



Newsletter April 2023

Editor: Andrew Grant

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ANNUAL DINNER

co-organiser Beverley Carruthers reports

CCC Annual Awards Dinner at Pembroke College.

Thanks to Colin Lizieri's connection with Pembroke College the dinner was held in Pembroke's beautiful historic Library dining room. Many thanks to Colin and of course to the Pembroke staff, for the drinks, food and service provided on the night. Ramona Loveridge and myself, as newly appointed social secretaries, learnt a lot about how much wine your average cyclist can consume. We will remember that for any future socials, I had been wondering if cyclists drank but there was my answer loud and clear. After all we are all athletes (aren't we?)



Whilst opening the boxes containing the trophies, I realised that the club itself has a long history of amazing cycling achievements which date all the way back to 1901. That is even before Strava existed. I know - horror of horrors.

After quite a lot of nudging (remember all those emails) the room was filled with club members, old and new with their partners and friends. From table to table, one could hear a variety of tall cycling tales. Many riders were freshly back from the Mallorca training camp with lots of stories about getting lost, beautiful climbs, broken rear mechs and budding bromances!

As a relatively new member myself, the dinner was an opportunity to meet people outside my normal Sunday cycling group; people who love cycling and want to chat about bikes and routes and heart rates (even Strava!). What could be better than eating and drinking with a room full of people who love the thing you love.

Kate Sanders did a brilliant job as MC turning herself into Gaby Logan for us, and teasing out stories from the winners, and details of the cup they had won. For us newbies that was very useful. Thank you Kate and thanks too to Simon Bond, (right) newly appointed Trophy Secretary (and winner of the Morris Shield) for matching trophies to recipients and taking up the challenge of updating the engraving.



Huge congratulations to every one of the winners, it takes determination to be the best and they all have that in bucket loads. One person stands out though, you may notice that Lucy Matthews won three cups.

Wow, what a cyclist. Well done Lucy.

Morris Shield - Simon Bond	Men's Club Time Trial points overall winner.
Cole Cup - Lucy Matthews	Women's Club Time Trial Points overall winner
Ted Wells Trophy - Lucy Matthews	Club Time Trial points on a road bike.
AR Skeel memorial Trophy - Lucy Matthews	Club Hill Climb Championship – Women.
1930 Woods Cup - Andrew Grant	Fastest 50 in an open event.
1950 Colborn Cup - Ian Bell	Club Member of the Year
2001 the Centenary Quaich - Ian Bird	Highest Audax points of the year.
Brian Mynott Trophy - Mauro Rosato	Club run rider of the year.
1966 John Jeffrey Trophy -Marino Guida	Best newcomer.

The full list of all trophy winners including past years can be found on the club web site at:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/e/2PACX-1vSjbjstSu6tDhSmtMjbrETmc6Rn149EwdUNulrmkW3nHKWqCGNalvQReW-xGEW1MFowla7wukgDafWN/pubhtml>

A fantastic time was had at the awards dinner and Ramona and I are already planning future social events, following its success. Look out for the emails about social rides to the pub and Summer Socials.

All photos by Davey Jones, except the one of Davey and Ramona, which was taken by Andy Grant. More of Davey's photos are on the Club Facebook page at

<https://www.facebook.com/CambridgeCyclingClub/>



CLUB RUNS club runs captain Will Lockhart reports



2022 saw club runs return to operating normally again; with the one major change being a switch to a sign up in advance system rather than the free-for-all that we were used to pre-pandemic. There are many advantages to knowing in advance how many people are going to be in a group; cafés can be pre-booked, you can split the group if it's going to be too big, or make other plans if you only have one or two riders.

Left: Tuddenham Nemesis: The Victoria Sponge that defeated Terry

I do know that some people preferred the flexibility of being able to choose a group on the day and would favour a return to free-for-all, but I would argue this caused many problems: on occasion it could take many minutes to adjust group sizes when none of the riders in a group of 19 were prepared to join a group of 3 going to a less popular destination; a group could have 10 people in it standing in the carpark at Addenbrookes, and would mysteriously have swelled to 15 by the time it reached Great Shelford, which would then require another stop to select a second leader and a new destination. I for one do not miss those occasions.

We're already a quarter of the way through 2023. It won't come as news to any of you that the roads are in an appalling state. We need to be more vigilant than ever at calling out the bad potholes to the rest of the group we're riding with, and bear in mind almost any puddle might be hiding a wheel chewing monster. If someone clouts a pothole hard and you end up waiting at the side of the road while they fix a pinch flat, it might be worth recording the location of the offending hole and reporting it to the appropriate council e.g.

<https://highwaysreporting.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/> . Another winter hazard we had to contend with this year was roads made especially slippery after a period of cold weather, when they were gritted, followed by very dry weather which lead to a buildup of salt, whatever the salt is mixed with, and general road grime. Several riders were caught out on one particular Sunday, fortunately with no major injuries.

Another topic that comes up frequently in conversation is the pace of the rides. The advantage of being quite a large club is that we can have multiple club ride groups all going at different paces. As a reminder we have no less than 6 different groups: touring, GT, ST, intermediate, sporting and sporting plus. Ideally the difference in pace between two adjacent groups is big enough to be noticeable, but small enough that someone who can comfortably ride in the slower group can also ride in the faster group, although they may find it challenging. Riders should be able to find their own level - if they find the group they're riding with too slow, move

up to the next group, and if they're finding the group too fast, move down. This can be a somewhat sensitive issue and requires everyone to be as honest with themselves as they can. If the group is always having to wait for you at the top of the hill, that might be a bit of a hint. Similarly if you always get shouted at for going too fast when you hit the front, that's probably another hint.



We're at that time of the year where the days are getting longer and generally warmer, and we have better weather to look forward to, so I'm looking forward to seeing many of you at Addenbrookes in the coming months.

Editor's note: Terry Dickerson, e-bike exponent and honorary headwind Derry pacer for the inters Group, has some useful tips for fellow e-bike users which would presumably be equally applicable to riders who use electronic groupsets. They can be found on his YouTube channel, *Five Minute Velo* here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q1LMajSFiNA>

A VERY WET CENTURY, MARCH 2023 ROB HALE



'It's not going to rain that much', we said more in hope than expectation as seven of us met at the coffee van by Cambridge station on a grey Saturday morning in March, ready for a 107 mile ride that



would take us into parts of Bedfordshire and over the hills to Hertfordshire before turning back for home. For the first two hours the rain did indeed hold off.

Finding Southill Tea Rooms unexpectedly shut due to the demands of Mother's Day we pushed on to a café at Amptill, where the heavens opened. It then rained solidly for five hours. By this time however there was no going back, and we carried on in the deluge, up Sharpenhoe Hill – the big one of this ride – and over the Chiltern ridge at Lilley, before a long descent and flooded roads leading to Codicote, where we had break no. 2 at Spokes Café, a friendly place with a bike workshop in a big shed, that is (rightly) popular with London clubs. By now we had cold wet hands and feet, and sought warmth in Spokes from blankets and their wood stove.



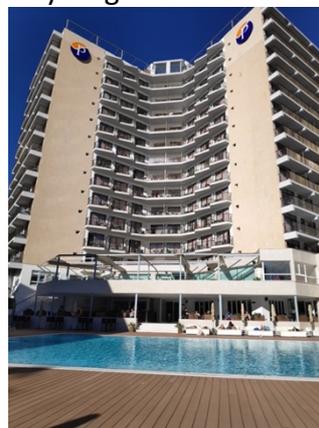
We regained familiar ground around Puckeridge, and finished via Clavering and Catmere End, keeping to the hills almost to the last, and on the final 20 miles the rain stopped and a weak sun appeared.

Despite –or maybe because of - the conditions, we kept our spirits up throughout the ride, in a kind of solidarity against the elements. I thoroughly enjoyed the day, and will organise another ride on this route, but preferably when it is a bit drier!

Five Minute Velo has a video of the ride here: https://youtu.be/im_igWMB0FO

MALLORCA 2023 the organiser's perspective, from Tim Williams

From an organiser's perspective this year's Mallorca training camp was definitely a success. Though Mallorca is not quite like it was when I first went cycling there over 30 years ago it's actually better in many ways. Sure, there's more traffic, but there are many more roads, they're much better mapped and they're in better condition so it doesn't take long to get away, and stay away, from the cars. There are also more cafes. So not only is riding great, so is stopping! The hotel landscape keeps changing too. The small family-owned hotels are giving way to big chains. The new hotels are up-market which is good, but they're more expensive. Having said that, we used the same hotel as last year, they gave us last year's rates, and it was great!



Two things that haven't changed are the fantastic scenery and the beautiful old towns. They always deliver. And this year the weather delivered too - blue skies every day and not a drop of rain. The camp has the same basic structure each year. It works and it allows us to see a lot of the island. We had a few days in the mountains, a few days exploring the middle of the island, a 'tour of the monasteries' and a ride along the spectacular coast road. We set out each day in four groups - each with routes that took us to the same area and a cafe stop in the same town.



We managed to do it without any unwelcome drama too! (...which doesn't make for the most exciting reading)

I'd like to thank everyone who came for doing their best to make things easy for me. My particular thanks to Jon, Colin, Julian and Heather for their help with logistics.



We're all cyclists, but there are times when a friendly face behind the wheel of a bus, a van or a car makes things so much better.

I'm sure that we'll do it all again next year. No concrete plans yet, but the dates will have to be different (earlier in March) to avoid Easter.

Ramona Loveridge shares a participant's perspective

I've been going to Mallorca for the last 6 times with Tim's training camp. It's a well-run event with organized cycling training up and down the glorious mountains interspersed with flattish routes and the rest day midweek where, if you can't stand the sight of the bike anymore, you can go on a trip to Palma and pretend you're a normal tourist, sit and people watch, having a beer and eating tapas. Oh, and a little trip to a "cycling shop" square where Rapha Mallorca and Cafe du Cycliste nestle. Rapha luckily had a sale on, although Cafe du Cycliste didn't :(Although (note to Tim) we promise we watched a video on cornering that you were demonstrating that day to the others.



We'd like to say that we obeyed Tim's advice about pacing ourselves well throughout the week. Hard though when excitement kicks in and another day of riding with mates and blue skies beckon. A few took a day off to rest and enjoy the hotel's 25 metre pool or the spa.



My "mechanical" midweek was well timed; I got out of doing the time trial and had a lovely morning driving about with Julian (our cyclist saviour who follows us about with water and bananas and seems to always appear at the right time). Julian and I were hunting for Bev, who had got lost, had taken a wrong turn and went down and then back up the mountain! (still smiling though :)

The camaraderie of the camp was great. We had our own area of the hotel to eat and there would always be someone there to discuss the day's events, swim with or have a beer (oops, mineral water, Tim honest).

Buffet food was plentiful with lots of choices where you really could have chocolate pancakes, eggs and bacon. and cakes for breakfast and not feel guilty about it.

The hotel was well equipped for cyclists and had its own hire bike shop and bike store nearby. The travel arrangements were slick. Tim picked us up from the airport the short distance to the hotel and drove us back when the week was finished. Not an easy thing to do when we are catching different flights at different times and destinations!

I can't wait for next year!! .

TIME TRIALS

The Club evening time trials are back in operation with the 5-mile come-and-try event at Madingley having attracted good numbers including a sizeable road bike field. Results and pictures are on the club web site and Facebook page.

Our first open promotion will be the Viking 50 on June 24th on the F2 Hardwick-based course on the A428 that is the venue for all our open events. Following that, in our open 15 on July 15th, we are hosting the VTTA national championship at the distance and our open promotions close as usual with the 25 on September 10th. Organiser Chris Dyason will be looking for help in due course.

Last year's open 25, which hosted the VTTA national championship, was too late for the last Newsletter and has so far escaped reporting but since it saw some Cambridge CC success, and for the sake of the archive, here are edited highlights from the VTTA report:

This year's national 25 mile championship was held on what is now one of the fastest and most popular courses in the country, the F2A west of Cambridge on the A428 dual carriageway. This helped attract a large entry, and a full field of 150 solos and 5 tandems, with 123 men and 16 women competing for the solo VTTA championships. This was a quality field as well with 11 of the men having an LTS of sub 50 minutes.

The sad death of the Queen during the week, and the cancellation of many sporting events at the weekend, triggered some concern on the Friday morning as to whether the event could proceed but a check of the official government guidance and some phone calls around the National Executive Committee confirmed we could proceed. We held a one minute's silence at the event prior to the presentations.

Sunday morning dawned with fog on the course, but a half hour delayed start gave time for the sun to come up and the fog to clear. It was a mild morning but with an easterly breeze that made things tougher on the return leg of each of the two laps of the course. Conditions were still good though for fast times and many riders will have achieved their 25 mile standard for the season.

The tandem championship was won by that tried and tested pairing of Murray Kirton and Dave Stockley (ages 81/82) whose 1:02:53 gave them a Vets Handicap Result (VHR) of a very impressive 47:45. With the women it was again Angela Carpenter who continued her great run of form to run out a clear winner and 2022 champion with a time of 52:28. Her VHR of 43:19 shows the real quality of her ride. The silver medal went to a very deserving Arja Scarsbrook who at 74 rode 1:03:51 for a VHR of 45:53. The bronze medal to Linda Dewhurst with 58:50 and a VHR of 46:26.



With such a large men's field there was a tense wait for all the times to come in and it turned into a very tight battle for the medals. Andrew Grant's 53:34 and VHR of 45:39 topped the leader board until Keith Ainsworth came home in 51:01 giving him a narrow winning margin of 9 seconds with his VHR of 45:30. 3rd to 5th were within 10 seconds of each other but another rider in their 60s took the bronze medal with Keith Dorling (51:52, VHR 46:21) just edging Matt Smith's fastest actual on the day (47:14, VHR 46:30) who in turn had just a one second gap on Chris McNamara (47:50, VHR 46:31).

The club team medals went to the local lads from Cambridge CC (Andy Grant, Chris Dyason and Colin Lizieri), with the women from High Wycombe CC second (Joy Payne, Helen Roby, and Dena Ford) and Legato Racing Team in third (Joe Costello, Steve Lorraine and Simon Horsley). The Group team award was again a local affair with East Anglian taking the medals as a result of having three men in the top four with Andy Grant, Keith Dorling and Matt Smith. London & Home Counties were second group team (Linda Dewhurst, Anthony Turner, and Joy Payne) and Surrey/Sussex third (Chris McNamara, Simon McNamara and Nik Allen).



Some comments from the 2022 champions. Firstly Angela, 'Extremely well organised event as always by Cambridge CC and a good call to delay the start with the thick patchy fog. I have seen some great performances from the women in the last few weeks, so I needed to do a good ride to retain the crown. Conditions felt tough, particularly the return, so the second lap was hard.' And from Keith, 'I didn't ride particularly well actually, although I couldn't squeeze another second out of my body. I think the long season has slowly caught up, but fortunately it was just enough to take the title. The return on both laps was particularly tough into that headwind, but of course it was the same for all, and I was relieved to hit that chequered flag.'

Finally, our thanks to Chris Dyason for his excellent organisation, especially with such a large field, and to the members of Cambridge CC, the timekeepers, and to Keith West for the efficient handling of results at HQ. It's good for the sport and the VTTA when we can put on such a quality championship and sets an example for other clubs and groups.

Andy, Chris and Colin have had the briefest of tenures as National Team Champions, as the 25 championship was the last of those contested in 2022, but the first in 2023 and Chris was the only one of the team to travel up to Yorkshire to contest it.

THE WAY WE WERE: Cambridge Cycling in the 1930s.

Colin Lizieri

In the depths of the pandemic, many people found time to sort through those unopened boxes: we were contacted by Roger Smith from mid-Wales who had discovered cycling memorabilia from his late father, Leonard, who was active in the Cambridge Town and Country Cycling Club in the 1930s. He kindly sent us to read and copy. It provides the (relatively) early years differences and striking photos (hard to scan and cuttings, standard 1933 Handbook and a prizes.

Although Leonard Smith *narrow bar bike, skin suit* appear very often in the was clearly a talented and shown as riding the club's clocking just over 169 miles O.A. Pope, setting a club



late 1920s and early some of the material to fascinating insights into of the club with similarities. There are reproduce), newspaper certificates, the club's handful of medals and

(seen modelling the new and aero socks) doesn't newspaper reports, he competitive rider – he's 12 hour race in 1927, then, in 1932, riding with record of 221¾ miles – the

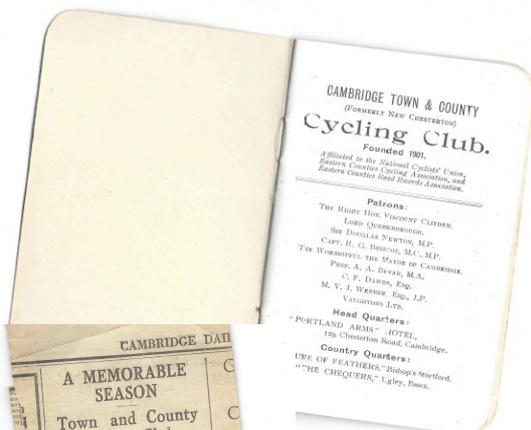
report notes that this was in “atrocious weather conditions” in “very strong winds” (so not much changed there). The current club record (235¾ miles) dates back to 1937, so there's a target for two of us! Ken Platts' individual record of 283m is, um, a little more recent, from the weaponized time trial bike era. While the road bikes in the pictures are familiar, remember the weight, the material and, typically, the absence of gears. Perhaps as striking is that there were nine individual starters and two tandems for the 1932 12 hour race. He also recorded a 100 mile time of 5:42, a 50m of 2:35 (and a 50m tandem time of 2:10) and, perhaps slightly less impressive a 1:14, 25m. That said, the reports seem to suggest that 20mph was seen as a highly competitive pace.

The material also provides some fascinating insights into the evolution of the club itself and, indeed, the origins of the club runs. An undated newspaper report (probably from the early 1930s) shows a decision to create a “social section” – the club’s object from the rules was

clearly defined as racing, but with many new members, there was a demand for “Sunday afternoon tea runs”, accepted by the executive (there is no report of opposition). Less comfortably, the report continues “*Although ladies cannot yet be elected members of the club, they will be welcomed on these runs*”. I suppose the “yet”



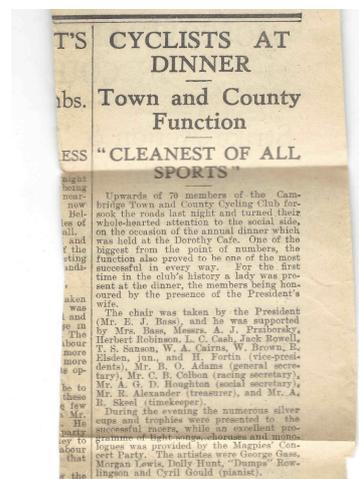
is hopeful and we should recall that the right to vote was only granted in 1928. While the photos are male dominated, there are some showing female riders, so changes were afoot.



One surprise there is that the executive committee of the cycling club was being reported in the local newspapers (I doubt that there’d be much interest in our Zoom committee meetings!). Indeed, there seems to be a lot of coverage of the club’s activities, including race reports (of club races as well as area races) and season summaries. We



could, perhaps, try to revive that coverage? There is even a report of the 1932 annual dinner which attracted seventy members to the Dorothy Café (which was in Sidney Street and seemed to have survived until the late 1980s). It sounds like a pretty formal affair with lengthy reports and toasts interspersed with “light songs, choruses and monologues” provided by the Magpies’ Concert Party (I hope this

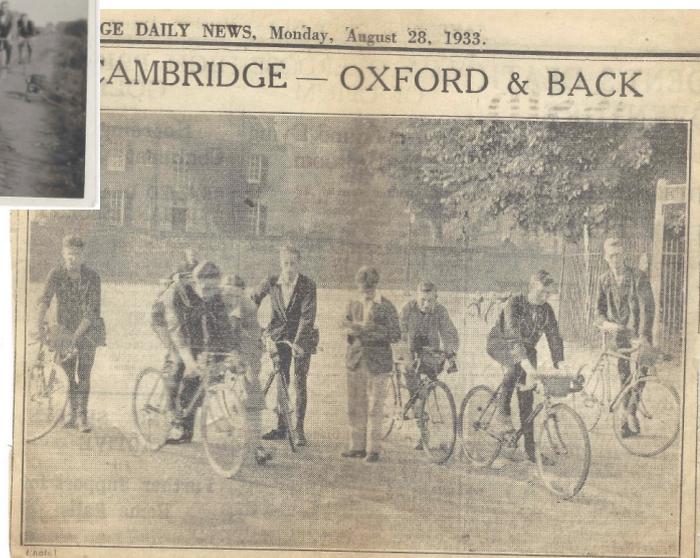


isn't giving Beverley and Ramona ideas ...). Again, the social situation is highlighted in the report "For the first time in the club's history a lady was present at the dinner ...". Might oaks from small acorns come. The club was keen to stress its amateur nature in the face of the commercialization of sport – I am not sure that portraying cycling as "the cleanest of all sports" would play so well in more recent times. Some of those in the report have their names on our trophies today, notably Messrs. Bass (the 1933 president) and Colbon (racing secretary).



We can, though, see many resonances with today though: the club rules signal issues with attendance and participation and seek

limit prizes to those who regularly attend and compete. Another link to the past: many of the cuttings complain about the state of the roads and report multiple punctures and damaged wheels! Oh and the weather – reports of atrocious conditions, strong winds (often from the South West), driving rain and cold – no change there then. **Above right: Full aero kit for a reliability ride.**



What was the 1930s equivalent of Zwift? The club rules insist that members should wear club colours which are, intriguingly, said to be black and white – when did we change? A racing vest cost two shillings and six pence (how many of us still remember half a crown?): inflating that at RPI suggests it's about £10 but Measuring Worth suggests that, in terms of labour value, it is more like £26. We should be aware of the economic context of these cuttings: the reverse of one of the reports contains details of a court case against a member of the National Unemployed Workers Union and we are in the midst of the great depression following the Wall Street crash of 1929, so it might have been some burden for the members.

With great thanks to Roger Smith for loaning us the fascinating material and in memory of his father, Leonard.



Cambridge Town and Country Cycling Club 1932 (?). Leonard Smith on right, second row

IKE SAUL ROAD RACE 2023

The return of the Club's Ike Saul Open Road Race, a counting event in the Eastern Road Race League, saw a move to the well-tryed and demandingly hilly circuit taking in Wendens Ambo and the Littlebury Green climb covered 8 times for a total race distance of around 65km.

Organiser Tom Begg had done a tremendous job pulling together the many and complex strands that go into promoting a road race and was well supported by a good turn-out of CCC members.

The pace was brutal from the start, with an early break featuring Edmund Slater of GFTL, who soloed to the first two primes and the Strava KOM for the circuit at 45kph and 398 watts! By lap 4 he had been joined by team mate Peter Hargreaves, who shared the work and took the next prime.

Ultimately the duo were absorbed by a chasing group from which Callum Laborde of Wheelbase Cab Tech Castelli emerged the winner in a tough uphill sprint.



Result

- 1st Callum Laborde Wheelbase Cab Tech Castelli
- 2nd William Gilbank Lee Valley Youth Cycling Club
- 3rd Phil Williams Private
- 4th Gabriel Taylor DAP Cycling Club
- 5th Peter Hargreaves GFTL
- 6TH Charles Gaimster Dulwich Paragon CC
- 7TH Ryan Klein Velo Schills-Interbike RT
- 8TH Max Bolton Oxford University
- 9th Benedict Walker Lee Valley Youth Cycling Club
- 10th Thomas Mead Lee Valley Youth Cycling Club
- 11th Connor Blackhouse TrainSharp Development Team
- 12th Thomas King Ribble Recharge
- 13th Seb Herrod Rotor Race Team
- 14th Daniel Rees API-Metrow/Bodyby JR
- 15TH Paul Opie Lee Valley Youth

TUBELESS TRIBULATIONS: Chris Dyason bids for a starring role in Dr Hutch's weekly "Acts of Cycling Stupidity" feature.

For 50+ years I've known that to go fast on a bike, skinny tubulars were the tyres to use, pumped to 150psi for a rock hard ride with almost no road contact area so almost no rolling resistance. Then, almost overnight, the fast people all took to riding fat tubeless tyres at pressures your Granny might use to go shopping. Surely can't be right, right? Wrong.

In an effort to stave off the ravages of old age I followed the trend, swallowing pride by accepting I'd been wrong (and nearly choking on the price tag). I got a beautiful pair of HED wheels and Michelin Power TT tyres and they would make me fast. So, rim tape carefully applied, valve seated, soapy solution spread, tyre persuaded into position. Frantic pumping and tyre pops into place – going well so far. Valve core removed and sealant squirted into the tyre, valve core back and more pumping, wheel twirling, bouncing, pumping. Tyre reluctant to inflate, clearly needs more sealant as it's leaking out and dripping everywhere (so doing the job in the lounge was a mistake). Repeat. Test wheel under water and bubbles appearing through the tyre as well as from the rim. Re-read sealant instructions (well okay, read instructions) – ah, didn't shake bottle. Remove tyre, drain sealant, re-fit tyre etc with shaken sealant. Repeat the adding more sealant process. Tyre holds pressure (hurrah!), but then deflates.

There are two wheels in parallel here, everything duplicated.

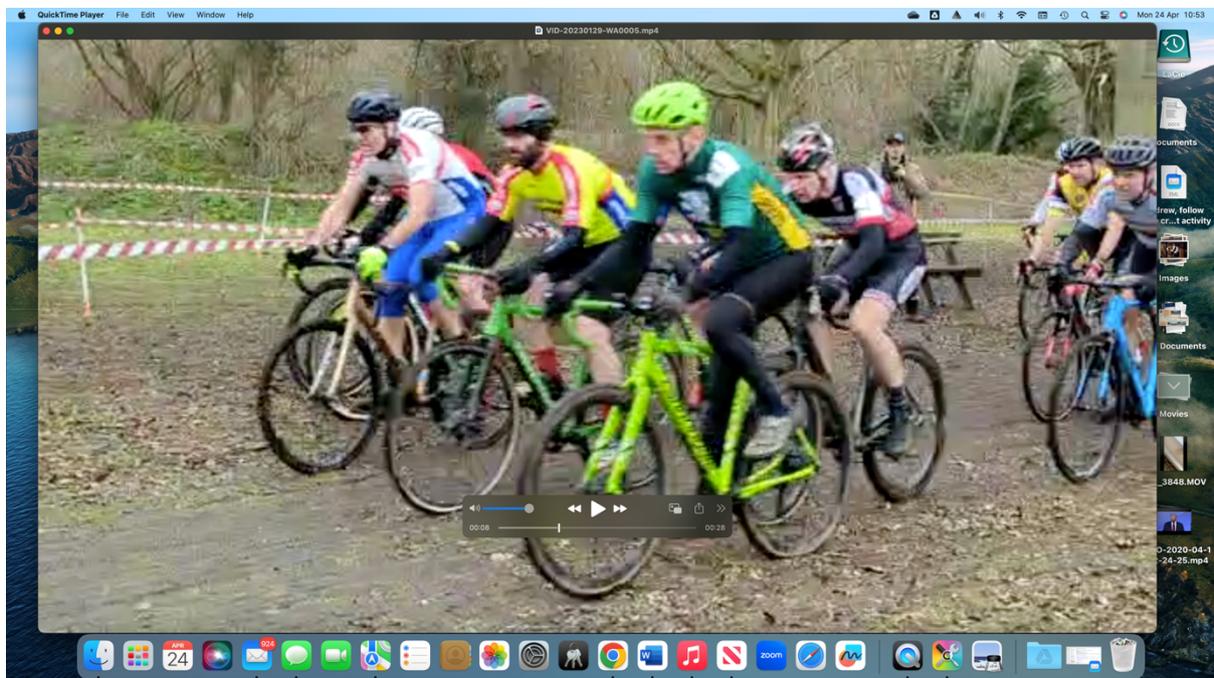
After three days and untold hours with 250 Watt pumping efforts, I conclude the tyres are rubbish and go to the Michelin website to see how to complain. Good website with lots of info about bike tyres. Tells me that Power TT tyres are clinchers for use with inner tubes. Ah!



EASTERN CYCLOCROSS LEAGUE 11TH ROUND, HOSTED BY CAMBRIDGE JUNIOR CC

Report by Ramona Loveridge, Junior link person, Club Welfare Officer and Social Secretary for CCC and British cycling coach for Cambridge Junior Cycling Club

Cambridge Junior Cycling Club hosted the 11th round of the Eastern Cyclocross League on 28th January 2023. This was an event open to all age groups and was held in Milton Country Park.



There were in total 374 riders and the park was jam-packed full of cycling enthusiasts that day with their families and absolutely buzzing with excitement.

It was a cold but dry January day with not a lot of rain the week before, so the course was fairly firm and with the sun breaking through in the afternoon it really was a perfect day. There were 7 races in total and the course consisted of a 2km circuit complete with hills and obstacles with numbers of circuits dependent on age range and ability and the varied terrain of the park allowing for a more technically challenging course for adult racers.

The biggest field was for men aged 50-59 yrs, closely followed by the 60 riders in the under-10 category. There were also over 50 adult women riders with a few in the 50-59 range. Maybe there's still a chance for me to race - or perhaps I'll stick to coaching.

Cyclocross really can be a family event with all taking part and is great for spectators and riders alike. The varied terrain and short circuits meant you see the riders flying through the park, up and down the small hills and bunnyhopping or lifting bikes over logs. There was also “techno Hill” where you could ride in sync with the Belgium beat. I’m not sure if this happens on all the league courses but there are plans for louder speakers next year!!

The next cyclocross race at Milton as part of the Eastern Cyclocross League will be on the 28th Jan 2024 so put it in your Google calendars to volunteer or participate. There will also be muddy monster series races throughout the year, dates to be decided, for children under 16.

Richard Miller runs adult cyclocross sessions on Saturdays at Milton country Park so ask to join the Saturday Cx Coaching WhatsApp group if you are interested.

See James Ward, (details on club website) for further information and if you’re not sure who James is, he has provided a handy introduction, below.

JAMES WARD IS INTERVIEWED BY... JAMES WARD

RIGHT, WHO ARE YOU, THEN?

I’m James Ward, the new Offroad Secretary for the Club. I say this whilst laughing, because anyone who knows my cycling background will be extremely confused already. I’m not exactly known for riding off road.

SO, WHAT ON EARTH LED YOU TO VOLUNTEER FOR THE POSITION?

Having passively resisted offroad riding since I joined the club in 1987 (it’s complicated), in recent years I’ve had too many close shaves on the road. As a result, in 2017 I moved to riding and racing almost exclusively on Zwift. After a few increasingly exciting years of racing, I’d just about “done Zwift” and looked for another challenge. Gravel bikes were getting popular, so I bought one in late 2020 and started exploring. Last year I bought a pair of second hand cyclocross bikes and discovered gravel racing and cyclocross (CX) racing. Next may well be an MTB, with enough cash and garage space! I have accumulated soooo many bikes over the years.

ZWIFT WASN’T THE IDEAL PREPARATION FOR OFF-ROAD, WAS IT?

To my surprise, the fitness from Zwift (and I had it in spades!) didn’t translate smoothly to cyclocross racing. It’s hugely skilful and I had pretty much zero ability, and most of my upper

body cycling strength had wasted away from riding on a static trainer, so I turned into a noodle after 5 minutes. There is also a lot to know about tyre choice and pressures: it's a big change moving from the old school 18mm slicks at 140+PSI for TTs, to 33mm knobbies at 17PSI.

YOU LIKE RACING BIKES, DON'T YOU. WHAT HAVE YOU DONE SO FAR?

I had a crack at the British Gravel Championship (I got me legs ripped off) and the Tour of the Cornfields (more sedate), both of which happened to be up the road from Cambridge. I've done a few summer cyclocross events at Ashwell, and now finally a full cyclocross season in the Eastern Cross League, including the regional championship, which happened to be on the UCI World Masters Championships, which was amazing!

WHAT ELSE HAVE YOU LEARNT SINCE YOU STARTED GOING OFF ROAD?

Here's a few initial thoughts: 1) Crashing can be fun, and I am now getting quite good at falling off frequently (and increasingly so at falling off and hurting myself). 2) Bike maintenance is a whole different ballgame compared with Zwift or even road. 3) You can't have enough tyres/wheels. Or weird kit in the back of your car (or preferably van). 4) Cyclocross events take place over most of a day, with multiple events arranged by age, with the smallest children in the morning to the seniors in the mid-afternoon. All four of my family race, so it can be a long day. It really is a big family event and I'd strongly recommend the atmosphere which blends fun and serious competition if you want it.

AS OFFROAD SECRETARY, WHAT WILL YOU BRING TO THE CLUB?

That's where I'd like to hear from other Club members who are keen on riding off-road. What would you like to see? I'm keen to update the website and to encourage us to know each other better. If anyone would like to offer ideas, then please email me at:

offroad@cambridge-cycling-club.org.uk

OBITUARY: FREDDIE WHIPP

It is with great sadness that I write to say that Cambridge CC Life Vice President Freddie Whipp passed away recently aged 87.



Those that remember Freddie knew him as a relentlessly hard working rider and always forthright character. He competed regularly in road racing and time trialling for forty years, joining Cambridge CC in 1981, having belonged to the Evesham and District Wheelers before this. He was an important member of the Cambridge CC vets time trial team which did well through the 1980's and 90's but equally at home in the vets road races which he really enjoyed.

He gave back a lot to the club as club coach for many years and as club secretary along with many other duties - always happy to give advice when needed and never one to sit on the fence.

There are so many memories of Freddie. Another Cambridge CC vet John Morley remembers riding 2-ups with him early season with good results and in which they would see who could make each other suffer the most.

I remember the Saturday training runs out from Alan Newark's house near Ely which Freddie regularly attended. The small group of us would be out across the Winter fenland lanes coming back covered in mud from head to foot from the sugar beet trucks which had left their trail but full of glee having worked hard and always enjoyed some good banter.

In the later years of his cycling Freddie took up playing the tenor banjo with the same endless enthusiasm as he always had for his bike and eventually formed 'Freddie and Friends Jazz Band' who played from 1998-2018 including at some of the Cambridge CC club dinners.

After he had retired from cycling he kept fit taking the family dogs which he loved for long walks. He often joked that everyone when they were born should be issued with a dog and a banjo to ensure complete happiness

He was totally devoted to his wife Jan and their family and I'm sure we all send them our best thoughts.

Rest Well Freddie and Pedal Up!

Lucy McTaggart

