

BOINK!

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EAST SUSSEX CYCLING ASSOCIATION

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EDITORIAL

Looking briefly through the summer edition of this publication we noted that we ran a competition to identify William Hickey; it must have been rather boring because no entries were received - not even from Mrs. Burgess of Crowborough. You've got one more chance out there to win a super prize; which will of course be presented at the Annual Lunch.

Also to be presented at the Lunch is the Reliability Trial Trophy. Details of this event are at the back. It will be a very good day out and the Landlord of the Kings Head at East Hoathly has been very obliging with the pub's facilities, so put a note in your diaries and come along and support the event.

Maurice & Esther

P.S. If you go to 'SCOLFES' at BOREHAM STREET, you will not only get a very nice cup of tea, but a warm welcome as well; they like cyclists.

CENTRAL SUSSEX C.C.

Road works on the Horsham by-pass prompted Ron to come up with a new evening 10 course for our summer series. The one he settled on went anti-clockwise starting under the Bolney fly-over, heading out towards Cowfold then a left turn to Twineham down to the kennels, left to the A23 and north back to Bolney. The course worked very well indeed, because although not fast, it's safe, there's good parking under the fly-over and plenty of visibility and clearance at the finish. Nice one, Ron! Many thanks, too, to all the helpers, particularly Ken and Barbara, Bill Shoulders and Bill King who made the whole thing possible and gave up a lot of time each week.

The results from the series were:

<u>FASTEST TIMES</u> Aggregate of 3 events			<u>HANDICAP TIMES</u> Aggregate of 3 events		
F'est	Paul Lipscombe	1.10.54	Best H'cap	M. Crossett	1.07.29
2nd	J. James	1.14.34	2nd	N. Wilton	1.08.18
3rd	G. Sear	1.16.50	3rd	K. Harding	1.08.29
4th	K. Harding	1.17.59	4th	S. Griffin	1.08.46
5th	K. Bramham	1.18.13	5th	G. Sear	1.08.49
6th	J. Green	1.19.06	6th	J. Green	1.09.09
7th	M. Crossett	1.19.29	7th	S. James	1.09.30
8th	G. Maclagan	1.20.13	8th	J. Gallsworthy	1.09.40
9th	N. Wilton	1.21.37	9th	J. James	1.10.04
10th	S. Griffin	1.22.47	10th	K. Bramham	1.10.46
11th	S. James	1.23.00	11th	P. Lipscombe	1.10.54
12th	G. Ericson	1.23.30	12th	L. Teague	1.11.10
13th	J. Gallsworthy	1.24.10	13th	G. Maclagan	1.11.13
14th	L. Teague	1.24.40	14th	G. Ericson	1.11.30
Fastest time of the series:		Paul Lipscombe	23.34		
G.N. Sayers Memorial Trophy:		Paul Lipscombe	23.47		

As the racing season moves into the final few weeks, I thought it might be interesting to see which event stood out in each of as many racing members memories as I could find on a Club night. I finished up with eight or nine printable, but some, such as Kevin Bramham, couldn't remember any event in particular and I put that down to over training - on the road and in the tea stops. Still, here's what they said:

Simon James - "My first ever road race. A ten lap job on the Isle of Wight. So much more fun than time trials and I won seven quid. I was fourteen at the time and did my worst ever ten the next day in a monsoon. I'm off to get a BCF Handbook."

Gareth Sear - "Down at Preston Park track. Only two laps to go, in with a chance and I get a pedal in my front wheel on the bend just past the finishing straight. Lots of skin off hip, leg and elbow and away to hospital. They SCRUBBED the grit out."

Les Teague - "I usually charge up and down the Dorking road but I thought it was getting a bit flat and boring so I had a go at the Crawley's Hilly '25'. Gawd, did that hurt!! I did a 1.12.30 and reckon that's my best effort for dobkeys years."

Geoff Ericson - (Geoff had ridden the SCA '12' the day before and I expected him to give me an epic tale on that, but no...). "The SCA 100. I'd failed to get inside the standard last year because of a puncture so I was determined to do it this year. The wind and rain were awful, but I made it - in fact I did even better because I got inside last year's standard".

Eric Bonner - "I've had a lay-off for seventeen years, so the first one this year, a '25". (He did 1.3.4!)

Mac - "The ESCA 50 and 25. They were very close together but I managed to get the handicap award in both. I felt good in the '50' but struggled all the way round in the '25' and it was a nice surprise".

Mike Crossett - "The rain and cold in the team championships at Cowfold. I'd only done 10s for ages, so this was into the 'unknown'! Still, I got round. I think I did an hour and something!!"

Mike Ryall - "I entered my daughter, Gina, in an Eastbourne Rovers 10 and expected to see loads of red and white - but she was the only one! It was her first event ever and she did 32.14. Her comment at the end was, 'I enjoyed that, I think I'll do some more'."

Joe James - (remember that my question was "what was your most memorable event this year,") "The next one! I come home from events every weekend and say to my wife 'not to worry, there's always next week!'".

As you can see, most people remember an event because it was particularly uncomfortable in some way. That applies to me, too, because the one I remember is the Redmon Hilly because it hurt for all the seventy odd miles, right from the first turn of the pedals. Still as Joe says, there's always next time!

Rambler

C.T.C. EASTBOURNE & HAILSHAM DISTRICT SECTION

It is pleasing to report that our invalids are on the mend. Jon Cooper is now seeing life in a more rosy light following his broken leg and the resultant complications, which caused so much concern. It is good to see him at the pub on Sunday lunchtimes with his walking stick strapped to the crossbar of his bike. Marion Heyday is recovering well after her spell in Hospital, whilst 'Crow', who had a nasty spill when a crank broke, is now back in action but still sporting a nasty lump on his thigh. So much for the "walking wounded", what about the others?

Well, our Sunday rides have continued much as before with something to suit everyone, we hope. Our energetic morning rides start at 9.00 a.m. now which has resulted in mileages in excess of 40 before we reach the pub for lunch. Phew! We have also recruited a few new runs leaders, which is nice. The District Association 50 Mile Reliability Trial in June attracted a number of riders from our Section who enjoyed the scenic route. Richard Slinton, who is no longer in the first flush of youth, completed the "End to End" recently - tourist style - and he has a certificate to prove it. Well done Richard.

Syd and Grace Richardson, who moved to Heathfield from South London not so long ago, entertained a group of us to 'elevenses' and tea recently and in between led a ride around High Hurstwood, Hadlow Down and Fairwarp which tested the leg muscles. Sad to say we have lost from our ranks Andrea Winchester, who has moved to the Portsmouth area. Andrea was a Committee member and a keen supporter of the Section when she was not time trialling and we shall miss her. At a gathering at the 'Bulls Head', Boreham Street recently Andrea was presented with a gift from members as well as some cards. We shall look on with interest at her racing exploits in her new area.

Tourist

LEWES WANDERERS C.C.

Picture the scene: a soft drizzle falls on a leafy Sussex lane - it is a peaceful Sunday evening in August, and a songbird trills from a hedgetop as the breeze rustles the tall trees and long grass. Those are the only sounds.....But hark! The whirring of wheels precedes the appearance of a bicyclist - yellow-vested, bearded and wet. He stops, dismounts and leans upon his bicycle, breathing heavily, in some distress. A motor-car draws up, a young woman emerges and speaks: "GET BACK ON THAT BIKE YOU STUPID MAN WHAT THE HELL DO YOU THINK YOU ARE DOING YOUR TIME'S NOT UP YET WHAT DO YOU MEAN YOU'VE HAD ENOUGH ARE YOU A WIMP OR A BIKE RIDER YOU'VE GOT TO GET TO THE NEXT TIMEKEEPER YOU CLOTH+HEAD LISTEN I'VE NOT BEEN UP SINCE FOUR O'CLOCK THIS MORNING JUST TO SEE YOU GIVE UP NOW SO GO GO GO GET BACK ON THAT BIKE AND PEDAL UNTIL I TELL YOU YOU CAN STOP."

This young woman, later identified as shapely petite blonde Jane Gates (24) was just doing what any loving wife would do, if her husband (in this case hairy-chested Peter Gates, thirty-ish) were to stop riding one minute before his time was up in the SCA 12. Peter went on to finish quite conveniently a few yards from event headquarters, well-satisfied with 213 $\frac{3}{4}$ miles in his first 12-hour on a hard day, and knowing that he had pretty-well clinched the club's B.A.R. championship. Mick Burgess was just as happy with his 206 miles because his ride was raising money for the Special Baby Care Unit at Pembury Hospital, where his latest grandson Thomas was born prematurely in March. But the day was blighted by the injuries inflicted on Horry Hemsley by a motorist who ran him down from behind not long after the start. As Horry lay on the verge in some considerable pain, the driver stopped briefly, said he would "park up the road" and disappeared from sight. At the time of writing, no trace of him could be found - and meanwhile Horry is disabled with a cracked pelvis and other injuries.

At the other end of the time-trial scale, Paul Gibbons emerged as victor in our evening ten-mile series (10.3 miles actually, don't ask me why). But his "best of six" aggregate of 2-29-46 was only 27 seconds better than Keith Parvin's, in his first year of racing. Paul is also champion over 50 and 100 miles; Keith has the "25" title and Peter Gates the "12". Young Barry Fowler was rewarded for his consistent improvement in the ten-mile series by topping the handicap list, just ahead of another promising rider, David Hunter. On one of those evenings, incidentally, people using the road between East Hoathly and Boship were treated to the extraordinary sight of a rather well-built man in a skin suit piloting a tandem from the rear seat while the man on the front presented his bottom to the rear and tucked his head under the other man's sweaty armpit. This was, of course, an outing by the famous Barry Deacon back-to-front tandem - with a courageous Steve Phippin on the front and an unfit Barry on the back. After a highly alarming start (the problems for the pusher-off are horrendous) they got back in one piece in 31-08.

John Coe caused some alarm in the ESCA "50" by going much faster than expected. He caught Peter Gates by several minutes and was so pleased with himself that he stopped with him for a while to have a chat. Dammit, the man was actually enjoying racing! Paul Gibbons was so demoralised by John's 2-09 that he gave up cycling for a couple of weeks. There was alarm, too, in the ranks of competitors in the Eastbourne Criterium Series, when Keith Parvin - almost a novice - took second place overall. Watch this space.

And back to the drizzle falling on a Sussex lane. I've been justifiably (and gently) taken to task for suggesting that a timekeeper was "rather parsimonious" in last year's "12". Quite right, too. After several wet and cold 12-hour Sundays, a better word would have been "heroic". Take Mick Kilby, for instance - crouched on his camp-stool in a lay-by on the A283 for several hours, trying to keep the rain from his time-sheet, coping with cars arriving and leaving the lay-by, dealing with queries from riders' supporters and keeping tabs on all the competitors. The chief timekeeper, Dave Stokes, was still checking the mileages in Ashurst Village Hall long after the last of the riders had taken their weary muscles home.

And what did those riders do on the following day? Some probably took the day off; others may have gone for a gentle ride, to ease their stiffness. Mick Burgess did none of those things: with Sylvia by his side (to keep him awake) he drove from Crowborough to Aberystwyth to pick up a gentleman who was stiffer than any 12-hour rider, having passed away (as they say in the undertaking business). After a romantic night together in a seafront hotel (just Mick and Sylvia), it was on to the West Country to collect another silent passenger, and so back to Crowborough. And during the entire journey there wasn't a word of complaint from the back seats when Sylvia lit up a fag.

Rotrax

(Yet more from the) LEWES WANDERERS C.C.

After being away so long I had some catching up to do. Who was this reincarnated rotund Boore-shaped man? My ignorance embarrassed me as I was introduced to the infamous, yet unheard of in Bedfordshire and Somerset, Derek Agg. As he had just returned from the Landless sun-camp in Majorca I enquired as to how he had fared in the mountains. "I would have been all right if I hadn't had to carry this bloomin' great tank around with me," said the Agg. I looked him up and down and thought: "You aren't all that fat, Derek"; and then he showed me his heavy old bike.

But then, a heavy old bike is what that great private detective previously mentioned might need if he isn't to keep having uncomfortable rides. Yes, only Geoff Boore could break his saddle when riding the ESCA 100. Rumour has it that with hunger knock setting in at around 60 miles a half cwt. bag of spuds for £5.00 at the roadside was too much for him and his saddle. I wouldn't have thought an extra 56lb here or there would have made much difference.

I recall in the distant past a weak story Mick Burgess wrote in Bonk of a naked woman calling her cat from her bedroom window, "Pussy pussy." No, it isn't very funny, is it - no wonder Mick was advised to move from Crowborough police station to Crowborough cemetery, although it's normal for people of his age to be moved to a slower-paced job with less going on.

Anyway, a client of mine lends herself to my tailpiece (no innuendo meant). Being of German origin her accent is as one might expect, even in East Sussex, German. When I cut her hedges she insists on clearing up the rubbish into black bin sacks with her husband Gerald to help. I had to look up when, in broad Kraut, she shouted: "Gerald, give me more secks, I want more secks, Gerald."

It's good to be back. Cheers!

Rear End

There have been numerous comments that our ESCA President, Mr. Don Lock, has not followed in the steps of our previous President by riding the 1988 ESCA events, we learn, however, that Don has had some health problems which has curtailed his racing for this year. We wish him well and suggest he joins the Eastbourne CTC, the backwater for ex racing cyclists.

Did anyone see the start sheet for the 30th July Surrey Sussex Vets 25? Charlie Robson was being chased by Maurice Carpenter (asst. ed.), who in turn was being shadowed by Esther. Much to our disappointment, Charlie and Esther were D.N.S.. Could this be a case of Charlie running out of petrol or perhaps oversleeping, we shall never know, I fear.

We were pleasantly suprised to see postman Andy Attwood performing on his tandem with none other than Mrs. Judy Budgen. When spoken to after the event, Andy said "Judy had given him a nice ride"! It cannot be coincidence that there are now a number of tandems turning up for the Falmer 10 on Tuesday nights. And whilst on this topic, what happens when Judy goes into the ladies ablutions in Stanmer Park, there appears to be a rather suspicious ritual. Judy turns up in a chaffeur driven car resplendent in a business suit. With a quick skip and a broad smile she disappears into the bowels of the ladies! Some twenty minutes later Judy appears in an Excelsior costume, taking a lot longer to reach her vehicle. It is not for us to speculate on the length of time it takes to get undressed, then dressed. Suffice to say it clearly improves her cycling performance.

We hear that Derek Agg spent over £100 on a new pair of wheels and a little less on a new truss.

We just have to mention again that ludicrous event titled the ESCA 100. This incidentally has nothing to do with the promotion but more on numerically, financially and physically the wisdom of running the event at all. The number of 100 mile competitors it seems is dwindling to such a low ebb as to reason whether the ESCA should not opt for an alternative event, or combine with the Sussex as a one off event. The critics to this will religiously point out that it is a necessity to enable riders to compete for their B.A.R. (there are, of course, those Clubs who specifically nominate the Sussex 100 as counting for the individual B.A.R. oblivious that there are dozens of similar events up and down the country. We hold the view, that in general terms, if put to the vote, Club cyclists would perhaps indicate an alternative to the 100, in addition perhaps to an up-dating of the entire B.A.R. system, especially at Club level. Prior to going to press the Sussex 12 is in the process of being run. This, we feel, is another non-runner, and like the 24 hour event, is nearly as dead as a dodo.

We also feel that this column is an appropriate vehicle to criticise the handicapping debacle which appears to be rife in this county. It would seem that some handicappers in Sussex events have their own particular system, which is totally mystifying and does not appear to conform to any recognisable methods of honestly judging a competitors status and correct form. Even to the extent of personal knowledge coupled with the current data available on the entry form, makes a nonsense of current trends. It would be of considerable interest to all racing competitors in Sussex events, for say two regular handicappers to confirm how they handicapped. This would allow each competitor to use this information as a yardstick when assessing future events in which they participated and where the handicappers calculations could be checked. Timekeepers are subjected to redress and time comparisons, so why not handicappers??

We were sorry to see that no Club Event booklet has been produced, much to the bitter consternation of some Sussex riders. In the past we believe the RTTC London South committee have been responsible for this. We can only think that Sussex Clubs have not forwarded details of their Club events for insertion. It seems that a yearly domestic scene pocket book cannot be produced, not only giving dates and times for events but also dinners, clubruns and general points of interest. Perhaps the S.C.A. could undertake some feasibility study into the merits of this. We are sure the additional revenue would be most welcome.

Readers will be interested to know that there are twenty six listed Club Coaches in the R.T.T.C. manual covering London, Surrey, Kent and West and East Sussex who have clearly passed a number of examinations to qualify. In addition to this, there are

there are possibly an equal number of persons who endeavour to pass on to new members a lifetime of valuable information. Despite this, they do not advertise; nobody is aware of their existence let alone their specific qualifications. We even have a Tour de France rider on the list. It seems that perhaps our standards could improve if these people could circulate a little more. I'm sure that none of us are too old to accept advice in our chosen sport.

We saw a note from an organiser in a recent result sheet saying, and we quote, that he was disappointed that over a third of the field did not ride. Even though the weather was atrocious, the person went on to say that as far as he was concerned there was really no excuse for failing to ride and that these people should not bother to send in an entry for the same event in 1989. He also seems to have returned over sixty entries. Unfortunately this 'short sighted' comment causes more criticism than most other matters. If the guys had no intention originally of riding, they would hardly have paid for this privilege. Secondly, there are numerous reasons why competitors will not under circumstances ride in the rain. Statistics indicate that a rider is more at risk of having a serious accident, quite apart from those of us who wear glasses or contact lenses. None of us who promote like small fields or large gaps and perhaps thirty years ago promoters had good reason to be critical. Apologies are satisfactory lip service but in general terms, where the weather conditions are bad and dangerous, we have considerable sympathy with riders who opt out. Remember, that individual has probably trained all through the week and he is probably the most disappointed.

By the next edition, we hope to make some constructive and suitable comments on the best run and most successful Club in Sussex.

In closing, our congrats to Malcolm in finishing the E.S.C.A. 100. The time didn't really count, his good humour at the end should be a lesson to all the less enthusiastic.

Keep well and safe riding.

William Hickey

From our Seaside Correspondent (or co-respondent, as he used to be called!)

There were bits of 'cycling game' atmosphere in the Hastings Old Town Carnival in August. One of the events was hill climb up narrow Crown Lane, between All Saints Street and Tackleway. Run on the time trial principle, the competitors, mostly young lads from the fishing quarter, wearing their working clothes and shoes or boots, had to pedal an old tradesman's bike up the roughly 1 in 8 lane. They had to remain firmly in the saddle. Any daylight showing between saddle and seat meant disqualification. The best riders went up the hill in such style and recorded times sufficiently fast that our reporter found himself wondering what they would do in a pukka event.

ThereThere was also another cycling connection in the procession itself. One of the entries was a fifties vintage fire engine (or appliance as they seem to be called in the trade), entered by the Ash Tree Inn, once the E.S.C.A. Headquarters and home for many East Sussex activities over the years.

CLOSING DATE FOR THE NEXT EDITION OF BONK IS NOVEMBER 20th, I WILL ACCEPT CONTRIBUTIONS AT THE RELIABILITY TRIAL.

FULL DETAILS OF THE RELIABILITY TRIAL ARE AT THE END OF THIS BONK. ADDITIONAL ENTRY FORMS ARE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST. THIS WILL BE A SUPERB EVENT, WHICH THE WORTHING EXCELSIOR THINK THEY ARE GOING TO WIN AGAIN. PROVE THEM WRONG - GET EVERY ABLE BODIED MAN AND WOMAN IN your CLUB TO ENTER AND YOU COULD BE THE PROUD OWNERS OF THE RELIABILITY TRIAL TROPHY IN 1989.

The film we've all been waiting for

"The Return of the Eastbourne Rovers". Starring STEVE WILLIS acting Sussex Divisional 20Km Points Champion. "ALSO NICK SMITH" playing the part of dashing young Junior Road Race Champion for SUSSEX.

CO-STARRING "SIMON PRIOR", "DUNCAN GEALS", "ANDREA WINCHESTER". Simon Prior plays a difficult role of the incredible dissolving man.

Duncan Geals, nicknamed the man with a thousand ailments and Miss Andrea Winchester the Heroine of Sussex Time Trialling.

DIRECTED by GRAHAM LADE (Graham also plays his first key role as the Team's relentless Trainer).

'THE PLOT'

This sequel to the popular film "Eastbourne Rovers Testers".

The story continues...After a disappointing year 1988 saw new aims for a bunch of people looking for an opportunity to claim recognition.

This true story tells the Agony and the Ecstasy of Lanky Willis, Poser Smith, Stumpy Stud Prior, Stiffy Geals and Aunt Sally Winchester. The team brought together by Vetty Lade, their faithful Coach. The team strives for more and more, claiming two Sussex Divisional gold medals, Clubs Trophy (Strudwick), Best Single Rider performance trophy, numerous top road race placings. Ladies Winner Andrea records dozens of Time Trial Wins (ladies classifications).

Follow the antics of the "WINNERS".

NOW SHOWING AT A CINEMA NEAR YOU!

Wolber Reject

More from our Seaside Correspondent

Back in June, the magazine PUNCH reported that some Leicester cyclists had been fined for placing pot plants in the pot holes that had been giving them trouble around the City's streets.

Also in June. That month's issue of CHOICE (a glossy magazine about home and leisure for people over fifty), featured an illustrated article on the present day life of ex World Sprint Champion, Reg Harris. He now lives in a beautiful house in Cheshire with his attractive third wife and says he is beginning to take life a little more slowly.

Harris has had his ups and downs since retiring from big time racing in 1957 (he lost everything when his cycle manufacturing business failed) but now appears to be comfortably off and back on his feet. Though he is now well into his sixty ninth year he looks like a fit man in his fifties. He is still a great believer in the health giving value of cycling and rides regularly, using the stable of immaculate machines which he keeps in what he calls his "recreation room"

Neevo

Neevo is in the habit of visiting his friends, Bill and Dot Collins in Eastbourne, and recently was fortunate to arrive on the doorstep at the same time as Dot came home from a stint on the allotment. Naturally she travels to and fro the allotment on her special "allotment" bicycle. She generously lent Neevo this bike and he was able to go to Safeways for some shopping, which he stowed in the capacious, all purpose "allotment" saddlebag, and then had a pleasant ride along Kings Drive and back to Commercial Road for a well earned cup of tea.

BRIGHTON EXCELSIOR C.C.

Adrian and Denise bought a tandem last year; this year they got married. Chris Chapman bought a new tandem to take his girlfriend Jane out. What now, Chris? Leave the lad alone, he's only just celebrated his 21st birthday. Tandems seem to be to the fore...Leon Budgen is organising a run locally on behalf of the Tandem Club. The run leaves Shoreham Station at 9 a.m., Sunday, 2nd October and lunch will be at the Trevor Arms, Glynde. Mileage will be 50 - 60.

Mountain bikes are another winner with a lot of our members and even President Bert has succumbed. We hope Bert will be getting some pink plus twos and Greenspot to match the frame!

Not only do the policemen look younger...the juveniles and juniors in our Club seem to be going faster. The record book is largely being rewritten by Ben Merricks and Simon Taylor (the tall). It's typical Excel luck to have two members at the same time with exactly the same name. Henceforth, they shall be known as Simon the short (the fair one) and Simon the tall (the dark one)...words in brackets in case you couldn't spot the difference.

New venue...yes, Dick has been persuaded to let us have a change and our ANNUAL DINNER and PRIZE PRESENTATION will be at the BLACK LION, PATCHAM on SATURDAY 21st JANUARY 1989. Traditional format with a good three course meal and two bands for entertainment afterwards. Guests will be welcome and the ticket price of £12 will include FREE TRANSPORT BETWEEN WORTHING AND PEACEHAVEN. Dick Jones is taking bookings forthwith.

Talking of bookings and buses, John Roberts is organising his annual bus trip for Sunday, 11th September, 1988, when we shall be transported to the Isle of Wight for a good day's cycling. (Look what happened to Tom and Tracey when they went to the Island in the Spring!)

France appears to have been the most popular country for foreign tours this year and should provide material for slide shows in the winter.

Roy Whitehead is hoping to resume his coaching programme as a new job permits more time, so the keen racing men should still have plenty of suffering ahead. This could be a good moment to thank wife, June, for her timekeeping services on Tuesdays. Sue Balcombe too, has helped at Tuesday and, lately, Thursday events, for which we thank her. The Club events have been well supported but there is often a lack of helpers (then Leon escapes a ride).

Not many months now until the Hardriders - I hope Boore is planning his Spring outfit carefully as I can do with a laugh on those cold March mornings.

Ropey Rider

An event promoter was heard complaining that riders made cheques out to the event secretaries and not to the promoting Club or Association. It would be probably be a lot easier to have all cheques were made out to the organisation promoting as far as accounting goes.

Unfortunately some material has had to be held over, including a poem from the Poet(ess) Laureate(ess) of Lewes, which should have accompanied one of the pictures which appeared in the last issue.

THE ORDINARY CYCLE SOMETIMES CALLED THE HIGH CYCLE BUT CHIEFLY KNOWN AS 'THE PENNY FARTHING'

The interest taken in old forms of transport shows no sign of waning. The large entries that yearly make the journey from London to Brighton in the Veteran Car and Motorcycle Pioneer Runs continue. Interest in other types of vehicles also embraces commercial and horse-drawn vehicles and steam locomotives, but of all these old types of transport, I am convinced that the one that creates the greatest interest to the ordinary layman is the "Penny-farthing" cycle. I have had one on display for many years outside my shop in Sutton with a description of its history, etc., and the expressions on children's faces as they gaze at it are wonderful to watch; the invariable questions are "Did people really ride them?" "How did they get on?" and "Why was the front wheel made so large?"

The answers to these three are: 1. Yes. 2. A step was fitted to the main frame just above the rear wheel. The left foot was placed on this with the rear wheel between the legs. A firm grip was taken on the handle bars, a few pushes were made with the right leg to gain propulsion and a leap was made into the saddle. You were then on your way. 3. The front wheel was made very large because of the gearing. If it was the same size as the wheel of today's cycle, i.e. 26 inches, a furious rate of pedalling would be needed to maintain any rate of progress.

It seems incredible that for a period of 20 years, tens of thousands were made and used for sport and utilitarian purposes as the cycle of today is used. In 1887 there were over 200 individual firms in England making them. Names such as Singer, Rover and Humber appear in the list of manufacturers — these same firms carried on to make gear driven cycles, motorcycles and finally motor cars. "Penny-farthing" is a slang name, the reason for its choice being obvious. The correct name is "Ordinary" bicycle. I quote from an 1887 Rover Cycle Co. catalogue: 48" 50" 52" 54" — £17-10s. : 56" 58" 60" — £18-10s. Food for thought here. £18-10-0 or £18.50 at today's price was quite a considerable sum as an average weekly wage in 1887 was about £1.00 a week. So, comparing it with today's average weekly wage of £100.00 or more, it makes today's cycle £1800.00. To own an "Ordinary" in those years was really something. The measurements refer to the diameter of the front wheel. A charge of 2s.-6d. was made for a packing-case (non-returnable). It seems hardly feasible that such an ungainly vehicle had such a long period of popularity. Not at all easy to ride, and one of the chief hazards was the habit of the front wheel to stop suddenly if any obstacle such as a pothole or a large stone was struck. This caused the rear wheel to rear up over the rider's head and tip him over the handlebars. A piece of advice written in all sincerity in an 1887 book on cycling by Viscount Bury and Lacy Hillier advised riders when descending a hill to place the legs over the handlebars so that if an obstacle is struck, the rider leaves the machine in a gentlemanly manner, as all cyclists know that the most painful injuries are caused by the handlebars striking the front of the legs. To overcome the tendency of the rear wheel to try to go over the front wheel when descending a hill, it was necessary for the rider to lean backwards over the rear wheel to keep it in contact with the road.

An old gentleman I knew by the name of Monkhouse, born in 1873 in Carshalton, rode an Ordinary regularly in his youth and told me that when descending a steep long hill, such as Reigate Hill in Surrey (with a gradient of 1 in 8 in places), he perfected his balance so perfectly that he could descend on the front wheel only, with the back wheel just touching lightly or not at all on the ground. Can we imagine such a sight today? An Ordinary careering down Reigate Hill with the rider leaning backwards with his feet over the handlebars on the front wheel only. The usual method of braking was to tread backwards on the pedals, as done on a fixed wheel cycle today. This same gentleman told me that at the age of 15 he bought a second-hand Ordinary for 25s. and to him, he described it as a veritable magic carpet. It enabled him to visit places he had never heard of and many were the weekends he travelled 80 miles or more. It must be remembered that travelling any distance from home was only the privilege of the few and many people lived and died in the town or village of their birth, not going more than a few miles from their home during their life time.

These cycles were considered dangerous as regards the speed at which some of them were ridden, as the speed of the motor-car was also considered in later years, in 1896, when it was preceded by a man carrying a red flag. Safety regulations and precautions insisted on by local authorities as regards cycling included, if more than a few riders of a club proceeded through a village, the Captain of the club gave several blasts on his whistle to warn the inhabitants of impending danger. If an Ordinary was proceeding through a village too fast in the opinion of the local constable, this gentleman administered the law on the spot by throwing his rolled-up cape into the front wheel, thus bringing the rider to an abrupt halt and depositing him on the ground. On picking himself up, the constable would say "That will teach you not to go so fast". This treatment was experienced by Master Monkhouse on several occasions, but one day he was pedalling through a village at a dangerous rate in the opinion of the constable, who prepared to administer the law in his usual fashion, but his aim was a little high, and Master Monkhouse managed to catch the cape before it went into his wheel. He proceeded gaily on his way, waving the rolled cape in the air with the shouts of the irate constable sounding in his ears. He disposed of the cape over a hedge several miles up the road, hoping the policeman would be made to make good the loss. Also the village yokel, who for a deviation on a Sunday afternoon, poked a stick in the front wheel to bring the rider down.

Gas lamps for street lighting were about nine feet from the ground and ideal for riders of Ordinaries to stop at a lamp-post, open the window of the lamp to light a cigarette when short of a match, by standing on the pedals of their cycles. Many records of endurance were made on these machines, one in particular by G.P. Mills, who rode from Land's End to John O' Groats, nearly 900 miles, in five days two hours, sleeping only five hours on his trip. These stories of the Ordinary are true. A vehicle so popular for 20 years will, I am sure, continue to fascinate this and future generations with the realisation that the cycle made the era of cheap transport available to the masses.

My grandfather, Thomas Pearson, came to Sutton in 1860 from Cobham and established his blacksmiths business in the same shop where we are today. My father Harry, was born in 1870 in the bedroom over the Smithy. He attended school at the school in West Street. This school was built in 1854 by the Church of St. Nicholas and a few local wealthy families can be remembered by many locals. He was taught the trade of a blacksmith and farrier by his father, but about the year of 1890, my father Harry, visualised a great future for the bicycle and so he directed all his attentions to this vehicle. For nearly a century now, we have specialised in cycles, that in spite of all the inventions of the last one hundred years, still remain the handiest, healthiest and cheapest form of transport.

Here, may I be permitted to give a word of advice. The best place to buy a cycle is from a firm such as ours, who can give a reliable and prompt after sales service and can offer one of the largest selections of new cycles in the South of England. Today, there are so many stores, shops, clubs, catalogues, petrol stations, etc. etc. offering cycles for sale, whose chief interest is to make a sale and a quick profit with no interest in any after sales service.

We have a fully equipped workshop with competent mechanics to put right quickly any troubles that may occur. We can make and supply any cycle, to your own specification.

Roger Pearson, son of Arthur Pearson, grandson of Harry Pearson and great grandson of Thomas Pearson is now in charge, representing the fourth generation.

ARTHUR PEARSON.

EAST SUSSEX CYCLING ASSOCIATION 48 MILE RELIABILITY TRIAL

SUNDAY, 20TH NOVEMBER, 1988

THE COURSE

START at the King's Head, East Hoathly. Join the A22 (CARE) and proceed in a westerly direction to take first left at Halland (1.18 mls). Continue along lane to turn left on to B2192. On past the East Sussex Gliding Club and the Raystede Home for Sick Animals & Old Vets to Ringmer. Ride through village and turn right at War Memorial just after pedestrian lights (5.77 mls). Follow road past the Church of St. Mary the Virgin to join A26 (6.57 mls) where right past The Cock and then first left (7.17 mls). Follow this road across the River Ouse, past the Barcombe Mills Station Restaurant (where there also used to be a railway) and the Angler's Rest to Barcombe Cross (9.15 mls). Turn right at the mini-roundabout and cross the Bevern Stream, keeping left at the first fork and turning right at the second fork just past Gipp's Wood (11.59 mls). Follow this road to cross the River Ouse again and emerge at the pond at Piltdown where left and almost immediately right to halt at the A272 (13.92 mls). Turn right (CARE) and shortly take first left (14.44 mls), following road via Down Street and Funnell's Wood to Nutley. Turn left (CARE) on A22 past Church (17.68 mls) and Little Chef to take first right (CARE AND GOOD HAND SIGNALS). Proceed (wonderful views from this road) to B2026 (19.87 mls) where left and almost immediately right following Crowborough sign to join A26 (20.92 mls). Turn left and climb past Crow & Gate P.H. to take next right (22.17 mls) (Sheep Plain Road) signposted Rotherfield. Keep your heads down but eyes open for flying balls through golf course, go straight ahead at Rose & Crown mini-roundabout and have your brakes ready for the descent past the Plough & Horses as you have a right turn over the bridge at the bottom of the hill. Proceed to Jarvis Brook T junction with A2100 (24.49 mls) (HALT). Right (CARE) past Millbrook Garden Centre to Rotherfield following road to the right after the Church and then turning left (still on B2100) by chemist. There follows a swift descent past the Methodist Church (PRAY) and under the railway bridge and on to Mark Cross (27.74 mls). Halt at A267, then right (CARE) and almost immediately left and almost immediately right again (still on B2100) to Wadhurst T junction (31.19 mls). Turn right (CARE) and proceed through Wadhurst on B2099 to Shover's Green (32.97 mls) where right (signposted Burwash Common) to Stonegate (34.42 mls). Bear right past Church and down across the railway and across the River Rother to Witherenden Hill and the Kicking Donkey (36.71 mls). Straight on to Burwash Common (38.41 mls). Halt at A265, then right (CARE) following A265 past Brian Lewington's Shrub Nurseries and the White Oaks Nursing Home to Broad Oak. Straight on through Heathfield to Cross in Hand where left (43.54 mls) and up the hill. Turn left again (43.76 mls) at Methodist Chapel into Fir Grove Road and proceed through Roser's Cross carrying straight on until you reach a T junction (46.74 mls). Turn right (CARE) and up the hill following signs for East Hoathly to finish at King's Head (48.07 mls).

THE CHECKPOINTS

Each rider will receive a Start Sheet and 4 numbered Check Cards. The Check Cards must be carried with you during the Trial. Check Card No. 1 must be given to the Checker at Barcombe Cross. Check Card No. 2 must be given to the Checker at Nutley (opposite the Little Chef). Check Card No. 3 must be given to the Checker at Stonegate (by the Church). Check Card No. 4 must be given to the Checker and Timekeeper at the finish at the King's Head, East Hoathly.

THE TIME

Riders may choose to complete the course in 3hrs., 3hrs.25mins. or 4hrs. and should specify their choice on the Entry Form. Riders preferring a leisurely pace and opting for 4hrs. will go off at 0900 and should finish between 1250 and 1300 hours. The medium paced section will go off at 0920 and should finish between 1235 and 1245. The hardriders section will go off at 0930 and should finish between 1220 and 1230.

THE COST

The entry fee will be 50p per rider (except for late entries) and an Entry Form is provided with this issue of BONK. Additional Entry Forms will be available to each Club. The closing date for entries is THURSDAY 10TH NOVEMBER. Entries should be sent to Charles Robson, 39 Winchcombe Road, Eastbourne, Sussex BN22 8DE, or to Mrs.E. Carpenter, 10 Maplehurst Road, Baldslow, St.Leonards-on-Sea, Sussex TN37 7NA. Late entries will be accepted but these riders will NOT qualify for inclusion in the competition for points to win the Rally Shield and the cost will be 70p per rider.

THE REWARDS

All riders completing the course in the chosen time will receive a Certificate, providing each of the 4 Checkers has received one of your Check Cards. The Club with the largest number of successful riders, whose entries were received by the 10th November, will hold the Rally Shield for one year.

THE LUNCH

The lunch will be in the Hall which is part of the King's Head at East Hoathly. A good three course lunch will be provided at £4.95 per head. A copy of the menu and lunch booking form is provided with this issue of BONK. If you want to come to the lunch, early booking is advised as seating in this hall is limited to about 50. Priority will be given to bookings accompanied by the correct cash/cheque payment. A lunch booking form should be completed by each person, but cheques may be made out to cover several booking forms. Cheques should be made out to 'C.G. Robson'. Drinks are available at the bar and may be taken in to the hall if you have booked for lunch. Drinks, tea and coffee are not included in the price of the lunch. Lunch will be served in the hall between 1330 & 1400.

PARKING AND TOILETS

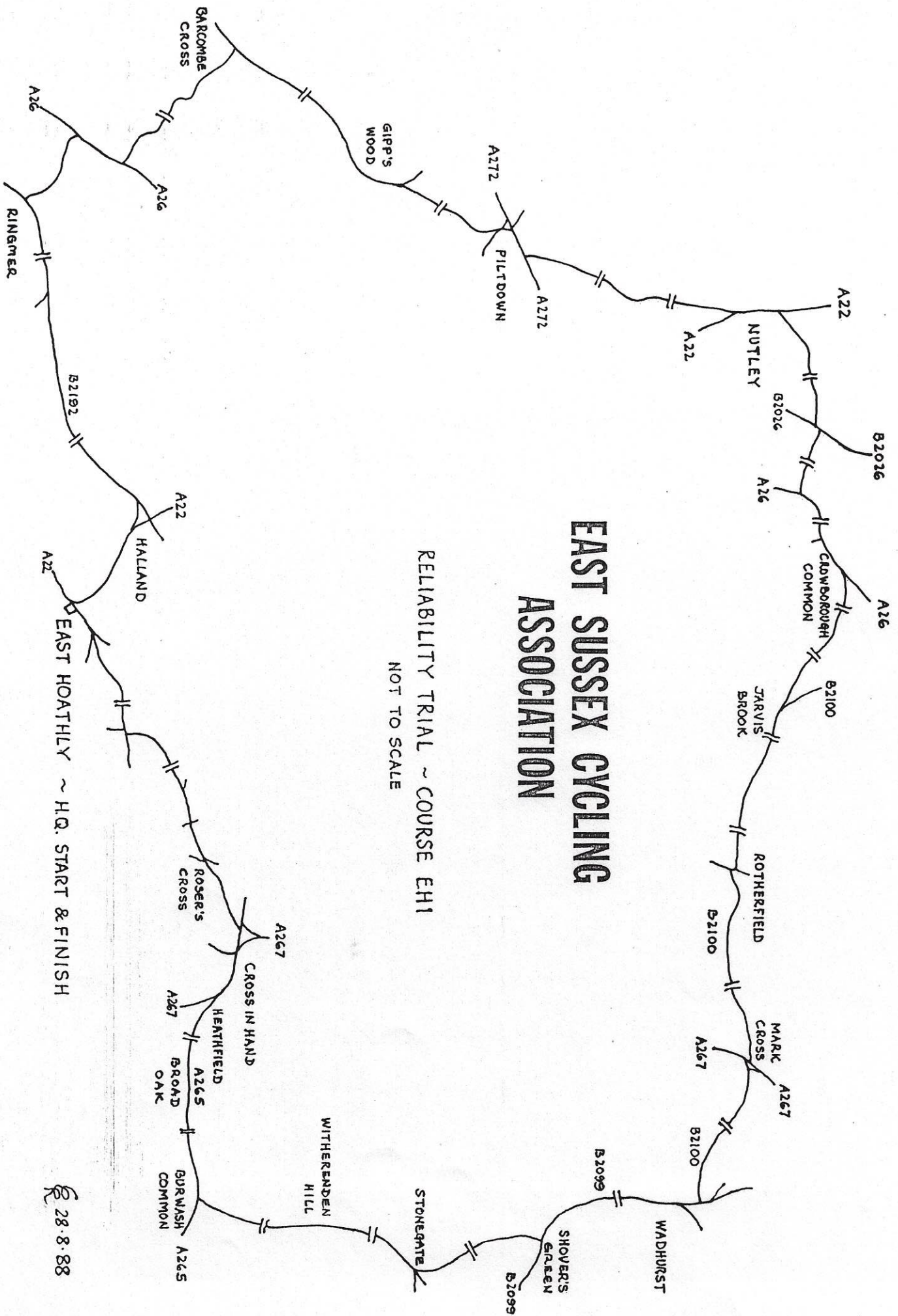
For those coming by car there is quite a large public car park by the Church in the village. Parking is also available in the small road down which you ride to the finish. However, please do NOT park immediately outside the pub or opposite the pub on the double yellow lines. There will be a Parking Marshall outside the pub to assist you. Any rider parking on double yellow lines opposite the pub either before or after the Trial will be disqualified and is liable to prosecution. The toilets in the King's Head will be available for riders and officials from 0830.

GENERAL NOTES

Every effort will be made to make this an enjoyable day and all age groups are welcome. Please remember to be as quiet as possible at the beginning of the Trial and to be considerate and polite to the local residents (so that we can come again next year).

EAST SUSSEX CYCLING ASSOCIATION

RELIABILITY TRIAL ~ COURSE EH1
NOT TO SCALE



28.8.88

EAST SUSSEX CYCLING ASSOCIATION
48 MILE RELIABILITY TRIAL 1988

ENTRY FORM

Please enter me for the E.S.C.A. Reliability Trial on Sunday, 20th November, 1988.

NAME _____ CLUB _____

ADDRESS _____

(Please use BLOCK CAPITALS)

I aim to complete the 48 mile course in 3 hours.....
3 hours 25 minutes.....
4 hours.....

I enclose cash/cheque for 50p. Cheques to be made out to 'C. G. ROBSON'

SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

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EAST SUSSEX CYCLING ASSOCIATION

LUNCH BOOKING FORM

Please reserve me ONE seat for lunch at the King's Head, East Hoathly, on Sunday, 20th November, 1988.

NAME _____ CLUB _____

ADDRESS _____

(Please use BLOCK CAPITALS)

THE MENU

Vegetable soup..... or Egg mayonaise.....

Roast beef/Yorkshire pud. or Steak & kidney pie or Vegetarian

Hot apple crumble.... or Trifle.....

(Hot main courses include a selection of vegetables)

I enclose cash/cheque for £4.95. Cheques to be made out to 'C. G. ROBSON'
Lunch Booking Forms should be sent to Charles Robson, 39 Winchcombe Road, Eastbourne, Sussex BN22 8DE, or to Esther Carpenter, 10 Maplehurst Road, Baldslow, St. Leonards-on-Sea, Sussex TN37 7NA, on or before TUESDAY, 15TH NOVEMBER, 1988.

PLEASE REMEMBER - EACH person should complete a Lunch Booking Form but cheques may cover several bookings and your entry fee if you are riding in the Reliability Trial.

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