

CYCLE LETTERS

Write to: Cycle Letters, CTC, Parklands, Railton Road, Guildford, GU2 9JX, or email cycleletters@ctc.org.uk

CTC & ME

My wife Carol, though a cyclist too, rarely reads Cycle, but I insisted she read Caroline Waugh's 'CTC & me' article straight after I'd finished it. I had become a little moist eyed while doing so. Carol responded with tears!

I cannot recall ever reading such an inspirational article in a cycling magazine! I've read many since I began cycling with the Hounslow and District Wheelers 50 years ago. Maybe I could be an exception, but the best features I have read on cycling have been those by women. Far more interesting and insightful.

Well, Caroline, your 'CTC & me' has reached out and touched two old 'wrinkly' CTC members' hearts. We are sure that your experiences will have moved everyone who read the article, and we will all be better off for you sharing your experiences.

Thank you. We trust you will continue to gain strength of mind, body and spirit with your CTC friends. Good on you.

Paul and Carol Glanville, Shrewsbury



options for less able people, including motor assistance add-on packs.

Bernard J Gilbert, Trawden, Lancs

CTC membership and all services are open to all users of electrically-assisted cycles. Plus, we've got an article on electric bikes coming up.

SINGING IN THE RAIN

Here's a suggestion that may be of interest to other members: shower caps make excellent rain covers for cycle helmets. I've been using them for years. You can get them from Boots for 79p for pack of three at the moment.

R Davis, Coventry

907,000 MILES & COUNTING

Many thanks for your reference to my cycling mileage in the last issue. I should exceed 10,000 miles again this year, for the 55th consecutive time, bringing my total to 907,000 miles recorded.

I have relied almost entirely on seven cycles since I made a note of a 6.5 mile ride to my grandmother's in 1950. I have three of them on the road at present, ranging in age from a Hobbs of Barbican, bought second-hand in 1956, to a Condor purchased to my specification in 1997. The latter, and a 1966 Allin, on which I raced and toured for 30 years, were custom built. I do most of my riding on the Condor nowadays. Like the Hobbs, it is fitted with dynamo lighting and is also used for routine journeys to the local CTC club evening etc.

Although I have tried alternative saddles, I find that the Brooks B17 suits me best and all three cycles have one. A proper rack is a common feature, after I broke an uplift rack in the Sixties. I still use toe-clips with straps, and the latter



BACK TO CYCLING

The Oct/Nov issue carried an article entitled 'Where next for CTC?' Can I put in an appeal for the inclusion of electric-assist cycles? There are many former cyclists of various ages who no longer ride due to illness, injury or, in my own case, disability (a stroke in 2002). I'm sure many would like to return to riding when they know what is currently available – like Caroline Waugh, swapping a mobility scooter for a cycle.

I am planning to return to cycling in 2010 on a modified recumbent trike. This market is vast and there are many

THAT WAS THEN

50 years ago...
From the CTC Gazette,
July-September 1959

'Go cycling' says a national daily

Daily Express readers on July 18 were given a refreshing change from the 'keep child cyclists off the road' theme all-too-frequently seen in newspapers nowadays. In its 'Opinion' column the Express urged parents to go cycling with the children, who, it declared accounted for nearly half of Britain's 7,500,000 cyclists. Headed 'Come on, Father!' the article continued as follows:

'Just a suggestion for Saturday morning. Take a look in the garage or in the attic. Somewhere, dust-covered and forgotten, you may find something that can give you a lot of pleasure and happiness: your old bicycle. Why not bring it out, polish it up, and get it ready for the road again? That bike can still play a big part in the family's leisure time. True it no longer holds first place. In prosperous Britain the number of cars has more than doubled in the past 20 years; the number of pedal cycles has fallen by half. But the cycle is still immensely popular with children. More children than ever before have bicycles today... Why not join the youngster? Get on the bike and show them that father is as skilled at the handlebars as he is at the steering wheel. Make cycling a family affair again. There is lots of fun and plenty of exercise in it for the young of all ages.'

can be very useful. When my freewheel failed on a club ride once, my club mates towed me home with a tow rope made from all our toe straps!

Joining CTC in November 1955 was one of the best decisions I have ever made. I am still cycling, albeit at a slower pace, and though I've never regarded it primarily as good exercise, I am now appreciating the health benefits it has and continues to give me; long may it do so in future!

Chris Davies, Havant

CYCLE MILEAGE ALLOWANCE

I'm a local councillor as well as a CTC councillor. Recently I attended a review

STOP SPIDSY

Delighted to welcome SMIDSY, but I think we might be in need of a Scottish version! 'Mate' is very English and is hardly used as a form of address in Scotland. We use 'pal'. So could we have SPIDSY north of the border, please?

Don't know whether all the class and gender implications of this title have been thought out anyway. 'Mate' – and 'pal' – are working class. What's more, they're normally used by men addressing men. Addressing women, the terms used are 'dear' and 'darlin', with regional variations like 'duck' and 'mi duck', and in Scotland, 'hen'. The upper classes, of the older generation at least, use 'old chap/man/boy/girl' (SOGIDSY?).

No doubt professors of sociolinguistics and social dialect up and down the country could provide further enlightenment!

Peter Hawkins, CTC Scotland



OBITUARIES

KENNETH ELLIOT

Died suddenly aged 80 on 31/5/2009 at Royan, France, while on holiday with one of his beloved bikes. Formerly an official of Barclays DCO, Ken was a keen cyclist from boyhood. He raced at Herne Hill in his younger days. He was a perfect gentleman who will be sadly missed. The cremation was on 1/7/09. *L Edwards*

JAMES BIBBINGS: 1926-2009

A lifelong cyclist and a founder of the Thursday Rides Section of Suffolk CTC, James died of a heart attack while he was getting ready to cycle to meet fellow section riders. At 83 his philosophy was 'If I can cycle 50 miles in a day once a week I'm okay.' He also swam three times a week, sailed and rowed. We'll miss his Christmas run mince pies and his cheery disposition. *Peter Ling*

JOHN DUTSON: 1934-27/2/2009

Died from cancer. John was a top time triallist in the '50s and a member of the Uckfield CC team and Central Sussex CC. He worked extremely hard for the local cycling community and knew every lane and byway in East Sussex, as well as the area around Dieppe. He enjoyed touring in France. He rode up the Col du Tourmalet in the wet on a fixed wheel and wondered what the fuss was about. *Stuart Greenway*

ODETTE KEMP

Born in St Etienne, France; died aged 82 in Marie Curie Hospice in June. A recurring childhood injury stopped her cycling in later years but not her interest in it, and she used to provide hospitality to CTC rides passing her door in Temple, Scotland. She moved from France in the '50s but never lost her accent or impish humour. A gifted artist, she wrote and illustrated articles about 'fearsome' Scotland in the CTC Gazette. *Richard Russell*

STAN FLELLO: 1922-2009

Stan joined CTC in 1981 and rode with the Coventry section before moving to South Birmingham. He never owned a car, preferring to cycle and travel by train. He toured at home and in Europe and in 1987 rode the End to End with his friend Pat. Latterly he suffered from poor health and was

on allowances and expenses awarded by an independent body. The leader of the council said that 21p was very generous for a cycle allowance, while no one complained about the 59p that a motorist could claim per mile. Even more extraordinary were the council who pay 42p per mile for walking!

My retort to the leader was that one can easily fuel and run a car for less than 21p. Running costs are subjective as it is a liability someone has already. After the meeting a member of the award panel felt that the national guideline for petrol was too excessive.

Are CTC consulted on how to assess the cost of running a bike and would anyone like to comment on the level of payment? To clarify, this is about cycle mileage allowances paid during the course of ones duties, not commuting.

Richard Bates, CTC SE Councillor

Is 21p per mile so very generous for cycling during the course of one's duties? HM Revenue & Customs says that an employer can pay employees 20p per mile without declaring this on form P11D or incurring Class 1A National Insurance Contributions. Employers can pay more, but you would pay tax on the difference.

SEEING AND BEING SEEN

I was interested in the Commuter Tutor article last issue, and the advice about observation, anticipation and negotiation.

I cycle almost daily on country roads and in a town with heavy traffic. As I have restricted movement in my neck, I have found that a Zefal mirror fitted

to the offside end of my flat handlebars enables me to see the road behind well, so that early, clear signalling is possible with no compromise in stability. I feel much more confident, knowing that I have clearly signalled my intention safely and in good time. I just hate drivers who don't.

It was an interesting article, especially the information on road positioning and taking the lane. I was rather surprised that the role model trainer was in all dark clothing, considering his mantra of 'see and be seen'. Many years ago I was told that I was almost invisible against a hedge in broad daylight. Since then I always wear high visibility tops or a cross belt, whatever the conditions.

Thanks for a great magazine.

Brenda Broughton, Brentwood



THORNY ISSUE

Can I set the record straight regarding the Thorn Club Tour you tested? As you know we built the bike specifically to fit you (and at a busy time with short notice too) but your accident prevented you from being the person who tested the machine.

Mark Waters tested the bike and

RECYCLE YOUR 'CYCLE'
 When you've read Cycle, why not give it to a friend – or a doctor's surgery?

OBITUARIES

in a care home in Minehead when he died in August. He will be fondly remembered by his cycling friends.
Roger Shelbourn

GEORGE HARRY TIDMAN

Died peacefully at East Surrey hospital on 24th August 2009, aged 96. Dearly loved husband of Betty and sadly missed by Michael, Pamela, Jane, Frances, Claire, Nigel and their families. George left a donation to CTC and a legacy of cycling to his family and friends.
Nigel Tidman

JOHN CARLILE: 1938-2009

Died suddenly on 28/08/09, aged 71. Inspired by Reg Harris, John rode with Manchester Wheelers in his youth. After a career as a technician, he ran a youth hostel in Buxton then managed cycle hire centres in the Peak District for 20 years. He was a visionary in the need for safe cycle routes for use by all and developed ex-railway cycle routes with Sustrans. Following semi-retirement John managed the Manchester Airport Cycle centre until December 2007
Rob Sawyer

PETER SHEPHERDLY

Died aged 79, a lifelong CTC and Clarion member. He was a gentle man with a belief in traditional socialist principles. At 68 he thought nothing of riding from London to Bath and back in a day. He toured widely, particularly in Germany, and was a champion ballroom dancer. A talkative man, his generous encouragement and companionship is particularly remembered by the Uxbridge Loiterers.
Carole Peck

WALTER PILKINGTON: 1923-2009

Died 27/8/2009, ending an era for Bury CTC, which enjoyed its best club run turnouts in the '70s and '80s due to his encouragement. Walter was a cycle dealer for nearly 40 years, opening his first shop in 1952. He helped found Bury CTC when it reformed after the war, in which he served in the Royal Navy. He was an active club cyclist for 50 years, touring enthusiastically, racing, and rough-stuff cycling with wife Norma.
John Butterworth

Send obituaries, preferably 100 words or fewer, to the usual editorial address. Limited space means that some may not appear immediately.

liked it well enough but Chris Juden concentrated on the test bike's lack of twin eyelets, which he admitted he had seen in a photo. It would have been good manners, towards a regular advertiser, to have made a phone call to clarify the situation rather than squander 12.5% of the copy complaining.

The first place that an otherwise perfectly built steel touring bike will fail is at the joint of the chainstay and the RH rear dropout. Chris never once mentioned the expensive socketed dropouts we use, to prevent the chainstay from cracking at this vulnerable joint. The reason earlier Thorn's had single eyelets was that these dropouts were only available with single (or no) eyelets.

I designed and made our own rear carrier, which has integral bosses for the mudguard stays. When we agreed to supply you with a bike to test we were waiting for a shipment of Club Tour frames and we supplied you with the last of the appropriate size, which happened to be an older model with a single eyelet.

You wanted a bike for around £1000, a price no longer achievable for us. Rather than send the bike out with no rear carrier, which I considered would cause you inconvenience, we decided to add a Blackburn carrier. Our mechanic mounted this on the outside of the stays which (and I agree with Chris here) is not ideal but it could easily have been rectified.

When a Club Tour is specified with top quality components and a complete set of our own carriers, I wholeheartedly believe that it really is the benchmark traditional touring bike. But unless test bikes are tested in real world conditions, carrying the weights that real tourists carry, when self supported, the



fundamental inadequacies of many so-called touring bikes will never be brought home to the readership.

**Andy Blance, Designer,
 Thorn Cycles**

I think the Club Tour is a good bike – and that the review reflects that. I also think that we're in agreement about the necessity of twin eyelets. The new Club Tour frames have

them; the previous ones had a special carrier rack with eyelets to compensate for their lack on the frame.

I would have been happy to have had the Thorn eyeletted carrier on the test bike, had I known the bike had single eyelets. I was looking for a touring bike of 'around £1,000', but the RRP of the test bike was £1,299. An extra £40 – the price difference between the Blackburn rack and the Thorn rack – would have been neither here nor there.

Testing everything to destruction is tricky within the constraints of a bi-monthly cycling magazine. But saying that, I'd be happy to introduce long-term test reports into our Gear Up pages. And no doubt some items will fare better than others!

FRENCH DRESSING

Here are some photos from our French cycling holiday, which I thought you might like. One shows Florence Edwards, sporting a trendy designer label T-Shirt. She is en-route to Lacoste, Ariège, France, hoping to pick-up matching haute couture cycling shorts.

We flew to France using CTC's fantastic less-than-£5 aeroplane bike bags. The picture shows three bikes, one Thorn tandem, Emily Edwards and some garden sacks containing panniers, ready for the Ryanair return journey from Carcassonne to Edinburgh.

Darby Edwards, Edinburgh

