

# ON YER BIKE

Cycling is enjoying a massive boom. The New Year is the perfect time to set new goals and **David Butler** from Oxshott's Personal Training Centre might just prove to be an inspiration

**Y**ou've been planning a change of lifestyle in order to lose a few pounds, improve your lung capacity and generally feel fitter and sharper. Well, it's probably high time you met David Butler from the Personal Training Centre in Oxshott.

Together with his highly qualified team of experts, David might be a one-stop-shop solution. From his perspective, getting on your bike is a good start.

This summer, David and three other bike nuts, Paul, Connol and Trevor, set off for the Pyrenees. Trevor, the retired police officer, bike mechanic and general all round handyman (just the type of guy you need on a trip like this) loaded up his Toyota van with four bikes, spare wheels, tools, gels, energy drinks and vaseline and drove on and off the Portsmouth to Bilbao ferry.

David the trainer, Connol, the chartered surveyor, and Paul, the universal management consultant, followed in the air a day later for a rendezvous at Bilbao airport. A two-hour drive to Hendaye on the Atlantic coast, a bike and kit check, a slap up dinner with stacks of carbs, a good night's sleep, and a 7am start on the Monday saw them on their way from the chic town of St Jean de Luz for seven days in the hills.

The foothills of the Pyrenees were supposed to be the easiest day, but 138km later and a 15 per cent climb thrown in, they arrived at a little village hotel in Larrau. More carbs and protein recovery drinks, plus vaseline and chammy cream, and they were up for another early start.

Larrau to Arrens, via the Marie Blanc and the mighty Aubisque, and they arrived at a rustic peasant French hotel with more than they could eat of the tastiest local dishes. It certainly refuelled the efforts of 30km of climbing over 9,000 feet over another 120km.

Wednesday featured the climb over the immense Tourmalet (7,000 feet high) and a race

down through La Mongie, over the Aspin and into Arreau just in time for a beer to watch England beat Slovenia 1-0.

The Peyersourde, Portillon, Col de Menthe and the Portet d'Aspet followed, another 10,000 feet and a short spell in Spain, and they dined on the most exquisite grub on a St Lary hotel deck, alongside a tumbling white water mountain river.



The next day was another clear blue sky and 35°C, with no shade on the mountains. It was a long slog to Ax-les-Thermes, finishing just as the sun was setting, but a huge juicy steak was a great reward. David and his colleagues were burning 8,000 to 9,000 calories each day and living off energy drinks, bars, bananas, cheese and ham baguettes. The dinners were certainly welcome.

Saturday saw them up the Pailheres for 22km and on and on. Connol huffed and puffed on the final push. He's 60 but supremely fit, and spluttered: "Wild horses wouldn't drag me up here." At the top of Pailheres there are the most magnificent wild horses looking on with complete confusion as to why grown men would choose to cycle up 7,000 feet on wheels, rather than on their backs.

Sunday delivered a flat ride in to Cerbere, with

the tantalising view of the Med along the Corniches for the last 20km. But then there was the finish and a dive into the deep blue cool sea.

Next year, David plans to ride from London to Paris, Alpe d'Huez and the Surrey May Sportive with South Western Road Club.

The Personal Training Centre has its own Cycle Group, meeting every Sunday morning at PTC in Oxshott all year round.

David established the Centre in 1996, bringing together teams of experienced and highly-qualified male and female trainers and therapists.

Motivation, support and encouragement are three key factors to maintaining a successful exercise programme. This combination delivers results and helps to achieve goals in an enjoyable and safe environment.

To begin a personal training programme with PTC, all you need is the desire to improve your lifestyle, physical condition, performance and well-being. You need not be familiar with exercise, the equipment or the technique. Your trainer will devise your programme, and direct you at the level that is ideal for you.

As the saying goes: "You can't hit a target if you don't know what it is." Before your first training session with PTC they'll take you through a unique and comprehensive Vie3 Lifestyle Evaluation that will indicate exactly where you're starting from. The evaluation includes Fitech computerised V5 fitness assessment, including VO2 max (aerobic fitness), blood pressure, lung function, body composition, grip strength, Structural and Functional assessment with the osteopath and a Dietary Consultation and strategy with the nutritionist.

After the assessment, you will receive a comprehensive report, detailing your current level of health and fitness.

PTC has created a unique environment to



support you in achieving your goals, combining one-to-one training with an extensive range of complementary therapies, including nutrition, osteopathy, sports massage, physiotherapy, Pilates and homeopathy.

Oxshott has its own PTC and is the headquarters for the PTC group. David Butler is a former police officer and Home Office physical training and self-defence instructor. He has over 20 years experience in the industry and specialises in health and fitness assessments including gait analysis and foot biomechanics, running, cycling, swimming and triathlon coaching.

He graduated with a chemistry degree in 1981 and spent a year in the chemical industry before joining the police force. He worked with the drugs squad, regional crime squad and special support group before being selected as the force physical training instructor due to his involvement in sport representing the police in athletics and swimming.

After eight years in the police he left to join Roche pharmaceuticals and then Syntex in a sales and marketing role, working with the major teaching hospitals in London. In 1994 he moved into the health and fitness industry and set up The Personal Training

Centre in Fulham, a dedicated one-to-one centre with a team of trainers and a range of complementary therapists.

PTC offers a range of health and fitness services particularly focusing on sports injury treatment and training, post-op rehabilitation and specific fitness and nutritional goals, working closely with osteopaths, physiotherapists, nutritionists and GPs.

Whatever your goal, PTC can coach and guide you to achieving it. The Vie3 Lifestyle Evaluation is the key to identifying strengths and weaknesses, and focusing on improving your performance and vitality. As well as specific training in the gym PTC goes outside and offers Adventure Bootcamp for women and Fighting Fit for men.

Adventure Bootcamp takes place at Oxshott Village Sports Club on Mondays and Fridays at 8.45am and on Oxshott Heath on Wednesdays. The boys train on Saturdays at 9am at Oxshott Village Sports Club. 'Fighting Fit' is a mixture of circuits, intervals, boxing and self defence, normally finishing off with a short game of football.

Lots of business networking goes on during the sessions, and business deals and friendships are cemented.

Then on Sunday mornings it's the Cycle Club, which is free. It's another hot bed of bankers, chief executives and business owners, mainly in their forties and fifties who are discovering the freedom of the roads and the health and fitness benefits of reliving their youth.

The team at Oxshott is there to help you achieve your goals. Rochelle Butler is PTC's homeopath, trainer and sports massage therapist, Samantha Teague is a trainer with an MSc in sports psychology and exercise performance, while Tim Mills is PTC's resident osteopath. The team is completed by nutritionist Amanda Allan.

Now PTC has partnered with the operators of a number of UK wide leisure centres, and is currently recruiting trainers and therapists across the UK to put the PTC concept into the leisure centres.

The PTC concept is growing. So get on yer bike. ●

## ● essence info

● **The Personal Training Centre**

● **Telephone:** 01372 844801

● **Website:** [www.thepersonaltrainingcentre.com](http://www.thepersonaltrainingcentre.com)