

AWheel

THE MAGAZINE OF THE SOLIHULL CYCLING CLUB

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REGISTERED GO-RIDE CLUB



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Front Cover: William & Gerard Ryan courtesy of Richard Howes Photography

Rear Cover: Fred Towers wearing a most excellent woolly hat!

Editor's Corner



Spring is in the air or is that just wishful thinking.

Those hardy riders amongst us are now probably fed up with the wet and cold, not to mention the amount of layers we have to dress ourselves in before stepping outside.....I know I am! Equally for those of you who prefer to spend the winter months sitting on a turbo trainer, finding it mind-bendingly dull and knowing that you'll never make the whole hour as you run out of things to think about after around five minutes, spring can't come fast enough.

A fairly mixed edition this quarter, a few event round-ups, messages from the Club's Chairman and President and a report of what sounds like a great trip to Belgium by the Knight twins.

I also bring you the sad news that Fred Towers, a club stalwart, sadly lost his battle with cancer at Christmas. I never got to meet Fred but I do know he was a great club member and I think he would appreciate the front cover picture of William Ryan and his father Gerard showing the club who for what it is, a big supportive family, RIP Fred.

And finally February sees the Club's annual awards dinner but unlike previous years I will leave announcing the winners to Dick Law on the night.

Safe Riding!

Rocky



Send copy to: editor@solihullcc.org.uk

Chairman's Report 2017

Amazingly 2018 will be my 11th year as Chairman of the Club.
How time flies!

The year saw Solihull Cycling Club continue to prosper. Membership is still around the 500 mark which makes us one of the biggest Clubs in the country and it was great to see Richard Lodge being elected to the Main Board of British Cycling for a 3 year stint.

The year has seen us produce many National and World Championship riders. In October Bob Richards won a Gold Medal in his age category at the LVRC Track Championships in Derby. In September Jake Stewart was 5th in the World Junior RR Championships and this was after his winning 2 Medals for the Madison and Team Pursuit at the European Track Championships in June as well as 5th place in the Junior Paris Roubaix race in April. Stuart Jameson won a Silver Medal at the LVRC National Circuit Race Championships at Milton Keynes Bowl and Matt Shaw won Bronze in the National Junior Points Race at Newport.

Dani Khan won Gold in the 500 meters National Women's Elite TT in January. Ivor Thomas became a World Champion in the Para World Masters Games in New Zealand in April and Lucy Shaw continues as a member of the DROPS professional cycling team based on the Continent, She represented Great Britain in the European RR Championships in August. Fine performances and a truly amazing year for the Club !

Solihull CC continues to dominate the WMCCL with excellent performances in 2017 from the Knight twins, Ella Tandy, Holly Saunders, Max Saunders and Rose Neely with at least 30 other SCC riders participating on a regular basis.

Our usual visit to France for the annual Semaine Federal Event took place in August. Only around 15 members took part this year but at least the weather was good considering the Normandy location !

On a more sombre note we lost a number of longstanding members in 2017. John Paling, Alan Boden, Dave Kirby, Graham Webb, Roy Cromack and at Christmas Fred Towers passed away after a long battle with cancer. May they all rest in peace.

Finally, the Committee decided to award Life Membership to both Phil Rosenbloom and Pete James in recognition of their major contributions to the Club over the last 20 years. Our President has written in greater depth on this in later pages of this AWheel.

Last but not least a very big thank you to all the many Organisers, helpers, and Club Coaches and Committee members without whom we could not operate. Ride safely in 2018 and a very Happy New Year to you all.

Dick Law

Chairman
Solihull Cycling Club

Letters to Ed



Dear Ed,

For those who have chosen to renew their subs by Direct Debit please note that these will be debited from bank accounts on or shortly after 9th Feb. 2018. If you have any queries or concerns I can be contacted via phil.rosenbloom@blueyonder.co.uk



Dear Ed,

We currently have a vision to create a MTB group within SCC promoting leisure and competitive MTB opportunities for all interested members



We feel Mountain biking should be complimentary to and not separate from, all the other club activities in the same way that Cyclo-cross, Time Trialling, road racing, club runs etc fit within the clubs existing structure.

If anyone is interested please contact Keith Jones



Dear Ed,

Racing Results and Anything Else You Are Proud Of!?

As we move into 2018 it looks as though the club will continue to be successful in many areas whether it is participation in all sorts of events - not just races - but also lots of other areas. As we have grown larger as a club it is becoming increasingly difficult to keep track of who is doing what but we want to hear from you and we want to publicise your achievements. It is particularly difficult especially when several of our top young riders are competing as professionals or in sponsored teams.

So we ask everyone who achieves race results - or anything else that may be noteworthy - to keep us regularly updated so we can let your club-mates know. It is not bragging or boasting to let us know these things so please don't be embarrassed.

So going into 2018 please just do an email - even if it is very short - to press@solihullcc.org.uk so we can cheer you on!

80th International Week of Cycle

The 80th Semaine Federale in 2018 will be in the Vosges, Alsace in eastern France from 5th to 10th August. This is 1 week later than last year. It will be based in Epinal which is a medium size town in the beautiful hills and wine growing countryside close to the iconic Tour climbs of the Balons, the Black Forest across the Rhine and the German border. The distance from the Calais is c500K requiring an overnight stop on route.

The Semaine Federale is a very French version of cycle tourism and organised by the FFCT (equivalent of the CTC) from a central base with a choice of 4 or 5 daily rides of distances varying between 30 and 100 miles commencing on Sunday 5 August. Registration opens on Friday 3 August and we usually arrive then or the next day. Maps and road directions are provided and the routes identified by road markings. It is always a thoroughly enjoyable week with regular participants from overseas including SCC, other British cycling clubs and nationalities from around the world.

The Solihull CC group usually consists of a group of 20 people camping in our own tent, caravan or camper van for the week on one of the FFCT campsites. I submit a consolidated group application on our behalf so that we are grouped together on the campsite.

Application forms and instructions will be available from me in early January and interested members can also obtain further information from the website www.sf2018.ffct.org. For further information also talk to others who have attended in the 25 years in which the club have attended.

If Members are interested in joining us then please contact me - Harry Balmer

[07770 957674](tel:07770957674) and hbalmer@btinternet.com



2017 TT Round Up

This year we had 57 different club riders aged from 12 to 64 years of age competing in the club TT series of which 42 of them picked up points to compete in the season long competition. A fair few of these rode on road bikes as there was a competition for best road bike and I think it went well so we'll do it again in 2018. The men were well supported with a few Ladies taking part ,so hopefully this year we'll get more Ladies competing.

I think the most successful TT rider this year was 14 year old Jacob Reid, who won the Midlands National Youth Qualifying event at the fast K11/10T course at Princethorpe with a PB of 21.26 a fantastic ride at the age of 14 Chapeau !!!He then rode the final at Peterborough where he did 23.12 to finish 35th out of 132 riders a very good ride indeed .I'm sure Jacob is a rider to watch in the future and he's already beating and giving us Oldies a hard time now so we're all looking forward to the challenge in 2018.

Penny Wilkin also had a great season after getting herself a proper TT bike ,she won the Ladies 10 champs with 26.04 ,the 25 champs with 1.14.42 ,the 50 champs with 2.18.12 and that was after riding her first 100 mile event the week before where she did 4.58.40 Chapeau !!!!Penny could do with some female competition in the club is there anyone out there ?

Ed Priddy's fastest 10 of the year was done locally on the K33d where he did 21.24,his fastest 25 was done on the superfast R25/3H in South Wales 53.40 and he also won the 10 champs with 22.34 due to family problems Ed had a quiet year by his high standards.

Keith Reynolds also had a difficult year this year with work commitments and Harry not being 100 % but he still managed a 20.24 on the K11/10T course at Dunchurch .

Pete Blackwell also had a quieter year this year with a house move taking a fair bit of his time .He still managed a 22.42 on the local K33/10d course and a 56.06 on the superfast R25/3H course in South Wales .

Andy Simpkins recorded his fastest 10 of the year 22.55 at Hemel Hempstead, then he recorded 58.58 at Raglan ,then he travelled to Warrington to the J4/16 and did 2.14.43 for 50 miles and he finished 2nd in the 25 champs with 1.2.49.

I didn't have any PB's at 10 or 25's this year but did manage one at 50 miles where I improved 3m and 3s to win the club champs with 2.06.06 .I managed 22.37 locally on the K33/10d and 55.34 at the Ogmore Wheelers event at the superfast R25/3H South Wales. I would like to say a big thank you to Ed ,Keith and Andy for not contesting the 5,25 and 50 champs this year as I've never won so much silver ware and I've even got the 5 champs by default as Jacob actually won it (but wins the schoolboy trophy) so I win the Senior trophy ,I'm not fussy though I'll have them , the only problem being all the polishing this time next year oh well !!!!

As I write this I'm not to sure how many events we'll be doing this year and where the 25 champs will be but as soon as I know I'll put them up on the TT webpage ,I think we'll be doing three 5m TT's two at the beginning of the season and one at the end ,so hopefully Newbies and our younger members can ride these events and get a feeling to ride TT's.

Once again a massive thank you to all my officials who helped out in 2017 and hope to see you all again in 2018 .It would be lovely to see a mass of new people offering to help in 2018 but I'm not greedy 2 or 3 would be lovely ,so if you want to help all I need is one hour of your time ,yes one hour, so if you can stand on a

corner or would like to hold a stopwatch just ask and your wish can be granted „just speak to me” Mounty”. I can be very accommodating .

See you all in 2018 and keep your heads up .

Steve Mountford

TT Secretary

Club TT Championship Results

5 Mile

11.29 Jacob Reid	- 1st Schoolboy
11.52 Steve Mountford	- 1st Senior
11.56 Mark Paveley	- 2nd Senior
12.13 Tony Satterwaite	- 3rd Senior
12.30 Mike Pridmore Wood	- 1st Roadbike

10 mile

22.34 Ed Priddy	- 1st Senior
22.57 Jacob Reid	- 1st Schoolboy
23.00 Ian Cowan	- 2nd Senior
23.22 Steve Mountford	- 3rd Senior
25.26 Mike Pridmore Wood	- 1st Roadbike
26.04 Penny Wilkin	- 1st Lady

25 mile

1.01.37 Steve Mountford	- 1st senior
1.02.49 Andy simpkins	- 2nd Senior
1.08.12 Colin Williamson	- 3rd Senior
1.10.05 Richard Burt	- 1st Roadbike
1.14.42 Penny Wilkin	- 1st Lady

50 mile

2.06.06 Steve Mountford	- 1st Senior
2.18.12 Penny Wilkin	- 1st Lady

Season Long Competition

Steve Mountford

LIFE MEMBERSHIP

In the long and proud history of our club there have been very few instances when it has been decided to award Life Membership. This has been a deliberate policy to ensure that when life membership is awarded it recognises only the highest achievers of those who have significantly contributed to the club over many years. It is therefore particularly pleasing to announce that the club committee recently voted unanimously to award life membership to Pete James and Phil Rosenbloom.

Pete James joined the club in 1997, having always been a keen sportsman. Coming originally from Abergavenny (which has a proud cycling tradition), Pete played various sports to a high level including running marathons, playing football as a full back and

of course, as a proud Welshman, being a very useful centre in rugby union. But as injuries took their inevitable toll and as knees started to creak after repeated brutal tackles the bike beckoned! Like so many of us in the club, Pete started out on the Sunday C Run – never mind what it is now called but everyone knows it is the friendliest of runs – having been introduced by Lucy Ryan (Pete's sister in law).



Early memories included being looked after by club stalwarts Trevor Bayliss, Fred Towers, Fred Hopkins, John The Barber, Terry Passey, Jim Smyth, Rob Hampton, Ray Batchelor, Phil Rosenbloom and Margaret Gordon to name but a few. And of course those riders became lifelong friends, which is what our club is all about. It's interesting to reflect for a moment that those names Pete mentioned have also played an important part in the club and are always amongst the first to put their hands up for anything.



Supported and encouraged by his wife Mary (of course well known as a very popular club member in her own right) Pete very soon established himself as a strong rider and moved on to the B Runs and the fast Thursday and Saturday Runs where he enjoyed administering regular pain to his closest friends. I asked Pete what his fondest memories of the club were and he replied straight away: "The Semaines Federale" in France where the club moved en masse every summer for a week of cycling and supporting the local French wine growing economy. In fact so great were our

club's efforts that they did a sterling job in getting rid of the infamous French wine lake some years ago. Pete is still waiting for his Legion d'Honneur for services to French agriculture.

Now Pete was a strong rider with his relentless turns on the front of all of our club runs but what really set him apart was what he did for the club. He has filled many functions including starting on the committee as a management member, then organising several very successful club dinners and volunteering for just about every event every year including coordinating our club runs. But he has also served for many years as our Membership Secretary – a thankless task involving lots of unpleasant administration and hassle when people don't fill in their membership forms properly or at all! I asked Pete if he could change one thing about the club what would that be and he replied that he would love to see more members copying our junior riders and wearing their club jerseys proudly on club runs and when out on the bike. Good point Pete.

It is for these twenty or so years of continuous contribution to the life and success of our club that we have awarded Pete life membership (one less membership form to fill in!) So raise a glass to Pete when you next see him and if you have made sure you have completed your membership form correctly and are wearing a club jersey, you will get a quiet nod in return from one of the Solihull Cycling Club's true stalwarts – Pete James – a legend in his own lifetime!

And in fact our club mate **Phil Rosenbloom** seems in many ways very similar to Pete. He too joined the club about 20 years ago having never even ridden a bike seriously until the age of 40. He

was encouraged to join the club having met Keith Vickery, Dave Roberts and Pete Caldwell out on the road one day with these riders being known to many older members, especially of the Earlswood RC. Somehow Phil quickly found himself exposed to a baptism of fire by finding his way onto the legendary fast Saturday Run where only the strongest survived. This was in the days of the hectic sprints into Aston Cantlow where there was the prestige of not only winning the sprint but also the need to be first into the café, which only had seating for about 10! Phil was mixing it with Roger Hanbury, Big Kev, Alan Boden, Roger Storey, Paul Carbutt, Harry, Bill Groom and Steve Tonry (who always did long and deliberately brutal turns on the front that had everyone lined out for miles whilst casually chatting about the Junior Tour of the Fosse of nineteen sixty something!) It was tough but men were men and no one would ever utter the despised words “Take One Off!” Nothing changes.

Phil quickly moved onto the club’s committee, having been asked to become Treasurer at a time when our finances were less rosy than today. With Fred Towers as Chair, his wife



Margaret as Secretary and Phil as Treasurer the committee had firm foundations and the club now enjoys excellent financial stability thanks to many of their actions. But Phil also chairs our Youth Council, organises the Old Sols Lunch, has been on the Dinner Committee and marshalled and helped at numerous club events. He is a giver and that's what sets him apart even if he can no longer rip the Sunday B Run to bits up Tom Hill as I well remember having been frequently dropped by him and Mounty on the Danzey Green approach to hell.

I asked Phil for his fondest memories of the club and who inspired him. He replied that Thursday lunchtimes at The Punchbowl figure high on the list with Trevor, Margaret and "the two Freds" being high on his list but perhaps the greatest accolade going to our oldest member John Moore who once chastised him. Phil had said "I better go down to the C Run as I'm struggling" to which John responded "In our club, you don't go up or down runs – you just ride the one which you enjoy most and that's how we like things around here!" which says it all about our club really.

Phil you have been a great asset to the club and, with Pete, above all else a friend that we admire and respect for all that you have done for us. Thank you from every single member of the Solihull Cycling Club – you have truly earned your life membership.

Guy Elliot

President
Solihull Cycling Club

National Cyclocross Championships & Trophy Series 2017/18

The National Trophy Series is a series of 6 national events in the cyclocross calendar. Races were held in Derby, Abergavenny, Shrewsbury, Kent, Bradford and Ipswich. Most of the event venues have been used in recent years for the series, but a new one – the Cyclopark in Gravesend Kent, was a great venue and a great course. Conditions of the courses varied from venue to venue with Shrewsbury and Bradford once again being the muddiest and Ipswich and Abergavenny the driest conditions.

Some of our younger riders have been competing at these events since October in Derby and finishing in Ipswich early in January. This was then followed by the British Championships in mid January at Hetton Lyons Country Park in Sunderland, a technically challenging course with a mixture of mud and tarmac. The event was aired on BBC Sport red button and also on various websites. It was a great atmosphere with huge crowds which featured some big names such as Tom Pidcock. However, for the second year running, the fastest outlap of the Championships was achieved by the Junior winner of the day, this year Scottish mountain biker Sean Flynn. Many mountain bikers are now competing in cyclocross races and their superior technical skills are helping them achieve great results. Mountain biker, Grant Ferguson won the Men's elite race. I would encourage all our budding youngsters who participate in cyclocross to get off road and enjoy some mountain biking to hone those technical skills!

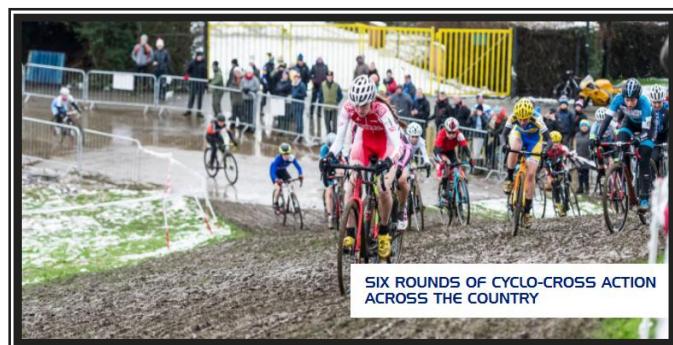
Well done to William Ryan (U14), Conor Jones (U16), Alex Harper, Jacob Knight and Harrison Knight (Juniors) from the club who have travelled the length and breadth of the country taking part in the national series, learning lots as they participate. Best positions achieved at these events were Harrison 8th in Bradford, William 9th at Ipswich, Jacob 11th at Ipswich.

Some of our current crop of Under 12 riders who move up to U14 category may want to dip their toes in the water and participate at one or two of the nationals in 2018/19. However, I see from social media that one of the venues for the 2018/19 Series will be in Scotland for those looking to step up to national events. We wish all the future national riders safe travelling, enjoyment and success!

Finally my favourite photo of the whole series, shown on the front cover of this edition - William Ryan (U14) with his Dad just before the race at Ipswich in January. It just sums up how fast how kids grow up, how much we support them and how much I am going to miss cyclocross!

Pauline Knight

"And we are going to miss you all as well, good luck boys!" Ed





Solihull Cycling Club members support Solihull Wheels for All

Four years ago, with the help and support from Solihull Active, I helped to set up an inclusive cycling project, Solihull Wheels For All.

We welcome people from all areas. We have a whole age range of service users from people who want to learn to ride a bicycle, people who want to re build their confidence of cycling in a traffic free environment to people, who for varying reasons didn't think they would be able to ride a bike. We have a range of adaptive bike that allows people with physical disabilities or learning disabilities or difficulties to also join in with the sessions.

We offer open sessions where everyone cycles together. This enables whole families who escort a person they care for, to join in an activity together, it can often prove difficult to find activities where everyone can join in together. We also work closely with other organisations that support people, young people and children with specific needs. Such as SENSE, for service users with visual and hearing impairments and often with disabilities or difficulties. We work with Headway Birmingham and Solihull for service

users with acquired brain injuries; and local services from day centres and community care groups and support workers for both adults & children with special needs. We run programmes for children & young people with local special needs schools. We also work with service users from the Stroke Association and those using exercise as part of weight loss or post-operative and cardiac rehabilitation programmes.



The whole project relies on the support from volunteers. We have been lucky enough to have a small team of volunteers from Solihull Cycling Club which has been invaluable and the whole project would not have been so successful and rewarding without them. Alan, Arthur, Bernie and Neville have been able to share their knowledge and passion for cycling with everyone who attends our project and together make a wonderful team.

We have volunteers from the local community as well as young people from the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme. We have also linked with the local STEPS service that support placements of young people with learning disabilities and we support these young people in gaining skills through their volunteering that may be transferred into a work placement.

The project is extremely rewarding to be part of and provides an activity that helps people to improve their fitness and mental health as well as providing an opportunity for new friendships.

In the four years we have been running we have seen many people overcome personal challenges, both by building their confidence in cycling, learning to ride a bike for the first time as well as helping people with varying disabilities and difficulties enjoy an activity they, or their carers, didn't think would ever be possible. We have seen so many people achieve and excel all their personal goals set.

We rely on donations and charity fund raising to buy equipment and bikes and adaptive bikes and none of this would be possible without the volunteering team of Alan, Arthur and Neville and others. I cannot thank them enough for all their hard work in rain or shine.



As you can probably tell.... I am very passionate about our project and very proud of both our volunteers and our service users !!!

I would get EXTREMELY told off by Alan if I did not use this opportunity to ask any others within the Cycling Club if you may be interested in volunteering at our Solihull Wheels For All project ? !!! Everyone is welcome..... Come and see what we do I guarantee you won't regret it No one leaves without a smile on their face.

If you have any questions or want to offer some time please contact **Cathy Fox** – 07800 570 802 cathyfox969@gmail.com

Volunteers

The perils of going for a pint after a club meeting!

I was chatting to Mick Edensor about the next youth circuit race and whilst he enjoys organising the event and to his credit what a great success the event has been over the last couple years, he finds ensuring we have sufficient volunteers in place takes up a disproportionate amount his time. Well I said “Don't worry Mick I'll looked after the volunteers for you this year” so here I am...



Now I could approach this by contacting the willing bunch that helped out last year who by in large are probably the same bunch that helped out last year and also throughout the year on other events which led me to think there may be a better way.

So here is my thought, how about we put together a register that captures the club members who would be happy to help out so when we are planning an event we can easily put out a call for assistance to a greater audience.



Now I appreciate our organisers generally have a team of volunteers who turn out year on year but perhaps we can step up and take our turn, so if you would be happy to help out, no commitment just a willingness to support.
please email me at editor@solihullcc.org.uk

Thank you in advance

Rocky



Obituary

Fred Towers



Fred was a good friend in fact I number him as one of my best friends ever. We travelled all over France and parts of Europe either at the Semaine Federal or watching the Tour de France, & World Championships. Fred was a key member of our annual “Gents Spring Tour”, his linguistic skills were second to none, quite often in the locals thought he was French.

Fred had been European sales manager for Courtaulds quite often on our trips business people he had met would travel 100's of miles to meet up with him & renew their friendships.

Eating out in France with Fred was a pleasure mainly because of his ability to speak French and over the years he had become a bit of a wine expert, I recall we were in a restaurant in Rennes where Fred sent the wine back then another until he had sent 3 bottles back, next day we thought we would not be welcome, but to our surprise the owner welcomed us back and agreed the wine had definitely been off, we thought the owner had been hoping to get rid of it on the English.

Fred did his National Service in the Navy and for some time was stationed at Wythall (now the transport museum) where his knowledge of Russian saw him listening in on the “Cold War Chatter.” When he was on board ship which wasn’t very often he was called upon to represent the Navy in various inter-service events quite often racing with top BC riders at Blandford Camp. National Service captured all the top riders in the country so he would be riding against the likes of Brian Robinson, Fred Krebs etc. who were pros.

Fred was introduced to Cycling with the Blackburn Eagles, when his job took him to Glasgow he soon joined the local cycling club, then he moved to Manchester and joined the Wheelers where he became a life member, his next career move was to the head office at Coventry still working for Courtaulds, luckily for the club he chose to live in Solihull to be near the Ice Rink as Anita his daughter was showing a keen interest and was quite talented on the ice. This is when he joined the SCC Margaret became club Secretary & Fred eventually became Chairman.

An amusing incident in France we were camping on a municipal camp site on beautiful turf flat as a pancake I jumped into the car to go to the shops I couldn't release the handbrake, in fact I pulled a muscle, where Fred lived his drive was 45 deg so he always had to slam the hand brake on and he couldn't get out of the habit. The car was an auto so you didn't need the handbrake anyway.

Fred's life was cycling he was great guy to know never ever heard him swear or say a bad word about anyone, he was good company, his friends are going to miss him.

Harry Reynolds



Fred was a much loved member of our club and as such I'm sure there are many anecdotes that could be recounted, if you've got a special story please send to me at editor@solihull.org.uk.

A festive trip to the land of frites, mayo and cross.

Christmas was done and the time had come to hit the fields of Flanders for 2 races. We packed the van, picked up Gary RP early on a snowy and icy Thursday morning and made good time down to the Eurotunnel, rolling off in Calais by early afternoon. 90mins later we were arriving at our hotel in a very cold, windy but festive Ostend.



Harrison at Bredene

The following morning freezing rain had been added to the cold and wind and was set in for pretty much the whole day. After an unscheduled and very awkward detour up and back along the start/



Jacob at Bredene

finish straight, we eventually followed the Czech team car to a windswept empty car park, followed in by several other trucks that positioned themselves around us. We were surrounded by the cream of Czech cross, and very impressive they were too!

RACE 1: BREDENE

By Belgian standards this was by no means a big event, but by British standards it was massive and fully televised with a very welcome and extremely large and raucous hospitality marquis where you could get some respite from the elements.



Rider Report, Jacob and Harrison:

'The course in Bredene was set in parkland and pretty familiar to us with numerous sharp banks and bends and switchbacks. The weather was foul for most of the day, cold, wet and very windy. The course had turned to mud by the time we started. Gridded at the back with a pinch point just after the start the challenge was to get as far up the field as we could. After a chaotic first lap we still found ourselves towards the back but both of us started to cut through the field over the following laps. This resulted in a 26th and 32nd place finish out of a strong field of around 60 riders representing countries ranging from Canada and Japan to France and the Czech Republic. It was an extremely muddy course therefore cleaning skinsuits for the following days racing was a real issue however we somehow managed!'

After cleaning the bikes and loading the van we stayed to watch the elite race which was unbelievably fast with incredible bike-handling skills, especially in the sand and mud ruts which had developed as the day went on. World champ Wout van Aert eventually getting a fairly comfortable victory over arch rival Euro champ Mathieu van der Poel.

We returned to a, by now, crowded car park with many examples of the mega-motor homes and mechanics trucks of the top Pro Teams (how the other half live!). After a short time taking in the goings on at the Pro Team camps Gary joined us in the van and we sped towards Brussels.

RACE 2: DIEGEM

The Superprestige in Diegem the next day was on a completely different scale. It was also scheduled for evening under floodlights which was to give a great atmosphere with vast, boisterous crowds.

We left our airport hotel after breakfast for a look around the course, which was within walking distance. It was very difficult to work out exactly where it went because it was woven right through the fabric of the town, also incorporating the local football stadium with a serious off-camber section. There were Frites stands, bars and large screens all over the place.

After lunch we parked the van in the designated area for junior riders and got prepped for the race.

Rider Report: Jacob and Harrison

'For the junior race, we both started at the back of the grid once again, but this time there was over 70 riders in the field, meaning it would be a challenge just to move up the field a little bit. Once the race had started, there was the standard junior pile up on the start straight, which we were both caught behind. However, once through the incident, we started making our way through the rest of the riders and ended up finishing 29th and 30th, just a few



seconds apart, despite also having 4 punctures between us as well! The course was perhaps the best course we had ever ridden, and the support was fantastic, with a sizeable contingent of Brits lining the course shouting for us every lap. In both races, the support from our pit crew was excellent, and we always had a clean bike waiting for us when we needed one.

Unfortunately we missed the U23 race and Tom Pidcock's win because we were cleaning up and loading the van, but when we got back up to the course the town was rocking in anticipation of the Elite races. First we saw World Champ Sanne Cant take victory in the women's race, then, after a break, it was time for the big boys again.



Sanne Cant

The first time through the off-camber section van der Poel caught his front wheel and took a massive fall over the front of his bike. After recovering he was almost last.

What we then saw was a masterclass as he made his way back to the front, had a duel with Van Aert for a while, then took off for a comfortable win to revenge the previous day. A popular Laurens Sweeck came in a strong third.



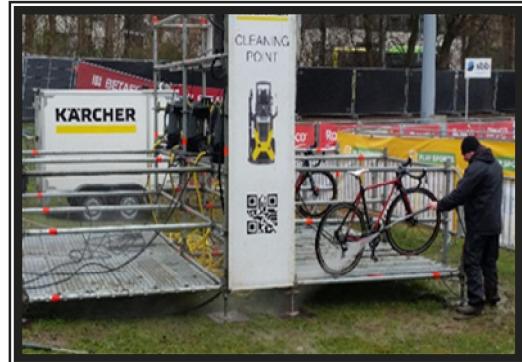
Off-camber section

Belgium (van Aert) 1 :
Holland (van der Poel) 1

We travelled home the following day tired but very glad we had taken the opportunity to experience some Cyclocross in its heartland

Some observations from the trip:

- Cross rules Belgium in Winter
- The elite are superstars
- Gary RP simply LOVES Cyclocross
- Gary RP simply LOVES Frites and Mayo
- Gary RP can get aggressive at the bike wash when necessary



- Belgian pits are great, bike washing facilities fantastic
- Laurens Sweeck has a massive fan-club
- It's a fantastic trip at least once in a cyclocross career

Jacob, Harrison and Peter Knight plus Gary RP

A Reminder to all Club Members

This short article is intended to serve as a reminder to all Club members of the need to abide by Club Rules whether riding on a Club Run or participating in Races of any kind.

I am well aware that we all regularly encounter situations where we are provoked by other road users most notably car or commercial vehicle drivers. However, provocation should not be viewed as an excuse for either verbal or physical abuse of any kind towards others.

Both our Club Constitution and the Complaint and Disciplinary Procedure [both are available to read on the Club Website] expressly forbid any such behaviour which may bring the Club into disrepute.

The Club Committee has the ability to impose sanctions against members committing acts of misconduct. These could involve suspension or cancellation of membership.

Please ride safely and responsibly and remember you are a member of one of the biggest and best cycling clubs in the country !

Dick Law

Chairman
Solihull Cycling Club



BC Board Member

In November, at the British Cycling AGM, I was successfully voted onto the main Board of British Cycling. But what does this mean and what will I be doing ? To help put this into context, there are 12 members of the Board. These comprise, 6 people essentially voted for by Regional cycling delegates, 4 appointed by the Board itself, Julie Harrington (the current Chief Executive) and the recently appointed Chairman, Frank Slevin.



There isn't a specific role that I have been appointed to undertake. It doesn't quite work that way with the set up of many National Governing Bodies. The majority of the day-to-day activities are undertaken by the staff of British Cycling. Overall, the role of a BC Board Director is probably best described as two-fold. Firstly ensuring that there is a clearly documented strategy and policy in all key areas and secondly of holding to account the senior staff at British Cycling to ensure that strategy/policy is followed. In the past 18 months, we have seen several instances of British Cycling being reprimanded and criticised for lack of policy and process – the medical processes in the Bradley Wiggins “jiffy-bag” case, the coach and athlete feedback process as in the Jess Varnish and Shane Sutton cases.

Since my election to the Board there has only been one Board meeting so I can report only what has been covered so far – we looked very closely at the high profile recent reviews and checked that the action plans for those continue to be implemented and

followed. Some further papers for the next couple of meetings are around a Major Events Strategy for each of the sports disciplines – what international/national events are the most important and how does BC secure and promote these successfully, and an area for review that I have raised around the Strategy for what content gets reported via the BC website and social media. We are also due to receive a further review into our approach and support for youth, junior and u23 competition.

The Board also has oversight of the finances, with monthly reports on the state of income, expenditure and cashflow. Also at each Board meeting we receive the reports from the senior staff about progress against previously agreed strategy and targets. There is a good level of questioning that takes place with unresolved matters being highlighted for prompt rectifying action.

Also each Board member Chairs the sub-committees that look after the various aspects of the sport. Given my recent involvement in track coaching and racing I shall be Chairing the Track Commission.

I am certainly looking forward to my 3 years as a Board Director, and hope I can make a difference to the organisations progress going forward. I am always receptive to new ideas and challenges from fellow BC members, so if there is anything that my club members think is an important issue to be addressed, I hope they will get in touch.

Richard Lodge

Station Run

A very brisk run starting at Dorridge Station at 9:00am, with a coffee stop at
Mapleborough Green GC.
Distance Approx 43miles

This is not a led ride, riders do not always stop for puncture and such like, and
every rider is responsible for the own navigation and safety.

Solihull Cycling Club accepts no responsibility for any person on this ride.

Riders ride at their own risk!

Club Runs

Saturday

All runs commence at 9:00am

B Run starts Railway Inn Dorridge

Apple Pie Run starts Dorridge Village Hall

All rides have a coffee stop :-

Studley Garden Centre,

Mapleborough Green

Thursday

DATE	A RUN	B RUN	C RUN	D RUN
		Led By Pete James	Led by Dick Law	Led by Trevor Bayliss
08-Feb	Wellesborne	Wixford	Blackhills	Little Alne
15-Feb	Dunnington	Wellesbourne	Kenilworth	Middleton
22-Feb	Wellesborne	Astwood Bank	Hunningham Hill	Stratford
01-Mar	Dunnington	C Chambers	Stoneleigh	Hatton Craft
08-Mar	Wellesborne	Dunnington	Alcester	Shottery
15-Mar	Dunnington	Lighthorne	Mapleboro Green	Alcester
22-Mar	Wellesborne	Hampton Lucy	Bidford	Blackhills
29-Mar	Dunnington	Hunningham Hill	Wellesbourne	Astwood Bank
05-Apr	Wellesborne	Wixford	Dunnington	Stoneleigh
12-Apr	Dunnington	C Chambers	Hoar Park	Charlcote
19-Apr	Wellesborne	Lighthorne	Charlcote	Middleton
26-Apr	Dunnington	Wellesbourne	Long Itchington	Stratford
03-May	Wellesborne	Astwood Bank	Wellsbourne A F	Alcester

Runs Co-Ordinator Dick Law 01926 427200

A Run starts Dynamic Rides Hockley Heath at 9:15 am

B and C run start from Punchbowl at 10:00 am

Sunday

DATE	A RUN	B RUN	C RUN	D RUN	E RUN
11-Feb	Chipping Camden	Farnborough	C Chambers	Dunnington	Alcester
18-Feb	Stourport	Wolverley	Jinny Ring	Kineton	Astley
25-Feb	Kineton	Evesham Ferry	Long Marston	Battlefields	Wellesbourne
04-Mar	Willoughby	Battlefields	Oxhill	Wellesbourne	C Chambers
11-Mar	Evesham	Barby	Wickhamford	C Chambers	Dunnington
18-Mar	Napton On The Hill	Hartlebury	Ilmington	Dunnington	Stratford
25-Mar	St Peter's	Broadway	M Hussingtree	Jinny Ring	Middleton
01-Apr	Ullesthorpe	Moiria	C Chambers	M Hussingtree	Alcester
08-Apr	Broadway	Draycote Water	Wickhamford	Evesham Ferry	Charlotte
15-Apr	Long Itchington	Blakdown	Long Marston	Draycote Water	Astwood Bank
22-Apr	Toddington	Defford	Battlefields	Ilmington	Shotttery
29-Apr	Blakesdown	Rosliston	Blooms	Battlefields	Hoar Park
06-May	Rosliston	Thurlaston	Chaddesley Corb	Blooms	C Chambers

Rides start from Clock Tower, Warwick Road, Solihull

A & B runs start at 9:00. All other runs start at 9:15

From 25 March all runs start at 9:00am

Beginners F Run also available - Contact Alan Thomson 01216-808322 or alt492@hotmail.com

Tuesday

	B Run		
DATE	A Run Coffee Stop	Coffee Stop	Pub Stop
13-Feb	Lighthorne	Long Itchington (PB)	Hampton Lucy
20-Feb	Ilmington	C Chambers	Ardens Grafton
27-Feb	Evesham	Fladbury	Broom Tavern
06-Mar	Broadway	Kineton (PB)	Wellesbourne
13-Mar	C Chambers	Flyford Flavel	Wixford
20-Mar	Kineton	Ilmington	Barton
27-Mar	Long Itchington	Lighthorne (PB)	Ardens Grafton
03-Apr	Flyford Flavel	Battlefields (E)	Shustoke
10-Apr	Wickhamford	Chipping Camden	Long Marston
17-Apr	Churchfields	Martin Husingtree	Broom Tavern
24-Apr	Pershore	Heather (E)	Ratcliffe Culey
01-May	Chipping Camden	Shipton on Stour	Ardens Grafton
08-May	Wolverley	Chaddesley Corbett	Flyford Flavel
Runs info: Dave Stephenson 01564 776064 davidjks@icloud.com			
A Run is faster with coffee stop, starts from Reservoir pub at 9:15. Leader agreed on day			
B Run is an all day ride with coffee & lunch stop. Leaves Reservoir pub at 9:15 am			
Except (PB) from the Punch Bowl pub, Lapworth and (E) from Xrds at Eastcote.			
Run Leader : Trevor Bayliss annitrev@talktalk.net			
Starts Punchbowl 10:00			

Main Club Contact Details

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