

# THE SQUIRREL



Summer 06



### Social Secs Corner

As the long hot summer becomes a distant memory, it's time to change down a gear and head into the social season!

Please support the Fun 8 on Saturday 9th September at the Kilton pub on the A50, meeting in the car park at 1:00 pm, don't forget it's for two ups and tandems only.

The Hill Climb takes place on the 1st October at Withenshaw Lane, Higher Sutton, meeting afterwards at the Ryles Arms for lunch. Please contact me beforehand to book a place.

The Last event this year will be the Club Xmas Hot Pot run on Sunday the December 17th at High Legh Village Hall as usual. Tickets £5.00 (closing date Friday 8th December.)

This years theme is 'XMAS' for a change, lets see if we can break the record for Father Xmas's.

Roger Haines

### Tourist Trophy Programme

- 10 Sept** Beard Cup Hill Climb
- 24 Sept** 100 in 8, Altrincham
- 15 Oct** Holmes Chapel Audax 204/152km
- 1 Oct** Brian Rourke Challenge Ride
- 8 Oct** Flintshire Challenge, Mold
- 12 Nov** Cheadle Audax 210km
- 8-10 Dec** Montgomery weekend
- 27 Dec** (or thereabouts) John Coles off road ride

Plus other weekends away, car-assisted rides, off road rides, etc.

### MID-WEEK RUNS

**Tuesdays:** Matthews Garden Centre is now **closed**. The Tuesday group are now meeting at GRASSLANDS nursery from 12 noon. Grasslands is on Free Green Lane which runs from Lower Peover to the A50, coming out about 400/500 yards north of the Drovers on the A50.

### Forthcoming Attractions

**9th September** - Fun '8' For Tandems and 'Two ups' only, so get your partners now! Meet at the Kilton at 13:00.

**1st October** Club Hill Climb at 11:00 am Withenshaw Lane, Higher Sutton - don't forget to book with Roger.

**17th November** AGM Clubroom.

**9-11th December** Montgomery weekend, contact Robin.

**17th December** Xmas Hotpot run. As usual there will be a fancy dress competition, this years theme is Xmas - book with Roger.

**10th February 2007** Annual Club Dinner, Cinnamon Club. Tickets from the Chairman.

# Inside this Issue

- 5 Meet Your Clubmate.....Allan Thompson
- 6 My Commonwealth.....Matt Crampton
- 7 Tourist Trophy.....Dave Barker
- 9 19 Gates + A Mere Trifle.....Carol Pardoe
- 10 Cycling the River Loire.....John Mercer
- 12 Club Clothing.....Tim Seddon
- 13 L'Ardechoise.....Dave Barker
- 16 Wild Wales.....Dave Mathews
- 18 Top Messing.....Gordon Peake
- 20 My First 12.....Allan Blackburn
- 23 Carrington Moss.....Haydon Perry
- 24 Malc Judge.....Johnny Pardoe
- 26 Testing Times.....Mike McConville
- 29 Xmas Hotpot Form.....Roger Haines
- 30 The Skirts of Kinder Scout...Haydon Perry

Cover: Peter Devine on Col de Rates.

'The Squirrel' is the magazine of the Seamons Cycling Club. Editor— Pete Coles, 72 Bold Street, Altrincham, WA14 2ES. ☎ 0161 929 1462 or e-mail [pete@thepot.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:pete@thepot.freeserve.co.uk). Club website at [www.seamons.org.uk](http://www.seamons.org.uk) from where the on-line version of this magazine is available in PDF format.

# BITS AND BITS

## Seen on the web.

### Some advice for 'Tour Riders'

1. As soon as you see somebody falling in front of you, use the self-stability of the bike to generate a sharp lean and hence a sharp turn to avoid the fallen rider by applying a strong counter-steering force on your handlebar. You do this by pushing out on the hand that is toward the falling rider (and better yet by simultaneously pulling back on the hand that is away from the falling rider). This momentarily turns your handlebar toward the falling rider and forces the bike to lean away, and hence to turn away, from said rider. The self-stability of the bike granted by sufficient fork trail works to bring the forces in balance to keep you upright when you push the contact patch of the front tire out from under your center of mass. It works way better than trying to steer away from the fallen rider, which I promise you will have a low rate of success. I am convinced that avoiding running into fallen riders will be a more successful method for keeping you from falling than will be improving your abilities at riding over prone bodies and bikes.

2. Failing that, practice getting your butt rapidly back off the saddle as you shift your weight back to lift your front wheel up onto the fallen rider's body. Bring your butt down and back as quickly as you can as you go over the top, and push straight outward on your handlebars as your front wheel comes back down toward the pavement. This will reduce the amount of weight on the front wheel, which is very important, because you know from Figure 40.5 that your front wheel will be trying to turn the wrong way when it hits. If you can reduce the amount of weight on it, you have a better chance of getting it to go the direction you want and hence staying upright. Lennard (from VeloNews)



### Recovery Drinks.

Carbohydrate recovery drinks provide extra carbohydrate plus protein, in a ratio of 4:1. Brand names include Accelerade and Endurox R4. Studies have shown that this combination can boost performance and reduce free radicals and muscle damage, vs. using a sports drink that only replaces carbohydrates and electrolytes.

### Any Better Than Chocolate Milk?

Researcher Jason Karp, M.S. of Indiana University tested chocolate milk vs. Endurox R4 recovery drink vs. a regular sports drink. The chocolate milk has the magic 4:1 carbohydrate to protein ratio, is cheap and tastes good. He used nine endurance cyclists who did an interval training workout, rested 4 hours drinking the chosen test drink, then worked out to exhaustion. Each rider was given each drink on three different days. The results - chocolate milk was as good as or better than the sports recovery drink and the regular sports drink for performance, heart rate, perceived exertion, and lactate levels.

### Paramedics to get on their bikes.

#### Ambulance bikes

Controllers hope the move will cut response times

Paramedics are to use mountain bikes to get to emergency calls in Manchester city centre, in an attempt to cut accident response times.



The scheme has been brought in to cope with heavy traffic, more pedestrianised areas and building work in the city. The bikes are fitted with large baskets containing medical equipment and a map on top, should they need it. The system is being trialled for six months but if successful, could be rolled out in other nearby areas. Greater Manchester Ambulance Service said if it can reduce waiting times, even by 30 seconds, patients will benefit.

### Trafford Cycling Forum

To bring you up to date after the story in the last Squirrel.

The Trafford Cycling Forum is to be re-established this autumn. Anyone wishing to contact the council with agenda items etc can do so on

[cycling@trafford.gov.uk](mailto:cycling@trafford.gov.uk)

or via Cycling Forum Issues  
c/o Built Environment Team  
Waterside House  
Sale Waterside  
Sale  
M33 7ZF

We were all shocked and saddened by the untimely death of Malk Judge, his popularity was reflected by the number of Seamons and other club members from the area, who attended his funeral and lunch afterwards.  
Roger Haines

### Friday November 17th AGM Clubroom.

Nominations for President to be in writing and seconded. Send to the Secretary. Also items for inclusion on the Agenda to be sent to the Secretary, in writing, not less than 28 days prior to the meeting.

### WHIPPETS IN LYCRA

Pedal, pedal  
over the Cat and Fiddle  
gasp at the top  
collapse at the bottom.

Push on, pedal  
until the next pub  
gulp down a beer  
or two or three.

Remount, pedal on  
nearly there, nearly where?  
There they are  
whippets in lycra  
streams of yellow and blue  
the fit, the thin Sunday biker.

Jennifer Robinson

All members are invited to the Old Market Tavern, Altrincham on Friday 15th September from 9:00pm, for Mike Brooks's Birthday celebrations.



Intel Inside

# Meet your Clubmates

Our clubmate this month is yet another mature newcomer to the club. A mid-life re-appraisal seems to have had an effect both his mental and physical aspirations. He returned to cycling and joined the Seamons, despite having to travel from Swinton to do so, and is now a regular on the touring section clubruns. The competitive urge is not too suppressed however and you are as likely to meet him at the club '10's. A late surge into academia saw him get a degree from the Open University which indicates that behind the quiet exterior of **Allan Thompson** lies a fiercely determined individual.

**When and where were you born?** 15th June, 1945. Hope Hospital, Salford.

**When did you start cycling, and what was your first club?**

Lone cycling and a few outings with the old Salford C.C. Seamons then followed as the first Club.

**What is your favourite touring area?** Sedbergh - Hawes - Leyburn in the Yorkshire Dales. Discovered during several C-2-C rides.

**What is your favourite meal?** Most things Mexican from Chiquito's in the Quays.

**What were you like at school?** Just above average, until a late renaissance in my fifties, with an O.U. Maths/Physics degree.

**What kind of books do you read?** Political, depicting the history of the Russian and Chinese revolutions. Scientific biographies.

**What kind of music do you enjoy?** Smooth jazz, country and western and popular classical.

**And your favourite type of TV programme?** General live sport, scientific documentaries.

**Which newspaper do you read?** Sunday Times, which is usually read during the week, because of the Club run.

**What's your ideal holiday destination?** Cornwall, enjoying hills without the bike!

**Do you have any hobbies?** Mainly cycling, with a few attempts at swimming and running, and other sporting activities.

**Who would play you in a film of your life?** Any comedy actor, to give my wife a laugh.

**What is your greatest fear?** This will be the worry of anything happening to my family.

**How would you describe yourself in a Lonely Hearts ad?** Sporty gent seeks female for adventures in tandem.

**What is your favourite training ride?** Longnor and its surrounding areas.

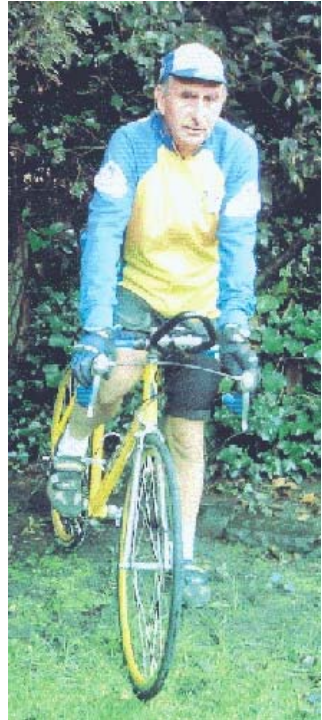
**What is your most unpleasant characteristic?** Can be very stubborn at times, so I am told.

**Which characteristic do you most dislike in others?** Two extremes: indecisiveness and arrogance.

**Who would you most like to have met, and why?** Albert Einstein to ask if time really could go slower (would help my '10' times).

**What was your most embarrassing moment?** On a busy Saturday morning, buying a set of weights from a sports shop in Market Street, Manchester. Lifting the weights in the shop a large tear occurred at the rear of my pants. Two trips to the car had to be made walking "crab like" down the Street!

**Four words to describe yourself.** Just does about enough.



## My Commonwealth Games Experience



Well, back home now from what was a great experience, arriving in Perth Australia on the 02/01/06 I was unaware of what was to be ahead. Me Chris [Hoy] and Ross [Edgar] settled in quickly to the glorious weather, accommodation, quiet roads and good food, training was quickly resumed and soon Shane and Jason arrived and we got straight to business. Jason and Shane were apprehensive about my progress, my standing starts were seconds off what Jason was doing and knowing that Jamie Staff was going to go quicker than 17.8 [his p.b was 17.6]. So a new plan was drawn up consisting of starts and speed drills then incorporating some turbo, interval workouts and almost immediately my times were starting to improve, several tenths off the starts and a tenth here on the speed work.

We had a sprint run out at the start of February using Scotsman Marco Librizzi for starting duties, he went 18.1 culminating in a 45 odd second overall time good enough for second behind the Scots with Australia 3rd. My lap was fairly decent only 1.2 or so off Chris. My turbo session started at this point 30secs on 1 min off at 40mph and 4% incline, sounds kind of easy but the lactic burn after the third and final effort is immense and then you do it all again. I hated these sessions, especially as I had to wait all day until 16:00 usually so that I would be fully recovered from the days previous [everything was scrutinised hence time frame]. Though afterward there's a lot of per-

sonal satisfaction from a serious workout. Just four weeks to go now so all systems are go, carbon wheels at three weeks to go and loads of rest is the order of the day, starting to get a little home sick now and the pressure is building more so as living right there with your closest rivals [the Scots].

Four hours of flying were here, Melbourne 2006, one and a half weeks to go. We have a personal bus taking us to the village only me Vicky, Jason and Shane [manager/coach], through the security checks and were in. Wow, not what I had expected. A purpose built village with own road network huge dining room with foods from every culture and something for everyone. Thousands of sports people wondering around, this feels amazing. Everyone is buzzing and eager to start. My training takes a knock for the first few days whilst I get my legs back after the flight. Melbourne is quite a nice city, very European though and the track is first class, so smooth and the arena was huge. 1 day to go, I can't wait, let's not talk of the Kieran, fresh legs for the sprint and I'm determined to do a good ride, I had my eyes on a 10.2 but a 3.007, I was chuffed second fastest it's all working out through the first round then bayley, not to be, Travis, I underestimated him a little plus I rode the same all day so he had me covered.

Team sprint. Running on adrenaline and fear, terribly anxious coming to the line. No matter how many training drills you do nothing can prepare you until you see, hear and do the race, 5,4,3,2,1, go I missed the start a little, the bleeps are terrifying but I quickly found my pace and got on to Jason to record a 44.57, once you start everything is all so fast and before you know it it's all over. There was a horrible feeling of failure after the first ride and my nerves were shot, I could see my team mates were down and all the England staff so to see oz record a 44.58 just behind us was somewhat relieving. I knew I had to get focused and ride above myself and that I could go 13.5 or even quicker, 5,4,3,2,1 GO, I'm on,

*(Continued on page 8)*

# Tourist Trophy

## Tourist Trophy 2006

As usual the summer months have started to sort out the contenders, but it is tight at the top.

Thirteen were out for the 50 in 4 at Easter. Keith has worked out two loops from Altrincham to Rodeheath and then back to Ashley with no/minimum repetition.

The two versions of the 100 in 8 have produced a fastest and a slowest ever. Dave Mac, Steve Booth, John Barry, Stuart Kay, Pete Vernon, Jon Rowlinson and John Pardoe got back at about 4 pm in May. A nameless group of tourists blame the heat, and therefore multiple stops, for their 7 pm finish in July. We are assured that their riding time was about 7 hours 15 minutes – so that's all right then. Reg Blease and John Carberry are the only 200 in 16 contenders so far. It was great to see Fred Foster who came over to ride the July event.

The Tatton Park Cancer Ride was immaculately marshalled once again.

Eleven members were at the York Rally in June. Some bike riding was done but the other efforts were eclipsed by Andy Burns who made it back along the Transpennine Trail (almost all off road) in one day.

Two continental trips were sufficiently large and official to qualify: Spain in April, the Alps in July.

Members have completed three Audax events. Carol Pardoe and Cath Schofield did the Holmes Chapel – Hawkstone and Dave Matthews completed the Corwen Three Lakes ride. In the Tour of the Berwyns we had the best ever tally of Seamons finishers (twelve) on the worst day yet. Once again we supplied

the first finisher, Steve Booth. Thanks to Dave Matthews for organising a superb event, and to all the helpers.

Among the other events for which points have been accumulated are Gordon's Treasure Hunt, Andy's off road series, and Manchester – Blackpool, where the club tandem got an extended outing steered by Richard Williams and stoked by his niece.

At the end of July, Gordon Peake leads with 8, followed by Reg Blease, Roger Haines, Keith Wilkinson and John Carberry, all on 7. Peter Coles, Andy Burns and John Pardoe are not far back.

## Best Cluman

At the end of July, it is starting to look like a three horse race, involving Phil Holden, Reg Blease and Peter Coles.

Leading positions:

Phil Holden	155
Reg Blease	153
Peter Coles	149
Mike McConville	137
Jon Rowlinson	132
Gordon Peake	130
Keith Stacey	122
John Barry	110
Tim Seddon	110
Dave Barker	108
Roger Haines	104
John Coles	102
Ian Udall	101
Mike Brooks	99
Nick Crampton	97
Allan Blackburn	95
Stuart Kay	91
Malc McAllister	91

## The Squirrel

*(Continued from page 6)*

everything flowed real nice, roll the bend then attack each line breaking the race up into quarters and 13.5 odd seconds later it's all over. Were second. The medal ceremony was brilliant full stadium photo's interviews like being a real celebrity! Standing on the podium was a really powerful moment, I was really proud of what had been and gone in the last few months.

Back home and three weeks to go until the World championships, I am confirmed for the sprint and Kieran and reserve for the team sprint. Things started out really well, though as I look back now I realize I was 'riding the wave' after the games but my training was going well my form was good.

Once we got to Bordeaux it really hit me, and brought me back down on my feet, this was the big one and all the big players were here and going well. I struggled at first to find focus; my confidence took a knock as my teammates showed great form and the pressure of a possible team sprint place came ever closer. Warming up for the team sprint was a horrible experience I felt tight and tired plus I was unsure weather I would get the ride I new there was a good chance they would put me in so but I felt as though I was forcing my-self to get psyched up. The Kieran stared much better I was ready to take it on, I had a good heat and new I had to hit out, I did and was just piped for second by René Wolfe. My following rides were pretty academic really being overhauled by Theo Boss and Tournant plus Bouragain. The track felt pretty fast and rumours of a 9second 200 qualifier were in the air. Though on the day the track was very cold less than 19 degrees I think, I wound up a little too early, mainly because of the heavy conditions but still qualified well with another 10.33 just off my p.b. Qualifying 14th fielding myself up against Teun Mulder of the Netherlands, I didn't have a great ride and didn't hold my position well from the back succumbing to take the front.

Although the worlds was not a great success, I learnt a lot from the experience and gathered



valuable information on my training and personal state coming up towards a competition, the commonwealths was my big aim and that is where I hit my targets.

*(Continued from page 9)*

set over the Cheshire Plain, back towards them there hills.

The checkpoints broke the route up well with food and comfort. Each time I arrived with my group JP was hurriedly leaving with his group and, anxious not to get left behind, he kept dashing up to me with his unfinished cake saying, "can you finish this for me?" No problem! The funny thing was, at the last café checkpoint in Chirk, when John and his group had long since gone, a complete stranger walked up to me and said, "Can you eat this cake for me?" It was a big chocolate muffin. Irresistible. And to complete my gastronomical day, there were free refreshments at the end, and because a number of riders didn't start or finish, there were a number of trifles going spare. Guess where they went? A mere trifle!

Many thanks to Dave Matthews for organizing it all, and to Margaret his wife patiently checking us in at the end, and to the helpers Clive Rock, Keith Wilkie and Roger, George Adams at Corwen, and Harvey and his dogs at Burwardsley. Put it on your calendar for next year.



I make it about 20. Well I got up to 14... where's Wilkie? He said he didn't want any more hills...There WERE a lot of hills. The cobbled lane round the back of Alderley Edge, Fools Nook, Langley, Standing Stones – ugh, we were each accompanied by our own personal swarm of flies as we heaved and wobbled our very hot and clammy way up the 16% climb. At least it is short. Blissful descent down to Wildboarclough, then up again as we turn left towards the A54, left and up again, hot and clammy again, to the right hand turn at the top along a track.

Great views, lots of gates, lots of excuses to get off and hold the gate for everybody else. Thank you, thank you. Another welcome descent towards Gradbach Youth Hostel, then right for Royal Cottage and up again! Down briefly, then up, up, up to the Winking Man where an ambulance was waiting for us, well, actually for the Leek Festival of Cycling Sportive, 130 km. It was their check-point.

A hearty lunch, though a long time coming for some. Andy appeared to be eating Wilkie's maroon serviette, but it was his lollo rosso. Off again, down, down, down, quick left and over the Roaches, and up through the heather. Re-group at the top. The gate was held open for us by a marshall for the Leek Sportive event, telling us the way back to Leek. No, we're turning right by that hedge down there, JC has already disappeared. It's just a grassy, stony track. Everyone bumps and stumbles along, and it comes out, via more gates, on a delightful lane, really beautiful views, and a great descent somewhere at the back of Win-

cle. We're just heaving up again through Wincle when Reg's chain snaps. It's Bob's old bike, we say thank you Bob, we know you're with us in spirit, glad to see us sharing each other's pain and joy.

Aha! The Wincle by-pass. A well kept secret, even the Winclonians don't know about it. It avoids the double chevron climb and offers even more unspoilt views, and no traffic. And more gates. Up to Cleulow Cross, left and left, to Wincle Min and afternoon tea on the ridge. Well, down the steep track. And more gates. More views, a great day out, thank you Wilkie.

### *A Mere Trifle*

The Berwyns 200k. Not having ridden this distance for a number of years, I was anxious to see if grandma-hood had taken its toll. It had. I could hear the bell tolling as I died many deaths on the many climbs, sometimes in company, sometimes thankfully alone. The best climb for me was the Milltir Cerrig when I heard the cuckoo in the wooded bit at the bottom of the climb.

I was sort of with JC and Reg. JP was sort of with Don Andrews, Richard(?) the chain-mender (JP's), John Barrie, John Rowlinson and Dave Barker. John Carberry was now and again with Dave Matthews, except when his tyre blew out...Steve Booth started with Stuart Kay, but surged ahead and was first back, but luckily didn't eat all the trifles.

The scenery was beautiful, even in the rain. The views from the Panorama Way were stunning, the Dee valley to Corwen a treat, with a steam train whistling down below, and those back lanes from Llanrhaedr to Llanarmon so quiet and green, with rushing streams gushing by, and rushing dogs hurtling out of that farm – apparently they do it every year. And then that climb, how cruel, I died again. The sting in the tail was the final checkpoint at the Candle Factory, Burwardsley. Seriously UP. And then another sting in the tail to the Finish at Summertrees café, Kelsall, with yet another climb. But the feelings now were of elation (and elevation), and there was a fabulous sun-

*(Continued on page 8)*

## **CYCLING THE RIVER LOIRE**



Beafort Castle in Goudet

May 20th to June 5th 2006

### Introduction

The Loire is one of the great rivers of France, and is over 800 miles long. Its source is high in the volcanic Massif Central, and it flows north through some fine gorges before the valley opens out. At Orleans, the river turns through a right angle, and flows west until it meets the sea at St. Nazaire.

I consider France is the best country in the world for cycle touring with great country, quiet roads, reasonable weather, excellent and reasonably priced hotels, magnificent food, a fascinating history, and a host of interesting things to see. This route had all these things in abundance.

### Guidebook

There is an excellent guidebook "Cycling the River Loire" by John Higginson (Cicerone Press 01539 562069 £10) which gives details of accommodation, routes and roads, distances and things to see. The Loire is famous for its chateaux, which range from fortresses to exquisite country houses, but there are also fine cities, towns and villages, grand cathedrals, a myriad of lovely churches and some very interesting abbeys. Higginson gives notes on

all these in a very convenient pocket size book.

My accounts have stimulated some friends to follow some of my routes, so I will try to provide sufficient details for those who might want to repeat this one.

### Route Out

I used the European Bike Bus (01642 713710). This runs buses down the M1, starting at Middlesborough, crossing the Channel at Dover and continuing on three routes across Europe. I caught the bus at Wakefield at 0700 on Saturday May 20th, and took the Mediterranean route to Valence in the Rhone Valley, arriving at 0530 on Sunday May 21st. There is currently one bus a day on Sundays from Valence (123 metres) to St. Agreve (1050 m), leaving Valence at 0940. Buses are more frequent on weekdays. The bus is supposed to carry two bikes. The driver was reluctant to take my bike, even though there was only one other passenger, but was ultimately persuaded to take me. I therefore got to St. Agreve at noon.

I had had some sleep on the Bike Bus, but was not in perfect shape after a 24 hr coach journey. What should I do - cycle or stay in St. Agreve? My target was Gerbier de Jonc 1400m, the source of the Loire. The weather was fine, so I decided to cycle. Higginson recommends going by St. Martin de Valamas 550m. This would involve about 1000m of climbing. Study of a detailed map suggested a route St. Agreve - Fay sur Lignon - Les Estables - Gerbier de Jonc would be better, so I took this way. It involved 700m of relatively easy climbing through glorious volcanic mountain country. I was very tired when I got to Gerbier de Jonc.

Gerbier is a strange place. the main source of the Loire is a water spout flowing into a stone trough in a cow shed. I stayed in an excellent

gite d'etape there. When I woke up the next day, the place was in cloud, with rain and high winds. This was not very encouraging, so I started late.

### The Cycling Route

Gerbier is in the Ardeche, but almost immediately the route passes into the Auvergne. The river flows north through marvellous mountain scenery - great sweeping views of volcanic country covered with swathes of flowers. Even the dandelions looked beautiful. The hills in this area were quite demanding - sometimes two or three miles long - but fortunately not too steep. After a series of attractive gorges, the valley opened out and became flatter. This is pastoral country: I have never seen such contented cows.



The river here flows north, then northwest, and becomes much broader. Unfortunately, I had a north-westerly wind for several days, and cycling against this was hard work. But there was always a church, chateau or abbey to visit if I wanted a rest. Accommodation was sometimes a problem, particularly on Sundays and Mondays when most of the small independent hotels had their weekly shutdown. One Sunday, I tried six hotels before I found one that was open. The food was usually good, and sometimes excellent.

The river swung west, and the wind turned to the north. It continued to be fairly cold, and I wore my rain jacket for much of the time. But there was little rain. The westerly section of the Loire is the area of the great chateaux. I had visited many of these on previous trips, and so I concentrated on churches, abbeys and cathedrals. I also varied the standard route so that I could visit various wine estates.

The route was mainly on quiet country lanes. Typically, there is a major road on one bank of the river and a minor road on the other. For most of the time, the roads do not follow the river very closely. The only real traffic problems were in the cities like Orleans and Tours. Cycling here was unpleasant, but I wanted to see the cathedrals. I avoided Nantes, as I had been there before. The only other poor section was the final twenty miles from Savenay to St. Nazaire, which went past oil refineries and dockyards. St. Nazaire was an interesting port, and I enjoyed seeing the big ships going out to sea.

### Return Route

>From St. Nazaire, I cycled back to Savenay and caught a train from there to St. Malo via Rennes. Only the slower trains carry bikes: the fast TGVs have no room. St. Malo is a delightful walled city and port, with an interesting history and much to see. I stayed the night,

*(Continued on page 12)*

## The Squirrel

(Continued from page 11)

and then caught the day ferry to Portsmouth (9hrs). This was a bit of a shock, as they charged me £85 for the passage. It was Pentecost (Whitsunday) It would have cost £30 less the following day. The day ferry runs from Portsmouth to St. Malo. It might have been cheaper and quicker to take a train to Cherbourg: the ferry crossing to Portsmouth takes about three hours and there are usually two crossings a day. Details of both routes are available from Brittany Ferries (08705 360360)

I cycled 780 miles in 13 days without a rest day, averaging 60 miles and 1400 ft of climbing per day.

Wine Visits : notes for wine buffs

The Loire is one of the great wine growing regions of France, and I modified my route to visit a number of vigneron and tasting cellars. In Sancerre, I visited Vacheron, who is probably the best grower. His 05 Sauvignon Blanc was very good, but the revelation was his 03 Pinot Noir Special Cuvee - stunning, and better than 90% of Cotes de Nuits Pinot Noirs Premier Crus from a good year. Other Sancerres were also good. Visits to Joguet (Chinon), Filleautreau and Chateau de Villeneuve (both Saumur Champigny) were slightly disappointing as I did not like their 04 Cabernet Franc reds very much. Huet, in Vouvray, was excellent: a fine tasting of Chenin Blanc whites varying from dry to sweet (moelleux), with wines from a number of years. The final visit was to Baumard in Rochefort sur Loire. Here I tasted outstanding Chenin Blanc whites, including Savennieres (dry) and Coteaux du Layon and Quarts de Chaume (sweet). On each visit I was made very welcome, even though it was obvious I could not buy very much. The secret is to convince the vigneron that you are "serieux" - a combination of knowledgeable and interested. I seemed to be able to manage this.

## Club Clothing

Tim Seddon is placing an order for new club kcolthing at the end of September. Please contact Tim if you require any items. He will only be ordering items suitable for winter use. The following are be available for orders.

Long sleeve Jersey in Thermasquare Full zip	£32.35
Rainout Gilet	£32.35
Windtex Jacket (Windscreen High Fabric)	£58.20
Supa Roubaix bib tights with 3d Elastic pad	£43.00
Supa Roubaix bib 3/4 with 3d Elastic pad	£42.00
Arm warmers	£8.30
Leg warmers	£12.25

All prices including vat.



**Happy 80th Birthday to founder life member Bob Hill.**

Seen here supporting Malc Judge at the Mersey Roads 24 in 1978

## **L'Ardechoise**

Three of the hardest, hottest and best days on a bike, ever.

It was 6pm on the Friday evening – the second day. I was descending the Col du Pendu (Pass of the Hanged Man), heading for my digs at Lanarce. The N102 (French trunk road) came into view and two big artics thundered through. Suddenly it struck me that one of the reasons the last two days had been so magical was that these were probably the only trucks I'd seen in over 200 miles. Not that there had been much other traffic – apart from bikes.

Just over 2000 of us had set off from St Felicien on Thursday for the various three day rides; another 2000+ left on Friday for the two day events; I was to meet a handful of them at the digs that evening; Saturday was the big day with 8/9000 one day starters. Which meant, of course, that everyone was due to converge on St Felicien in an ever-increasing torrent on Saturday afternoon and evening.

Where were we? The Ardeche is a French departement immediately to the west of the Rhone valley; Grenoble is away to the north east and the Med is about the same distance to the south. It is mountainous without being Alpine. There are 40 named cols on the various rides; the highest is the unfortunate Hanged Man at 1435 metres and the highest summit, Mont Mezenc, weighs in at 1753 metres. It is also extremely isolated. One trunk road across the middle and one in the east up and down the Rhone Valley. Otherwise a network of B roads.

This would explain no trucks. It might also start to explain the remarkable way in which the locals have taken the event and the riders to their hearts. Nothing much happens all year, then along comes the biggest and best cyclo-sportive in France (way ahead of L'Etape in

the readers' poll conducted by the French CycloSport Magazine). Suddenly up to 13000 bike-riders are hammering through your village.

They need to be fed and watered, so in the



villages and at the summits of many cols there are rows of tables with water and other liquid top-ups, fruit, cheese and bread. Behind the tables are rows of villagers in white T shirts and yellow straw hats, trimmed with purple (colours of the Ardeche); outside the schools are lines of children all wanting to do high fives with every rider going through; the special L'Ardechoise song blares out from loudspeakers; there are visitors' books to be signed and little displays (about le Beage in the winter, for example - perishing; or about the villager who persuaded the organisers to take us over the Col du Millet for the first time – thanks a lot!); some places go in for blow-up Tour de France-style archways; everywhere there are flags, decorated bikes and farm-carts. Away from the villages you come across little groups sat by the roadside; a wave and a 'bon courage' mean so much, especially towards the end of a long, hard day.

The organisation was superb: detailed info over the internet and through the post; welcome pack with number and electronic tag; arrangements for transporting baggage which left you feeling that nothing was likely to go wrong, and nothing did; accommodation arranged for two nights; evening meals with stacks of pasta and more flagons of wine than any of us needed with another 100 miles in the

## *The Squirrel*

mountains looming next day; breakfast at 6 so that we could make an early start in the cool of the morning; every junction marked with a yellow arrow, including hundreds where you would never think of deviating even on a Johnny Coles club run; this meant that several thousand kilometres had been covered – immaculately; fully computerised information



system leaving me with the feeling that back in St Felicien they knew more about me and my whereabouts than I did myself; it also provided me with a beautiful certificate within 20 minutes of finishing, complete with shark-tooth profile of my ride. So for £100 I got my entry, two nights accommodation with meals, baggage transport, evening meal the night before the ride and when I finished, a maillot, with Mavic service thrown in - luckily I did not need it.

I also got access to an expertly designed route through a stunning part of rural France. The first day and a half, or 270 km, took in La Chataigne (literally The Chestnut – I'm still not sure why). In this area the valley bottoms were at 200 to 400 metres, the hillsides were heavily wooded and the cols ranged from 700 to 1150 metres. The big one was the Col des Quatre Vios which for me came up in the stifling heat of that first afternoon. My mentor, Daniel, had assured me that, over the top, I wouldn't need to turn a pedal for the next 30 km down into Privas. He'd reckoned without the southerly headwind which made the plateau really hard and did nothing for my morale. So the first mini crisis occurred later that

afternoon in the inferno of Privas: I'd done 165 km, I didn't want to do another pedal rev, but my kit was 20 km away at Darbres with the Col du Benas (500 metres of ascent) in between. Time for food, drink and a good talking to. Later, of course, I started to feel a whole lot better on the Benas when I saw that everyone else was in the same pitiable state. What? Me a sadist?

The rest of La Chataigne on the second morning was relatively easy – conditions were cooler until midday and there was no col over 800 metres. Then came the transition to Les Hautes Terres (The Highlands). The terrain now became more open, more rolling and less wooded. It was also volcanic (extinct) – so there were dramatic outcrops and almost perfectly round lakes in the old craters; the villages were built in characteristic very dark brown, nearly black, stone. In the Highlands you rarely dropped below 1000 metres, while the cols were typically between 1300 and 1450 metres. But first I had to get there via the next mini crisis.

I had lunch with a group from Lourdes in Joannas, a beautiful old village whose history and architecture deserved longer and closer scrutiny than I could give them – one of the penalties of 'doing' the Ardeche at 100 miles a day. I set off alone up the Beaume valley, 23 km long and just over 1000 metres of climbing. The heat was intense and by Valgorge I was pouring sweat and feeling rather the worse for wear. In retrospect, riding alone I was probably overcooking it. Two large Perrier's later I was starting to feel better. Then my salvation appeared in the form of poor Dominique (rather than Our Lady) of Lourdes who, it was immediately obvious, was having one of those days – hell on a bike. And Francis looked nearly as bad. Which left Alain and me to nurse them the rest of the way up the Col de Meyrand and then the Pendu. Amazing how much better you feel when others are taking a real pasting. And then there were compensations in the form of the most stun-



ning scenery the Beaume valley, green, wooded and shimmering in the heat below and behind us; then suddenly, over the top, the rolling hills of the Cevennes, layer after layer, stretched interminably into the distance. What would Dominique have given for Robert Louis Stevenson's donkey?

So as well as a great route and fantastic scenery, the Ardechoise provided marvellous company. Mes copins lourdais (my mates from Lourdes) helped to get me through the Friday. On the Thursday I kept leapfrogging an Italian couple who had ridden London-Edinburgh last year. A group of Belgians livened things up on Saturday on yet another col. 'Three days and we've lost one already. Forty cols and a funeral.' Original in Flemish, obviously a film buff; instant translation for my benefit. I wasn't quite sure what to say to a small French group with whom I'd had a really good burn-up on Saturday's highest col. They soon put me straight: handshakes and 'bravos' all round, after which we worked out that we were 100 metres or so higher than the highest mountain in Britain. The evening meal at Darbres, outdoors on the terrace, was a cosmopolitan version of the sessions we so enjoy: a group of French riders, Mike and Doug who work for the War Graves Commission in northern France and are now completely bilingual, and me, struggling to get by with school-boy French, reviewing the events of the day and putting the fear of God into each other about what lay ahead. A great night to round off a great day in the heat and the hills. Just like the other two days – magic!

(Continued from page 16)

ever. This tow was lost when we turned off the main road and followed several minor, steep roads that eventually led to Llyn Brenig. At this point the recent diversion kicked in and we had to descend to Llansannan and back up to Llyn Aled reservoir as the dam had sprung a leak and undermined the original route. Sum total of this diversion was an extra 2 miles, and 3 X 1 in 5 ascents.

The next village was Gwytherin where the Lion Inn was serving pints of shandy and big bowls of soup--how could we resist? After this impromptu stop we continued on over steep back roads to Llanrwst and Bettws y Coed. After tourist infested Bettws, we regained Wild Wales with a vengeance following a narrow, partly decomposing road over to Penmachno. A mountain bike would have been a distinct advantage on this stretch. We were relieved to have got over such a tough road to Penmachno, but this relief was soon shattered when we were told that the biggest climb of the day now lay ahead of us. Pausing only to fill my bottle with water at the pub, we set off up the 5 mile, 1000ft climb to the B4391 at the top of the moors. This road then descends 5 miles west to the control at Ffestiniog.

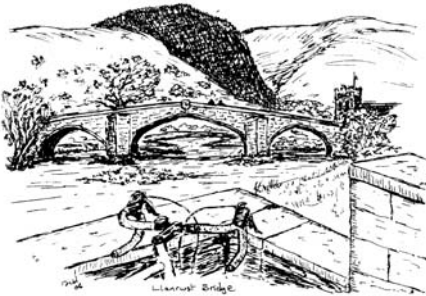
The control had some proper food at last which enabled us to stoke up for the return back up the B4391 and the minor Arenig road back to Bala. Fortunately we had a ferocious tail wind for this stretch, which considerably aided our return.

So it was back into Bala for the commemorative slate and sandwiches. On reflection, this route is the equal in difficulty with the hardest routes of the past few years and undoubtedly a worthy challenge. Well done to the new organisers for a great route and to Guy Saunders who successfully completed his first "Wild Wales" in just under 10 hours.





**CYCLISTS TOURING CLUB**  
**Welshyrade D.A.**  
**WILD WALES CHALLENGE**  
**Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> AUGUST 2006**



### “Wild Wales” Evolution

2004 it was the 21st anniversary of this challenging event based around Bala in N. Wales. On this auspicious occasion we were promised an especially hard 89 mile route going out to Dolgellau & Tywyn to celebrate. No one claimed false publicity as we finished an exhausting day up the difficult south side of the Bwlch y Groes. I can remember being so nervous at the thought of this climb following the previous 80 exhausting miles that I abandoned all my spare food in Dinas Mawddwy to save weight.

2005 marked another milestone as Dennis Holder decided to retire after 10 years as event organiser. Dennis promised an 87 mile route that took in many of his favourite places from previous editions. We got a double dose of the Hirnant pass to Lake Vyrnwy for the start and finish, with the route extending out to Machynlleth. The undoubted highlight of the ride was the traverse of the remote and beautiful Nant y Eira between Talerddig and Llan-gadfan. This valley is well worth a trip in its

own right and there are several possible circuits available. Overall a great route and slightly easier than 2004.

The new organisers, Ian Bulmer and Jim Walsh set out their philosophy for 2006 in the handbook---“Please remember that this event is a challenge and that it will be more than challenging for some”. With the longest route yet (90 miles that became 92 miles due to road works) and a stiff course based on the Denbigh/Ffestiniog area, this ride promised some real entertainment. My own level of apprehension was not helped by mutterings in the Eureka café that a number of regulars had given Wild Wales a miss this year, as it had got “too hard”. Well, there’s only one way to find out!

This year I was teamed up with Guy Saunders from the local CTC Tuesday section. Although new to cycling, Guy had previously been a rower. This background has given him a good physical base for the rigours of challenging cycling events.

We joined the usual long queue to sign in at Bala, which gave us the opportunity to meet other stalwarts of the event such as Graham Mills (who had ridden over from Corwen) and Dave Hill, fresh back from the Himalayas. Maybe Dave had a special edge this time out, riding hills 20,000ft lower than he has recently experienced!

Initially the route headed north out through Cwm Main. I remembered how steep the roads are here from a previous Wild Wales that finished through this valley, and took extra care on the steep descents. Unfortunately, the narrow, twisty road caught out Sarah Blackburn who clipped the grass at the side of the road and caught her front wheel in a hidden gully. Sarah didn’t seem too badly hurt, so once we were sure she had plenty of help Guy and I continued to the first control at Clawdd-newydd at 17 miles.

After this first control, we got a nice tow on the back of a Macc. Wheelers bunch along with Alex Young who is looking fitter than

*(Continued on page 15)*



**Marshalls for the Cancer Research Charity Ride at Tatton Park Knutsford**



At the start of the Tour of the Berwyns



## Top Messing in the Med

“Just get to Terminal One for 5.30 in the morning with your bag containing the list of what to take and your passport – and the means of acquiring more Euros”!

John and Gail Carberry’s instructions to Capt Wilkie, Rob Morton, Pete Devine and myself (Gordon). The wonderful Carberry’s had arranged: Flights, Car Hire, Villa, and Bike Hire + a list of essentials. Thanks to Gail’s organisation and Johns enthusiasm, the five of us (Yes five – Gail wasn’t even going) set off for some early season, “top messing” on the bikes around Spain’s Costa Blanca, the Mediterranean, and sunshine. We got nine days of perfect weather – sunshine up to 27 degrees and low humidity. Five brand new bikes were collected from Eduard at Javea Bike Shop. A really nice bloke who did us proud. Ten cogs at the back and three at the front and very little

else – ideal! £50 for 8 days! I’m told it costs £30 + insurance + the hassle, to fly your own bike out, and it’s treated with the same respect as all baggage. Rob’s bag got left at Alicante airport arriving the day after our plane. Luckily this was on the way back – but just imagine if it was “going out” and it’s your bike! Two bags went missing on our flight alone!! It’s apparently, a common scandal. Rant over. Our luxurious villa sat amongst the ribbon of villas on this coastline, so each ride starts and finishes in “Villa Ville”. Very civilised (Javea) – a sort of Bowdon on the Med. With strict 9.30am starts every day, we adventured through miles of scented Lemon and Orange groves before the heat of the day. Once away from the coast and the villas the landscape is mainly rolling horticulture with raw Rocky Mountains within reach. However the first day was just a warm up along the coast to Denia, for elevenses and Oliva for lunch and some

necessary re-hydration. We happened to sit next to some people from Altrincham, and to my surprise, it was one of my college lecturers not seen in 35 years. Nice one!

Sticking to the coast sounds easy enough until you literally, pass the last house in Javea, and meet a stiff climb over the headland. They've even named it "Montgo"! The whole week was a good mix of coastal plain, stiff but steady climbs and wonderful long snaky descents. In true "Crazy English" style we ignored the phenomena of siesta and rode through the afternoons. Keith soon noticed that at 3 o'clock each day, when it's about as hot as it gets, we usually found the "climb of the day". To their credit John and Rob won every climb. On the Col de Rates climb I stole a minutes handicap whilst they hung on for Pete (Pete was battling against having been "off the bike" for 6 months and under the surgeons knife just eight weeks before. Pete spent two grand going private to ensure his place in Spain. £2K – that's a measure of how good it is!) – My minute handicap melted as Johns grin appeared on my shoulder half way up. I'd not seen them coming and had cruised to my folly. The best I could do was cling to their wheel, then watch the gap increase as we reached the summit.

After massive chopping boards, piled high with German cheese rinsed down with coffee, at the top, we turned the corner for surprisingly more uphill till we reached a five kilometre uninterrupted downhill. The road to Castelle de Castel is new enough to not even appear on my 15yr old map. It was also closed to traffic for improvements at one end. Stuart Kaye, who's got his own place "out there", had told us we could sneak through. The long



gradual drop through numerous hairpins was a real highlight. Having now got used to the brake levers being the "wrong way around" a la continental, we let it go. Perfect tarmac and

no traffic at all, we swept down like "Le Tour". I remembered Phil Holden's advice, to "press hard down on the appropriate side of the handlebars to get the stallion around the bends". It works! Oh for my helmet right now - I'd ditched it on day three. Helmets, Spanish heat and my head, don't gel. The descent to Castelle de Castel was definitely "Top messing". For a moment we dallied with the idea of going back up for another "slalom" run. One rest day was scheduled which John and Rob ignored in their quest for more miles. The rest of us took the car a bit further up into the mountains, sightseeing and lunching at Castell De Guardalest. The following day Keith managed another "day off" after an early morning solo spill on loose gravel. He required half a tube of Savlon and some "general anaesthetic" by the pool. The next day - all back to normal.



The evenings were spent searching out a different eating place and we covered a wide spectrum. There are hundreds to choose from. Ex Patriot bars

proved interesting where Brits, frozen in time and fashion, seemed hell bent on smoking themselves to an early grave. But for us Seamons it was early nights, early starts, coffee culture (a new one on me) and miles of hot, dry sunny runs. The more diligent got the best part of 500 miles in. Inevitably the bikes had to be handed back leaving a day and a half to fill before setting off home. We searched out a quite "locals" cove, and sat on the beach for about ten minutes feeling a bit glum. We cheered ourselves up recounting the highlights of the week and testing fresh sardines, tuna baguettes huge olives, and more coffee, sat under a scorching sun. Then it was back too blighty, one missing bag, a nasty frost, mudguards!, but all adorning healthy glows. John summed it up, "Top messing eh Gordo" - It's certainly that.

## The Squirrel



6.13 am - Couple of minutes to start

### My first 12

The most I've ever ridden in one day before today is about 110 miles, on the Llangollen thrash with the club a couple of times. I know how my legs feel after that – shattered, spent, cramp-laden, and that's on a day that includes a couple of cafe stops! Now here I am aiming to do about twice that distance without stopping! It's unknown territory for me. All I have as a yardstick, distance wise, is the Llangollen jollies and they're harder than hard. Have I bitten off more than I'll be able to chew? These questions and many others have been racing through my head for weeks now but finally the day has arrived. The day of reckoning. The 12 hour.

The alarm goes off at 3:40am. Not that I needed it – I've been awake for the last half hour anyway. Sara gets up and starts getting ready. She'll be my much needed support for the next 15 hours or so. The bikes, kit and other knickknacks were packed into the car the night before. All I have to do is prepare the hot food and tea and get it into flasks. I'd been getting lots of hints and tips over the preceding weeks on what food to eat and how to eat it from club members who have all seen and done it themselves in the past and know what they're talking about. All royal advice as far as I was concerned. The consensus was definitely that rice pudding is a winner for a 12 hour event. You mix that with some blended tinned fruit and I watered that down with a

chocolate protein drink mixture. Besides that there were lots of bananas and gels and to drink I had a very weak GO solution.

All packed and we're off at 4:40am. It's a miserable morning and the wind is already getting up as we drive the twenty odd miles down to Whitchurch. On arrival I get out of the car and it is absolutely freezing – more like October than the middle of August. And the wind feels like it's near gale force! Ian's already there getting ready and I see Dave Barker (who's Ian's feeder today) there too. Dave comes over with some last minute advice about not pushing too hard into the head wind which we'll have for the first 22 miles. Again – sound advice and well heeded.

I'm number 15. It's 6:14am.... "3, 2, 1, Have a safe ride" I'm off. 50 metres to the first roundabout just outside the truck-stop headquarters and straight into the head wind. This feels hard, I thought. Never mind – probably because I haven't warmed up yet. I'd given Sara my feeding plan which included the mileage and estimated time for each pass of a feeding point. The first was Broxton roundabout at 12 miles in. I'd estimated about 30 minutes for this so had reckoned on being there at around 6:45. It's nearly 7am now and I haven't reached the first feeding point yet! It's all going wrong and I'm still in the first hour. What do I do? Should I start to push harder? Then Rob's voice comes into my head – "Just get into a steady, comfortable rhythm as soon as you can, and hold it". This settles me and I'm able to gain a bit of focus again. Just then I see the Broxton roundabout sign ahead of me. Straight through this one then into the next 9-10 miles to the Broughton Heath roundabout where we can about turn. Half way between the two roundabouts I see a couple of friendly Seamon's faces in the shape of Carol and Johnny shouting encouragement from the roadside. I'm a bit embarrassed to be going so slowly but my options are limited at this point.

Once I'm round the roundabout it's tail wind for 10 miles back to Broxton and I'm absolutely flying. The temptation is to race like mad but I resist, knowing that too much effort at this point will be paid back in spades later in the day – and not in a good way. Still I'm doing about 30mph when I pass Johnny and Carol again. That's better, I think. By the time I get back to Broxton my average speed has recovered to a more respectable 20mph+. Twice more up to BH and back and suddenly I've got 63 miles under my belt and at an on-target speed too – Great! From there it's back to Whitchurch and onto the next circuit of Whitchurch to Telford via Espley Roundabout. There's 3 laps of this to do at about 40 miles per lap so Espley roundabout is a great spot for feeding as you pass through it roughly every 20 miles. When I get to Espley the first time I'm 92 miles in and feeling great with all that tail wind riding behind me. I stop to pick up some rice pudding and a drink. All the support are there in one place now – Sara, Carol, Johnny and Dave Barker. It's great to see people shouting you from the roadside and really spurs you on. On the way down to Telford from Espley I pass the 100 mile time keeper. A quick glance at my watch tells me I've done the first hundred in 4:39. This lifts me even more as I'm actually ahead of my planned schedule now and averaging over 21mph.

Then it happens – I reach Telford and the Shawburch roundabout. I encircle the roundabout and BAM! That head wind I'd last felt nearly 50 miles since was back with a vengeance. It was the same wind but now my legs have more than 100 miles in them. The riding for the next 10 miles was to be my first of many low points. I remembered what Keith Bailey had told me about damage limitation and put that into action just trying to keep a steady pace and accept the limited speed. It was about this point that I decided I would clear my nose in the time honoured cyclist fashion of holding one nostril and blowing with all your might through the other. I turned

my head slightly to the right and blew as hard as I could. Just as I did Neil Skellern came cruising past – on the right of course – sorry about that Neil – oops. (Neil was number 45 by the way!)

I was absolutely convinced that I'd planned a quick stop for a cuppa and a ham buttie at Espley but when I arrived Sara was holding out a banana and a drink. I'd got it wrong – another downer as I'd dearly love to have had an excuse to stop. Luckily the direction from Espley to Whitchurch isn't quite as head wind facing as from Telford to Espley and that leg wasn't as bad. It was still into the wind and was still tough but just not as bad. It was on this leg that I started to mess around with my position on the bike. I couldn't hold my TT position constantly any more and started to sit up and get out of the saddle for stints. Then I'd get back into the TT position again. I found this really helped and helped keep my speed going. This perked me up a bit and by the time I'd turned to head back at Whitchurch I was on a real high. Only two more laps then it's onto the finishing circuit, I thought. This seemed to lift me and the endorphins must have been kicking in because I was suddenly on a real natural high flying along at 25mph+ albeit tail wind assisted. By the time I got back to Espley I'd decided to dispense with the tea stop after all and just picked up some rice pudding and a fresh drink. There was no stopping me now.

A quick leg from Espley to Telford then the high very quickly turns into another low as I turned to face the wind again and this time with some spots of rain thrown in for good measure. With another 40 miles in my legs this time it was even harder than before. Somehow though in a way it didn't seem as bad. I was past the half way point and that in itself was enough to brighten me up. Up to now I'd been holding my pace too and was still averaging over 20mph. That was soon to

*(Continued on page 22)*

## The Squirrel

(Continued from page 21)  
change.

The leg from Espley to Whitchurch seemed a lot lot harder this time as fatigue started to take a hold. I was playing around with my position again but it wasn't having the same positive effect this time. By the time I returned to Espley I'd dropped 10 minutes in that single leg – I was slowing fast. Now from Espley to Telford I was struggling to hold 22mph even with the wind pushing me along. On the way from Telford to Espley I managed to catch and pass number 14 which gave me a bit of a boost. A quick grab of some food at Espley then it was the final stint down to the finishing circuit at Whitchurch. Carol and Johnny passed me on the way down and stopped off to shout encouragement again from the road side. Having someone there at the side of the road egging you on really helps a lot.

The start of the finishing circuit was also the 200 mile marker and I went through it at about 10:20 and so had 1:40 left to do. It's amazing



6.16pm and 232 miles later.

how you pick up in that last hour or so. Speeds that would have seemed impossible a couple of hours ago now feel like a breeze. Plenty of support was offered again on the finishing circuit from Sara and Johnny and Carol egging me on. On my second lap I had to stop for a comfort break. As I got back on my bike number 14 came flying past! I was back on a high again now and before I knew where I was it was 6:15pm and all I had to do was ride on to the next time keeper. I can't describe the feeling I had when I passed him and he said "That'll do y'son". Sara was right there with the car so I didn't have to ride another mile more than I had to. I'd done 231.9 miles. Then it was back to the caff for a cuppa and a bit of friendly banter with the others. A great day out. Already looking forward to next year!

Thanks to Sara for feeding and all her support and to Johnny, Carol and Dave Barker for their support too – much appreciated.

---

Now hie we forth upon our steeds of steel-  
Lissom and strong, and fleet to travel far.  
To-day we will forget the city's jar,  
And speed away upon the flying wheel  
To freer space, where Nature shall reveal  
Her visage fair, and nothing come to mar  
The sweet contentment of the hours that are—  
They that the future and the past conceal.

Nor do we make our pilgrimage in vain,  
And homeward bring no guerdon from our quest.  
With after-memories we still are blest  
Of sunny fields and flowers, of rolling plain,  
Of wind-swept hill, of quiet woodland's rest  
By broad high road or narrow tangled lane.



## CARRINGTON MOSS

A short round, which I am sure would be more frequented if its interesting character were known, is one which starts with Stretford and Sale by the main road. At the point in the latter village where Ashton Lane goes off to the right turn along it, and run over small smooth setts, bearing to the right where a lamp is supported by a stone pillar. The lane has been flanked by the pretty lodge gates of villas, but now it becomes more open. We follow Green Lane, and let it take us sharply to the right at a point just beyond the Old Plough Inn. There are bits of bad cobbles here and in Church Lane, by which we turn to the left, and, moreover, we can have no thoroughfare across the Moss in this direction, but we make the detour in order to see the old church of St. Martin's, which has been rebuilt in a striking style with timber and red tiles and brick.

Returning then to the angle of Green Lane, we proceed along Buck Lane, and when it emerges on the road go to the right and speed along a good fast surface as far as the boundary of Carrington. Here the paving becomes abominable. A notice that the full penalty will be extorted from drivers of vehicles who make use of the footpath is well placed on the first building within the border, for never was there greater temptation to break the law. On the right manyfolds of the Mersey approach the road. The distance views are on the other hand. They do not suggest English Fen scenery at all, but are perhaps a little like the bog country of Ireland. Just after passing a white farm building, long and low, there is a characteristic view. It is spacious and lonely, with no house in sight, and only bounded in one direction by rising ground. By the yellow light of a misty sunset it look's particularly eerie. In the old days, before the marsh was reclaimed, Will-o'-the-wisp must have played many a prank among its wilted rushes.

We pass through Carrington village and on to Partington. The church, the gift of the late aged vicar of Carrington, is a noteworthy building. It is clothed with some foreign varie-

ties of ivy which have been successfully acclimatised. Their glorious tints of red and gold are a fine foil to the architecture. Opposite the church is a quaintly constructed inn, built in the time of William IV. and named after him. We now see less of the Moss. The way leads past well-appointed farmsteads, with orchards all about them and barns brimful hard by. All through the social changes which change of industry involves—the decline of pile-cutting, the increase of paper-making, the arrival and departure of the army of canal-makers—the work of the farms has gone quietly on. I am told that there were at one time among the agricultural population of the Moss many Irish who could speak no language but their own.

There are none such now, nor is the Irish element, from what I can gather, as large as it used to be.

At Partington inquire for the best road to the Warburton high-level bridge. The shortest one goes past the paper mills, but it is very rough at the furthest end, and should on no account be followed except in good daylight. There are fine views up and down the Ship Canal from the breezy summit of the bridge, and then we drop into Hollins Green and turn homewards on the old Liverpool coach road. At Eccles Cross it is best to keep to the right, arriving home by the Eccles New Road.



No, not Carrington Moss or the Moon, but your editor on the old road up Mam Tor.

## Obituary to Malcolm Judge



It is my privilege to pay tribute to Malc or, as he was affectionately known to some of us in the Club, Seamus or Judgy.

Malc joined the Seamons in 1953 and I can quite honestly say in the 50 years I knew Malc, some of my happiest times on a bike were spent in his company.

There were those early club-runs, long runs that started at 9.00 and finished at bedtime, runs that included elevenses, lunch, tea and finished with a few drinks at a local pub on the way home.

There were magical weekends away to Ludlow, Lincoln, Shrewsbury, Church Stretton and beyond.

There Christmases in the Lakes and Easters on the Isle of Man.

We enjoyed summer tours to the Welsh Borders, Southern Ireland and the Italian Alps, all happy memories.

It was on the Irish tour that we all came back with nicknames: Malc was Seamus, I was

Nathan, Koj was still Koj, but nobody knows why.

The Irish roads were so quiet in the early 60's that one day Malc was heard to say: "I bet if we lay down in the middle of the road for 10 minutes we wouldn't be disturbed." We did and we weren't!

It was on the Irish trip that Malc was to enjoy local fame when he became the hoop-la champion of Sneem – a little village on the Ring of Kerry. An honour indeed, but only for the day. Well, actually just the lunch period.

The Italian tour was our first adventure overseas, and our first experience of heat, riding on the right, mad drivers, real mountains, lizards that shot across the road between your wheels, and spaghetti.

I have vivid memories of this big fat mamma demonstrating the art of consuming copious amounts of real spaghetti in a rich lumpy tomato sauce, and watching Malc turn very pale. To my knowledge he never ate spaghetti, beans or anything in tomato sauce ever again.

If you were to meet Malc in the street he would come across as a quiet, unassuming, modest – some would say shy man. But put a number on his back and his personality changed. He became a very competitive and well respected racing man.

During the 60's, 70's and 80's if Malc's name was on the Start sheet of any of the longer distances you knew you were in for a hard ride.

We enjoyed many long weekends away in our constant quest to ride on fast courses, travelling long distances, on our bikes of course – this was before we could afford motor transport.

I distinctly remember riding over to Blyth, Notts, to ride a "50". On arrival at the White House café we would go through the weekly ritual of preparing the bike for the event: remove guards, change sprockets, and generally get very oily. I remember Malc saying: "Have you got a rag?" "Sorry, Malc, but there's one on the fence over there." It turned out to be Nim Carline's shirt. Nim was one of the leading riders of that era – sorry Nim. We made

up for it many years later by inviting him to be our Guest of Honour.

We would think nothing of riding hundreds of miles in a weekend which included the event, and possibly meeting the club for tea, and of course the pub later, just to round off the weekend.

These were great adventures, adventures that bonded friendships, friendships that would last a lifetime.

I remember looking after Malc in the National "12" in the mid 70's. We camped in a field, just off the busy A1 – not perhaps the ideal race preparation. It was so cold when we woke at some unearthly hour that we cooked breakfast under canvas and duly set fire to the tent...We survived and Malc went on to do complete another 240 plus miles ride, and the tent is still in use to this day – patched, but OK.

In all the thousands of miles I rode with Malc we never half-wheeled each other, although I do remember on one occasion he really did put the hammer down. Cyclists have long memories, and obviously someone in the group had given him a hard time some time previous. We were on our way back from Whitchurch, battling into a cold north-easterly, and Malc and I were on the front. Suddenly a cry from the back: "Man off." Well, Malc turned to me: "Who?" "So-and-so", I said. I saw Malc reach for his gear lever. Down went the lever, up went the speed. Poor old So-and-so was now well and truly off. Revenge is a dish best served cold, so they say.

I once managed to persuade Malc to stoke the tandem trike on a winter weekend to Coed Talyn, North Wales. The route took in the infamous World's End between Wrexham and Llangollen. It is narrow and pot-holed, with grass down the middle. There is also a steep 1 in 6 section which drops down to a deep ford. With a heavy tandem and two blokes, two saddle-bags and brakes that didn't exactly suit the terrain, the descent was, to day the least, hairy. We somehow managed to stop before the ford. "Enjoy that Malc?" "I had my eyes shut." The ford did come in handy to cool

down the rims. I can't understand why he never showed any further interest in riding the tandem trike, although we once rode a 30 mile time-trial recording a 1.11.00.

Malc's very first event would have been the Fun Cyclo-cross against the Sale Harriers. If you can call riding across a ploughed field in the middle of February "fun". I can still see Malc crawling up the finishing lane looking very sorry for himself and well off the pace. – minus his saddle. Not the best start to your racing career. Malc certainly made up for it in the years following.



During his long racing career with the Seamounts Malc was Club Champion on 5 occasions and Club Best All-rounder 8 times. He was 12 Hour Champion no fewer than 9 times, and 24 Hour Champion on 3 occasions. He was the "100" Champion 6 times and 50 mile Champion in 1959. And just to prove he was an all round club rider he won the Tourist Trophy on 3 occasions. He served on the Committee and was a former Club President. In the local Manchester and District Best All Rounder Competition he was a member of the winning team on many occasions. He was the winner in 1978. Malc won the West Cheshire "12" in 1978 with 244 miles. In 1968 he came second to the late great Cliff Smith in the North Road "24", with 455 miles – this re-

*(Continued on page 29)*



# TESTING TIMES



## Showing the New Club Clothing at Rackhams on a Sunday Morning

### The Open season

Up until 13/08/2006 19 Seamons riders had entered a total of 35 open events that I am aware of, and have bothered the finishing time keeper no fewer than 113 times. It would have been a lot more but heat exhaustion, punchers, and wind, got the better of people on occasions. There was also Withington Wheelers 25 on the 9<sup>th</sup> April that was abandoned due to hail rain wind etc

Alan Blackburn has been competing all season at all distances, and has been getting faster all year, his best for 25 being 1:00:30 in the Janus RC 25 on 17/06/2006, and he did 231 miles in West Cheshire 12 hour on 13/08/2006  
Sara Blackburn, Clare Bridge and Louise Eden all took part in 10 and 25 mile time trials events.

Dave Bates still has the bug, which forces him out on Saturday afternoons to compete, his best this year for a 25 is 0:59:57 and 2:08:20 for a 50.

Dan Mathers has had a quieter season this year, but has still managed to get under the hour for 25 twice, and he got under 2 hours twice for 50 miles and did 4:00:44 in the national 100 mile TT.

Ian Udall has purchased the new kit, but we have not managed to see it yet on a Sunday morning, as it is always in the wash from the day before when he has proudly worn it in an open event. Ian has competed in 14 events so far, breaking the hour 3 times, his best being 0:58:50. He did 1:59:28 in the Warrington RC 50 on 29/07/2006, and he completed 239 mile in the West Cheshire 12 hour

Mike Brooks travelled to Liverpool to compete in Ashurst 10, he also competed in a M&D 25 in April. Malc McAlister got his trike out for the Janus RC 25 and did it in 1:19:41.

Nigel Harrop retired last year and has had a great time since, competing in lots of competitions including nine open events. His best time for a 10 being 00:23:44.

Paul McAllister had a great start to the season competing in 10's and 25's. his best 10 being 00:22:37 in the ABC Centreville 10 on 20<sup>th</sup> May. We all congratulate him on his new arrival for which his attention was focused.

Phil Holden again built himself up to lead the team of himself, Rob Morton and Mike Wigley in the National 24 hour, all putting in an excellent performance. Phil doing 382 miles, Rob doing 359 miles and Mike doing 300 miles. Anyone wishing to take part next year please contact Phil for his training schedule. Rumour has it there are already some interested parties of which names are being withheld to protect the innocent.

John Rowlinson has enjoyed taking part in 25 and 50 mile time trials his best 25 being 1:06:47 in the Westmead Team 88 in July  
Roy Myers found his nerve again and has completed 12 open events between 10 and 50 miles, his best 50 being 2:14:41 in May.

### Wednesday night Club event

The Wednesday evening club 8.75 TT has



received excellent support all year, regularly seeing over 20 riders taking part. The best time for the year was done by Dan Mathers 19:12 in July

This year we saw the return of Keith Stacey to the competition his best of the 10 events he took part in was 20:40 in May. Nigel Harrop and Mike Brooks turned up for all but 2 events, Mike managed to catch Dan at the top round about on one occasion. Nick Crampton Alan Blackburn and Ian Udall have all put in excellent performances all season. A young man of 14 turned up in July this year, Lewis Pylypcznk his best being 25:24 in August.

The weather has had an impact this year, on the 17 May only 5 Seamons riders turned up in the wind and rain, and I was soaked at the far turn with Reg who hogged the shelter behind a lamp post that evening. On the 5 July when Richard Williams, John Rowlinson, Ian Udall, Malc McAlister, Nick Crampton, Simon Williams and Keith Stacey turned up, we abandoned the event in favour of a canoe race, Lymm was washed out that evening.

This event takes a lot of commitment from the organisers. Riders just see how they feel on the night and turn up if they want, the organisers don't have that choice. Thanks to Steve Booth for time keeping and Reg Blease for marshalling all season.

### 10 and 25

Both the club 10 and 25 were turned into closed Seamons events this year.

The 10 was held on 7 June. A fine Wednesday evening saw 24 riders start and 24 finish even after Nick tried to ride a Rolls Royce or was it a Bentley off the road, if you are going to crash

Sarah Blackburn	00:30:59
Malc McAllister	00:28:30
Brendan Coyle	00:28:21
John Barry	00:28:04
Sophie Wood	00:28:01
Chris Scholes	00:27:47
Richard Walsh	00:27:37
John Rowlinson	00:27:24
Phil Holden	00:27:23
Mike Brooks	00:27:07
Louise Eden	00:26:54
Dave McIlroy	00:26:22
Simon Williams	00:25:23
Roy Myers	00:25:03
Tim Seddon	00:25:02
Adam Rycroft	00:25:02
Nigel Harrop	00:25:01
Allan Blackburn	00:24:48
Keith Stacey	00:24:38
Dave Bates	00:23:50
Ian Udall	00:23:47
Nick Crampton	00:23:44
Paul McAllister	00:23:12
Dan Mathers	00:22:48



After the M&DTTA 100 showing the 1st (Dan Mathers) 2nd (Ian Udall) and 3rd (Allan Blackburn in his first attempt at the distance). All three recorded personal best times Dan 4.13.59, Ian 4.24.53 and Allan 4.35.31.



Dan Mathers	00:57:55
Paul McAlister	00:58:53
Ian Udall	01:00:35
Dave Bates	01:02:39
Keith Stacey	01:02:40
Allan Blackburn	01:03:50
Nigel Harrop	01:03:56
Phil Holden	01:09:47
John Rowlinson	01:10:06
Mike McConville	01:11:25
John Barry	01:11:33
Brendan Coyle	01:12:14
Claire Bridge	01:14:56
Malc McAllister	01:16:12
Peter Julian	01:18:57
Sarah Blackburn	01:23:39



The club 25 took place on Tuesday June 20 a night when England were playing Sweden in the world cup and the weather threatened wind and rain all evening. No matter in which direction you rode your bike you seemed to be heading into the wind. 16 riders turned up and a full team of marshalls. Dan and Paul both getting under the hour.

# XMAS HOT POT BOOKING FORM

NAME.....

NUMBER OF TICKETS REQUIRED.....

PLEASE CROSS OUT PREFERENCE NOT REQUIRED HOT POT/VEGETARIAN

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM (OR PHOTO COPY) TO ROGER HAINES WITH  
£5.00 PER PERSON.

CLOSING DATE 10TH DECEMBER 06.

*(Continued from page 25)*



mains a Club record to this day. Malc was to reach the pinnacle of his long distance career in 1980 when he won the classic Mersey Roads "24" with 454 miles, leading the winning team, supported by Dave Bates and Bob Hill. Malc, you will be sadly missed by all who knew you, but you leave us with many happy memories. May you rest in peace.





### **Club 12 Hour Champion IAN UDALL - 239 Mile's**

#### **THE SKIRTS OF KINDER SCOUT.**

Woodhead not infrequently figures as the destination of a club run. But when once there are better things to do than turn tail and come home again. From the hill just above the station, where the Etherow, at times a tumbling torrent at others a trickling rill, drops down towards the first of the long chain of Manchester Corporation reservoirs, retrace your course for three miles. A mile on the way a road from Huddersfield and Holmfirth comes down from the right and joins ours. The whole region is very wild and bleak, and the views to the left are at times highly impressive. The precipitous sides of Bleaklow Hill frown darkly over the reservoirs. The weird effect is deepened when their level is low. There may then be many acres of drab-coloured mud exposed to view, and where this is overgrown with weeds or coarse grasses stray sheep and cattle may be seen feeding

here and there. Presently we come to the bank separating the Woodhead and Torside reservoirs. At the foot of Torside the road takes a short rise and reaches the hamlet known as "The Hollins." Leaving the Hollins, we must cross the bank between the Torside and Rhodes Wood reservoirs. Having done so, we enter Derbyshire. The way bends to the left, giving a fine view towards the head of the valley. After going through a gate turn sharply to the right, passing the Sheffield main line by a level crossing. There is now a stiff climb some two miles long. High on the left rises the steep flank of Torside mountain, scantily clothed with patches of heather. On the right the whole chain of reservoirs is visible, down to Valehouse and Bottoms, while the thin smoke-clouds that rise from different points indicate the busy townlets of Tintwistle and Upper and Lower Hadfield. The road is easily rideable as we approach the gap known as the Devil's

Elbow, where it goes round a wedge-shaped cleft in the hill cut out by a mountain stream which is here bridged over. The highest point is reached just after passing a quarry on the left, where " a large quantity of cubical stone blocks are piled ready for carting. The descent is gloriously ex-hilarating. The surface is good, the gradient fast but nowhere dangerous, and the prospect that of a wild hollow encircled by a theatre of hills. We pass Old Glossop below us on the left, built, like its modern neighbour, entirely of grey native stone. A small estate of Lord Howard's is passed on the same side. Over the high wall that bounds it we can see the tall stone posts of an abandoned gateway, which formerly led to the house. Near the town of Glossop a point is reached from which five roads radiate. Continue the descent by the one exactly opposite, although it is the only one that is paved. Half a mile brings you to the middle of the town. On leaving Glossop we continue past the station and take the Hayfield road through Whitfield, Charlestown, and Chunal. It is an uphill grind of two miles and a half, and all except the first and last portions of it are extremely heavy riding. Do not be deluded by the hope that a building seen far ahead, and made conspicuous by a wash of bluish-white, marks the summit of the climb. It is a farmhouse, with a porch looking as if it belonged to a church. A good half-mile beyond this may be seen the farm called " The Top," and about the same distance away, but not in sight, is the Grouse Inn, which is close to the highest point. On both sides are bleak stretches of steep pasture land, clothed, however, with very meagre herbage.. We can see right through a pine wood on the left destitute of any undergrowth. The words, " Abbot's Chair" may be found on most maps just midway between Glossop and Hayfield, but they are generally printed as if they were the name of a locality, as, for example, a hollow between hills. They really refer to a curious relic which it is worth while to search out. Just beyond the inn, where a signpost stands, a rough road called Monk's Road goes off to the north-west. At the junction

there is a lumpy triangular bit of unenclosed ground. Leave this, and soon afterwards come to another unenclosed triangle on the left side of the Monk's Road. Dismount when you see two rough-hewn stones looking like gateposts, but with no gate between them, and follow the hedge, the first you have seen for some time, along one side of the triangle.

At the apex (regarding Monk's Road as the base) and just where the hedge joins a field wall of typical Derbyshire build lies a huge stone, shaped with the chisel to the form of a chair. It is half buried in the hedge bank, and one corner of it comes into the structure of the wall. The natives are ignorant of any legend touching the story of the stone.

Returning to the main road, there is at the outset a very sharp descent, which becomes easier further down. We cross two feeders of the Sett, which river conveys to the Goyt the whole of the drainage of the west side of Kinder Scout. On reaching Hayfield turn to the right down a narrow passage beside the church, and then, bending to the left, strike the road to New Mills near a chapel, and turn along it to the right. Passing Birch Vale and New Mills, we have now and then a good view along the valley of the Sett. The transition from the Derbyshire type of scenery to that more characteristic of Cheshire occurs near the passage of the Goyt. A good road, steam rolled, brings us to Disley. Hence we may return by the bridle roads described in the course of the journey to Disley, but I may repeat the warning that they should not be tried on dark nights unless the rider knows them well.

The mileage of the route described is about as follows :—Woodhead 19, Torside 3, Glossop 4, Abbot's Chair 2 1/2, Hayfield 2 1/2, New Mills 3 1/2, Disley 2, and home by the bridle route to Cheadle and Manchester, say, 15 1/2. The total is about 52 miles.





# CLUBRUNS



## DATE

## HALF-DAY

## TOURING SECTION

10 SEPTEMBER	SUMMERTREES	UPERMILL - CTC BEARD CUP HILL CLIMB
17 SEPTEMBER	CAT AND FIDDLE	CHESTER - Bob Richardson Memorial Run
24 SEPTEMBER	POOLE MARINA	FLASH
01 OCTOBER	CLUB HILL CLIMB	HILL CLIMB WITHENSHAW HILL
08 OCTOBER	BEESTON *	THE WAYFARER - CAR ASSISTED **
15 OCTOBER	WINKLE MINN	100 IN 8 - BACKWARDS
22 OCTOBER	RADWAY GREEN	BUXTON
29 OCTOBER	ASTBURY	MADELY
05 NOVEMBER	BUXTON	HOPE
12 NOVEMBER	DELAMERE	WRENBURY
19 NOVEMBER	NANTWICH MARINA	ALGREAVE
26 NOVEMBER	MEERBROOK	BARTHOMLEY
03 DECEMBER	HOLLANDS	HAYFIELD
10 DECEMBER	RADWAY GREEN ***	DONES GREEN
17 DECEMBER	XMAS HOT POT	XMAS HOT POT
24 DECEMBER	IMPROMPTU	IMPROMPTU
31 DECEMBER	IMPROMPTU	IMPROMPTU

\* Mudguards from now on!

\*\* The "Wayfarer" is a unique Drovers route over the Berwyn Mountains. If enough interest there could be two runs. One involving more off- road, the other involving just (!) the "Wayfarer" and then back via roads to Corwen and then brilliant back road to Llangollen.

\*\*\* Montgomery Weekend.

LAST LAUGH

