and walk, took their toll. Amazingly, having not seen him for more than 100 miles, I caught Ralph with one to go and we sprinted across the line together for silver medal times of 7hr 39mins. Trevor, despite the night's shenanigans, was 20 minutes up the road getting well-deserved gold. The winning time on this very hard course was an impressive 6 hours.

On the same day, Alan and Andy rode the 115 mile Highclere cyclosportive in Hampshire. A new event, this one crosses Hampshire from north to south and back again, taking in the steep Inkpen Hill towards the end (this climb featured in the Newbury weekend organised by Patrick Canglely a few years ago and is, I believe, the hill he once saw a man descend at speed on a recumbent). Our men attached themselves to a group consisting mainly of Pedalon Team riders and hammered round the course at over 20mph. Getting detached on the last few climbs, both came in at around the 6 hour mark.

Also there was Mark Williams who got a silver medal, as he also did at the Gran Fondo Cymru - 100 miles around Snowdonia in (needless to say) pouring rain, with a crash and a damaged knee thrown in for good measure. Mark did take gold in his next event, the Dragon Ride, 125 dry, sunny and hilly miles round the Brecon Beacons.

Trevor's next ride was October's Autumn Classic, 90 miles around Rhayader in mid Wales and reprising some of the climbs we had done earlier in the year. He was 23rd (out of 650), completing the 90 miles in 5:04.

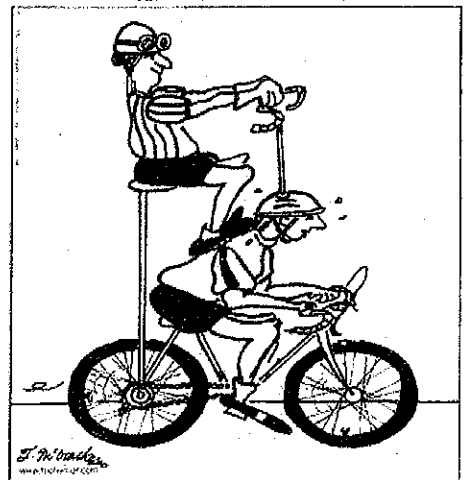
Abroad, Dudley Samuels arranged his annual trip to Italy for the Gran Fondo

Pinarello. Sabin and John Harris tackled the 120 mile version, finishing in 7:18 and 8:08 respectively. Tacked on to either end of this already lengthy ride was 20 miles to and from the hotel, making for a Gran Total of 160 miles on the day. Talk on my part about our 140 miles in Wales was ended by this impressive statistic. Dudley, Bill McCombe and Pete Sturton completed the intermediate ride for a paltry 125 mile total.

But the ride of the year must be Paul Alderson's second Paris-Brest-Paris attempt. At 1200km/750miles this is the daddy of all sportives (randonees, audaxes or whatever we wish to call it). This year the sheer distance was compounded by appalling weather, France not escaping the wind and rain thrown at Britain this summer. With the Dragon Ride as mere training - 22nd overall in 6:14 - along with qualifying rides of 200, 300, 400 and 600km, not to mention his record-breaking 24hour ride, Paul finished PBP in 69hours 45mins. Incredibly this is the same as his previous time - his pace-making skills must be extraordinary to contrive that. Paul is already talking about doing PBP again in 4 years time. More details on the SWRC blog at <http://southwestern-swrc.blogspot.com>.

Mark Packman

MCHUMOR by T. McCracken



"Dear, could I suggest one small change for our next custom built tandem?"



SURREY CYCLE GUIDES

Did you know that Surrey County Council produce a series of eight maps covering the county (and some of the surrounding areas)? These were updated early in 2007 and copies should be available from local libraries, town halls and cycle shops or from the contact centre (tel: 08456 0 0 9 0 0 9 o r contactcentre@surreycc.gov.uk).

EARLY SEASON CYCLOSPORTIVE

Dave Pinder graciously offered to organise this year's early season Cyclo sportive. The event takes place on Saturday 4th February starting from the Fetcham Village Hall again at 9.?? and will be run over the same course as last year. The only difference being (we hope) is that the weather will be a lot kinder to us (many of you will remember the torrential rain we were blessed with last year.

Any one wishing to enter the event should send a completed entry form (available from the swrc web site) together with the appropriate fee to Dave as soon as possible - Dave had already received about 40 entries within a few days of the opening date of 1st January. Although Dave will gladly take your entries, he will be even more pleased to accept offers of help. If you are not available, please bear in mind that we will need even more help for our May Cyclo sportive event (Sunday 11th May - to be confirmed) because there are two routes involved and feed stations/check points to man.

THE BICYCLE MEN

One of the lead roles in the above musical comedy show, in Slington this winter, was none other than Dan Castellaneta (who? - Ed). Dan, as you

all know is the voice of the well known Homer Simpson (of course - Ed). The musical comedy tells the story of Steve, an American who arrives in a mysterious village whilst on a cycling trip through France, wrecks his bike and is unable to leave. A wild goose chase ensues, involving various wacky characters under the direction of a Viking-helmeted bicycle god, as Steve lurches from one surreal encounter to the next. Unfortunately, the run of the show ended on 31st December, when Dan returned to the States. The contributor of this article however, said that if they wish to continue the show into 2008, he could think of a couple of our members who could fall straight into the parts of the hapless Steve who wrecks his bike or the manic Bike God with the weird helmet - names on a postcard to the editor please.

By the time you read this you will have missed the show, but don't worry yourself too much - I understand it was not in the same league as Phantom on the (Pinarello) Opera, Coinage Chicago or Peddler on the Roof.

MORE EVENTS

A resume of events planned for 2008 was included in our last edition but, since then, the following have been

added:-

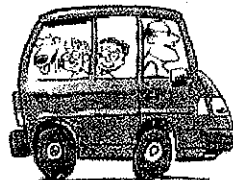
1. Dudley Samuels is planning to go to Italy (outward bound on Thursday 22nd May - returning on Saturday 24th May) to see Stage 13 of this year's Giro. Return flights will be to/from London, Stansted and Venice, Triviso and will set you back about £100 with bike box. Two nights stay in the hotel plus transfers to and from Triviso airport should also cost around £100 (with 2 sharing a room including breakfast and evening meal).

Further details are available from Dudley, but don't delay - Dudley booked his own flight early in December.

2. Alan Parkinson is keen to encourage members to join him on the 'Hell of the North' mountain bike ride which takes place on 13th April. Only the long standing members will remember that one year we managed to enter a field of over 50 for this event. Further details were sent out recently via e.mail or are available directly from Alan. Again, if you are interested, don't delay as numbers are limited and these events fill up fast.

If you are on e.mail, but do not currently receive the regular bulletins (such as the above) etc sent out by

The Wheels of Life





Andy Hicks, please let Andy know so that he can add you to his circulation list.

TIMES ARTICLE

At the end of December, The Times printed an article by Matthew Parris calling for decapitation of cyclists by stringing piano wire across country lanes.

I think we can all take a joke, but this seems to be going too far, given the spate of cases where motorists' passengers lean out to push cyclists off their bikes "for a laugh" following anti-cyclist remarks by Jeremy Clarkson and Nigel Havers. I am not a lawyer, but wonder if the remarks by Matthew Parris could be illegal? They are certainly irresponsible, and I wonder if Matthew Parris would have

YOUR ARTICLE HERE

We are always grateful of material for Bottom Gear. Can you pen a report about that charity ride or cycling holiday? Have you read any interesting facts about cycling that other members may be interested in? Are you planning a cycling trip or an entry in an event in which you would like some company?

If the answer to any of the above, is 'Yes', then please contact me, the editor. Articles can be submitted in any format from e-mails to handwritten notes on a tea room serviette and I would particularly like to hear from any first time contributors.

Tony Sayers

made them if he had any children or grandchildren who ride bicycles?

I have written a complaint to the Press Complaints Commission using their website at www.pcc.org.uk/complaints/process.html. They wrote back to say that I

need to attach a copy of the article, which is what I have done. I have copied you in (this applies to those who have already received Andy's note via e.mail), in case you wish to make a complaint too.

On a more cheerful note Happy New Year! - Andy Hicks

CYCLING SHORTS

Tumble - At the end of October there was a tumble on the Saturday club run. It happened on a dry, but slippery/smooth bend in the road coming down from Poldsen Lacey. Steve Walter suffered bruised ribs and poor Bob Waller sustained a broken hip. You will be pleased to know that Bob is now well on the way to recovery and even managed to join us at the annual prize giving dinner (although he did leave it to his wife, Maggie, to represent the Waller clan on the pre-dinner walk).

Presentation of Awards - Once again Dawn & Roger Jackaman stepped into the vacant shoes of our Social Secretary to organise this annual event on the tried, tested and very successful; Annual presentation of Awards/Lunch preceded (for the fit and able) by a hunger inducing walk in the countryside. Like several of our events this year, the weather was against us, but this did not stop about 12 hardy souls from turning up (and enjoying) a walk in the countryside near Farnham. The lunch, in the Pride of the Valley Hotel was well worth the £21.50 fee and saw over 40 members and partners sitting down to such delights as Smoked Trout with Horseradish, traditional Roast Turkey and Blueberry Cheesecake.

New record ? - Enthused by all the talk at the annual lunch and prize giving presentation of records being broken, Dave Pinder was obviously keen to break a record or two of his own. The weather on the Saturday following the annual dinner was somewhat damp. Even so, 12 members turned up on their bikes at Cobham car park. Most remarked the rain had been getting progressively harder on their outward journey. Dave and, following his example, Ted Collins both arrived at the car park in their cars with their bikes 'in the back'. In the event, neither bothered to get them out. Mostly through a half open car window Dave suggested a short ride to Rykers Café since the weather was a bit damp and the forecast was predicting worse to come. All agreed (possibly influenced by Dave's reluctance to cycle). As the rest of us arrived at Rykers 30 or so minutes later, we found Ted and Dave inside in the warm and with Dave already tucking into 'double beans on toast'. However, I am afraid a five mile car ride to the refreshment stop is not a record. I have been putting this newsletter together for long enough to remember an earlier edition where some members arrived at an alternative meeting point in Epsom only to find it raining and so they just walked across the road to a nearby café. Fed and watered, they then drove home. I also seem to remember that one of these members was none other than the aforementioned David Pinder.

Postman Mugged - Cycling out to join the club run last Saturday, I noticed Sabin come out from the Private estate by Claremont lakes. I have not been able to take this short cut myself since last summer when they installed new gates (and more crucially a new lock) - Sabin must have found out the keypad combination I thought (I'm quick like that!). Sabin informed me he had got the combination from Andy (the brick) McKie, who, in turn, got it by 'leaning' on the postman. If my memory serves me right the 'secret' number is 0607 - but don't tell anyone.