



Newsletter- December 2022

Dear All

Happy Christmas and best wishes for the New Year!

As I write this we have just had our first real frost, which does at least make it feel like winter has finally arrived! Temperatures approaching or even below freezing aren't of course ideal for riding although the rise of indoor training apps and equipment at least ensures that you can maintain your fitness without the tedium of the turbo training regimes of old. Members of my old club even run a virtual 'winter league' every Tuesday evening using the Wahoo RGT app. Maybe that is something an enterprising WECC member might consider organising?

Annual Dinner and Awards Ceremony

Our annual dinner and awards ceremony was held again last month and a great time was had by all those who attended. Our Social Secretary even composed (and performed), a song that detailed all the highlights of the Club's year. Although that had no bearing on the result I am extremely pleased to report that for the second year running Ian Cheesman was made Club Person of the Year by the Committee as recognition for all the work on behalf of the club that he does. Such is Ian's efficiency that he has already booked the Fox at Patching for next year's event, which will be held on Friday 10th November 2023 so keep that day free!

Annual General meeting

The provisional date and location of the 2023 AGM is Tuesday 21st February at the West Worthing Tennis Club but further details will follow once this is confirmed.

Membership renewals

Expect to receive an email in due course from our membership Secretary Mick Irons, but an early reminder that your membership expires on the 31st December and if you don't renew by 1st February you will cease to be a member. Fees for 2023 will remain the same as previous

years namely, £25 Senior, £17 U/18's, £7 U/16's, £50 Family, £9 Social, and £9 Second Claim. Renewals can be made via our website.

Stolen bikes

I am sorry to have to report, although it is perhaps not surprising given their value and ease of disposal, that there is a continuing trend in the theft of bikes. This includes the theft of multiple bikes from the premises of small businesses, which are almost certainly carried out by organized criminal groups who will probably know what they are likely to find and what they intend to do with what they steal. Good security can prevent or deter these crimes although it's sadly a reality that a determined thief will almost always be able to overcome any physical means used to protect your property so do consider also recording details of your bikes including taking detailed photographs of any distinguishing marks such as frame numbers. Expensive components such as group sets can be marked with products such as SmartWater and there are several tracking devices now available that might help the recovery of your bike if it does get stolen. Please also consider the Bike Register <https://www.bikeregister.com> from whom or with you can obtain security products, register your property, record your loss in the unfortunate event of a theft and check if a secondhand bike you may be purchasing is stolen.

2022 Commonwealth Games

I am indebted to our member Vern McCelland for the below report covering his involvement in this year's Commonwealth Games and for which he certainly deserves due praise.

Birmingham 2022 was my first appointment as a National Technical Official (NTO) to a Commonwealth Games. In the past I have worked as an NTO on Track and Road World Championships, the London Paralympic Track, European Track Championships, various Track World Cups, several Master's World and European Track Championships plus in 2019 I worked on the Small Island Games cycling events in Gibraltar. My expectations for the Games fell somewhere between World Championships and the Small Island Games. Certainly, some of the teams from the Island Games were also players in the Commonwealth Games and would prove to be competitive with the more familiar nations. As an NTO and part of a small team of officials appointed to the Games you could expect to work on any of the three cycling disciplines of Track, Road and Cross-Country Mountain Biking. I am qualified for both Road and Track but not for Mountain Biking, so the possibility was there to be out of my comfort zone if I got the chance to work on the Mountain Biking. The complete team for the Games consisted of 14 International Commissaires drawn from various Commonwealth nations and 10 National Commissaires. I knew and had worked with all the National Commissaires on various events over the years, plus I had also worked with several of the international officials on major events in the past.

The Games started in London with the Track events, competition starting the day after the opening ceremony in Birmingham. I think that I'm correct in saying that this was the first time that Para cycling events had been included in the Track cycling programme. The Commissaire President for the track events was Paul Watson from Northern Ireland who I had worked with on various events previously. My main task during the track events was as part of the bike measuring team and on the first day of competition as one of the holders for the Team Pursuit start. There were 5 officials on bike measuring, Gisela Bradbury, Patrick Nestor, Willi Tarran and me the National officials with International Commissaire Greg Griffiths from Australia as the UCI Technical Commissaire to oversee things. Bikes had to be checked before every competition so for instance in the sprint this means prior to every ride. In addition to checks pre-event, team mechanics or riders will bring bikes for unofficial checks. Greg came up with some figures post competition. 700 bikes checked pre-race. Most bikes also pre checked plus many that were returned numerous times. A conservative estimate would show that well over 1500 bikes were checked in total over the four days of competition.

Once the final track session had finished on the Monday evening, we had to travel by coach up to Birmingham arriving just before midnight after a long day. In London our accommodation was in a hotel in Stratford just a short walk from the velodrome but the official's accommodation in Birmingham was in Student Halls close to the city centre, this meant long trips and early starts to the venues for the cycling events. Once in Birmingham we met up with the final two members of the team who were already there taking care of the mountain bike training.

Unfortunately, I didn't get to work on the mountain bike event during the Games as it didn't need the full team and the mountain bike competition day clashed with the Road Time Trial signing on and course familiarisation meaning the official's team had to cover both events. David Menzies from Scotland took over as Commissaire President for the road events, again I had worked with David before. The Time Trial events were based in Wolverhampton. For the Time Trial signing on day, I once again found myself carrying out pre competition bike checks. This was a bit different from the track as we had more of the smaller teams competing and it was obvious that many of them weren't familiar with the regulations for time trial bikes resulting in lots of adjustments being required. On the day of competition, I was one of the officials looking after protocol for the medal ceremonies and looking after the hot seat area during the event which meant looking at finishing times and ensuring riders finishing in any of the podium positions were ushered to the correct seats in the waiting area.

The final events were the Road Races held in Warwick and like the Time Trials involved a day for signing on and team managers meetings plus course familiarisation. On the day of competition, I was broom wagon commissaire for the Women's Road Race in the morning

and in the feed zone for the Men's Road Race in the afternoon. Being in the broom wagon had its moments as following dropped riders meant that by the end of a lap we were several minutes from the front of the race. Riders over a certain time behind the race were eliminated at the end of the lap and this resulted in a high-speed chase to pick up the back of the race only to be repeated on the next lap.

Working in the feed zone for the men's race also had its moments, for most of each lap all that was required was to ensure that no one got into the feed zone that shouldn't have been there. As the race came through the feed each lap it was manic and as officials, we had to ensure that things were safe. Despite the feed being on a slight uphill section the speed the race came through each lap was very fast, resulting in quite a few dropped and missed bottles. Fortunately, I think we only had one minor crash in the feed zone during the race. The road races provided a great last day for the cycling events and the crowds were tremendous.

What stands out for me was what a great team it was to be a part of. It was good to work as part of an international team of officials on a major event and share previous experiences. I would also like to thank both Paul Watson and David Menzies for explanations of their decisions and sanctions during the events, you learn from every event that you work on.



Eastbourne 2023

The annual road ride to Eastbourne (and back) is due to take place on the 25th and 26th February and it's not too late to let Dave Wilbor know that you would like to participate. Bed, breakfast and an evening meal at the plush Langham Hotel will cost £60 and Dave can be contacted via clubruns@worthingexcelsior.co.uk

Club kit

I'll get the on-line shop, through which you can purchase club kit, re-opened in early January but in the meantime I do have some short sleeved jerseys available in the most popular sizes. They'd make someone a lovely Christmas present!



Ian Thomas, secretary@worthingexcelsior.co.uk