



Nomads News

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The news letter of the Hitchin Nomads Cycling Club

Editorial

Hi Folks

August is almost upon us, where does the time go? For sure it speeds up as you get older.

Instead of going to Saffron Walden with the club run on the last Sunday of the month, John, Tony, Frank and myself agreed to ride to Hare Street instead. When we got there, Linda the proprietor informed us that she is closing the Old Swan tearoom on the August Bank holiday after 23 years for health reasons.

If anybody has any suggestions for a tea stop to replace Hare Street please let the social and touring secretary know.

Dave is in fine form with three race reports.

There are only three more Briercliffe evening 10's to get your average up.

Looking forward a little, on the 2nd September the Icknield RC are running their 12-hour time trial.

I think there may be four club entries for this event this year if you fancy a good day out then get your entries to Gordon Hart ASAP.

Results

Royston Road 10

Sunday 22nd July

Andy Herbert	24:47
David Ledgerton	26:54
Clive Collins	27:51
David Summerell	30:04

Non Nomad	
Rob Hemming	27:23

Timekeeper and Pushing Off
Richard Bland

Briercliffe

Tuesday 24th July

Steve Robinson	26:49
Paul King	26:56
David Ledgerton	27:41
Paul Riley	28:17
James Spence	28:45
Clive Collins	29:12
Julian Siedlecki	29:40
David Rossall	29:59
David Summerell	30:19
Andy Herbert	31:43

Non Nomads	
Andre Dyson	23:46
Rob Hemming	27:35

Timekeeper and Pushing Off: Frank Turner
Ably assisted by: Ann Collins

Race report –

Nomads evening 10 July 17th

Thought I'd do a race report with a difference this week. I don't do many Club events – quite simply because I think it's an evil little course. I've never said anything different from the first time we rode it way back in the mists of time – well, 1983/4 – when Paul Stanbridge sent us off with map in hand to find our way around!! I got back from that ride and said I didn't like it, my own personal view hasn't changed in the pursuing twenty odd years since that first ride. I still hate it and always will.

But this Tuesday was different – I actually enjoyed it!!!!!! OK, I've said it.

In a moment of wisdom Frank/Tony set the field as: Richard Bland, Clive Collins, David Ledgerton, Me, Tony Anderson – sorry chaps I just can't remember the rest of the field. At the start I said to Tony that I'd see him at

G&Ms – meaning I expected him to beat me by two minutes. When he passed me at Ireland – after only two and a half miles – I was a “little surprised” to say the least.

But then I guess that was OK - all I wanted from the evening was a fast middle five miles which I did. That was my ride for the night - training with a number on my back.

Tony might well have been going like a train, but Ireland was the start of my five mile ride and I was damned if I was going to let him get away. I was determined to hold him at 20m. On the Southill Park bend I had three options: hit Tony up the bum, hit the brakes or go around him. I didn't fancy a collision or slowing down so I took the last option. But I think this surprised him somewhat. Along through Southill village we are both doing 30s plus but the hard man passes me again. Still undeterred I try to keep that 20m gap again. At the Broom crossroads Tony changes up a good four or five cogs before the turn, I change up after the turn and the gap opens up to around 50m. Uhrrm, let me think how Tony got a 10m advantage just on the crossroads??

In the distance I can see three other riders – Richard, Clive & David. I'm still just about holding Tony at 20, then 30 and then 40m up to G&M. We both pass Richard before the turn (I think) and then start pulling up behind Clive & David. By the Swiss Gardens Tony is well up the hill and disappearing at an alarming rate of knots.

David catches Clive as I catch David. Three abreast across the road – looks more like a road race prime than a TT! Up the hill and the gradient starts to catch up with my legs. That's my five mile done with. But as David comes back at me and Clive yells – as only Clive can – “Come on Dave” how can I give up now. The yelling increasing in volume, again it comes bellowing up the hill “Come on Dave”. Inspired by the bellowing, David comes past me. Inspired by David coming past me I try to accelerate. By the top of the hill I'm not sure whose lungs are going to implode first – mine or David's! We both sound like old steam engines huffing and gasping our way to the top. But I draw level

and then open a small gap. Suddenly, that five mile ride is turning in to 7.5 miles.

On the down hill to Old Warden village my gears take the advantage over the fixed that David is riding. On the final drag to the finish I look behind expecting David to be right on my wheel. I can see him just 50m away and think – I'm too stuffed to say it – no way is he passing me again and I just give it everything I have. Last gasp and it's done.

David & Clive are just a few seconds behind, Tony is changed and back in the car! Fantastic ride Tony. Richard comes in a couple of minutes later. What an inspired piece of field setting, what rides for all of us.

Thanks guys, I might even ride again this year!!!

Dave Wentworth

Briercliffe 10

Tuesday 17th July

Tony Anderson	24:33
Andy Saunders	26:11
Dave Wentworth	26:22
Paul King	27:01
David Ledgerton	27:35
Clive Collins	29:08
Neil R Fraser	29:16
Richard Bland	31:54
Timekeeper: Frank Turner	
Pushing Off: Tony Furby	

Race report

N&DCA 15, Sat 21st July

Thursday and I've not got my start sheet. Friday am, the Postman comes and goes – still no start sheet. Friday PM, I ring the organiser – “Oh yes, Dave Wentworth, you are number 41”. “Where is the HQ” I ask, “Folksworth village hall”, “OK, what time is number 41 off?”. I need to get the map out to even find Folksworth, I've never heard of it!

Saturday morning and I'm awake at the crack of dawn as usual. As I get out of bed I take care putting my left foot down – can I stand on it? I had an attack of gout yesterday – the anti-inflammatories work fast most of the time but not always. Uhrrm, it's OKish at the moment at least I can stand on it. Breakfast is

at 05:30 so that I can have that pasta lunch at 11:00.

By 06:30 the mid-morning (Carb), pre-race (Carb/Caffeine) and post-race (Protein) drinks are prepared and my race kit is laid out ready for the kit bag. Even though I know where I'm going – now I've found Folksworth on the map – I still have a route map and a timing plan. Yes, I like to be organised but this is especially true on race days. No rushing about at the last minute. Everything ready and in it's place. Everything checked and double-checked.

Over the years I've driven miles out to bike races only to find that I'm a wheel missing, no shoes or no shorts. Once I turned up with odd shoes – one racing and one touring, both of them left feet!!!! On another occasion I turned up with two front wheels!! Then I learnt to check my kit and bike BEFORE I left home. I lay my kit out for a couple of hours and just keep walking past it. I get the bike in the middle of the garage hours before I leave home and actually put it together including race wheels. I can cope with no warm-up wheels, but not the race set.

The weather is dank at 07:00 with a fine mist in the air – you know the sort that soaks you in five minutes flat. But, it looks better for the afternoon with a 6mph wind from the south. Looks good so far but as usual, will it last? Just as a precaution I'll put a bigger back light in my kit bag – I think an extra 100g is a worthwhile investment if the rain does come down later. I like race days, but I like living better!!!!

The HQ in Folksworth is 3½ miles from the start. The N1/15 starts on the old A1 at Stilton, turns at Alconbury and finishes near the start – but I don't know the exact course details because that start sheet didn't arrive in Saturdays post either. The first 4 miles are relatively flat, Alconbury Hill will hurt on the outward leg, then it's nearly flat again until the descent of Alconbury Hill and the run-in to the finish.

On the drive up to Folksworth it rains quite heavily and I start to think that I'd been better off staying at home. Village hall found, car parked in the pub across the road and the bike

is ready to go. The fine mist starts to fall again so I decide to put warming oil on my arms and legs and actually go for a warm-up in my waterproof jacket. Back light is also fitted – the rain was coming down quite hard when I drove through Alconbury.

Even during the warm-up I know that I don't feel good today – maybe the effects of the anti-inflammatories and paracetamol to stop the pain in that left foot. Never mind, I'm here, I'll do a ride anyway.

By the time I get to the start the rain has stopped and the sun is shining – but that only lasted a few minutes. I remind myself that if it's wet I'll need to take it easy on the nine roundabouts on this course – that's one every one and a half miles!!

I'm off. After the first mile or so I check the HR – I can't start too fast. I'm gob smacked by the reading – it's only 142. By this time of a race I'd be checking to make sure that I'm not too far over my red line of 162. At the second RAB I get stopped by a car, at the third I take a wrong turn and do a 30 seconds detour. I struggle the whole way round and expect to get caught by several riders – but none appear. OK, my HR is stupidly low but maybe this course is slower than I gave it credit for, and I am catching a couple of other riders who started 2, 3 and 4 minutes in front of me.

At the end I've done my third fastest fifteen ever – a 39:33. Mind you, I've only ever done three of them!!!! Like I said, I didn't feel good during warm-up - maybe next week!

When I left the fastest time on the board was a 33 something from a rider who can regularly go sub-20 for the ten. So maybe the N1/15 is quite slow after all.

Dave Wentworth

Race report – VTTA F12/10, 25 July

Wednesday – 17-20mph the forecast was not good for wind from the southwest and showers. And so it was a correct forecast!! What a horrible day it turned out to be. Probably the hardest day I've raced this year!!

The F12/10 is based on the A507 at Leighton Buzzard and can be a reasonable course on it's day – or totally horrible with the wrong wind. Very little in terms of uphill – just 54 feet of vertical climb for the whole ten miles. To put that in to context, our club 10 course has 75 feet of vertical climb on the first hill. The F12/10 has to be a flat course by any ones standards - but it is very exposed. A southwest wind is just about as bad as it gets for this course.

A very slow start with 6:53 for the first 2½ miles – I don't normally start fast, but that is slow even for me. At 5 miles I was on 12:56 and still had the hardest bit to come. The return five was done in 12:29 – I was well pleased with that because it included the mile and a bit of head wind after the turn.

In hindsight I'd have probably gone faster on spoked wheels rather than the rear disc and the tri-spoke in the front. But, I didn't put the spoked wheels in the car, so that was the end of that.

So a 25:25 is my slowest Open event of the year, but for such a tough day I'm reasonably happy.

On a jovial note, one chap at the finish was complaining that it had turned out to be a very expensive event for him – he hit one of the many bumps on this course and lost his upper dentures!!!!!!!!!!!!!! At least he saw the funny side of it.

Dave Wentworth

August Clubruns

5 th August	Waresley Garden Centre
12 th August	Family Ride and Bedford (Bliss Café)
19 th August	St Albans
26 th August	Grafham Water Start 09.00 Prompt

Family Ride

Start at the **Oasis swimming pool Bedford**.
Ride to Danish camp for refreshments total distance about 5-6 miles.
Arrive at 10.15 for 10.30 start.
Normal run from Hitchin to Bedford then home via Danish camp.

Bank Holiday Monday

27 th August	Special clubrun to Hare Street
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There is a proposal put forward by the social and touring secretary Frank Turner that we have a clubrun on the bank holiday Monday to Hare Street starting from the market square Hitchin at 13.00 to wish Linda all the best and to have one last cup of tea and maybe a Bacon and Mushroom sandwich for myself.

Eulogy to a Bacon and Mushroom Sandwich

As you have read in the editorial the Old Swan tearoom at Hare Street is closing after serving cyclists and other people for 23 years.

For me this was my most favourite clubrun stop.

Whenever I visit there my order is always the same, 'Bacon and Mushroom sandwich and a pot of tea please' in fact once when the clubrun visited I put my usual order in to a boy who was serving and Linda came out from the kitchen and said who ordered the Mushroom sandwich and I said 'No, that was a Bacon and Mushroom sandwich', 'I thought that was probably the order', she said.

Now this simple order is far from simple and for what you pay is top class for quality.

Consider this and try and match it elsewhere, first there is a choice of white or brown bread nothing unusual about that except the bread is home made then the bacon and the mushrooms are organic.

The tea comes in a proper teapots with a tea strainer because they have always used loose leaf tea, which adds a certain class to the experience of a visit to the tearoom, and for this I paid £4.10 this Sunday, and you will not get better value anywhere.

A lot of the members when they visited there would have a tea cake, again home made and these tea cakes were not your soft flabby ones that usually pass as a tea cake, these tea cakes were intense and you knew that they were worth 50 miles on the bike.

So farewell bacon and mushroom sandwich, farewell loose leaf tea its time to move on but

on chilly Sunday mornings in winter the warmth of the tearoom and the aroma of bacon cooking will be remembered.
Clive