

BOMK!

THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL

**East Sussex
Cycling Association**

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EAST SUSSEX CYCLING ASSOCIATION

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President Jane Lade

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We're not going to do a boring editorial this time but will use this page to start off the calendar for 1993/94. Please let us have the dates of anything special you hope to organise during the following months. To start you off here are three very important items for your diaries.

E.S.C.A. Reliability Trial
21st November 1993
Start from East Hoathly

Eastbourne Rovers Annual Dinner
22nd January 1994

Fellowship of 1066 Longmarkers Dinner
29th January 1994

In the meantime, enjoy your cycling this year and try to support the local promotions.

Don't miss the Milk Race which is starting in Tunbridge Wells!!

Maurice & Esther

EAST GRINSTEAD C.C.

Welcome everyone to the new season, no doubt as you read this you will now be able to tell if all the Winter training has paid off, or is it now time to start thinking up some new excuses.

On the subject of Winter training it will be interesting how one Brighton Club is going. It seems way back at the end of last year on one of their clubruns, following Peter Keen's system of four training levels, they have created their own level - level 0. We discovered this when our clubrun stopped at Ditchling for tea; shortly afterwards some cars turned up with bikes on the roof and a number of cyclists got out wearing yellow and blue jerseys. It appeared the clubrun consisted of driving to the tea stop although some of them had gone to the trouble of splattering themselves with mud to create the impression of having ridden some distance.

Cycling apart, the Club has been doing the rounds of Club and Association Dinners, including the ESCA school dinner where we picked up a fair amount of the silverware. Richard Blackmore is hoping another Club will win the points trophy this year.

The highlight of our social season must be our Club Dinner and thanks go out to Matt Rabbetts for his amusing and enlightening speech. Several of our more well known club members didn't escape Matt's observations. Just where did he get some of his information from. I think we would all like to know who the East Grinstead mole is. For example, how did he know that Steve Dennis wore Janet's knickers to the ESCA Lunch and he needn't have worried about Ted Boorman not having enough energy to freewheel down the following day's downhill course, on account of the amount of Baccardi consumed by his wife.

Ted was there on Sunday, although he did fall off his bike on the ride out to the hill, so drained of energy he was.

Roger Hargreavess held the unofficial record for the number of profiteroles consumed although accusations of cheating were levelled as he had paced himself early by not eating all his main course.

As mentioned earlier the following day saw our most keenly contested trophy, the Downhill Title. Of course it's just a bit of fun, that's why people turn up on freshly prepared race bikes tuned to perfection. John Geal washed away fears of knee trouble ruining his season when he freewheeled past everyone else. Paul Harris took a passenger down with him in the shape of his young daughter travelling in the baby seat. Paul, I thought the idea was to throw the weight off when you reached the bottom of the hill. As for my good self, well I did forget to fit my No, no! It's too early in the season to start the excuses.

After the event it was back up to the Blackmores for tea and cakes. It was an interesting race back. I got involved in what seemed like a four up time trial, only faster, with Ted and Ken Taylor riding like men possessed - a self confessed unfit Ken hammering out a blistering pace. It's amazing the pull that one of Janet's fruit cakes has on Ted and Ken. Needless to say, we reached the bungalow first, and yes, there was some food left when the rest arrived.

So if anyone wonders why Ken is riding so well this year, it's not his new carbon fibre wheels but Janet waiting at the finish with a freshly baked fruit cake.

Andy

closing date for next bank june 10th 1993

EASTBOURNE ROVERS C.C.

As the racing season fast approaches (or has started by the time you read this) a quick run down on the form of Rovers members. The Club much awaits the return to racing of track supremo, renowned Goodwood thoroughbred and former Sussex B.C.F. junior and senior road race champion, Paul Delani. Rumours abound that Paul was visiting the fitness and training maestro Louis Passfield at his Chichester clinic. Happily he will be fully serviced and tested for the 1993 season after 1992, which promised so much, was wrecked by illness. Good luck Paul (and good health). Paul's sidekick, Steve Willis, with the commitments of a house and girlfriend is uncertain of his season. Last year he finally learnt how to time trial properly, he produced two excellent 25 times (or was it girlfriend Miranda shouting at him halfway round the course?).

Junior James is normally associated with his expertise on the mountain bike but this year is set to concentrate on road racing and time trialling.

Our veteran road racers (Eastbourne RAVERS) Malcolm Cross, John Blackman, Peter Driscoll and George Windsor will again be making an assault on the VETERACE series following their success of last year. Wembley R.C.'s. Dave Nie was the man who prevented them from any first places and he will almost certainly be the man to beat again this year.

Graham Lade is set for another year at the Brighton track and, if my source is correct, is contemplating the E.S.C.A. 100, an event which has been somewhat undersubscribed of late but continues to be extremely well run and always generates a superb atmosphere. I can now reveal Graham's Sunday training secret, a cycle ride followed by a large liquid intake. This normally takes the form of four pints of Harveys or three pints of Websters, which latter is evidently not quite so preferred.

George Taylor celebrates his 40th birthday on February 22nd (gosh - he doesn't look it) and it is rumoured that a cheque is in the post to Esther Carpenter of the V.T.T.A. Surrey/Sussex Group rewarding her five year long sales drive in his direction.

Finally, E.S.C.A. President Jane Lade along with daughter Sarah is set to fight it out in the Hardriders. But who will prove superior? I'm going for the President, probably because I am a crawling, snivelling creep, who is only after a free tea in the event headquarters afterwards.

Rover Raver

FROM OUR SEASIDE CORRESPONDENT

The clubrun group of former days are rarely seen now. Apart from everything else, modern traffic density makes that kind of social riding virtually impossible. Even so, clubruns of a sort can still crop up and surprise a veteran cyclist. For instance during the Christmas period a large group of boys in the twelve to fourteen age group, all on new BMX bicycles were tearing about along the pavement on Hasting sea front, more or less in two by two formation and of course doing plenty of "ride 'em cowboy" and "up the kerb" starts.

A couple of day earlier, and even more surprising, was the sight of about half a dozen youngsters riding unicycles expertly along the St. Leonards promenade, and later that day trundling about round the streets of the Old Town (one rider had even fixed a rear lamp to the back of his saddle). These unicycle riders were dressed in various sorts of fancy dress, so they may have been circus performers keeping in practice during the winter lay off.

Finally a few weeks later, the real thing, with a group of obviously pukka cycling enthusiasts riding very neatly through St. Leonards. The Ed later confirmed my thoughts that they were probably C.T.C. types - Seaford Section to be exact. Yes, a rare and refreshing sight.

Also seen around Hastings over Christmas, a cyclist getting around quite briskly and smartly on a recumbent bicycle. Is this, one wonders, an old idea going back to Edwardian times that is coming back into fashion? or was this machine a one-off job put together by an enthusiast with engineering skills?

D.J.N.

WILLIAM HICKEY COLUMN

This period of the year is nearly always bereft of any significant activities on the annual scene. I am also mindful that the Editors cast more than a critical glance at my column just in case I have upset any of our readers (perish the thought). In this period between the magazine's Autumn and Spring editions there are the usual obligatory Dinners; the customary Dinner speakers and the much heralded prize recipients. It was relief that at last the majority of prizewinners were present at the ESCA Lunch, once again ably organised by Roy and his catering cohorts, although in common with other functions numbers were down. However, it is nearly always a good two and a half hours of light entertainment and I feel that this year was no exception. Although our guest speaker was not a celebrity this year it must be remembered that he was summoned at very short notice and travelled from the precincts of Southampton. I think therefore we should be very grateful.

I couldn't attend once again Eastbourne's Dinner or Central's. However the Nomads function was once again a total success thanks to the generosity of Maureen and Brian Tidbury (late of the De Laune) who presented our Club with a large shield, and similarly to Fraser Bennett who presented the Club with an attractive plaque. Alan, or Alaine as he now prefers, 'steered' the Dinner & Prize Presentation thru' the evening with his usual panache. Notable absentees were Colin Brennan (having an awayday to see Brighton lose at Old Trafford), and that celebrated Hassocks electrician/tv engineer, Colin Schaffer, who was also at an 'old' function entertaining some old age pensioners at the local British Legion. At the other end of the county, the co-editor, Arthur Coleman and hordes of Hastings, Southborough and Kent Vets sat down at the Yelton Hotel and were subsequently serenaded by a group comprising a banjo, accordion and the spoons - who I assume was doubling up as a percussionist. Needless to say the 1066 Longmarkers fellowship is clearly well represented and fulfils that area where you still remain constantly in touch but don't necessarily belong to any specific Club, a bit like Brighton Mitre!

The seasonal good wishes go to Kevin Harding, to regain his lost youth; to Kevin Bramham in the passing of his; to Frank Blake, who swears blind that his stomach is flatter than that of W.H. (what utter nonsense). Back from overseas vacations are Ken and Barbara Atkins (that's the tea lady up at Staplefield). Ian and Julia Landless (late of the Chippendales); Jillian Rogers daughter, Katrina (moonlighting from Spain) and William Hickey junior, arriving from Hong Kong totally broke. In the New Year, the Lewes racing team with their directeur sportif will be off once again to sunny Majorca. John Galsworthy, ex Central, Eastbourne and Falklands C.C. and now Lewes is set to join the A.N.C. in South Africa, and Sally Thorpe tells me that she is taking some refugees up the Himalayas via Nepal. Ron Rogers has opted for the States to visit his Chubb Security colleagues in Ellis Island (twinned with Uckfield Hospital) and Mick Burgess and Horry Hemsley have decided to go to Ireland together.

I met up with the rather lovely Vanessa Redgrave (sorry, Attwood). She admitted that perhaps the price of Excel's cakes had been rigged but assuredly the sell by date had not been reached. I still have to reserve my opinion on the bread pudding. Judy assures me that Vanessa was not involved in that. This year I promise not to be rude to the Excel catering staff, providing the 35p cakes are increased in size.

I was cycling along a relatively narrow country lane the other day when a motorist 'tooted' me constantly in order to get by. Presuming I was too far out I managed to quickly slow down and in fact came to a stop in order to maximise sufficient room for the motorist to get past. Get past he did. His passenger, a young lady and his children in the back, promptly wound down their windows and yelled out a whole string of expletives condemning my presence even though I was compelled to halt and extended every consideration. There was sufficient intimidation in that brief moment, which sums up the total malady and indifference which currently exists between cyclists and the general public (to be fair, people like that also behave like pigs to other motorists that they don't approve of! Mrs. Ed) It did not surprise me that the car and the occupants were seen in a pub car park making a hurried entrance into the private bar. Out of curiosity I stopped and inspected the now empty vehicle. It was clearly unroadworthy and displayed no tax disc. Clearly I felt that had the car run me down I would have had no recourse whatsoever in finding out who was responsible, let alone bringing the person to justice.

For many years now I have always nourished the idea that whatever your personal thoughts are on the various different bodies operating on behalf of cycling, unless there is simple discipline exercised by people, whatever their persuasion, we shall not move forward one jot. Discipline in the individual is learnt usually collectively, where the onus is placed squarely on the person to exercise discretion and control. I believe we started to lose this shortly after National Service ceased. National Service was a great leveller, it sorted out the misfits, the social outcasts, the loners, the gregarious. It brought comradeship and a joie de vivre which regrettably is no longer plainly visible. In short, bring back a national discipline along the lines of National Service and you stand a chance of unifying various bodies to protect not only cyclists but all those people who prefer to exercise in their leisure hours.

I was totally bewildered to read that Marina (that is the Crawley marina NOT the Brighton one. Whoever gave the poor girl such a name?) has won the Crawley B.A.R. How is it possible for a lady to win the premier award or is it once again that old chestnut that riders have once again been enticed to other Clubs. On this subject, whatever is Mike thinking about? If he paid less attention to crash hats and more to beating his wife (cyclingwise, that is) I'm sure he would be a better man, Gungha Din.

Now Ric has moved I would be grateful for a photocopy of Stan Kenton's record contributions in his Jazz A to Z record contributions. I may be missing some albums. My season's wish is that Sir Charles creates some faster East Sussex courses and my personal best wishes to all competitors for some better Sundays than in 1992. Be lucky. regards

W.H

A TOURIST'S TWELVE HOUR

The thought of riding a twelve hour event and covering between 200 and 300.086 miles has always been quite appealing. However the idea of soul destroying mile after mile of main road and having to start a minute behind the rider in front are just some of the drawbacks. Of course the most important reason is food. To quote the words of John Woodburn at one of the controls on his first U.K. Audax event (a 600 k in fact) as he tucked into beans on toast and tea "these events are great, much better to stop and have a breakfast with your mates than simply be handed up a drink and told to keep going". So the nearest to a 12 timewise is a 300k Audax event. Around 190 miles which provide you with about twelve hours actual riding time (in my case anyway).

A couple of years ago one of the 300s I rode was the Wiltshire Cycleways 300 k organised by the Southampton CTC. During the preceding night there had been lightning and crashing of thunder and even for the short drive to the start at Southampton there had been a deluge. But clear skies came and as our watches showed 6.00 a.m. we pedalled away from the University car park. We were not alone for we had company, not on the road but in the sky. During that weekend Southampton was host to a Balloon Festival. Whilst our friends in the sky headed north west towards Romsey we followed likewise, but we were burning rubber and their effort was all a lot of hot air (did you like that!) and we saw them no longer. We were around sixty in number and the first few miles to Romsey were soon covered. As we rode along the lanes heading close to the River Test we were ever watchful for the debris which had been washed onto the road during the night's storm. Northwards from Stockbridge via Red Rice and Abbotts Ann we were soon arriving at the first control, the Happy Eater near Andover. A glance at my brevet card confirm the first 48 k (30 miles) had been reeled off in just 1 hour 32 minutes (perhaps not bad going even for a twelve). Some ate at the Happy eater but I knew of a better establishment of the transport type and soon had my jaws into a double helping of cheese on toast and two large mugs full of tea. Back in the saddle through Weyhill and Luggershall and then it's into the lanes as we joined the Wiltshire Cycle Way. The scenery was beautiful, open downland, thatched cottages and quiet lanes. The only vehicles we seemed to see for miles (sorry, kilometres) were those on the M4 as we rode along the Ermine Way towards Swindon. A southerly route avoided Swindon and soon we were seated in Emm's restaurant in Wootton Bassett at 10.45, well pleased with our 121K covered before elevenes. Coffee and toasted teacakes were soon served and I was awheel again. On the way to Malmesbury I caught Chris Davies (Everybody's friend! CCP of the CTC from Happy Havant) who had also had a couple of stops but for two punctures and a broken spoke!

We were well and truly in the Cotswolds now and as you looked around at the delightful cottages and scenery it was all too easy to forget where on the route sheet you were. Two other riders who had become accustomed to my navigating also added about three miles on to the route when I took a left turn a couple of villages too late! That's one disadvantage with Audax events, there are no marshals at every junction as in a twelve hour. Oh well, what's a few extra miles in nearly two hundred. Along some very narrow lanes and we rode right past the front door of the Great Chalfield Manor House and shortly descended at speed into Bradford on Avon. Over the River Avon and into Katy's Cafe for lunch at 1.45 and 170k by this hour under the belt. A large cheese omelette with chips and peas with generous quantities of tea and cold milk complete the Randonneurs requirements. I know only too well what Tony Palmer would have said if he'd been present "get that down that down your fat neck".

Some roughstuff was in store for us afterwards as we crossed the Kennet & Avon Canal by a towpath bridge then left by the Cross Guns Pub under an aqueduct and then up a steep hill. The lowest of gears was quickly selected as we struggled up about a 1 in 6. Some main roads followed through Farleigh, Hungerford and Norton St. Philip. In Frome I paused for an apple pie and a cold drink. With the grounds of Longleat to ride round I thought I'd better be ready for a sprint in case one of the lions was out for its own clubrun. But fortunately there were none and soon Sutton Veny was reached and the beautiful Wylve Valley. This route seems to have changed little since the early seventies when I first used it. One can cycle from Warminster to Salisbury on virtually lanes. The village of Wylve which at one time the traffic of the A303 is now by-passed and how tranquil the village is now. The next stamp on our cards at 261k came with the compliments of Salisbury Y.H. and arriving at 6.25 co-incided nicely with the opening hours of their cafeteria. The hot soup, roll and butter served instantly was most welcome but the long wait of over twenty minutes for the crumble and custard was not. However Chris Davies kept everyone amused trying to establish who we reckoned would win the Tour. I unwisely chose Greg Lemond (perhaps he also had a long wait one day for his crumble!). The old A36 to Alderbury followed by East Grimstead, West Dean and Lockerley and then it's over the River Test into Romsey and back into Southampton. The computer and my legs confirmed the distance had been covered and the finishing control at one of the members' houses is fortunately serving an excellent meal. This control had opened at 4.00 p.m. Saturday and the last rider should be through no later than 2.00 a.m. Sunday. The short ride back to the car park made the day's riding 194 miles. Three youngsters from the Portsmouth CTC still had to ride back to Emsworth but thought very little of it. This was without doubt a great day awheel and actual riding time I calculate as eleven and three quarter hours.

So now having read this article you will surely wish to sample the delights 'first hand' of an event at this distance. Sunday, 30th May this year the Worthing Excelsior promote their first Audax event at this distance and I am pleased to report that entries are rolling in nicely. Long distance rider Ray Douglass will be manning a control on the return at Flimwell and looks forward to stamping your brevet card. These longer distance Audax events are becoming increasingly popular. Riders who in previous years were keen 12 and 24 hour riders are now returning to the long distance scene in these events. Although everyone starts together you can ride with others or alone as you please. Starting nice and early ensures quiet roads are enjoyed for hours on end. Also good catering is organised for you during the day. For more information write for details. For those who think perhaps a half day's ride on the bike is a little over the top why not join us for our 125k or 200k on Sunday, 25th April.

Dave Hudson, 151 Middle Road, Shoreham by Sea, West Sussex. BN43 6LG

EAST GRINSTEAD C.C.

Welcome everyone to the new season, no doubt as you read this you will now be able to tell if all the Winter training has paid off, or is it now time to start thinking up some new excuses.

On the subject of Winter training it will be interesting how one Brighton Club is going. It seems way back at the end of last year on one of their clubruns, following Peter Keen's system of four training levels, they have created their own level - level 0. We discovered this when our clubrun stopped at Ditchling for tea; shortly afterwards some cars turned up with bikes on the roof and a number of cyclists got out wearing yellow and blue jerseys. It appeared the clubrun consisted of driving to the tea stop although some of them had gone to the trouble of splattering themselves with mud to create the impression of having ridden some distance.

Cycling apart, the Club has been doing the rounds of Club and Association Dinners, including the ESCA school dinner where we picked up a fair amount of the silverware. Richard Blackmore is hoping another Club will win the points trophy this year.

The highlight of our social season must be our Club Dinner and thanks go out to Matt Rabbetts for his amusing and enlightening speech. Several of our more well known club members didn't escape Matt's observations. Just where did he get some of his information from. I think we would all like to know who the East Grinstead mole is. For example, how did he know that Steve Dennis wore Janet's knickers to the ESCA Lunch and he needn't have worried about Ted Boorman not having enough energy to freewheel down the following day's downhill course, on account of the amount of Baccardi consumed by his wife.

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So if anyone wonders why Ken is riding so well this year, it's not his new carbon fibre wheels but Janet waiting at the finish with a freshly baked fruit cake.

Andy

CLOSING DATE FOR SUMMER EDITION

10TH JUNE 1993

C.T.C. EAST SUSSEX D.A. MID-WEEK SECTION

Yes! The Section does still meet on occasional Wednesdays in Woodgate Cottage at Marle Green. The most recent being particularly memorable and not just for the sticky buns, coffee cream cake washed down with lots of coffee and tea! No, this simply preceded an idyllic run led by the delightful Grace Richardson from Marle Green to the Barley Mow at Selveston. Grace announced, firmly, at the start she had planned the 'alternative' route rather direct but would happily accommodate anyone wishing for a longer ride - not a murmur, all quickly assuring her "will follow you, Grace!". Off we went through pleasant level country with yet another ingenious ploy - asking Mike Issett to be 'back marker'. Mike collected several more Brownie points for his assiduous marshalling - for unusually on a Wednesday run, no one was dropped, no one got lost and he kept in touch with the main body throughout! Thanks Grace and Mike.

At the Barley Mow we were pleased to be joined by Phyll and Yub Moore, Jim Berriman and June, a likely new member from Brighton. And, as so often, the bonny Jean Steele, still not cycling since she broke her ankle but very actively supporting the Section usually at elevenses and at lunch venues. Talking of injuries and the like our girls seem to be particularly vulnerable and we do hope to have cycling with us again soon Thelma Mehew, Joyce Wickens, Dawn Muirhead, Thelma Chiverrell and Thelma Thompson.

Another successful event was the Mid-Week Section fourth annual Festive Lunch on the last Wednesday in December. Very well attended, with Dennis Jakeman in the chair ably leading us through a full programme including a popular raffle of the now surplus stock of CTC goods held by the District. A presentation was made to David Rix for "many services to cycling in the District" and to his wife Susan who kept son, Martin, happy throughout. A further surprise presentation was made to Dennis Jakeman in recognition of his great work as Secretary/Treasurer of the Mid-Week Cycling Section over the past four years. Guests welcomed included Peter Lee, Maurice Garrett, Charles Robson, Ernie Spray and two of the riders on the day getting fit Kathryn Webster and Fred Mehew. Great to see so many members' wives including Madeleine Darton. Mary Dunn, Joycelyn Earl, Christine Isset, Megan Rabbetts and Bessie Stockham.

Sadly on the following Wednesday we learned of the death of Denys Darton on his cycle on his way to meet us for lunch at Arlington. Denys, who lived in Bexhill, was a popular member of the Mid-Week Section. Many members, along with other cycling friends, paid tribute to his memory at the moving funeral service in Crowhurst Church on Friday January 15th, 1993.

At the start of February there was a very important development in the activities of the Mid-Week Section as there is now a regular cycle run each Saturday, this innovation is largely due to the initiative of Harold Bateman together with the full backing of Esther Carpenter and the rest of the Committee. These Saturday cycle rides each start with a meeting for elevenses at The Lagoon Leisure Centre at Hailsham, here the lunch venue is selected to meet the needs of the riders on the day. So far, particularly enjoyable rides have been made to Ripe, Wartling, Chiddingly and Rushlake Green. As with the Wednesday rides arrangements are completely flexible, cyclists being welcome simply to meet for a chat over coffee, to ride for part or the whole of the way and to share a drink and lunch if time allows. So far numbers have been small but all the outings have been very enjoyable as the flexibility accommodates varying requirements. So if you feel the need on a Saturday for fresh air and exercise on your cycle in the countryside with like minded companions - do come along, join us and be sure of a warm welcome!!!

Peter Bratt

BONK TEAPLACE

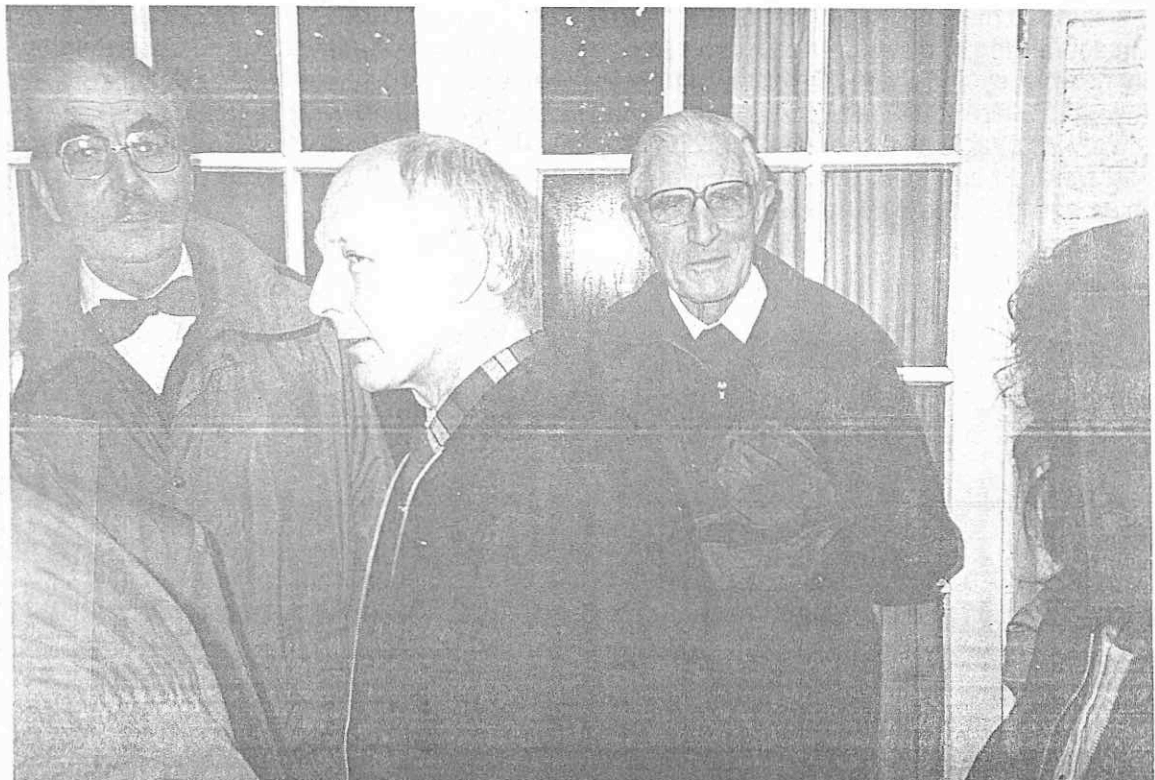
"The Cabin" at Maresfield advertises in the C.T.C. Newsletter and welcomes cyclists.

MID-WEEK SECTION LUNCH AT EAST HOATHLY

Peter Bratt *centre* (Section Press Secretary)

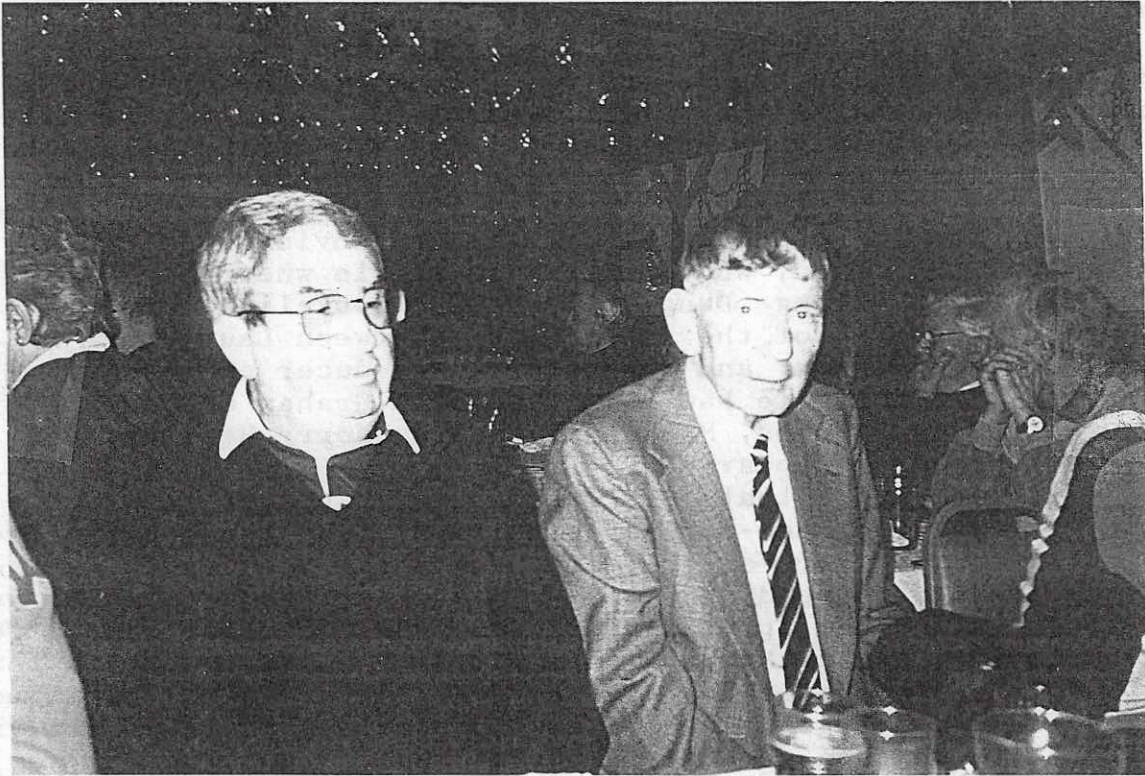


Jim Stockham, Bill Earl, Jack Dunn

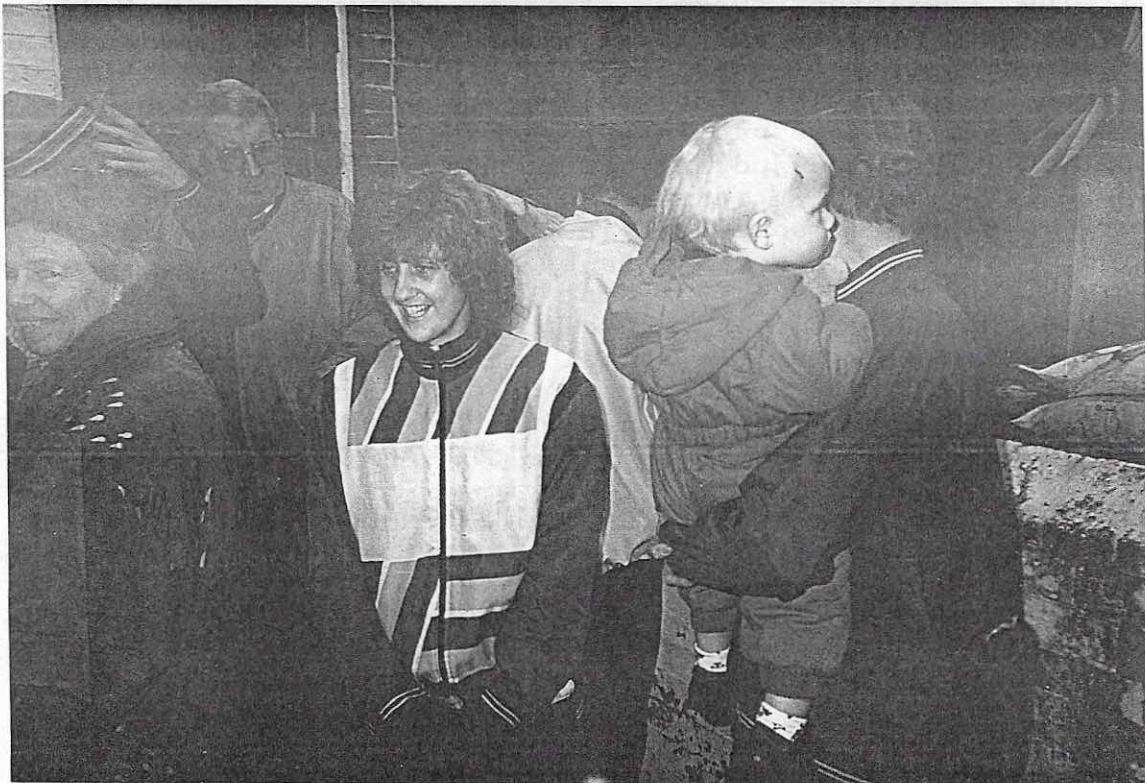


MID-WEEK SECTION LUNCH AT EAST HOATHLY

Did they get to the bar too late?
Peter Lee and Ernie Spray in pensive mood.



Left to right Christine Isett, Peter Lee, Susan Rix and Martin



LEWES WANDERERS

History was made on a clubrun at the end of last year, when there were more mountain bikes ridden to the elevenses venue than conventional ones (16 to 10). This either means that our members have found a way to beat the recession, or they've been brainwashed by MTB fanatics led by Laurie Leaney. The old diehards who are suspicious of this new-fangled invention don't mind sitting with these muddy chaps in the cafes but take exception to having filthy Schwinn's parked against their gleaming Claud Butlers. Still, Laurie had his come-uppance at the annual dinner in February when he was the latest subject of "This Is Your Life", which could more accurately be entitled "A Hundred Amazing Things You Never Knew About Laurie Leaney." He was reunited (whether he wanted to be or not) with Basher Boothroyd, a scruffy little boy in short trousers, a school cap and a nose-picking problem; a convict from Lewes Prison, dragging ball and chain, who head-butted Laurie when he offered to shake his hand; Mr. Hu Flung Dung, a Fu-Manchu lookalike who revealed an extraordinary story of the relationship between Laurie, a Page Three girl and a bag of chips; and the notorious seducer of milkmen, Mrs. Betty Witherspoon, whom Laurie had comforted when Graham Seymour left her in the lurch. Mick Burgess, Matthew Rabbetts, Horry Hemsley and Valerie Hemsley also made an appearance.

We like to think that our club dinner is better than some others because it features home-made entertainment (and the county cake-eating championship, won for a third year by Horry Hemsley). But even we found numbers had dropped this year - and other clubs' dinners were even more badly affected, probably because fewer people can afford the ever-increasing costs. Perhaps it's time for clubs to have a rethink - to abandon ambitions to stage a sense-of-occasion hotel/posh pub function and revert to a cheaper clubroom/village hall prizegiving with a buffet, to which a greater number of members and guests would feel able to go. And is a disco really necessary? Surely most clubs have some hidden musical or entertainment talent?

Our winter fun and games has included freewheeling and speed judging competitions. Can any aerodynamics expert explain how some riders can freewheel down a hill faster than others, no matter what bike they are using? The consistent success of Larry Limpus and Dave Wells suggests that you need to be not too fleshy and not too hairy. Larry says it's all down to polishing his head with Mr. Sheen but that can't have been much help when he also won the speed-judging. Those same skills will have been of some use in our reliability trial, notorious for its combination of speed-judging, sweat and suffering; but a sudden burst of springlike weather transformed the day, so that only ten of the 72 starters disappeared somewhere in the mountains. It seems also to have inspired warm thoughts in the breast of Geoff Boore, who for some inexplicable reason assumed that Sandra Weller and Michelle Seymour needed his help to get round the circuit.

A happy event in the social season was the marriage of Robert Wimble and Heather Stevens, whose wedding reception was a traditional cyclists' affair in the Union Corner Hall at Hailsham. The next day the bride was back at the hall for a CTC jumble sale, though thankfully she didn't offer Robert for the bric-a-brac stall. Heather was ESCA Ladies' BAR last year, and with our ESCA Junior BAR, Stephen Comben, should be among the prizes again in 1993. The rest of us will be doing our bit for ESCA in one way or another, with the same dedication and determination shown on a clubrun by Shane Faulkner. He spent one-and-a-half hours trying to mend a puncture, using six patches which wouldn't stick. He didn't make it to elevenses.

ROTRAX

Jack Harris and Dave Boorsma in the Hare & Hounds



Rita Preston and Janet Blackmore enjoying a pint each



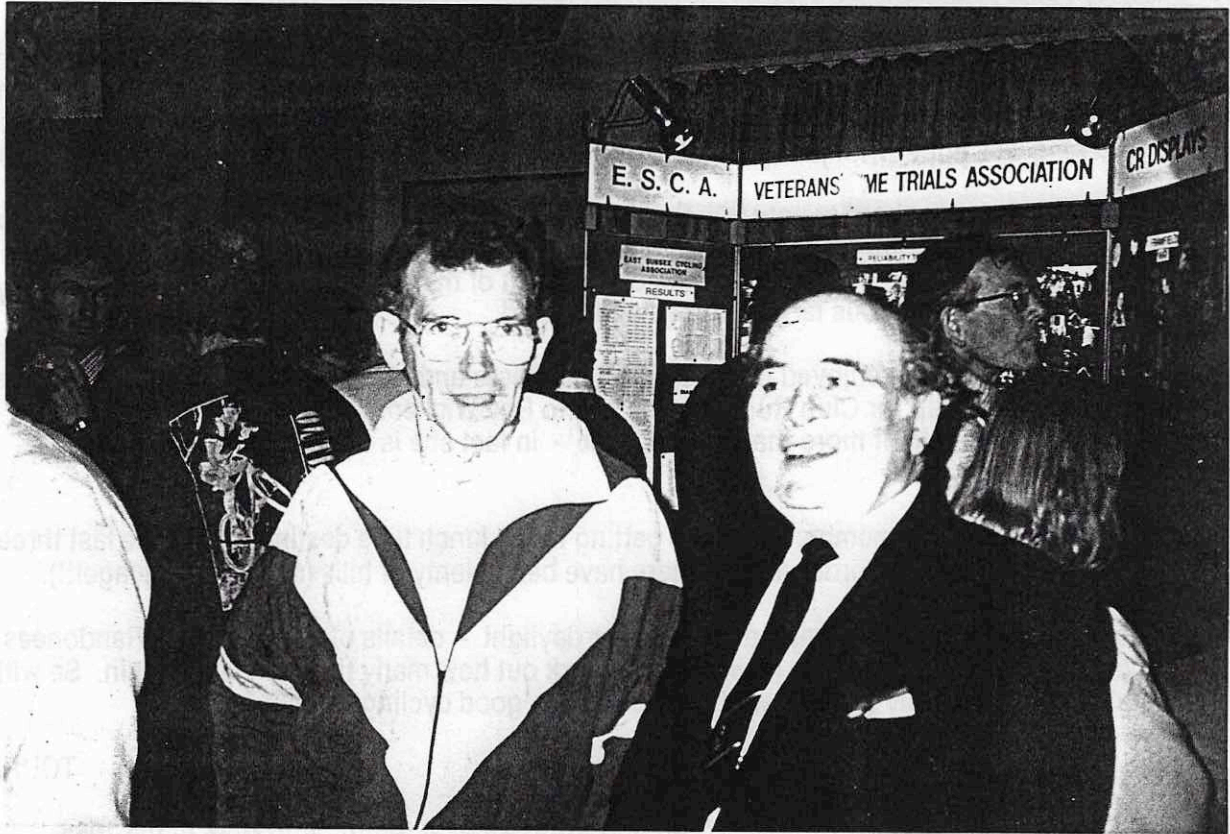
Ladies Champion, Heather Stevens, Lewes Wanderers
receives her Trophy from Dave Stokes



Men's Champion Peter Cauldwell, Sussex Nomads.



ALAN LIMBREY and GUEST of HONOUR NICK CARTER



and finally THE KISS
JANE LADE IS INTRODUCED AS 1993 PRESIDENT



C.T.C. EASTBOURNE & HAILSHAM SECTION

Before Christmas many of our Sunday runs had to be curtailed due to the very wet weather, but Section members did manage to attend the D.A. Christmas Lunch at Arlington Village Hall, whilst others ventured north for the Tricycle Association "do".

Christmas Day saw lots of Section members out at Stone Cross to watch the Eastbourne Rovers Christmas 8.8. miles time trial; afterwards everyone went back to the hall for tea and mince pies before heading home for Christmas lunch. New Year's Eve found a few members at the 'Bull's Head' at Boreham Street, where a very pleasant evening was spent with jacket potatoes and other seasonal goodies provided by the Landlady.

Into 1993 and January 3rd saw about twenty two Section members and friends from the Mid-Week Section take part in the Annual Ramble, ably led by Joyce Wickens. Sunshine was the order of the day despite being extremely cold and frosty, but this did have the added attraction of the younger (and young at heart!) members testing the ice on numerous large puddles and a pond.

Our Section New Year Lunch was enjoyed by thirty eight members and friends and the Section's trophies were presented. The North Cup for Club Runs Attendance to Ray Wickens, and the Topsy Turvy Trophy to Sarah Lade for managing to fall off more than anyone else - in fact she is the first person to retain the Trophy for a second year!!

Our last few clubruns have seen members actually getting to the lunch time destinations - the last three weeks have found us on the Kent border and so there have been plenty of hills (and bad language!!!).

We are now looking forward to better weather and longer daylight - details of lots of French Randonees have now arrived and many members are now trying to work out how many they can take part in. So with thoughts of sunny days hopefully ahead, I wish all ESCAbods good cycling in 1993.

TOURIST II

Dave & Audrey Morris celebrated their Fortieth Wedding Anniversary at the Autumn Meet of the 1066 Longmarkers Fellowship at the Yelton Hotel and are seen here cutting the cake.



DIARY OF THE CROSS-AMERICA WANDERERS (Part II)

We left Matthew Rabbetts and James Benning of the Lewes Wanderers at the end of the 11th day of their 35-day ride across America last autumn. They were in the small town of Harlem, on the vast Great Plains of Montana: 1150 miles covered, 2376 to go. The 11th day (148 miles) had been mainly wind-assisted but the weather forecast for another day of dead-straight roads stretching interminably into the distance was not good. To cap it all, they had failed to make contact with a relative of Paul Phillips (ex-Wanderers), who lived along their 12th-day route and whom they were looking forward to meeting.....

Sunday, September 6 (Harlem to Glasgow, Montana) - Temp. 34Fahr., wind ESE!!! Left 9.10, along to Fort Belknap Indian Reservation store for apple fig rolls (yuk!), then terrible road surface like farm track - filthy after only two miles. Luckily Bike Centennial route went off onto parallel side road - into wind - then back to rough surface (altogether 16 miles of it). Lumpy and against wind (strengthening) to Dodgson - coffee and choc bar - and to Malta. Dead place. Puncture. Into bowling alley/pizza place - women smoking behind counter, took ages to serve food but pizza very good when it did arrive. Felt lousy - lowest of trip: hard and gutty morning and still 70 miles to do. Left 2.10, a case of putting head down and getting on with it; long straight stretches against gusty wind along flat river valleys - no momentum from downhills: you just look forward to each milepost or sign ahead..... On to final 30 miles, light wind and beautiful evening, but still interminable. Car passed us, first for half-an-hour - stopped in front: driver was Paul Phillips' brother-in-law, only there by chance. "Are you the two Englishmen I'm meant to be looking for?" Arranged to meet for meal in Glasgow (Johnnies Cafe) - got there 7.20 just as getting dark - getting bonk over last 15 miles (only pizza and 4 Snickers etc. all day); water tower of town sighted ten miles away, never getting closer. Stayed at Rustic Lodge Motel. Delighted to have kept day ahead of schedule against wind - good to experience both sides to the Plains. In bed by 10.30! Good achievement. (MILEAGE:122; RUNNING TOTAL:1272)

Monday, September 7 (Glasgow to Culbertson, MT) - On road by 8.45, to Nashua for breakfast; dinner sitting on pavement in Poplar - no cafes (Indian town). Tailwind! (yeehar!) In Culbertson by 4.45! A relaxed day - the Plains are bearable when tailwind. Subtle difference since Havre: more pastoral in places. Out for walk after shower - pleasant tree-lined streets and proper houses (unlike rough feel of Indian Reservation). Shake, muffin, coffee and newspaper in diner; cleaned bikes (James got his looking brand new!); pizza in local bar in evening - "bull's nuts" on menu - 8oz. or 16oz. - they are what they are! Hoping for easy days from now on. (MILEAGE:107; RT:1379.)

Tuesday, September 8 (Culbertson to Stanley, N.Dakota) - Up 7am, bushes blowing wrong way. Breakfast in Bainville - stack of six pancakes, \$2. Hard up and down to State Line "Welcome to North Dakota - Discover the Spirit." Sun out and wind backed a fraction; spirits rose. On to Williston and Super J diner - dopey barmaid: "Diet 7-Up, please" - "Doughnut?" Gentler grades towards Stanley (East Montana was steeper, shorter climbs) - land browner, even windbreaks of trees, looking like hedges (first seen). Roads very ribbed and cracks filled in - bumpy. Crickets noisy and loads of them in road. Flew last seven miles to Stanley (wind at back now). Fish and chips and ice-cream (so nutritious!). Chap in bar couldn't comprehend ride - all friendly. I like North Dakota! Weather forecast read like a dream - wind going north-west tomorrow - perfect. (MILEAGE:116; RT:1495)

Wednesday, September 9 (Stanley to Fessenden, ND) - On road by 8.50 in bitterly cold, very strong tailwind. General climb to Berthold (32 miles) for breakfast in Barbs Cafe. Danish couple who saw us arrive in Stanley yesterday passed us on road and waved - then amazed to see us in cafe so soon. Oatmeal, orange juice, coffee, two massive hot cakes, eggs and patty and toast. Full up! Then on to Minot - very fast, rolling at 30mph in places. Disappointed to find only v. little mail for us at Post Office. Cars double-parked with engines running. Then Highway 52 - road terribly ribbed, awful - to Drake: rundown diner, old lady running it - 'fifties decor etc., feel of decay. Order for diet Coke again misunderstood for doughnut. In Fessenden by 6pm: no choice but shabby 4-bedded room in motel - stank of piss - toilet not flushed - old beds - sheets stained. Could do better after 150+ miles! To lounge/diner for chicken, etc. - farmers talking about wheat moisture content; chatted to part-owner - fan of Maggie Thatcher. (MILEAGE:152; RT:1647)

Thursday, September 10 (Fessenden to Valley City, ND) - Room still smelled in morning. Out to rundown cafe for takeout coffee - row of old men drinking coffee. Town had ghost-town feel about it - dying. Jeweller with beard and cap chatted to us outside - he selling up shop - very despondent. To Carrington, where women told us of "road up" everywhere so took alternative route - extra 13 miles! Mainly sidewind - able now to just get on and do it. When I look back and think how many long gutty sections we've done that to, it's frightening. To Polar Bear Drive-In at Jamestown: car drivers keep engines running at windows - women rush to serve them - not as quick for non-motorists! 15c. charge for water due to labour costs! Sun going down, good clouds, birds in mass flying across blue sky - very pleasant. Fewer vistas in North Dakota - trees fairly common + hedgerows - fields ploughed and green. Booked into Wagon Wheel Inn at 7.40, then cafe over road for yet another meal of salad and NO veg. (other than potato). (MILEAGE:136; RT:1783)

Friday, September 11 (Valley City to Fargo, ND) - Strong southerly wind: Oh no! Another slog! Poor rough road-shoulder - not too much traffic but no scenery and very hard into sidewind - going hard at 15mph! James puncture No.3. West Fargo a sprawl but sheltered from wind. Into town for prearranged meeting with Great Plains Bicycle Club member Dean Dormann and wife, Marie - very pleasant couple. He took us for tour of town, restaurant. Sunny and warm, p.m. (84F). (MILEAGE:62; RT:1845)

Saturday, September 12 ("rest day" in Fargo) - To diner for breakfast of 4 pancakes etc. Same place for dinner - waitress surprised I wanted two veg. with meal - first veg. with meal for days (never on menus). To bike shop, where advised on route to Duluth; and State University shop to buy presents. To Dean and Marie's for supper - tapioca and jelly salad + chicken and runner beans with almonds. Request for tea brought search for tea bags - usually used only for colouring material.

Sunday, September 13 (Fargo to Remer, Minnesota) - To diner for breakfast: old blind man came in with dog - told us he was there to meet woman pen pal (his "intended") for first time. He 72.4, she 69.1. Met Dean and other GPBC member - rode with them out of town, they up and down pavements, across red lights - no wonder they need helmets. Left us at Buffalo State Park (now officially off The Plains!) then onto rolling hills, small lakes, woods - good tail wind. Afternoon, along Heartland Trail - old railway track - several groups on it. Motel by 6.30; meal at Woodsman Inn - soup, salad (inc. bread pudding), fish (walleye), hash browns, blackberry pie: TOTALLY STUFFED. Felt ill! (MILEAGE:148; RT:1993)

Monday, September 14 (Remer to Duluth, Min) - Minnesota feels alive - towns and villages all vibrant - N. Dakota had decay feel about it. Rolling road to Hill City - lovely colours through woods. Roads VERY

ridgy, made ride v.gutty. Then marshy woodland to Floodwood. Coal train passed us - nearly two miles long. On to ridge above Duluth and down steep, twisty descent on terrible ridgy surface. Relaxed in Comfort Inn lounge - v.pleasant to do so in proper armchairs! (MILEAGE:99; RT 2092)

Tuesday, September 15 ("rest day" in Duluth, on shore of Lake Superior) - Into town by bus, trip on North Shore Railroad - screaming child, hopeless parents (boring route, +1hr.). To shops, lift-bridge and bike shop. Only two weeks left - excited about rest of ride.

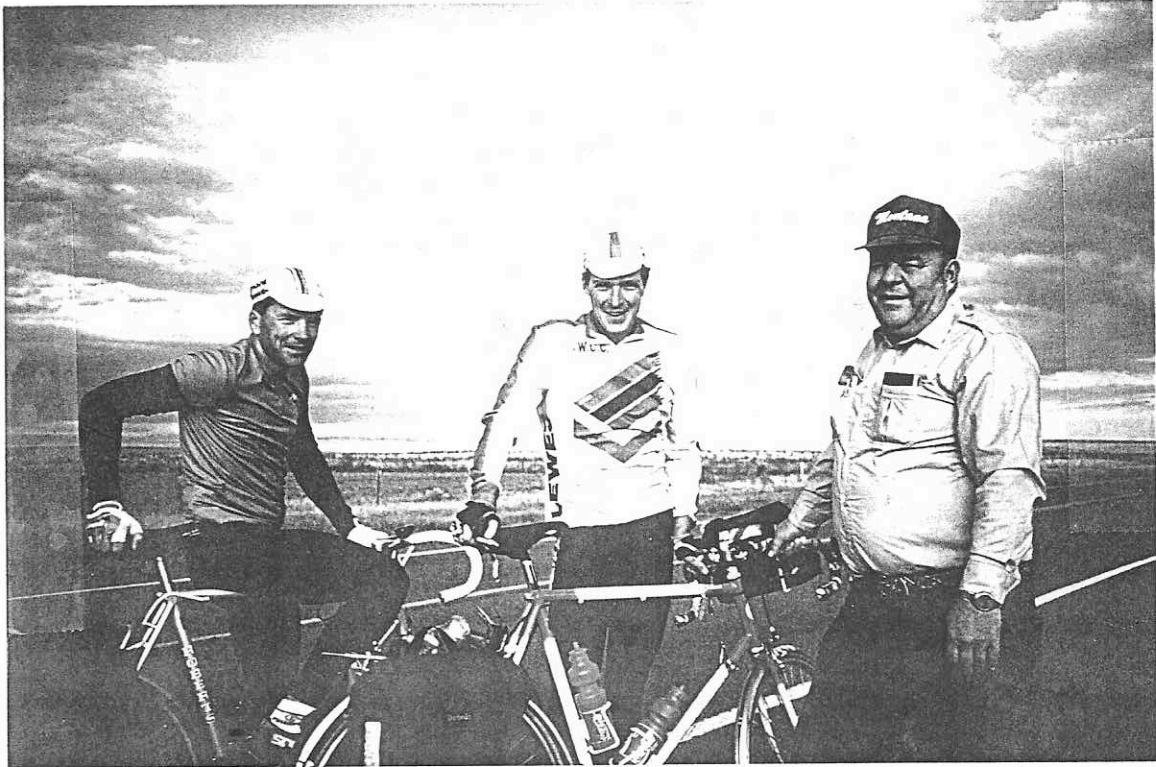
Wednesday, September 16 (Duluth to Ironwood, Michigan) - Up 6.45 for "free" toast, muffins in motel. Over Bong Bridge to Superior on other side of lake. Onto beautiful surface to Herbster, colder and murky - fog off lake - clouds threatening. Up long climb against wind through forest. Good colours. Beeped twice by fat drivers - does their size make them so insecure? On to Ashland. Slight tailwind but concrete road full of holes etc. - terrible, worst yet. Cut-up by full-size coach towing car and bikes on back. (U.S. version of campervan). Up and down gently to Ironwood - views to lake on left and tree-covered rolling hills all around and fantastic colours - looks good! Into tatty motel 6.20pm just before thunderstorm - great timing! Light out by 9.40! Rain hammering down. (MILEAGE:134; RT: 2226)

Thursday, September 17 (Ironwood to Iron Mountain) - Roads dry. little wind. On road by 7.50, drizzly, cold and murky. Dense forest - great colours. Breakfast after 24 miles in place done out as country cottage - blue flowery curtains, blue coffee pot on table with jams. Workman: "You intend to be seen" (pointing to Lewes jersey). Me: "Well, you can't trust American drivers!" Sun out and warm - down to shorts etc. At Iron River, v.friendly restaurant - everyone seemed impressed (esp.by number of gears!). Italian sausage and bun. V.hilly to Crystal Falls - beeped by bloke in car. I waved. What is it with some people - so inadequate. Amazed at ignorance of U.S. people. How are they "leading country"? On to Florence into wind yet no prob. - on Plains would have been nightmare. In Timber Lodge Motel 6.30pm - mints in room, shampoo, body lotion etc. + big continental breakfast. Relaxed watching USA v. Colombia football - feels GREAT, esp. having only 11 days riding left and no more long days.(Turned out there were some to come!) (MILEAGE:131; RT: 2357).

Friday, September 18 (Iron Mountain to Manistique) - Thunder etc. and rain overnight - wind WNW and strong - showers during day but we never got more than a sprinkling. Scenery nondescript - more open, odd bit of easy rolling. Stopped at Eastern Time Zone - last one and a high spot of tour (but another hour lost on the day). On to bypass at Escanaba (very busy): grumpy waitress in diner, again shocked that I wanted potato and veg. with the pastie. Quieter roads, views of Lake Michigan, to Manistique - a disappointment, not cosy little lakeside resort I'd imagined. Motel room small, bathroom minute, bed-mattress collapses when sat on. To lighthouse - even that looks dingy, rundown when close up. Can't the Americans do anything right? (MILEAGE:108; RT:2465)

Saturday, September 19 (Manistique to Cheboygan) - Out by 8.30 - cold (mid 'thirties) but beautiful sunshine. Dinner at Epoulette (62m) - group of women - I said: "You can make a donation if you like" - gave us \$9! Road followed line of lake, but only odd glimpse of it. Ex-pat. Scots couple took our photos; then to end of Highway 2 at Mackinac Bridge) across strait dividing Lake Michigan/Lake Huron. Bikes banned on bridge, so across in pick-up truck (\$1 each). Map holder fell off bag.....into truck! Phew! Donut place on other side, then Highway 13, trees again hiding lake (Huron), to Cheboygan by 5.45. Felt tired all day - not enough proper food and too much grease? (MILEAGE:108; RT:2573)

A CHANCE MEETING ON A LONELY ROAD NEAR GLASSGOW, MONTANA
for James Benning and Matthew Rabbetts of Lewes Wanderers
towards the end of the hardest day of their Cross America ride
Car passed us (first for half an hour)
"Are you the two Englishmen I'm supposed to be looking for?"



A POEM from HAROLD BATEMAN

Some boys and girls, they rather like
Spending hours on a bike.
Little do they know the joy
To have a trike as your favourite toy.

A bike is such a silly thing, never self supporting,
You never find, a trike, that, is self aborting.
A tripod, firm and steady,
When at stop,,, you're ever ready.

Feet in toe clips all the while,
Blast away in perfect style.
Ice, or snow, you'll ever go,
Tearing away, fast or slow.

Have a Longstaff, it costs a plenty,
Or a Rogers, when't Banks empty.
If your wife is ever nagging
That you're behind, ever lagging

Then the answer, has to be,
A longbarrow, don't you see?
Up the front you let her hack
You, feet up, on the back.

CRAWLEY WHEELERS C.C.

Rusper - Hindhead Reliability 17.1.93

The weather forecast looked wet & windy, well the rain held off, pity about the wind which didn't deter the brave forty riders who took part. All the groups set off by 10 o'clock, 17 of us went for the 3½ hours schedule. Alan Hale & Dave Hickey disappeared at about 20 miles, another few miles saw myself off the back, however Rob Holder said he realised I was in stress and would need a back wheel. We joined up at Hindhead with eight other riders, Paul Clegg & Kevin Shaw, Crawley, Steve's Elms, Dennis & Blackmore, Bob Taylor & another East Grinder and Lee Fanner Regent R.C. At about halfway back Rob's legs went, the pace had given us plenty of scope to complete the course on schedule and I was able to return the tow for Rob.

On arrival at Alan & Frances H.Q., Dave Robert, Tim Osborne, Bernie, Mark 'Central' Bob & Mike Crossett were well into the bread & soup. They attempted to beat 3 hours & just missed it by 2 minutes. Alan Hale & Dave Hickey arrived in the qualifying time, but where were the East Grinders, we soon found out - Steve Elms arrived, decided as they had plenty of time to spare they would take a detour resulting in a pressure finish which shot a few, "Oh dear", "how sad", "never mind"

Roger Hill, Phil Hitchcock, Dave Boorsma, Bob Taylor East Grinstead and Ron Gager Redmon were successful in the 4½ hour standard after some adventures to do with Ron's rather capacious magic 'Bonk Bag' - ask Phil about it.

Eight members; Dave Beadling, Steve Lenn, Jack Harris, Graham Payne, David French, John Powell, Tony the Trike, Richard Griffin, Dave Stokes and six visitors, namely M. & W. Wates, B. & A. Daws, Keith Wawman, R. Chambers, got back inside the 5 hour standard. Tony set off in front & turned left at the 'Stat' P.H. in Rusper, when the rest of us went straight on. He completed the ride on his own in 4.05, he should have had confidence to go with the 4½ hour group

There was another parting of the ways at Oakwood Hill that left the club group to continue via Rudgwick, Loxwood, Chiddingfold, Witley and Brook to Hindhead, our strategy in using this route to avoid the worst of the wind paid off. However it was on the long grind up the hill from Brook that 14 year old John, who had ridden well, started to feel his legs and breathing, but with some coaxing and coaching from Jack and Dave Stokes and a short stop he reached the turn at the top.

After sharing Dave's banana Butties and Jordans Bars, borrowing a quid off Richard to purchase Mars bars etc for the return journey and with much encouragement from the rest of the group John tucked in for the return. At Plaistow a short stop for John to rest sore legs and refuel, Dave 'S' and Jack stayed with him. All hope of qualifying now abandoned they continued, with John tucked in behind, via Loxwood and along A281 to make the most of the 'chuff' wind, left through Clemsfold, another stop for legs and fuel, on past 'Chez Courtier' in Warnham, right onto the A24 then left onto the A264 at Great Daux

CRAWLEY WHEELERS. MYSTERY RALLY 31.1.93

About twenty five riders met at Herbert Sports for the rally, the weather looked good, sunny and no wind, which made a change from the rain we've been having.

Six groups set off at intervals of their own choosing to start at Ridley's Corner R.A.B., and headed south to Balcombe, passing through the village, and were politely thank you'd (all correct but Tony & Bob), quickly onto the next poser, which quite a few overshot and had to return to the railway viaduct to count the thirty seven arches (Dave Stokes, Jack, Frank & David Brighty, Ray Throssell & Denis Worsfold had thirty six, as did Dave Boorsma, Roger & John)

Up to Borde Hill Gardens & sharp left along a pleasant lane to the Ardingly Road, about this time guest riders Dennis Newton & Jim Powell punctured and weren't seen for some time

Ardingly College was the answer for No three, which all teams had correct, carrying on up to the village & sharp right towards Lindfield, an acute left turn was negotiated safely by all riders and all the teams got Paxhill Park Nursing Home. At this stage some may have felt like taking up residency.

A climb to the Bluebell Railway Ltd Bridge, all correct again and into the charming village of Horsted Keynes, pity the Green Man and his rival The Crown weren't open.

At last a stretch of flat road to Twyford, some cautious descending required down a couple of bendy lanes, through the splash & quickly into a low gear for the climb up through Ashdown Forest, looking out for Pooh Bear, two teams spotted the bear, they were:- Bernie, Tim, Mike & guest Woody and Rob, Terry, Stephen and Daves Roberts & Beadling.

Down to Weirwood Reservoir to do some twitcher spotting, up the climb to St. Hill Manor to look for the previous owner, all teams got Twitcher & the Maharajah.

On to Turners Hill and St. Leonard Parish Church, the date MCMXXX (1930) is on the wych gate, which was spotted by all the teams.

Downhill hill all the way back to Ridley's Corner R.A.B.

My wife (Kath) & I joined Bernie, Tim, Mike & Woody for a drink in the Hillside Inn, they answered all the clues correctly, as did Daves Roberts & Beadling, Rob, Stephen and Terry.

Thank you all for taking part and making the event worthwhile, I hope it was enjoyable. When the evenings are lighter, this course is a good training route.

Charlie. Alias Spoke in the Wheelers.

MIKES MYTHS

That sex on the night before a race can affect your performance

This is a myth that has definitely been kicked around for many years with many people still unsure so I will quote the following from various good authorities.

Sex before racing the night before poses no problems providing that sex occupies a regular part of your life. If you normally have sex every day then abstaining just because of a race the following day will do you no good at all.

(From 'Cycle Racing' Frank Westall and Ken Evans)

By all accounts better when both partners are fit and healthy. Even at professional level sportsmen and women feel no need to abstain before competition. If anything, relaxation after lovemaking calms pre-match tensions.

(From 'Sports Injuries' Doctor Malcolm Read)

I can find no factual evidence either in scientific literature or in discussion with many athletes and sportsmen of world class that sexual activity in moderation up to and including the night before a match has any detrimental effect on the sport in question.

I can quote a case of an Olympic middle distance runner who set a world record an hour after making love and that of a British miler who broke four minutes shortly after having sex. For the rest of us, having sex the evening before a big race may be relaxing and let us get a good night's sleep. But beware! remember Casey Stingels warning about his athletes - "It isn't the sex that wrecks the guys, it's staying up all night looking for it".

(Doctor Craig Sharp. Chief Medical Adviser for the British Team at the 1972 Olympics)

The actual act takes fewer calories and less time than a good set of warm-up exercises. Studies indicate that sexual intercourse on the average lasts nine minutes and will cause the aggressive person to burn 250 calories an hour. That's only forty calories, or about the same energy as walking up two flights of stairs. That shouldn't trouble any conditioned athlete's competitive style.

Sex is a good activity though neither a aerobic or a big calorie burner. Next time you're hungry, reach for your mate not for your plate.

(From "Runners Handbook" Bob Glover)

Now that you've absorbed all the boring evidence substantiating all that you already knew, I will cheer you up with an anecdote.

Picture an American marathon type running race called the 'Bay to Breakers' in San Francisco. One thousand men and women are at the start on a foggy morning. At the starting gun a great mass of runners surged forward and each began finding his or her pace. One runner settling into his run found himself behind a specially lovely woman whose stride matched his own. She glanced at him, he at her, and silently they paced each other for the first few miles. Finally, using an opening line he had tried elsewhere he asked "what's a nice girl doing in a place like this?". "Who says I'm nice?" she replied with a mischievous smile. He pulled closer, took her elbow and the pair of them veered off into the fog shrouded park

Anyone in the sport who is still not convinced that sex the night before is harmless to their performance in a race should certainly abstain. The best way of doing this is to go to bed with the wife that night!!

On the Sunday prior to Christmas thirty cyclists could be seen perambulating the Sussex Lanes furtively glancing at their watches and doing passable imitations of people dying of thirst. At a signal from their leader, whose boyish good looks belied that this was his 37th Excel Christmas Lunch, the pace quickened to the White Lion, Thakeham. Village locals scurried into their cottages and the landlord took a fortifying drink as the riders approached, hell bent on a good time.

The muscles on the landlord arms glistened as he pulled pint after pint, the air got thick with the fumes of cordite whilst missiles flew and the whole scene made the Drones Club of P.G. Wodehouse fame seem like a nursery. Throughout all this, aided by technology, Peter Fray's bobble kept flashing but Barbara said she has learnt to live with it. The Storrington lads, Ben and Robin, looked in for 'just for a pint' but were finally pointed in the right direction at 3.30!!! Notable absentees, Judy and Leon were reported to be cowering somewhere in France.

As the Christmas pudding arrived, Bill the landlord assured us that it was a non-stick variety, which proved to be almost true. The locals, cringing up the end of the bar, looked agog as the missile throwing reached peak velocity and the waitresses donned tin hats (they had served us before). Still the beer flowed, some in balloons onto selected victims. Eventually a truce was called, as was closing time. As the aged leader said, "roll on number 38!".

Prior to this we had thrashed the Lewes at darts. Although not present myself I am assured that all the pre-tournament training by the Lewes was top no avail. In fairness to the Lewes, as so many of the Excel's activities take place in pubs, it could be deemed unfair. Comments were made about the excellent fish and chip supper provided by the Lewes. These comments incidentally came from Val Stringer, whose taste buds are extremely hard to please, so it must have been good.

At this point in my jottings I come to the Everest in the Excel's social calendar, The Annual Dinner and Prize Presentation. Those of you from other Clubs in the ESCA region who were present are aware of this no expenses spared extravaganza. For other, non-participants, I give the following account. A hotel in Worthing is the venue. Fancy dress is the order of the day (the latter is designed to give a certain amount of anonymity to those whose desire it is to throw constraint to the winds and act out their libidinous and wild fantasies with impunity (bet you wish you'd come). To aid them in this frenzy of uninhibitedness is a magic colour of a brown colour imported especially for the Excel from real ale land (Horsham Brewery). This event is really the culmination of all that hard training in pubs around the county during the previous three months. The final climax, the total throwing off of all that hard won cycling fitness, a last minute desperate attempt to blot out that awful truth. That truth like an inexorable drift toward the abyss of pain and torture, the racing season, aaarrgh!!

But I jest. As many of you know we have a keen racing side to our club, covering all aspects of the racing scene and making our presence felt from time to time throughout the year. So at a suitable point in the proceedings and before too many people were out of it, we had the Prize Presentation, with awards going to the following:

Simon Taylor (fastest 10 - 21.24); Andy Smith (fastest 25 - 57.53); Vince Lowe (fastest 50 - 2.1.02); Andy Payne (fastest 100 - 4.33.46); Andy Payne (best 12 hours - 231.775mls); Tom Roberts and Anthony Pope - Hillclimb; Andy Payne (B.A.R.); Steve Woodbridge (junior B.A.R.); Rick Stringer (vets B.A.R.); Theresa Thompson (ladies B.A.R.); Simon Birstingl (most improved novice); Simon Taylor [tall] (road racing); Dick Holkham (track B.A.R.);

As well as racing awards we also had prizes for a photographic competition, provided by our sponsors M & J Cycles. These went to Nick Pitchford (1st) and John McKernon (2nd) in the racing category and Tony Rogers (1st) and Val Stringer (2nd) in the touring category. We're grateful to M & J Cycles for the high quality of their prizes. Also thanks to Andrew and Vanessa Attwood of the Bike Store for organising and providing the prizes for the raffle.

After the prize presentation the tables and chairs were quickly cleared for the bands. Thirsty Work and a R & B band led by Charlie Chandler. At the end of the evening, I am led to believe, Dick Jones was left negotiating for an unstarted barrel of beer. This was taken at length by Dick at a knockdown price and brought out at the next Committee Meeting and freely distributed.

Other snippets of information before I finish.

Vince Lowe organised the first of two off road races last weekend (7.1.93). This was up and down the Ouse Valley and was won by Tom Roberts. The other on 21.1.93 is around Steyning and the prizes donated by Brighton Cycle Sport, The Bike Store, Worthing and M & J Cycles, Brighton.

Leon and Judy have just gone off to Normandy, France, to do some more work on the Excel club room (continental branch).

We are having a bust trip to Dorset organised by John Roberts. This is where we charter a double decker, put the bikes downstairs and us up and get to a fresh cycling area for the day.

Easter might see a mini tour to the Ardennes by club members.

Brighton Excel wish you all a safe and speedy 93 season.

