

## HASTINGS & ST. LEONARDS C.C.

Hastings & St Leonards CC look set for another good season in terms of time trial participation with ten members on the start sheet for the ESCA Hard Riders. A number of other members are holding fire until the following week when they will give their racing bikes an airing in Southborough's Saturday afternoon 10 mile TT on the rural but quick Tenterden course, with still more planning to save themselves until it gets warmer in May. Prospects look good for an even better season than 2005 with several new members signing up and some having been in serious early season training to make sure they will improve on what they did last year. A quick summary of the club's 2005 highlights follows:

Early in the year new member Alan Priddy was the most prolific tester for the club in his comeback season. He rode with Catford CC until the early 1970s knocking out 58 minute 25s. After a lay off of more than 30 years he was making a return to the sport after retiring. In the six months leading up to his first event he lost four stone in weight and was then disappointed with the times he was doing! In July he decided to sign up with De Laune first claim since some of his old racing friends were members and De Laune is affiliated to SCCU and other bodies to which Hastings are not. Since De Laune are not ESCA affiliated he will have to miss out on our excellent Association events in 2006 unless he rejoins Hastings as second claim. Club policy has been to not [re]affiliate to the likes of SCCU since not enough members step forward to help carry out any duties that the club is obliged to perform. Members have had entries returned for SCCU Association events and complained but when asked if they would be prepared to co-ordinate our assistance in marshalling or promoting SCCU events all goes quiet!

Mark Brittle has been the club's fastest ten miler since joining in 2002 and by the end of June he had equalled his fastest time yet for Hastings with a 22.19 on the P901 course late in June. This proved too tough to beat for the up and coming challengers. Last year's new prospect Dan Harwood (PB 22.47), a work colleague of Pete Tadros who trained with him, decided not to compete this season having been runner up to Mark last year. It was left to David Earl to steadily improve and lower his PB several times ending up with a personal best of 22.29 in mid July just ten seconds off Mark's time. Pete Byrne who is another colleague and sometime training partner of Pete Tadros rode a few events and did not quite break evens (PB 24.20) but should be in the frame to challenge for top spot this year. Jon Hollidge (23.22), Richard Clarke (23.31), Tim Miles (23.34) and Mark Corliss (23.54) all set PBs better than evens.

Mark Brittle won the club's trophy for the fastest time in the April ESCA 25. In 2004 Mark had produced the first sub hour 25 for Hastings since the late 1990s when we had five beat the hour in 1998 and one in 1999. It was not to be again in 2005 as he only rode a couple more and was not quite on song. This gave David Earl the opening to go for the club's Ron Eastes Challenge Cup for the fastest 25. Ron Eastes was riding out with the club to the ESCA HQ at the Ash Tree pub in Brown Bread Street for an event in 1951 when he went over his handle bars on the descent after leaving the North Trade Road. He fractured his skull and sadly he subsequently died from his injuries in the days before most riders wore helmets.

David's PB set in 2004 was 1.01.58 but as the season progressed he made steady in roads towards breaking the hour for the first time. Having done it once he did it a few more times. In mid September he travelled up to South Wales with Jon Sharples and Mark Corliss to ride on a course near Monmouth, a fast course that had not been used for a few years due to road works. The long journey and an overnight stay in a Travel Lodge situated directly on the course proved well worthwhile as David Earl came in with 58.34 which was good enough to win the Ron Eastes' Challenge Cup by over two minutes from runner up Mark Brittle. Mark Corliss set a PB of 1.03.03 and Jon Sharples did one of his best ever 25s. The course is R25/7 if anyone else fancies a go on it.