



NEWSLETTER

CTT

At the AGM of CTT on 5th December, a number of decisions were made that will affect you if you are a time trialist.

The first thing is that you will have to have working lights at the front and rear of your bike at all time trials whether it's on public roads, closed roads or circuits. As you know, you've had to have had a rear light for a couple of years now but put a front light on your Christmas list 'cos you're going to need one.

Not only that but you'll need to ride with an approved helmet on whether you like it or not, and that includes hill climbs. Previously, all riders under the age of 18 were required to wear helmets but now, whatever your age, you'll have to ride with a helmet on.

The good news is that, although the income from race levies was heavily reduced during the COVID-19 pandemic, there is an indication that there will be no increase in the levy for events in the next season. It is believed that there will be sufficient funds by 2024 to continue to operate effectively, as long as the numbers of riders does not greatly diminish. That means you'll have more money to spend on upgrades.

One of the matters of interest that arose out of the pandemic was that riders in time trials had to start with one foot on the ground and that the role of 'pusher-off' was redundant with a view to reducing personal contact. Another motion before the AGM was that, for the foreseeable future, riders should still start with one foot on the ground EXCEPT for hill climb events. However, that motion was rejected. It seems as though the role of 'start marshal' may now have been confirmed as a 'competent person to act as a 'Start Line Official' who will 'manage' the start line and assist the start timekeeper.' Now that could be you!

Stolen bikes

In the last Newsletter, I made reference to the Italian team having all their bikes stolen. One person who obviously didn't read the Newsletter was Geraint Thomas who popped into a cafe for a coffee and left his bike outside. Guess who had to go home in a taxi? The good news is that he got his bike back, but would you be as lucky?

BUT Tejay van Garderen was not so lucky. Tejay, late of EF Education – Nippo, has had not one, but two bikes stolen. One was the bike he rode in the Tour de France when he wore the white jersey as the best young rider award. Apparently it still had has race number on it.

What would you do?

Imagine that you are a male cyclist who has got to the limits of exhaustion and you're overtaken by a young lady. What would you do? Would you just let her go, or would your male ego overtake you and re-pass her, or would you do some drafting and use her back wheel to pace you home? Should you really follow a young lady who is riding on her own? Perhaps you should check with her first that she's happy with your company. It may be considered inappropriate to follow, especially if the route you're following is on remote roads or in the dark. You may be happy but is she? Just give it a bit of thought.

Fancy a 'Reliability Trial'?

What is a 'Reliability Trial'? In simple terms it just means a bike ride, but a bike ride with a difference. A rider is expected to ride a pre-determined course within a pre-determined time limit. The idea goes back to the early 20th century when cycling equipment was less reliable, roads were rougher, routes were poorly signposted and mobile phones hadn't been invented. It was also in the days when racing on the highway in mass events was frowned on by the Police and the name re-enforced the fact that it was not a race.

Riders needed to be self-sufficient, adept at navigation, able to deal with mechanical problems and fit enough to complete the course. Nowadays it's seen as an early season test of fitness, reliability and the ability to ride longer distances. It is also seen as a social event when riders can choose the time they set themselves to complete the course. If you're a racing type then you would choose to ride the shortest time and the longest distance, but, if you're looking for a more sedentary ride, but still like a bit of a challenge, then you can choose a longer time slot and the shorter distance.

The Club is considering the promotion of such an event in early 2022 over a couple of courses of roughly 35 miles or 50 miles. Watch this space for details.

Don Lock Memorial Evening 10 series

Just for a bit of fun, the Evening 10 series has been listed as a 'Come and try it' event so that anyone can come along and ride, not just the Club riders. They don't have to be a member of a CTT affiliated club and they can wear whatever clothing they like. Obviously they will have to wear a helmet and have front and rear lights and comply with all the other rules and regulations, but it does give an opportunity to those who want to give it a go to give it a go. So, if you know someone who wants to see if they can ride 10 miles non-stop and to see if they can improve over the weeks and, perhaps, join Worthing Excelsior, then let them know. Obviously there will be no prizes for them unless they join our Club - and that's prize enough for anyone.

Surprise!!! Surprise!!! Winter is on the way

Are you sensible or are you a cyclist? With winter fast approaching and the prospect of icy roads and frozen fingers, is this a good time to go out riding? If you are crazy enough to do it then do so. Don't let me stop you.

But a few tips I've picked up include that you should wrap up warm. Dress for the occasion. Don't just think that you'll be warm enough after 20 miles. And, on the subject of clothing, make sure that you can be seen. I know that black clothing against a snow white background will make you visible, but what if you do fall off onto the road? Black on black ain't going to help with your visibility when that truck comes around the bend. Beware of black ice. The road ahead may look smooth and shiny, but it may also be slippery, especially if you hit a bit of ironwork in the road. Those inspection covers and drains can be awfully sneaky.

Do you ride country roads or main roads? That's your decision, but perhaps you should consider that main roads are likely to be gritted and well used so that traction is going to be better. With rural roads there is always the danger of water run-off from fields turning into the slippery stuff so, as much as we may not like it, the main roads may be a safer option.

Have you thought about your tyres? If you can squeeze a wider tyre in, that might give you greater traction. And a bit more tread might give you better puncture protection as you won't want to be mending punctures with frozen fingers.

Relax and enjoy the ride. When you're tense you tend to go rigid and that changes how you control your bodyweight and, therefore, your balance on the bike.

So, if you've done a few miles up and down the main roads, don't forget to give your bike a good clean and a lube after it has been contaminated with all the grit the Council has put down so that you can ride in safety. You owe it to your bike.

Stay warm. Stay safe.

The Club

It's good to know that the Club has got over 100 members and all of you want to perform an active role to make sure that the Club remains active. However, you should be aware that things are changing. Until now the Club has been run, effectively, by its Committee. Some of the members of the Committee have served in one role or another for decades and feel that it's time to step aside and let others have a go. Perhaps some 'fresh blood' can expand the membership or improve the racing performance, perhaps make it more diverse with other cycling opportunities. The future is in your hands.

At the next AGM in February there will be a number of vacancies on the Committee including a General Secretary, a Club Runs Co-ordinator, someone to represent the Club with regard to British Cycling related events, and someone on the Committee just to make sure that things go right. Remember that it is your Club. You know that you want it to improve. The Club cannot function effectively without a Committee. Perhaps it's time for you to consider what you can do to make sure that the Club goes on to bigger and better things. If you want to help and want to have a chat about the various roles available then don't hesitate to contact me and I can give you the 'low down'.

Remember – it's your Club. You are the future.

The opinions expressed above are not necessarily those of Worthing Excelsior Cycling Club, but could be the ramblings of a senile old duffer. adrian.wecc@gmail.com