

THE WORTHING WHEEL



**MAGAZINE OF THE WORTHING EXCELSIOR
CYCLING CLUB**

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DAVE HUDSON - 7300 Km AUDAX 1996

Srping 1997=====THE WORTHING WHEEL=====

WORTHING EXCELSIOR CYCLING CLUB'S=====

QUARTERLY MAGAZINE=====

Clubroom: Broadwater Parish Rooms: Meetings every
Tuesday evening, 7.30 to 10.30. Canteen until 10.00.

Opinions expressed are those of the contributors,
and not necessarily of the club or its committee.

President: BN13 3LN.	Don Lock , 7 Welland Road, Worthing., Telephone: Worthing 531877
Chairman: BN16 4EJ	Alan Matthews, 20, Water Lane, Angmering Telephone: Worthing 784852
Secretary BN14 8HG.	Paul Toppin, 8 Beaumont Road, Worthing, Telephone: Worthing 201501
Treasurer: BN13 1JL.	Allan Langham, 38, Lenhurst Way, Worthing, Telephone: Worthing 263049
Membership Sec. BN13 2QB	Richard Cooley, 3, Holmes Lane, Rustington Telephone: Worthing 786322
Social Secretary. BN132QB	Richard Cooley, 3, Holmes Lane, Rustington Telephone: Worthing 786322.
Road and Track. Beeding, BN44 3JS.	Vern McClelland, 31 Downland Road, Upper Telephone: Worthing 814351
Club Coach Beeding, BN44 3JS.	Vern McClelland, 31 Downland Road, Upper Telephone Worthing 814351
Club Events Sec. BN14 9JQ.	Mel Robertson, 30, Pines Avenue, Worthing. Telephone: Worthing 214489
Club Events Ass't. BN15 0HG	Alan Stepney, 38, Manor Road, Lancing, Telephone: Worthing 762988
Evening Tens BN12 5HZ.	Jan Scotchford, 11, Brook Lane, Ferring, Telephone: Worthing 242459
Mountain Bikes Rep. Worthing. BN12 4QF.	Jeremy Wootton, 17 Amberley Drive, Goring, Telephone: Worthing 245068
Club Runs Hollingdean, Brighton.	Tony Palmer, 23 Brentwood Crescent, Telephone: 01273-558597
Magazine Editor. BN13 3LN	Don Lock 7 Welland Road, Worthing Telephone: Worthing 531877

Puff - Pow-wow.

I wish I smoked. Hundreds of years ago American Indians used tobacco in peace ceremonies, and to talk to the trees.

We have no Red Indians in the club, so I feel on safe ground here.

Nowadays all over the world, those who are lucky enough to smoke can still puff their way from an initial acquaintance into a bonded friendship, re-cemented by the ritual exchange of tobacco.

This reassuring ballet of offering and acceptance. The over-emphasised gesturing. The production of the flame. Both parties safe in the expectation of what the other may do. Perfectly timed like the courtship of a pair of grebes.

Finally with this seemingly nonsensical thing smouldering in the hand the lucky smoker can enjoy several minutes of warm reciprocal motioning.

It's so friendly.

The Indian has changed.

He got himself some lawyers and he is causing problems.

He is no longer the confused individual who found it hard to decide if a Horn was Big or Little

Nowadays a chat in a tepee is something even more like an extract from a Batman comic.

He wants his land back.

He wants all the buffalo back.

He wants everyone, except snakes, to stop speaking with a forked tongue.

And he wants his customs back.

What are we going to do if he wants tobacco back too?

Sex outside Marriage.

I was down in the South of Spain again. Me and my battered old bike.

I'm not sure if my bike is male or female. However, it is the nearest thing I can get to Sex outside of marriage.

I have done things with my bike that it would have been impossible to do with anyone else.

We have won a few. Lost too many. We have been hot and terribly cold. I don't think we have ever laughed or cried. We have been bored a lot. We have sworn a lot, been very tired and scored a few times. Taken all together we have been deliriously content.

I have cleaned it about six times in ten years.

I would no more think of buying a new bike than I would of changing my wife. Still, there are an awful lot of new bikes sold every year.

Occasionally though, I like to look in the Bike Store window and dream a little.

To-day was one of those dreaming days.

Amorously Challenged in Marbella.

Beautiful women terrify me. One look from them and I come over all peculiar. So I try to watch them from a safe distance and avoid close contact if possible.

A fashion show was being held in fashionable Marbella. With leopards on leads, Sylvester Stallone (running loose) 6 feet tall sensational models.

Six of these marvellous clothes horses were staying alongside me in the hotel.

They were so lucky, so beautiful. Touch one and you would burn your fingers.

Just watching one of them cross the dining room was like witnessing a significant event in history.

All over the hotel, men were coming over all peculiar.

Paradoxically, in my experience, to feel really at home when on holiday one needs an occupation. To be on holiday and not occupied is to be extraneous, and tends to make one look and act like a refugee, with no fixed abode.

Lucky for me, I'm a cyclist.

I was coming back, drenched and gritty from three hours in the mountains in the wet with my battered old friend.

Two of the models had wedged themselves in the hotel doorway, waiting for a limousine and watching the rain.

I looked at one of them and made eye contact. I knew it was a mistake, but I couldn't help myself.

Are you a professional cyclist?" she asked. "Not now, but I was once" I answered "nowadays all I am is 44 years old". Technically I wasn't lying - in 1979 I used to finish work early on Wednesdays, to go training - so I knew what the life was like.

"I thought so", she said "You look -- good".

Coming from her that was really something.

Half-way back to my room I came over all peculiar.

A Town Called Pomegranate.

Arnold had travelled all the way from Venezuela to the Costa del Sol to see if he could find anything of Significance there.

He was English but had gone to South America to search for

Significance there too.

He was 64, and a Professor of Dramatic Arts in an American University.

He was also a Film Director, a Playwright. He was a personal friend of Peter O'Toole and had once turned down a part in Coronation Street, because he thought it wouldn't run.

Oh Boy!! Was he interesting.

From my point of view he had only one draw-back.

Dramatic Arts were not the only thing Arnold had in common with Oscar Wilde, Somerset Maugham and Larry Grayson.

Artistic Significance ruled Arnold's life.

He sought Significance everywhere.

Even where it didn't exist.

He thought it was Significant that I was a cyclist and asked me what in essence it was all about.

I told him that cycle sport was all about wearing yourself out for personal satisfaction, and for the vicarious gratification and often ghoulissh appreciation of a small minority of people. He saw that as Highly Significant.

After a coach trip to the city of Granada , Arnold was overcome with the Significance of the Pomegranate fruit, for which the Spanish word is "Granada".

He told me that because it has exactly 113 seeds the pomegranate was adopted into the religion of the Venetian Jews, whose bible has 113 commandments.

"So if the pomegranate had only had 112 seeds, that would really have bollocksed things up for everyone" I said.

The derivation of words held a significance for Arnold. Grenade came he said from the fruit Granada (the pomegranate)

Arnold thought it was Significant that there is no commonplace word in English for a three-dimensional rectangular shape, such as a cigarette packet, or a match-box or a coffin, yet we have words for cubes, spheres, cylinders, pyramids.

I suddenly felt insecure, as if at the creation God had slipped up and left out the atom, making the universe an unstable place.

"So what on earth are we going to do?" I asked.

"We can call it a PARALLELEPIPED" said Arnold.

"Thank goodness for that then", I said.

Humour he said was derived from Human, because it involved mankind playing with its weaknesses and foibles. I said that mankind was very lucky to have his own foibles to play with.

He began to recite - Human, Humour, Humble, Humi..... "What about HUMUNGUS " I said, "and HUMP".

Cycling soon lost its significance for Arnold. He went after a young Belgian, who looked like Wilfred Nellisen the sprinter, and had six ear-rings in one ear, which Arnold found highly significant.

An Innocent in the land of Duende.

A tiny sliver of yellow moon hung on its back in the sky like an abandoned melon skin, making the night seem very Islamic.

As I rode uphill the rough mountain road drummed upwards through the bike. It was an infectious rhythm and I pushed myself to feel more of it, but I tried too hard and lost the rhythm.

It was 12.30 a.m., and I wanted a beer, luckily the Spanish hardly ever seem to go to bed.

I freewheeled cautiously through the narrow streets of the village of

Abdalagis and from the dark interior of the Bar M'alaga I picked up the rhythm of a flamenco guitar. I wanted a drink and I needed that rhythm. Wearing cycling shoes and tights and carrying only a Zefal pump as protection, I was drawn mothlike into the darkened bar.

A curtain of smells hit me at the door. Woodsmoke, brandy, cured ham, sweat, hashish and tobacco.

They were acrid, dangerous smells.

My Look cleats crashed onto the marble tiled floor and I moved ducklike into the unknown interior.

Flamenco music originated in Andalucia through a fusion of Spanish and Moorish cultures. Its greatest exponents are the gypsies or Gitanos, of which there are many in Southern Spain.

The flamenco concerns itself with the description through music, clapping and singing, of all human emotion - Love, Pain, Fear, Death, in fact all the things that could never be comfortably discussed along the promenade at Worthing.

The more effectively a singer can pass on this deeper feeling (known as DUENDE) to the audience, the better will be considered the performance.

When they feel sufficiently moved each member of the audience is free to add something of his own, a phrase, some clapping or perhaps an agonised wail. This assists the singer and guitarist in their attempts to raise the depth of feeling to a point close to frenzy. This is known as Deep Duende. I like it.

The way of clapping the hands is important. This not the "Singa Longa Max Bygraves" type clapping. The flamenco clap is like the beating out of an emotional Morse code, taut, highly syncopated and profoundly felt.

Hit it right and it can drive you wild.

There were nine gypsies in the bar, six men, two women and a small, toothless old lady dressed in black.

The rest were in working clothes, the men dark-skinned and unshaved.

I got my beer from a young barman with glasses who looked like a Between Careers University Student. He seemed slightly embarrassed by my "sudden" appearance amongst all the duende in the smoke-filled room.

Feeling like a cycling apparition, I slipped into a chair next to a heavy jewelled gypsy in cowboy clothes with a moustache the size of an emulsion brush.

After an acceptable length of time he nodded, gave a chesty cough and leaned towards me...

You want Hash or Coke? he asked, in a way that suggested I was obliged to have either one or the other.

All I wanted was to stay and be part of all the duende.

"Can't I just have one of those?" I said, pointing to his packed of cigarettes.

I don't smoke, but I didn't think there would be much harm in it, after all, Mike Gibbs does it and he's from High Salvington.

The gypsy picked up the Parallelepiped-shaped box, took a cigarette himself and offered one to me. I slid out the cylindrical object. It felt very dry and light in the hand.

Quite ludicrously, I began to pat myself all over to convey to my new friend that I had mistakenly left my lighter at home.

Looking somewhat offended that I was not reciprocating, he was forced to produce the flame.

I inhaled deeply and my head began to spin. 20 seconds were added to my "10" time.

With his Parallelepiped by his side the voice of the singer wailed hoarsely upwards, the notes propelled from lungs the colour of

smoked Haddock.

He sang something very sad about accidentally killing a beautiful butterfly as it rested on a flower.

The duende began to envelop me. In my job I kill millions of greenfly every year with insecticides and believe you me I feel for every one of the little green buggers. I wanted to sing about it there and then but nothing I could think of would rhyme with I.C.I.

I was not reciprocating, I began to feel desperate.

I could sing about all the misery of an evening 10 in June, but there isn't any.

From across the room the harrikan gazed happily enough at me but her eyes suggested she fancied I would better make a good price on the illicit Moroccan white slave market, only seven miles across the Gibraltar Strait, or failing that a hearty meal for her dog.

The grip on my Zefal pump tightened.

I waited, wondering which of them would come at me first.

To my left my new friend, using all the skill of a craftsman, began to manufacture a funny little cigarette with five loose papers.

The guitarist stopped playing and offered me the guitar, holding it in both hands in a humble deprecatory way. His tired, red but kind eyes looked into mine out of a pock-marked and heavily whiskered face. His voice was manly, but plaintive.

"Are you a guitar-eester?" he asked.

"No, I'm terribly sorry", I said, "I'm only a cycl-eester".

I got out by a back door, via the toilet. A sleek grey, country rat who had never experienced a moment's duende in his entire life, played happily with a plastic bag on top of the dustbins.

My backside hit the Rolls saddle on my battered old bike, the clipless pedals snapped into place and my legs felt good.

I wheeled around and headed towards the coast.



The Great Ray Douglass Tea.

Sunday 26th January saw approximately 130 people fill the Washington Village Hall. They came to "meet up" to talk cycling. They enjoyed a cuppa and some food and they remembered Ray. 3.30 we said, but they were arriving in the village by 2.00. Some went on a ride together, some walked around the village bumping into others, providing another "chat" opportunity.

By 3.00 the hall was filling up. They came from the four corners of the county and from beyond. People from Maidstone met people from Bognor and recalled old times.

Don't get the idea though that these were all Ray's old contemporaries, they were not, many were younger people who'd done 70 miles hard in the morning and still enjoyed being back in HIS company. For this is what it was, it was the scene that he enjoyed most. He could be seen in one corner exchanging banter with old sparring partner John Mansell, in another talking to the fit ones and asking of their plans for '97, discussing the '97 12 hour with Dave Stokes, and S.C.A. business with Les Janman. Over there he was with a group of the 40 plus, and then he was next to Chris Watts sorting out some R.T.T.C. matter.

Still he managed to keep in front of Dave Hudson in the food queue, still he smiled, still he was civil to Geoff Boore

Vanessa and Andy Attwood and so many willing helpers, did much work in preparing all the food. They deserve our thanks. Next year the hall is booked for Sunday 25th January. We may have to examine the funding, but I'm sure we shall all be there again.

Don

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45 Juniper Road
Crawley
RH11 7NL

3 February 1997

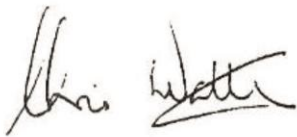
Dear Don

Thank you to everyone who made "Ray's Teaparty" such a pleasant gathering. John and I did get a few miles in around Dial Post and Storrington before joining you all.

We do miss Ray on the District Committee both for his local knowledge and course measuring abilities, and, as you mention, it is good to have Mike Gibbs join us. To quote your magazine "if you don't have people doing these jobs there would be no competition for the rest of us." How many realise that if we did not have REAL CLUBS, like the Worthing for example, there would soon be no events. How many Team XXX's and R.T.'s promote events - they rely on the old established clubs to promote the events for them to win !

I enjoyed reading the high quality Worthing Wheel and managed to get round the Tourist Trail without getting lost.

Sincerely



Near the Back of the Bunch.

The call came from the Editor - would I write a piece on the Worthing 100K Audax event, from the point of view of someone at the "back of the bunch". Well, this can't be me Mr Editor - I'll have you know that 15 people (plus 2 on a tandem) finished behind me. There are in fact several good reasons why I prefer to stay towards "the back of the bunch"

- i) so I don't get tangled up with all those serious cyclists*
- ii) so I can look at the scenery*
- iii) most people have gone when I get to the refreshment stops, so I don't have to queue.*
- iv) my bike won't go any faster - anyway, I've got very short legs.*

Well, the day didn't start too well - Alan was suffering with a bad back and could hardly stand up, and we had trouble locating the lady with the key for Ashington village hall, so we were not as prepared as we should have been when hordes of cyclists started arriving soon after 7.45am demanding tea, but at the appointed hour of 9am, 92 cold but keen entrants were on their way.

Unfortunately one person had his bike stolen from outside the village hall, so he was one of the 18 non-starters.

Although I have ridden Audax events of similar distance, grizzling and whinging my way round - I was at first apprehensive about riding without Alan - not for any sentimental reason but because a) he will insist on carrying all my luggage (plus his own) in his handlebar bag, i.e. waterproofs, spare clothing, food, money, repair kit, tubes, tissues, cuddly toys and other essentials and b) he also reads the map - I have not been allowed to read the map before (women can't read maps, apparently).

Having done neither of the aforementioned, I decided against the handlebar bag - I would travel light. As for map reading, I had a cunning plan - I would simply follow the person/s in front - assuming there would be plenty of these as I would be at the "back of the bunch", and also assuming they were actually participating in the event and following the same route.

Note: I must get one of those nifty little plastic map holder things that go on the handlebars for next time. By the end of the day my route sheet had been in and out of my pocket so many times it looked as though it had been through a hot wash with a fast spin.

I had "persuaded" several friends from Worthing Rowing Club

to enter - told them they would love pottering through the countryside, perfectly flat, no hills at all, etc, they would enjoy it. After all, if they're fit enough to row, then cycling a mere 65 miles should be no problem, should it? I stayed with this group (more or less) for most of the ride. Shortly before Cranleigh, I suggested to Sue (who had never ridden more than 20 miles in her life and had borrowed a bike for the occasion) that she changed down a few gears - she replied that she didn't know how to use the "clicky thing" so she had done about 20 miles without changing gear!

Also, unfortunately, the bike she had borrowed was fitted with one of those computer thingies, and she would insist on giving a mileage report i.e. "We've done 6 miles. Wow, we've done 8 now. Nearly 10 - only 55 to go" which I would rather do without. Pete and Mandy riding the other tandem - not to be confused with the OTHER tandem -struggled a bit towards the end of the day, but it's surprising how a few beers ease the muscles and soothe the saddle sores.

One thing about being a "social" cyclist (as opposed to a racing cyclist) is that you get to chat to lots of people along the way, and everyone I spoke to said how they enjoyed the day, and were full of praise for the organisation/refreshments. A number of people who are not involved with cycling clubs and are not interested in entering a "race" like to ride these events as there is no pressure to keep up with those who prefer to "give it some wellie" - you can go at your own pace (within reason) and unlike racing, Audax events are sociable things - there is time to exchange words with other riders, and to offer each other encouragement up the hills etc. This is my kind of cycling. These events should be promoted more, in the hope that they will encourage people of all ages/abilities to become more interested in cycling, and perhaps to join the club.

And talking of age, what about Sean McClelland? I can tell

you, it's quite disheartening when you're still on the road ("back of the bunch") several miles from the finish, and the McClelland car comes towards you, bikes on top, with Sean waving at you having finished the course, had a cup of tea, packed his bike up and is on his way home! For those of you who are not aware, at 12 years of age and riding his first 100k event, Sean completed the course in 4.52 hours, much to the embarrassment of his Dad, Vern, who could only manage a poor 4.57 hours. This was the furthest distance Sean has ridden, but I'm sure he'll soon be entering a 200K. (Note: Sean, leave your Dad at home next time).

A word about the weather - well, it could have been worse, thankfully there was no frost/ice/snow/rain/sleet/hail/thunder. There was no sun either, but what we did have was fog. Must be something about the Surrey/Sussex border (I blame the airport myself, all that pollution). In fact the fog was so thick in places that if Richard Cooley had not been standing in the middle of the road gesticulating wildly (I think that was what he was doing) we would never have known that the second refreshment stop was there!

On reflection, part of the route I would like to give a miss is the A283 Bramber/Wiston - that stretch of road is so busy and the traffic is very fast. However, it is possible to omit that stretch from the route by adding a piece on up country somewhere (Dave knows where I mean) and then cutting across on country lanes, thereby avoiding that busy road. Perhaps a thought for next time.

Well, although it was a relief to get back to Ashington Village Hall, I must admit that I sort of enjoyed this Audax. I rode up all the hills (thanks to Bob Seago at Cranleigh, whose back wheel I hung on all the way up, while trying desperately to breathe. I also did a personal best time - 5hrs 56 - OK stop sniggering - only 2hrs 21 behind Jan Scotchford and Andy

Smith on the OTHER tandem. Even my friend Ruth finished the course without grizzling and threatening

The route for this event was based on the Reliability Trial Circuit - I am reliably informed by a reliable informant that during the past few years the Reliability Trial has not been well supported, but as an early season Audax route, it seemed popular. Personally, I could have done without those lumpy bits at Cranleigh (where did they find those hills?) but everyone got to the top, either on their wheels or their feet. And lo and behold, when we reached the top, an angel with a chariot had descended (well, Dave Hudson and his Tuck Truck). Dave's vital statistics show that apparently during the course of the day 180 rolls were eaten; plus millions of lemon curd/jam tarts, Bakewell tarts, apple puffs, bread pudding, bananas, and gallons of tea/coffee/cold drinks, as well as a dustbin full of vegetable soup and 20 French sticks and more cakes at the finish.

And now for the credits - you would not believe the work that goes into organising an event which for some people (i.e. Jan and Andy) only lasts 3hrs 35. It took over our spare bedroom for several weeks beforehand, and although entries closed several weeks before, people were still phoning up to the night before the event. I know Alan would like to thank everyone who helped make this a success - Dave the Tuck and his Outside Catering Facilities for his usual superb stuff; Vanessa Attwood for making the soup; Richard Cooley and Angela Toppin at the second control (sorry about the fog); Linda Gibbs and Jean Retallick for their help at the finish (Note: expect to see both ladies actually RIDING the next event as apparently it would be easier than serving food to hungry bikers!); Cliff & Rose Borer of Weybridge Wheelers for assisting at Cranleigh, and also to Tony Palmer, Mike Poland and to Alan for organising it whilst dodging backwards and forwards to and from Houston and Italy. Maybe he'll get

time to actually ride a bike soon! Oh, and thanks also to the person who invented ladies lycra cycling shorts!

Sue Dray

Free-loaders but Proud.

The atmosphere at the club A.G.M. seemed less uncomfortable this year than usual, even so it was still pretty terrible. The whole affair continues to be cell-sappingly embarrassing, but I found the desire to be entirely swallowed up by the parquet flooring a little less intense than in '93, (which was the year I cracked and found myself with a job). Recession followed in '96, a doctor's certificate proving that I was life-threateningly jaded.

Thanks for this respite are due in the main to President Don Lock who deputising for absentee chairman Alan Matthews (re-elected even though hiding in the New World) carried the proceedings along at a smart but appropriately respectful pace (Lower Level 2 for Sports Physiologists).

He allowed just enough silent reflection for us shrivelling, non-volunteering miscreants to become fully aware of our own worthlessness, but insufficient time for those useful members with jobs to become excessively sanctimonious about their own merits.

Have you noticed how much stuff the average committee member carries about with him?

Clipboards, sheaves of notes. Dave Hudson (re-elected good egg) actually needs a briefcase. Even at this late hour he was handing out entry forms with Messianic zeal.

I peeled my intensely folded, dog-eared agenda out of the pocket where I keep my small change, made myself as minute as possible, and settled down to count the creases in Roger Smallman's (retired President) cycling shoes.

I am finding as I get older that I like people less and respect individuals a lot more.

Women, because they are basically kind (and make excellent sandwiches), have a tendency to like people, blokes, not content with a measure so intangible as affection, have adopted respect, as a far more quantifiable means of assessing a person's worth.

So when all the committee members, having completed their 12 months of useful endeavour, turn up at the A.G.M., quietly confident with all their paraphernalia, we the Free-loaders and Loafers could be forgiven for feeling just a little envious, antagonistic, and intimidated. but very full of respect. Complex, isn't it?

What I as a lazy Freeloader like is races and events that just happen spontaneously, appearing early in the morning like mushrooms and then disappearing just as mysteriously.

I need dinners, soup runs, days out, roller racing which I can attend irresponsibly as if they were some illicit liaison with no strings attached.

I don't want to feel guilty or furtive.

Most of all what I want is to be free to choose not to attend them, but to know somehow that they are there, just in case I feel the urge to attend. IN just the same way, I want to know there are still Elephants in Africa, just in case I fancy dropping in to see them sometime.

Paul Toppin (Hon. Sec. re-elected) read the '96 minutes with confident ease. This was his day as well. In front of him he had all the paperwork to prove it. Last year I had apologised for non-attendance. I think I then said I was going to be ill. Respect Paul.

In '97, as an unrepentant Freeloader I was going to bluff it out. You know we idle buggers really should stick together not least because it's easier to hide in a bunch.

Inevitably the A.G.M. was poorly attended. It would have been such fun to sit with a gang of fellow "dodgers" and to yell inanities during the Election of Officers and to trick the odd "volunteer".

"What a mug!"

"Your Missus is gonna love you"

"Corr, there goes your summer 'oliday.

Back in the vibrant days dear old Chairman Charlie Lednor had to keep control with an old cycling shoe, which he used as a gavel, like a judge.

An A.G.M. was unruly, crowded, and fun.

The clubroom was packed and stuffy, condensation built up on the windows. The free-loaders would sit at the back on tables, guffawing.

We would write a title like TREASURER on the humid class above the head of some unsuspecting, irresponsible Lotus-eater and giggle.

Charlie would thrash his cycling shoe on the table and call us all big girls, but that's another story entirely.

Free-loaders had a slothful, easy time in those days, somebody was always willing to sever their gear-lever finger in order to serve on the committee. You never had to respect anyone, or be grateful. Funny thing is, I liked everyone then.

Purse-lipped and impassive Alan Langham (re-elected) is a superb Treasurer. Throughout he wore the dour expression often adopted by Belgian winners of Ardennes classics, for the benefit of the sponsors, to convey the mood of a job well done, rather than one of personal exultation, which he deserves.

Our last treasurer, Robert, used to look pretty stern as well. The Club made money under him too. Shame really. The faintest whiff of a loss could have delivered Bob to us as "Butter Side Downham".

He got the job because he worked in a T.S.B.

How does sitting all day in a big yellow digger help you add up?

Perhaps in every committee member there lurks an unsatisfied urge

towards irresponsible raillery and we may see Alan Langham cross the floor to join us wayward Feeloaders soon, but please Alan, not until you have made the podium in the Flèche Wallone. Mucho Respecto!

This year the Election of Officers was a tense, dismal affair. It felt like a Sothebys's auction where any uncontrolled movement could land me with a Goya portrait worth £ 1.5 million, or even worse a job, which could involve getting up early or having to regularly attend some meeting where I might be accused by some blinkered Neanderthal (from the Creepy-Crawley Wheelers) of not being aggressively pro-cycling and all because I can't quote verbatim the entire contents of Keith Bingham's Reactionary Bikewatch Column.

Crikey! I've only recently learnt that the local 25 course is the G939 or it was until it was changed. I wonder what it is now? I must ask Mel (re-elected T.T. secretary) Respect Mel.

I once knew a chap who kept racing pigeons on quite a large scale and ever on the look-out for new ways to go faster on a bike I pestered him for clues as to what motivated a simple pigeon to race unswervingly for many hundreds of miles across seas and continents. Not for a little jersey - "they do it because they want to get home" he said.

About a fortnight later the poor chap killed himself. He left a note and I wasn't mentioned so I'm in the clear. It was probably all that waiting for his birds to come home.

Anyway, some time, and a lot of loose feathers later, the premises were taken over by a Greyhound Trainer.

How do you make a greyhound run?" I asked, keen as ever.

Keep them kennelled up tight at home" he replied

"What do they do if you take them away from home?" I asked.

"They cock their leg on the nearest tree", he answered.

I included this anecdote, not only to illustrate that we free-living, gloriously irresponsible Club Feeloaders are just not motivated in the

same way as other adults, but mainly because I like it, that's all.

I look forward to Any Other Business. It provides the hard-edged drama to any A.G.M.

This year was a very subtle vintage.

Colin Miller (re-elected Assistant time-keeper) writhed in his seat in a recalcitrant way for a few minutes, could not pick up any loose ends of club ideology upon which he could demur, and gave up..

I studied the legs on his plastic chair. Half of them had lost their rubber feet and were playing havoc with the parquet flooring.

Now I reckon we could buy some new feet for the council chairs and at the rate we make money it shouldn't delay the purchase of our next garage by more than a couple of open events.

What do you say?

Andy Lock (re-elected Race Writer) cleverly using a plot recently seen on daytime television, accused the committee of not fully consulting him about something before acting. He then went on to request complete freedom to organise any event when he felt like it, without asking anyone.

Which made perfect sense to me.

Look, can we get back to my rubber feet?

Incidentally, how come he knows so much about the inner workings of Jan (re-elected 10's Secretary) Scotchford's mind?

Sadly, Ray is no longer with us, someone was badly needed to organise an array of Marshalls for the "12". We might all still be sitting there now if Andrew had not owned up to the job. He's riding as well!

Respect Andrew.

Apparently Ray had a little black address book full of phone numbers of people who were "putty" in his hands. Absolute Certainties he

called them. And all that time we thought he was getting in the miles!

Thanks Ray.

Sean McLelland (Junior Rep. newly elected) has made a good start. He's young.

My advice to him is this -

Go for the 21 years continuous subscription option. It makes good economic sense. You will be a life member before the age of 35.

I advise against marrying, but should you choose to do so the new Family Sized Club /Subscription will be there to support you.

Then make for the Presidency.

By the year 2043 you could be head of an organisation with perhaps 20 garages, all with double locks, thousands of pounds worth of liquid assets, a set of valuable antique rollers, fully written race records with very slow times, and the Ray Douglass black book of Absolute Certainties.....

And a clubful of lazy, indolent good for nothing, but not wholly unlikeable Freeloaders... like me.

Respect Sean.



Popular Cycling Heroes.

NO. 1, ADAM

It was a gorgeous spring Sunday, quite early in the book of Genesis when God turned to the Archangel Gabriel and said, "Don't know about you Gabby, but I couldn't half go a pint of Guinness down at the Saddle-bag and Spanner. While I get the bikes out of the shed you go and tell Adam to meet us in

the saloon bar when he comes out of Church."

Now Gabriel was a real nice guy, bit of a yes-man, but that was how he got the job and he didn't need any encouragement when someone else offered to pay. Needless to say Adam spotted the bikes leaning against the pub wall as he walked to church and thought what horizons he could open for himself if only...

Like I said this was quite early in Creation and not all the building blocks of modern civilization were in place yet. For example the pub and Church stood on the village green like they always do, even to this date, but Adam had not yet met Eve so there was no vicar and worse no publican.

After about three hundred years or so they realized that they were jumping the gun a bit, well Adam did first and shaking off three inches of dust quietly got up and went next door. " Yes, I know." said God. "Gone and put the jolly old saddle bag in front of the handlebars again, never mind I've got a plan to set things in motion, you borrow my bike, it's out the front, and head off down the orchard. You'll meet a strange looking chap called Eve, take it from there, oh and good luck ! "

That is how it all started really, you see Adam went out and found that after three hundred years that the tyres were flat. " There had to be a catch "he muttered. As nobody had invented the pump he had to huff and puff to get a bit of air in. So he was dizzy when he jumped on God's bike and promptly fell off. " There you go, " said Gabriel in that smug self-satisfied way that he has. " Good old Adam, he has started inventing things off his own back already!" God replied , " How do you work that out? " " Easy, see first he comes up with the first road casualty statistic, then he invents the skin suit ! " The big One was not impressed " He would have been better off inventing stabilizer wheels "

To be continued subject to request and no offence being taken.

LONG FURLONG CIRCUIT RESULT 23-2-97

NAME	POS	ACTUAL TIME	FIRST CIRCUIT	H'CAP	H'CAP TIME
Nick Lelliott	1	43.46	21.57	0.45	43.01
Jeremy Wootton	2	45.02	22.10	Scratch	45.02
Richard Bonner	3	45.31	22.23	0.30	45.01
Mathew Gould	4	47.35	23.24	2.00	45.35
Chris Bacon	5	48.55	23.51	1.30	47.25
Paul Carruthers	6	49.12	24.23	5.00	44.12
Ken Retallick	7	51.43	25.10	3.45	47.58
Colin Miller	8	53.22	26.10	4.15	49.07
Ian Cheesman	9	55.25	27.36	5.00	50.25
Ron Bardouveau	10	57.00	27.42	6.00	51.00

D.N.S. Karl Robertson
Tim Stedman

AWARDS

1st ... NICK LELLIOTT

H'CAP 1st ... NICK LELLIOTT

2nd .. PAUL CARRUTHERS

PRIVATE ENTRIES

NAME	ACTUAL TIME	FIRST CIRCUIT
Roger Smith	46.17	23.08
Martin White	48.31	24.02
Mike Feesey	48.59	24.13
Phil Saunders	50.33	24.53
Alun Piggott	55.14	27.32

TANDEM

Jan Scotchford / Andy Smith	43.36	21.31
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TIMEKEEPER Mike Gibbs
PUSHER - OFF Alan Stepney
H'CAPPER Don Lock

So there you have the statistics. To fill out the report we can say that the morning was mild and dry but there was a strong south-westerly wind. This made the first third of the course the hardest, with the climb from the start by the Findon Cricket Club ground and then a frustratingly hard "downhill" section over the Long Furlong to Clapham. Riders were able to make good speed back to Offington and up the A24 to Findon.

"Legs" Lelliott stormed the first lap in 21.57 to go 13 seconds clear of Jeremy Wootton and a further 13 seconds ahead of Richard Bonner. If that wasn't enough he went faster next time round (21.49) while the rest went slower. This performance also soundly thrashed the handicapper who swears it won't happen again!

Paul Carruthers made his debut and impressed with a fine 49.12, and Ian Cheesman another new member got round in a worthy 55.25. Ron Bardouveau nearly decided to have another 30-year lay-off, but allows that his 57.00 gives him "scope for improvement"!

"Roll on Kathryn"

The English Schools Cycling Association Home Counties Roller Championships.

Three Worthing Excelsior youngsters, Kathryn and Sean McClelland and new member Chris Dransfield, travelled up to Herne Hill track in South London for these championships on Saturday February 15th.

It was a shame to be racing indoors on such a pleasant spring-like day, however Chris made the most of the conditions by travelling up in the morning for one of the regular Saturday morning track sessions run by Dave Creasey, thoroughly enjoying the experience.

In the ESCA events the riders are separated into age groups and Kathryn was riding in the under 11 girls while Sean and Chris were in the under 15 boys. The format for the racing was two 500 metre standing-start rides with the best time of the two to count and a 1,000

metres flying start with the overall winner in each category being the rider with the fastest combined time over 500metres and 1,000metres.

Two riders at a time competed and Kathryn was first up, and with no other rider in her age group was assured of the title as long as she finished her events, however we had great hopes of her establishing some new national records. Kathryn was however matched with Alexandra Hardy riding in the Under 13 girls and in the first 500 recorded a time of 32.19, establishing a new national record for the distance in the process. Alex managed to beat Kathryn's time, recording 30.71 seconds.

For the second 500 Kathryn's gear was raised from 36 x 14 (69.4) to a massive 36 x 13 (74.8) with the result that she recorded 29.82, a six-second beating of the old national record and just faster than the under 11 boys' record. Alex unfortunately missed out on the second 500 due to a knee injury.

In the 1,000m Kathryn rode to a tremendous time of 67.20 seconds, which lowered the national record by an incredible 43 seconds, and again establishing a time that was faster than the existing boys under 11 record. She also managed a faster time than Alex who managed a time of 73.03 to win her age group before deciding to call it a day with the knee injury.

Sean and Chris were riding in the most competitive group. Sean managed 22.15 and 29.43 for his two 500m, and Chris, who was taking part in his first races of any kind managed 25.39 and 27.31. The fastest in the 500m was Mark Tunnell of the Addiscombe with a fastest time of 18.27, another new national record by a margin of 1.5 seconds.

In the 1,000m Sean rode to a time of 52.35 seconds with Chris finishing in 61.67. The 1,000m was won by Peter Wade of the Chelmer C.C with another new national record of 39.62 seconds. Peter also won the overall title from Mark, with Sean finishing 4th and Chris 5th.

To round off the afternoon there was a 750m handicap event for all riders, based on their times recorded in the championship events,

with the winner to be the rider who beat their target times by the greatest margin. Here Kathryn managed another win by beating her target by 4.49 seconds from Paul Harris of Dartford Wheelers and Phillip Law of the V.C., Londres.

Kathryn's prize haul for the afternoon's events was £ 15.00, and included two £ 5 prizes which were donated by Mark Wyer of the Greater London Cycling Forum for breaking each of the national records.

Kathryn is now looking forward to the ESCA National roller Championships to be held in Bradford later in the year.

Vern McClelland

The Spirit Lives On?

On the night of January 23rd I went to bed early. The dreaded 'flu had arrived and I felt lousy. I had a high temperature. Does that make one more receptive to "visitations"? I dreamed that I was in my lounge at home with numerous other people - not sure who, but one suddenly said "There's someone at your window Don", and another added "It's Ray Douglass".

"Better not be, 'cos he's dead" I said, not looking but walking into the hall to go to the front door and investigate. As I reached the door, in walked Ray. I have no recollection of opening the door! He hugged me quickly.

"But but" I stammered - "Don't worry, I'll explain" he said, passing me and going into the other room. Then he sat down and started talking about some cycling episode of the past. I kept trying to interrupt him and it was my increasingly desperate efforts to do so that woke me.

Then I felt as though a cold atmosphere gently pressed in all around me and after a few seconds lifted and disappeared. I was very much awake now I can assure you. I went over the dream

in my mind, it was all so real. What was strange however was that once more the cold enveloped me, and then just as quickly as before, was gone.

When I recounted this to Maureen in the morning she reminded me that Ray had died on the 23rd January.....exactly one year ago.

O.K., so perhaps I had gone to bed with things on my mind concerning Ray's Memorial Tea which I was organising for the following Sunday, but things like that don't happen to me.....

well until now.....

Don

ERRATA.

Since the publication of my 'Naked Gun 3½' article it has been obvious that there are spies in our ranks. Yes I am afraid so because Vauxhall cars have pinched my gangster format and Big Mike character for one of their advertising campaigns.

This has meant that security at H.Q. has had to be tightened somewhat, unfortunately an experiment with blindfolding the magazine proof reader proved a mistake and sadly the last (Winter '96) edition of the Worthing Wheel carried the wrong answers to the Tourist Trial quiz.

Here are the right answers. and for your convenience I repeat the questions.

1. How many Mills did you pass and where were they?

A. None, they weren't marshalling that day.
2. You should have crossed the "Downs Link". How many times and where?

A. In the pub when you didn't buy a round, otherwise he is quite amiable.

3. How many times did you go on a gradient of 1 in 7 to 1 in 5?
A. None if you can read a map, twice if you are a slow learner.
4. Were you going uphill or down/?
A. All the hills are up.
5. You passed the remains of a castle. What is the name of this castle.
A. The Elephant and Castle
6. If you cycled this route how many miles would you have done?
A. All of them

Part II

1. If you rode 42 miles in 3hrs 30min what would your average speed be?
A. About the same as mine on a good day.
2. Which is further north, Upper Beeding or Lower Beeding?
A. The one nearer the top of the map.
3. Which is further west, West Hoathly or East Hoathly.
A. West Hoathly, Idaho.
4. Which is further East, West Chiltington or East Chiltington?
A. Who bloody cares?
5. Which is the shorter: the distance between Worthing Pier and Bognor Pier or Worthing Pier and Palace Pier, Brighton?
A. Depends on the tide, and whether I've got mudguards or not..

Michelin Man

**The House of Dorlas, 67/69 The High Street,
Tunbridge Wells.**

So we are to host the National 200km Randonnée in 1996 thanks to the hard work of one Mr. Hudson. Such an event is prestigious indeed for our club and shows that there is life in the club outside of time trialling.

It seemed a good idea then to look for a few far-flung tea spots to help encourage those longer training rides. How delightful this spot appeared, not in the main thoroughfare of a bristling, bustling market town as the address might seem to imply, still handy for the Pantiles however and raised from the traffic by an elevated walkway.. Safe for your bike and out of pedestrian nuisance.

If you were to imagine how a trendy tea room might appear in a yuppy town then come and see for yourself. All the fashionable people seem to pass this point from one expensive shop to the next and sitting in the thin October sunshine outside this parlour showed me a glimpse of a world that few of us share in.

Sit back and enjoy your cappuccino, you'll need a spoon to take the top off, and the service cannot be faulted, my brother produced a privilege card affording us a discount, try that one in Dolly's Pantry! There was nothing you could fault and I heartily recommend this to anyone on an expense account.

Michelin Man



Barn Dance.

Despite assuring all club members who claimed to have two left feet that there were an equal number with two right feet, we did not get a brilliant response from the membership at this new venture -

We do try.

However about twenty came, and fortunately they had no

trouble in getting about forty more friends and family to come. This with another thirty from the general public answering an advertisement meant we had a full house and a superb evening.

The band "Bonabrill" were tremendous, Old Nick's catering, delivered on time, went down well, and the General Committee have already determined to repeat the event next year with the same format. So make sure you don't miss out again.

Roger Smallman, who was perhaps slightly apprehensive at straying from the strict tempo of his Victor Silvester 78's (have a word with your granddad if you don't understand this, Ed.) (or if you haven't a granddad of your own, ask Don! - John) found himself quite carried away, in fact Colin Miller twice told his wife Dawn to put him down.

The club committee has passed a vote of thanks to Maureen Lock for her efforts (must remember to do that - Ed.) in making this such a success.

A special award goes to Nick Lelliott who partook of the entertainment - partook of two boxes of the chicken and wedges as well and went on to win the Pulborough Circuit event a few hours later.

Don

1951/53. Bicycle Polo.

A February edition of the Worthing Gazette devoted about one third of a page to a "public demonstration" of the "unknown" sport that they considered, probably correctly, had been struggling for recognition for many years.

Worthing Excelsior put on the demonstration at Hill Barn Lane

and local cycle-polo enthusiast Ernie Meredith pointed out that it was really a summer game when the weather is better and the ground firmer. Mr. Meredith owned a cycle shop near the clubroom - where they sell balloons and decorations now.

Two teams, five a side, struggled with the cold and the soft going and concern was expressed about damage which might be caused to the ground.

"Accidents? they sometimes happen. Bumps and bruises are frequent, more serious injuries rare, but the game is hard on the bicycles, specially fitted machines with low 39" gears"

Mr. Meredith looked forward to two more practice matches and then to their first competitive matches.

A newspaper cutting in March 1953 obtained by Peter Kibbles from his brother Gordon reports on the first match which was against the Woolston Club from Southampton. We lost 14-4 but it was apparently a fast and exciting match and we came back well in the last two chukkas when we scored all our goals., Gordon Kibbles being the marksman on each occasion.

The Worthing team was Dick Yarnell, Hugh Mansell, Dave Appleton, Paul Morris, Mike Palmer and Gordon Kibbles (perhaps one was a substitute!)

The sport made the Sussex Daily News as well, and again an action photo was included. Ah! those were the days, when our sport was given fair coverage. Dennis Lednor recalls that this revival of the sport in Worthing actually made the national daily papers. We caused something of a fuss with the Lord's Day Observance Society by putting events on, on a Sunday. Whatever next! They'll have shops opening on Sundays before long!

Don.

Early Sussex C.A. Results.

16.5 mile Circuit (Ashurst) Saturday, 8th March 1997.

Winner: Steve Elms, E.Grinstead C.C. 35.25
(Event Record).

<u>Worthing:</u> Richard Bonner	39.43
Eric Bonner	40.10
Mathew Gould	41.33
Chris Bacon	41.41
Colin Miller	44.13

25 mile Southwater/Crawley, Sunday 9th March.

Winner: Steve Elms 54.58

<u>Worthing:</u> Nick Lelliott	1. 01.21
Richard Bonner	1.04.46
Jan Scotchford	1.10.59

200K AUDAX 9 MARCH 1997

I rediscovered cycling three years ago at the age of 48 after a gap of some decades and had an ambition of doing over 100 miles in a day. The 200k AUDAX was my chance.

I tried the 100k in February, riding to and from the start at Ashington, and survived (86 miles) So I entered the 200k. In the meantime I did a couple of 40 mile rides to keep fit.

I study the maps and decide that it should take me at least 11 hours, including one hour for eating, if the weather is good.

The big day arrives. Up at the crack of dawn, give my wife a cup of tea (to ensure my survival after the ride) the weather

forecast is good so I take a chance and leave the waterproofs at home. Bananas and Weetabix, an acquired taste, for breakfast. Off to Heene Road to book in and eat another banana.

Dave Hudson sets us all off at 7.30 and I take his advice and get as near to the front as possible. Going up Findon Valley I find myself in with a group of riders about my age and pass them on the downhill stretch to Washington roundabout. Someone said they were going too slow (about 14 mph). I wondered what speed he intended to go at! Passed through Storrington and Pulborough and got to Petworth, the first check by 8.50 (10 minutes ahead of schedule). 5 minute stop to check in and have a drink.

Recognise a group of riders from the 100k leaving just before me so I chase and catch them just before Duncton hill. We all ride together as a group, a thoroughly enjoyable experience, passing through Lavant and Funtington at a steady 16mph. (I mentally thank my wife for streamlining my beard). I suddenly spot a staggered cross roads and stop to read the route but find its the wrong crossroads. The others had stopped at the bottom of a small hill for me. I went quickly past them shouting "sorry wrong crossroads" and voluntarily lead the group for the next few miles. I don't know what they thought and I wasn't going to hang around to find out. Portsdown hill split us up just before the stop at the "Inflatable banana cafe" at Southwick. 51 miles covered in three and a half hours (half an hour ahead of schedule).

The food was good and lots of it. Stay for about 20 minutes, time enough to spot the Ed. (was he sunbathing?) and Richard Cooley doing his David Bailey impression.

The ride to New Alresford was not much fun, there were about half a dozen riders but we never got organised as a group. The hills seemed to drag on for ages. the only good thought is that

there must be a downhill somewhere, but where? Arrived at New Alresford at about 1.45 (still half an hour ahead of schedule) top up with tea and bananas and watch the Mothers' day special steam train leave on the Watercress line. Sorry train spotters, I don't know what sort of engine it was.

Decide to take off the leggings and ride in shorts (if the Ed. can get a suntan so can I) and change my shirt (thanks for the tip Jean).

On the road again at 2.05 and meet up with "Harry" (I never discovered his name but he came from Enfield). (Perhaps it was THE Harry Enfield - Ed.) Up the A31 to Ropley, the first time the breeze had been in our face. Climb the long drag out of Ropley, was this the 2 mile drag uphill mentioned on the route sheet? No, because this went on for three and a half miles. Finally find the top. The ride down the hill was great (only took me a few seconds to forget all about the climb) until I discovered I had no top gear so I did a steady 35mph down the hill into Steep, and saw the next route turning flash past me. Whoops!

Made my way towards the old A3 where I meet up with Harry again. He was riding fixed wheel (64 I think). After the long drag up to the Jolly Drover we stop for a drink of water. Harry said that one of his feet is starting to swell. Two other rider join us and top up with water from the pub. (Didn't know they stocked the stuff! - Ed.) They said that there were people inside in coats sitting round a roaring log fire (on a nice sunny day!)

Harry and I sort of ride together onward towards the next stop, I went faster downhill and he caught me on the uphill. There are not many flat roads around that area so we didn't talk very much. Harry said that his other foot was beginning to swell when we reached Fernhurst (I start to worry). Tried to cheer him up by saying that there are only 12 miles to a nice cup of tea and cakes.

When we reach Ebernoe I notice that the 100 mile mark has been achieved, Hooray!! all I have to do now is get home.

Harry's smile had now turned to a grimace. We turn left at Kirdford and see the first signpost for Wisborough Green, 2 1/2 miles to go. Unfortunately half a mile down the road another signpost says 3 miles to go. Harry's grimace turns to a snarl. I tried to calm him by saying it was the old route taken by the horses and carts. Harry did not look impressed. But we finally make it to the last stop and find the "Inflatable Banana Cafe." at 4.20. (still half an hour ahead of schedule) Check in and have tea and cakes.

Knowing that this was my first 200k Dave Hudson asked me how was it going. "Extremely well" I replied. "Have you been taking it one stage at a time" asks Dave. "No, but I will do from now on" I answered.

After a 20 minute stop leave and ride from Adversane by myself. Finish off my food and water at Washington then ride to the finish. I finally get back at about 6 o'clock, very tired but very happy. I had covered 126 miles in 10 1/2 hours.

It was an absolutely fantastic day and my thanks go to the organiser, the caterers, number checkers, card stampers and signers, photographer, all the other helpers (including the sunbather) because without them I would not have achieved my ambition.

Mick Irons.

Found in "The Milestone".

1. The December 1996 edition of the San Fairy Ann C.C.'s club magazine contains this entry in its "Audax Corner".

"21st April, Worthing 200 (trike) - 9 hours 37 minutes.

Comfortable ride until 170 km, blew up and took 1½ hours for last 30 km. Fortunately Dave Hudson produced the food, so I survived."

Article is contributed by one Alan Hill.

2. *Also interesting was the following from the first paragraph of the report on their Annual General Meeting.*

"Less than 40 members turned up, from a total membership of 163. Maybe this is a sign that everybody is happy with the way the club is going, but it is disappointing"

Sounds familiar, doesn't it.

Storage.

The Club have acquired a garage at Upper Beeding. It is handily placed, just 50 yards from Vern McClelland's.

Keys will be held by Vern, by Secretary Paul Toppin and by Don Lock. All these have their names addresses and telephone numbers on page one.

A book will be found in the garage and every item removed or indeed replaced is to be signed in or out, detailed and dated.

Anyone holding club equipment of any kind should please notify one of the three keyholders and arrange for it to be placed in the store. If you are likely to need it would you please inform Don what you hold so that it can be listed in the book and marked out to you.

Incidentally, now that we've got this facility if you get anything during the year that will be suitable for our next "Cycle Jumble" sale you can let us have it now - get it out of your way.

A few statistics on the 200k Audax
Entries 185, Starters 151, Finishers 148.

Consumption of food included; 372 rolls, 3 dozen boiled eggs, 600

portions of cake, 320 bananas, 151 "Fuse" chocolate bars, 4½ gallons of milk, gallons of tea and coffee, 42 litres of soft drinks, 500 biscuits, and that just during the ride!

All the Worthing starters got safely round. These were; Richard Shipton, David Mills, Jonathon Markwick, Mick Irons, Tim Stedman, Vern McClelland and Alan Stepney.

PULBOROUGH 16.5 MILE RESULT 2-3-97

NAME	POS	ACTUAL TIME	H'CAP	H'CAP TIME
Nick Lelliott	1	42.19	Scratch	42.19
Mathew Gould	2	44.34	4.00	40.34
Richard Bonner	3	44.54	2.00	42.54
Jonathan Ford-Dunn	4	46.24	7.30	38.54
Tim Stedman	5	47.29	6.30	40.59
Karl Robertson	6	49.44	8.00	41.44
Ian Cheesman	7	54.56	11.20	43.36

The "agony" circuit event received some "agony" weather and only the toughest arrived and survived. The previous evening's Barn Dance and/or the weather accounted for three non-starters, while Ron Bardouveau's excuse, and I promise you this is correct, was that he had an injury, caused when putting his racing jersey on!

A strong south-westerly wind and quite heavy rain at times made for a rough and dirty ride and remarks about "the pretty part of the course" were not appreciated by the riders.

Nick seemed to enjoy it "it's a good course, certainly undulating" the mildest comment, and the only one printable.

Jonathon Ford-Dunn was pleased with his ride and got much closer to the scratch man than was expected by the handicapper.

Mat Gould threw his glasses to me on the climb west of Wisborough Green hoping no doubt to do a "blinder"! He couldn't see through them, so why carry them around, was probably the true reason.

Don

Robot Control.

At the control near Southwick in Hampshire (it's pronounced "Suthick") for the National 200k Audax, organiser Dave Hudson had everything laid on.

A prominent "control" and a manning by no less than four persons would ensure riders would not be delayed. Brian Cox would note the riders' times of arrival, Betty Cox would note their number and mark them off the list. Next to her Don Lock would initial their Brevét card and Mike Poland would complete the operation with his rubber stamp.

After that the riders were free to eat, drink and rest for as long as they wanted.

It was O.K. when they came in two or three at a time, but with 185 riders expected and only 80k covered, there was bound to be a large crowd at some time. It occurred around 11 o'clock, 40 or more poured in and the quartet worked like the proverbial well-oiled machine until, following a short gap, Betty made to take a bite of the corned-beef roll in her left hand.

Then things went haywire. The system had been operating like clockwork, out went her left hand without looking, took another card from Brian, scanning it as she moved it to her left hand en route for Don's initials. Up went Don's right hand while he was still passing the last card to Mike with his left. Only problem was that this time Betty didn't get a card with her right hand, nevertheless she still scanned the empty right hand and passed the Contents of her left hand to Don.

If anyone fancies a half-eaten corned-beef roll with the initials DWL and a rubber stamp with **"A TESTING RIDE"**, please apply to Mike Poland.

Don.

_____ **Finish.**



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Legal Executive

MILLER PARRIS
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