



## Newsletter June 2024

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### RECORD BREAKERS

Barely had we finished congratulating Piotr Zulawski on his 25-second smashing of David McGaw's Club 10-mile record, (now 7 years old and set on the legendary and now defunct, V718 near Hull) with his 18:33 in the East Anglian VTTA event on the Hardwick-based F2/10, when he did it again in the next event in the series. This time it was on the E2/10, based at Six

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Mile Bottom where Piotr recorded his, and the club's, first ever sub-18 minute ride: 17:53 for the fastest time of the evening.



Not long ago, you needed to be a World Tour pro and World Hour Record holder - Alex Dowsett - to do that sort of time on that course. Piotr took some notable scalps, including that of Matt Smith of Drag2Zero. In the veteran's event on Age Adjusted time, Chris Dyason took second place behind VeloRefined's Kevin Tye and Martin Reynolds took third with a new club age record for 61-year-olds of 19:56.

Among the course records Piotr has set this year are 19:46 for the Mepal-based B10/1R. en route to winning the Ely and District Open 10 and 19:39 for our local Bottisham-based E33/10 in the Newmarket T&C 10 on Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> June. <https://www.cyclingtimetrials.org.uk/race-report/27121#anchor>

It's time this young man tried some grown-up distances (or at least a "25").

The club records secretary has had a busy time. On the same evening as Piotr did his “17”, Caitlin Borowski smashed all the girls' five mile records from juvenile upwards with her 13:43 on the Madingley course.

Earlier, in the year, in our own Open 15 on the Hardwick-based F2, Chris Dyason reprised his



trick from last year of organising the event, starting No.1, getting round before the weather turns nasty and breaking the National Age record for 76-year-olds with 34:27. The only unsatisfactory element was that he was miffed to have beaten last year's time and thereby wiped it from the record tables so his name appears once instead of twice. In the same event, Anne Shuttleworth set a new club women's record for the distance of 38:30.

<https://www.cyclingtimetrials.org.uk/race-report/27258#anchor>

Our evening time trials have been getting good fields with some enthusiastic newcomers and our Open 50, the Viking Trophy, again organised by Chris Dyason, took place on 22<sup>nd</sup> June on the F2 at Hardwick and generated some exceptionally fast times.

<https://www.cyclingtimetrials.org.uk/race-report/27274#anchor>

Word reaches the editor that Ben Redman achieved a bronze medal 🥉 in the age group 45-50 at the European Middle Distance Triathlon championship, whilst second claim member Claire Martin came 4th in the 40-44F. It would be good to get the full story from them for the next newsletter.

STOP PRESS: In the East Anglian VTTA 10 on the E2/10 yesterday evening (26 June), Chris Dyason broke the National Age record for 76 years with 22:16, while Piotr was fastest of the evening, equalling his 17:53 of the previous week.

# MALLORCA 2024



Tim Williams gives the organiser's perspective

My starting point for each year's training camp is the previous year's camp. If that went well (and fortunately that's been the case every year so far) it makes sense to keep as many of the knowns and controllables as possible the same.

For 2024 that wasn't possible as the movable feast of Easter fell right on our normal date. When this happened before, several years ago, we went earlier - in the middle of March. After all, going just after the clocks change as we normally do is already quite late for a training camp and it's not just Easter that we want to avoid, but the whole of the associated school holiday. However a straw poll of recent attendees

suggested that going later, in the hope of warmer weather, would be a more popular choice.

Having decided on a new date a few other spanners dropped into the works: new people to deal with at the hotel company, a surge in hotel bookings and a clash with the Mallorca 312 sportive.

The upshot of the surge in hotel bookings was a late change of hotel. Whether this would have happened without the change of staff I do not know, but instead of the familiar Hotel Bali we found ourselves just around the corner in the Hotel Sofia. That wouldn't mean any changes to the cycling, but the clash with the 312 might as all of the roads on the 312 route would be closed.



So what happened?

Everything worked just fine. The hotel turned out to be OK. Going on the later date didn't make much difference on the weather front - we had one and a half rainy days and lots of sunshine - and the cycling was as fantastic as ever.



There were definitely more non-cycling holiday makers in the resorts, and there were huge numbers of cyclists 'oop north' around Pollenca and Alcudia in the days before the 312, but they (the holiday makers and the 312ers) all seemed to stay firmly in their designated areas leaving the rest of the roads and cafes clear for us :-)

Each year the camp follows roughly the same pattern to help those training hard to get the most out of it, and everyone to make it through to the end without running out of energy too soon. Mixing flatter and hillier rides of different lengths also means the we get to different parts of the island and this year was no exception. Fortunately the 312 route left us plenty of roads to play on on our final day so apart from having lots of company on our mid-camp pilgrimage to Sa Colobra it didn't affect us at all.

As we had no incidents or accidents and lots of happy, smiley faces I think that the camp was another success! Hopefully I'm not the only one and we'll all be back to do it again next



year. I'd like to thank everyone who came and helped us all to have a great time. Mallorca is great, but it really is the nature of the rides and the company on and off the bike that make the camp so special ...and that's down to the people who come. My particular thanks to Jon, Steve and Mauro for their help with logistics.

## **B2C**

**Jon Wells and friends on the delights of riding all day into a headwind; the concept of faff credits, scenic pee stops and the sexual behaviour of male honey bees.**

This ride originated following the expansion of the Thameslink service to Cambridge in 2018, providing a direct service between Cambridge & Brighton. Could we take a train to Brighton and ride home? And if we're riding across London where should we cross the Thames?



There are many lovely routes available between Cambridge and Brighton. We chose to take the early train and ride from Brighton because...

a: It gets the train bit out of the way first. The direct train service is what enables this ride to happen and if there is disruption (ie, no direct train) you'll endure a lengthy journey home when you're tired and depleted.

b: The landscape becomes steadily more rolling and flatter as you get closer to Cambridge, so you ride familiar roads at the end of the day when you're fatigued and riding in darkness.



Having mixed results on the first attempt going through Central London I resolved to plot a route far to the west of London and to include some of the Sussex Downs, the Surrey Hills, Windsor Great Park and the Chilterns. I consulted friends in the cycling community from Brighton, Twickenham and Hemel Hempstead to provide me with their favourite routes and roads in their respective locales and the B2C route was formed.

Notable occurrences on this year's instalment...

An intrepid group of eight CCC and CTC riders, with a ninth meeting us in Chesham to ride with us for a few hours and guide us through some of his local back lanes.

This year's total distance was 295km including more roads of the beautiful Surrey Cycleway and inviting the pedants to do laps of the Cambridge ring-road to achieve the full 300km at the finish. Elevation gain was about 2800m with many ups and downs but only 3 categorised climbs as I forgot to include Flaunden Hill (near Latimer). It was pointed out that the road book read like a hilly stage of the Giro with 3 categorised climbs and 25 uncategorised ones!

This year saw the introduction of Faff-chips - Every rider was issued with 2 faff credits at Brighton with the instruction that once your credits are gone they are gone. This concept (which I strongly ecommend for all future clubruns – ed.) decrees that in the event of any rider, having cashed-in all faff-credits, subsequently requesting an unscheduled stop for 'any reason' the group will convene and decide on a worthy penalty. Appropriate punishments might include sitting on the front for 2 hours, buying all the cakes at the cafe or carrying out any subsequent puncture repairs unassisted. Exercising ride-leader's prerogative, I cashed in the first chip of the day before we'd even left Brighton Station!

There was much concern about the forecast headwind (and much *Schadenfreude* in evidence on the Tri Club Saturday ride back in Cambridge – ed.) but it was the cold that proved to be a bigger challenge. We were well prepared with many layers, and we did enjoy some sunshine in the first couple of hours, but the weather wasn't particularly kind and the headwind did curtail our speed more than we anticipated. Nevertheless, everyone was willing to take their turns on the front.

Tradition prescribes three formal cafe stops to break the route into manageable chunks. There were also many unplanned natural breaks, the first of which occurred quickly after the start just outside Brighton at a lay-by overlooking Devil's Dyke and the Sussex Downs, during which the landscape, the native flora & fauna and the sexual behaviour of the male honey bee were discussed.

The first section of the ride passes through the rolling pastures, woodland and byways of the Weald and into the Surrey Hills. It really is a stunning place to ride your bike, particularly in late spring with the trees and plants in full-leaf, offering beautiful, quiet, rolling lanes, through tunnels of green and dappled light. The first categorised climb of Box Hill arrived at 70kms and our first cafe stop at Handley's Cafe arrived at 90kms in the busy town of Ashted. Though very busy, due to it being Derby Day at Epsom, the service was very friendly. We were interviewed by the staff at Word On the Street Bookshop as part of their father's day book promotion of cycling related literature. Check instagram for video of the interview!

From Ashted we passed through Leatherhead and to the off-road (did someone say gravel?) secteur through Great Bookham Common which links with Ockham. Then on to Ripley to cross the River Wey and admire the grade 1 listed ruins of Newark Priory. We had to navigate Woking/Sheerwater, which are a bit tricky, but you're through the busy roads quickly and onto Sunningdale to enter Windsor Great Park through the Blacknest Gate. There was a polo match in progress in the park. Steve, playing Charles Darwin to the group's Beagle, commented on the stunning orchids. The Great Park is truly beautiful and not a spot of litter anywhere to be seen.

Cross the River Thames at Datchet, admire the stunning architecture at Eaton, then turn towards the Chilterns via Eaton Dorney. Soon afterwards we met the next two categorised climbs of Holtspur Lane/Paul's Hill at Beaconsfield and then Chalk Lane just after Little Missenden.

The second stop in Chesham arrived at 175kms with most of the Chilterns completed. We enjoyed coffee, cakes and friendly conversation with some of the locals in the Cafe Nero.



The 3rd and final stop came at the oasis of the Jet garage in Henlow at 240kms. Time for the emergency ice creams!

We arrived home in darkness to the familiar streets of Cambridge, having enjoyed some beautiful countryside, many epic rollers, lots of fast, sweeping descents, and a beautiful sunset as we neared Potton. Best of all, we had no issues, punctures or mechanicals.

***This photo is in perfect focus. It's the riders who are blurry.***

Steve's scientific observations on the voyage:

- WeatherReport 🌧️ : cold and grey with a stiff NNEerly all day 🌧️🌧️🌧️ ...not a single blink of sunshine until sunset @9pm!
- NosebagReport 🐷 : fig rolls x9 (donation to Trevor Coleman x1), mini brownies x4, cereal bars x2, 2 packet of S&V crisps x2, vegan sausage roll x1, (non-vegan) sausage bap x1, Americano x2 , espresso x2 (rocket fuel 🚀)
- Noteworthy POI Report 😊 : the South Downs Devil's Dyke, Beacon Hill trig pillar, a PR on Box Hill, Rolls Royce Cullinan SUV (RRP £425K) in Ashted, instant Insta-fame at @WordOnTheStreet bookshop, the mysterious ruins of Newark Priory, angry Woking drivers +++, missing the Magna Carta Memorial at Old Windsor (next time!), orchids in Windsor Great Park, the brutal triple whammy of Holtspur, Chalk & Flaunden Hills 🏔️🏔️🏔️ on the Trans-Chiltern Expressway, the back lanes of Hemel Hempstead (ahem), the life-giving power of the Jet garage at Henlow Camp, a stunning sunset riding into Potton, the Mathematic Bridge @Queens' College in the dark, multiple legendary scenic pee-stops 😊
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## INTRODUCTORY GROUP RIDES



As an initiative to attract new members, the club has been running introductory group rides on the second saturday of the month starting from the Station Plaza.

The first saw saw thirteen riders (plus three experienced ride leaders) set out for a 20 mile ride,

stopping off at The Stove for a slice of cake and everyone had a great taster of group riding.

It was good to see some returners in the second edition and we hope it might result in some new members. We're always looking for volunteers to accompany the rides and if you'd be prepared to help, please get in touch with Heather or Susanne.





## FRED WHITTON CHALLENGE



Massive congratulations to Michael Coleman and Ramona Loveridge for completing the Fred Whitton Sportives! The long route is the UK's hardest sportive with more than 3000 m climbing over 180 km. Michael finished in 7:36 which got him a First Class Certificate. Ramona (below) completed the Lion and Lamb route which has made her hungry for the long version next year. Who says flatlanders can't climb?

## SAVE THE DATE: CLUB SUMMER SOCIAL

CHRIS AND PAULA DYASON'S GARDEN

SAVE THE DATE



CCC SUMMER SOCIAL

4TH OF AUGUST

# PORK PIE AUDAX

WILL LOCKHART

Last year's survey of CCC members revealed a definite interest in longer rides; an opportunity to ride unfamiliar roads, see new places, and challenge the legs a little more. With this in mind, Susanne Hakenbeck, our General and Audax secretary, organised a DIY Audax ride on Saturday 1st June, using the 'Pork Pie' Audax route, which is 219km, from Cambridge to



Melton Mowbray, and back again with 1300m of climbing. The idea was that those riding it as a true Audax ride could register it with Audax UK and collect the points, while everyone else could just do the ride for the personal challenge.

Messages went out on WhatsApp groups and some 20 riders

assembled outside CRC bright and early on Saturday morning, with representation from CCC, CTC, HIBC and ELSR. We rolled off up the busway shortly after 7am with a little sunshine on our backs - the last of the sun we'd see all day.

We split into two groups pretty much immediately, which kept the group sizes sensible. I was in the medium - paced group, while a faster group disappeared up the road ahead of us. I was more than happy to pace myself and ride relatively easily - I've done a few rides over 200km, but it had been quite a while since I'd last ridden this kind of distance, and I knew the route got significantly hillier around Melton Mowbray.

The first part of the route heads in a pretty much straight line (both horizontally and vertically) to Sawtry and then leaves Cambridgeshire for Northamptonshire and Oundle, where we had our first planned stop at just under 60km ridden; we'd already had one short unplanned stop in Swavesey where we'd picked up some of the riders who weren't too keen on the 30kph pace being set in the fast group. There'd be a few more unplanned stops before the day was out. We reunited briefly with the faster group in Beans coffee shop in Oundle - it would be the last we'd see of them all day as well! Oundle was where we also started losing riders - some had planned only to ride to Oundle then head back to Cambridge, and one had a knee problem which prevented him from continuing further.

Once out of Oundle the countryside becomes more rolling, although I felt it was also more sheltered from the northerly wind we'd been riding into. The route between Oundle and Glaston (just south of Rutland Water) is the same in both directions. If I had one criticism of the route, it would be that the section between the southern edge of Rutland Water and Oakham is on a main road for around 3km. There is a cycle path which dumps you rather unceremoniously back onto the road where you have to make a right turn just where the road bends and goes over the crest of a hill - not cycle infrastructure's finest moment. There is a much more peaceful cycle path around Rutland Water but it is rather bumpy in places. Our group had splintered on the main road so we stopped to regroup in Oakham itself, but ended up waiting around half an hour for a few riders who had got lost. Everyone had the route in their computers, right? Eventually the lost sheep were reunited with their flock and we now only had around 18km to go to Melton, and the halfway point of the ride.

Lunch was obtained in a cafe opposite Ye Olde Pork Pie Shoppe, so those who wanted to had the opportunity to buy a souvenir pork pie to take home. We lost another rider here to knee problems; she took the train back to Cambridge. The next 50km back to Oundle were the most challenging riding - there's a sequence of short sharp climbs and equally short sharp descents. Strava tells me the climb up to Riddlington and the climb out of Harringworth are both around 1km at an average of over 6% - hardly Alpine, but with 140km in the legs already they were certainly starting to make themselves felt. On this sort of terrain the only sensible thing to do was to let everyone ride at their own pace and regroup after each hill. There was another unplanned stop in Glaston - conveniently with a handy bus stop for shelter and right next to the pub - where I had to fix a slow puncture. Someone kindly lent me one of those new-fangled mini electric pumps to re-inflate my tyre; it seemed to work very well, although

without the physical feedback of a manual pump I didn't put quite enough air in; I later topped it up with my own pump. My water bottle was empty by the time we got back into Oundle with 160km ridden so I was glad of the opportunity to stop. We'd been expecting all the cafes to be closed, but Beans was still going so we got



takeaway coffees; the nearby Tesco was also popular, and we propped ourselves and our bikes up against the unoccupied seating outside the cafe for a final pitstop.



The return route from Oundle is slightly different from the outbound one, crossing the A1 at Alconbury, and once back into Huntingdon the familiar roads rolled by pretty easily even on tired legs - and by now, my knee had started to ache in sympathy with all the other afflicted riders' joints. The planned and un-planned stops had added up to a considerable amount of time not actually riding our bikes - almost four hours 25 minutes stopped! Nevertheless, for those riding this as an Audax we were still comfortably within the time limit. I had a riding time of 8 hours 47 minutes (including the short runs to and from my house), and had been out for just over 13 hours, getting back home just after 8pm.

It was a very enjoyable day on the bike. Although we were denied much sunshine, the cool weather meant staying hydrated was easier, and it didn't rain. For a significant number of people, certainly in our group, this was their longest ride ever - which certainly surprised me. The route is a good one; almost all of the riding between Oundle and Melton is on quiet roads which are also in much better condition than many of our local roads. You do want to be prepared though - outside of the towns there were precious few places to get a drink or a snack - although there were a good number of pubs. Many thanks to Susanne for initiating, organising and advertising the ride, to all the riders who provided moral support, conversation and wheels to follow. I hope it's the first of many more.



**NOT FOR SALE**

## **WINTER/AUDAX/COMMUTE BIKE - FREE**

**TO THE FIRST ENQUIRER WHO PROMISES USE IT ON WET WINTER CLUBRUNS INSTEAD OF SPRAYING EVERYONE WITH MUCK OFF THE BACK WHEEL OF THEIR SUMMER BIKE.**

Ribble 56cm aluminum frame with horizontal TT (will fit rider approx 5'7" – 6')

- ITM Carbon forks
- Campag 9 speed Mirage groupset.
- Campag wheels
- Continental 4 Seasons tyres
- Carbon seatpost
- Full length mudguards
- No pedals

Email me for further details

