



Newsletter- July 2022

Dear All

Welcome to the 2nd half of 2022 and the WECC July newsletter. With fuel prices ever increasing it's a great time to be a cyclist although sadly I can't say I have noticed any reduction in vehicular traffic?

Time Trials

If you were planning on entering the Club 100 mile championship on the 17th July, which is being held as part of the Southern Counties Cycling Union event, I'm afraid entries have now closed but you still have a few days to enter our 30 mile championship on the 24th July (which is part of the Sussex Cycling Association event). Entry is via the CTT website and close on the 12th July.

Meanwhile, the Evening 10 series continues on every Thursday throughout July and is followed by the Hill Climb series on the first three Thursday's in August.

Speaking of Time Trials, I am indebted to John Grant for a wonderfully worded extract about an early event witnessed by Dick Long, aka Dick Turpin of the original Excelsior Club.

Road races have changed since the early nineties. Then fierce-looking tandems swept along with two or three hard riding speed men in their wake, the riders heralding their approach with a discord of bell-ringing and hoarse cries. The competitor who entered a big road race in those days without at least three or four tandems at his disposal usually wasted his efforts. In one case I remember a little army of wheelmen was engaged to feed and pace one rider who was on a twenty-four hours. This rider reveled in the luxury of riding well-sheltered behind tandem tricycles, which were in their turn paced by the more easily propelled tandem bicycle. Such was road racing in the good old days.

Things altered suddenly when pace making was generally disallowed, and a day or two ago, when out in the early morning, I saw a good example of the new road racing.

A hundred miles race was in progress, but there was little to attract the attention of an outsider. A couple of wheelmen stood at Offington corner; a little group waited further on; and at awkward corners on the road to Arundel I noticed other watchers. I knew the badge they wore - that of the Southern C.C.- and recognised the club colours in the dark and light blue ribbon, at the same time observing that bottles protruded from the pockets of many of the wheelmen.

Presently the scent grew warmer, and one by one about thirty competitors came along, quietly and unobtrusively, at intervals of half a mile or so in most instances. They looked like scorchers, and only checked their pace to hurriedly take speed-drinks, rice or fruit, and perhaps to sponge their faces before resuming the stern struggle. With a cheery word of encouragement from their clubmates, many of whom had ridden out fifty to sixty miles to perform their slight but welcome services, they vanished down the road.

An hour of this, and the string of dusty riders had passed and were on their way back to Crawley, where after much arithmetic officials would ascertain who had won the race. No noise, no tandems, no gangs of speedmen, and consequently no police interference. Arundel had hardly finished breakfast when the road racers had been and gone. Such is the new road racing. It is harder work than the old, and the new road racer is a sportsman right through.

Former member Kenneth Atkins

I've been contacted by a neighbour of a former member asking if anyone would be willing to pay him a visit. Ken is 94 next Thursday and lives alone in Sompting following the passing of his wife a few months ago. Although housebound Ken often talks about his cycling days and apparently still has some John Spooner hand built bikes in his garage? If you could spare the time to make a visit please let me know and I'll put you in touch with his neighbour.

LEJOG?

As you may already know Membership Secretary Mick Irons is currently riding from Lands End to John O'Groats to raise funds for the Alzheimer's Society. You can follow Mick's journey via a Facebook page he has set up <http://www.facebook.com/mickslongbikeride> and it's not too late to make a donation, which can be done via <http://www.gofundme.com/micks-long-bike-ride>. The Club Committee has also agreed to make a donation on behalf of WECC.

Club kit

We are currently looking at finding a new supplier for cycling kit in Club colours with a strong possibility that this will be Kalas who are the official partner of British Cycling. They offer several ranges of kit to suit every type of rider and only require a minimum of 5 items to make up an

order. We are trying to arrange obtaining some sizing samples with the intention of members being able to try them on at one of the Club nights but my old club before I moved to beautiful Sussex used Kalas and we found them to be good quality at a reasonable price. Further information will follow in due course.

Sportive and Audax mileage

A reminder to please let Graeme Gill chairman@worthingexcelsior.co.uk know if you would like any mileage ridden in an organised Sportive or Audax event to be counted towards the annual award for the rider completing the most miles in a season. You can't win it if you're not in it!

New Members

Well there are actually no new members this month but it's a sad farewell to Michael Wright who is moving away from the area. Michael has been a regular and popular member of the Sunday Morning Club rides with a delightful racing style particularly whilst negotiating corners. On a personal note his parting means there is one less person to tow me around on a Sunday morning so I shall certainly miss him! I am sure I can speak for the whole Club when I wish him (and his family) all the best in the future.

And that's it for another month except to say that if you haven't been watching the Tour of France then you are missing a real treat so tune in now!

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