



Human Sat Navs required

Comedian **Dave Gorman** found cycling guides for his Sit Down, Pedal, Pedal and Stand Up tour on the CTC Forum. **Kirstie Pelling** reports

Stand up comedian Dave Gorman is a cyclist. What's more, he recently decided to combine cycling and comedy in a journey to the four furthestmost points of the British mainland, delivering a live stand up show every night. Dave Gorman is known for his eccentric quests: he travelled the world to meet 52 other Dave Gormans, and then followed a chain of Googlewhacks from here to Australia. But he'd never done anything like this before.

Even during training rides he wasn't sure he was capable of going the distance, and it soon became clear that a full day's cycling followed by an energetic four or five hours of work every evening wasn't going to leave him much time for poring over maps and route planning. So he thought he'd ask cyclists with local knowledge to help. He appealed for Human Sat Navs on the CTC Forum and his own website.

'I'm not super-fit,' he wrote. 'I'm probably going to stop and take photos more than necessary. It's not a race but I do have to reach my destination in good time.' He was overwhelmed by the response, and recruited several CTC members.

'Asking for Human Sat Navs was 100% the best decision I made,' Dave told me, shortly after completing the journey. While the cycling provided 'burning climbs and fabulously exciting descents', the Sat Navs provided interesting company and quiet, traffic-free routes. From Lizard Point to Lowestoft Ness, to Ardnamurchan and finally to Dunnet Head, his guides were a positive and integral part of the experience.

'I think cycling alone, and route planning and so on, would have turned it into an ordeal,' said Dave. 'Given the pressure of working in the evenings I needed the rides to be as pressure-free as possible. And having new people each day to take on some of the responsibility and provide company did just that.'

The Human Sat Navs included mountain bikers and pensioners and even a family on tandems. Some brought picnics, others



"I think cycling alone, and route planning and so on, would have turned it into an ordeal"



brought punctures, and one brought him home to meet the parents. The rides ended up being shaped as much by the nature of the guide as the landscape, and Dave enjoyed the variety of personalities and approaches to the task: 'Some wanted to mooch around and sup tea and get the ride done in between time, while others just wanted to get me there as quickly and safely as possible.'

Often the gigs were in unusual venues, like a Scottish railway dining car that seated just 33, and the village hall in Threlkeld where the vicar operated the sound. But despite some remote finishes and difficult weather, Dave always got on with his Sat Navs. 'When I speak to people who've done long rides before

with friends, they've almost always talked about tempers fraying and a row at some point. I wasn't with anyone long enough for that to happen... I had a new best friend every day.'

After 1,563 miles and 32 shows, he finished the tour at Dunnet Head. The ride was harder than he thought but he came through it in better shape than he imagined. His 'Sit Down, Pedal, Pedal, Stop and Stand Up' shows have proved so popular he's extended the tour into next year. This time he'll be driving between gigs, although he definitely isn't consigning his bike to the shed.

'I knew when I started that I'd either never want to see a bike ever again or I'd get more into it... and I've definitely got more into it. My body is as confused now that it's stopped as it was in the first days when I started.'

Dave Gorman's website is www.davegorman.com
The CTC Forum is at: forum.ctc.org.uk