



Nomads News

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The news letter of the Hitchin Nomads Cycling Club

Editorial

Well that's the 12 hour ridden for another year and congratulations to the winners of the team prize.

My thanks to Steve for his regular Captains Corner article. We are doing well in this issue with four race reports

Dave Wentworth has sent in an article suggesting a change to our current evening club courses.

Dave's proposals have been discussed in committee and discussions are ongoing. If you have a view about a flatter course then please let the club hear your view.

Clive

Results

Aylesbury CC

Course F5/11

27th August

David Ledgerton	54:28
Winner	
Dave Dent – Wightlink	45:34

Icknield 12 Hour

Course F1

2nd September

Neil JJ Fraser	227:44
James Cornell	215:94
Clive Collins	199:87
John Harrison	193:26
Neil R Fraser	DNF
David Ledgerton	DNS

First Team

Hitchin Nomads

Riders

Neil JJ Fraser
James Cornell
Clive Collins

Captains Corner

Nomads in team prize shock!

No question about there being just one rider of the month this time as four of our team managed to not just complete the Icknield 12 hour, they walked away with the team prize as well!

Therefore the honour of the rider of the month has to be split between Neil Fraser, James Cornell, Clive Collins and John Harrison. Anyone who enters let alone completes a 12 has my respect, so well done lads.

It's great for the profile of the club to have a strong presence in open events, and winning the team award is the icing on the cake. The more we can coordinate riders racing opens next year the more impressive we look as a club and the more new members we will attract – so there's one target for the winter to work on...

As the season draws to a close we have only a handful of events left, but boy do they matter. This Sunday is the Interclub 15 and we have a strong turnout, so with a bit of luck we'll extend our lead in the competition. The following weekend is the 30 and again we have a good turnout – but there is still time for you to sign up if you haven't yet!

Good to see Dave Wentworth still out flying the flag for Nomads in open events, and getting within a whisker of going under in a 25 as well, nice one Dave.

As you'll see elsewhere Paul King and I have resumed our battle over 10 miles and a poor ride from me and a good one from Paul saw him batter me for 50 seconds – not something he'll be repeating with a bit of luck.

It's around this time of year that thoughts turn to winter training, so I'd be interested to hear from you about what you would like

from the club to help you prepare for racing next year. A good racing season is built upon a strong base, so it would be good to get something going that will help us all build that base ready to fly in 2008!

That's it for now, see you all at the Interclub events!

Steve

Race Reports

Icknield 12 Hour

Course F1
2nd September

Congratulations to all the finishers and commiserations to David who was unable to start because of a sciatic back problem also Neil R Fraser who climbed off at about 80 miles probably thinking why did I listen to Clive!

Over all I think the finishers would agree that the day wasn't easy with that west wind but you did get help from time to time but not nearly enough in my opinion.

Neil JJ Fraser rode a superb unsupported 12 as usual to record 227.44 that is only 9 miles short of his best distance when he was supported.

James Cornell did very well in what was his maiden 12 hour coming home with 215.94, I think he was pulling my leg when we both stopped in the same lay-by on the Wimpole circuit and I asked him how he was feeling and he said with feeling, Knackered!!

I felt that John Harrison was a bit unlucky to get a puncture at Dunton roundabout on the way back to the finishing circuit, because he was on the way to a 200-mile ride. The problem was that he had lost his pump; fortunately Richard Bland spotted him and was able to source a track pump and pump his tyre up to get him on his way.

Having analysed my own ride in the 12 and at the time while riding the 12, telling my wife that it was the last 12 hour ride that I would ride, I have now changed my mind for two reasons.

The first being that I cannot sign off with a 199.87 ride which is 228.8 yards short of 200 miles in old money. I see that as a failure, and second reason is that I was pleasantly surprised that I recovered so quickly. I was

expecting to be brain dead for at least three days but come Monday morning I was as bright as a button if a little stiff.

I had taken the precaution of booking a physio session for 09.30 on the Monday following the 12, which was just the job.

Clive

My Annual 12-Hour Fix

Since I got involved with cycling with the Nomads I think the 12 hour event has to be my favourite event because there is so much that happens through the day.

With such a small field this year I thought that it might be a bit dull, especially as the usual suspects Messrs Hutchinson, Dangerfield and Dawson were not riding but as usual it was thrills and spills all the way.

Ladies it's the only way to see men go through as much pain as we do in childbirth,

We can't just get off the delivery table half way through when it starts to get tough and say, "that's it I'm going home". Joking aside. These 12 hour riders are to me real heros, pure grit determination and dedication. You get to see some fantastic styles of riding and bike handling skills.

Clive, you were not the only one to be glad to see the last of the Wrestlingworth circuit.

As Ann and I travelled around the circuit we could see tired legs and riders stretching out on their bikes to relieve the stiffness and just battling into the wind. As the riders approached the control at Wrestlingworth cross roads full of concentration and determination, there were big smiles as they were sent on their way to the finishing circuit.

It was noted that there was a lot of support at the Wrestlingworth cross roads for all the riders.

As usual there were laughs to be had.

At the main score board near Orwell, Ann and I walked to the top of Ledgerton Hill (as I think it should be called) thinking that the two men sitting on chairs were timekeepers, when we got to the top and asked if number 42 had been through, one man looked at the other and said, 'Are you going to tell them?' he then looked at us and pointed to his friend and said, 'It was his idea to let you climb to the top knowing that the timekeepers were at the bottom!' Talk about drop your friend in it!

Then there was number 61 who I kept thinking was Neil JJ Fraser, I kept on shouting at this poor bloke, he must have thought, I've got a right one here! The problem was that the High Wycombe CC colours are close to the Nomads and at a distance 61 Paul Mace had a similar riding style to Neil JJ Fraser.

Now number 50 was a cheeky chap all smiles and waves, and I thought that's nice but then discovered from another lady supporter that he was waving to all the ladies.

Then to make my day complete there was Ralph Dadswell on his Trike but please only on his trike and in Lycra, anything else just won't do!

What a great day!

Who needs the Tour de France?

VIVA Le 12 Hour!

Barbara Day

Race Report

Reading CC

Course H10/1

9th September

Time trialling is an unpredictable business isn't it? On Sunday Paul King and I turned up to the H10/1 outside Reading on what looked like the perfect morning.

With hardly a breath of wind the talk was all about how fast it would be – it's supposedly a fast course - so the questions were focused on how much would we improve on our PBs for the year, how wrong that proved to be.

With very little traffic to pull us along the slight drags on the single carriageway course seemed to take the speed off the day.

Paul only just missed his season PB with a 25:02 while I missed mine by a mile with a disappointing 25:52. The guy I rode back to the HQ with was two and a half minutes off his season PB (he finished with a long 23) which confirmed that it wasn't a great day.

So for 2008 the tip for the H10/1 is that it is a fast course on a Saturday afternoon and not so great on a quiet Sunday morning!

Steve

Race Report –

North Notts Olympic CC

Course A10/21

1st September

The A10/21 is based on the A1 and a B road around Tuxford and Weston in Nottinghamshire. I decided to ride such a distant course only because it's basically on the way back from visiting my Mum in Lancashire.

So, the A10/21. The HQ was is Weston, the start in Sutton-on-Trent and the finish on the A1 slip road at Carlton-on-Trent. The first 4.8 miles to the turn are on the B road and it's basically uphill. The first 4 miles are fairly gentle and should allow a sensible speed to be held. But then a kick-up in the last mile to the turn will make it harder. At the turn it's head south on the A1 – it's basically rollers to the finish from here. In the CTT Handbook the course is given as the A10/20 – which really appealed to me – you got the benefit of the A1 rollers but the B road section was split in to two. The A10/20 is, in my opinion a faster course than the A10/21 - a full field plus reserves would indicate that the locals consider the advertised A10/20 as being a "best in area" course.

By the time I arrive at the HQ it's too late to warm-up on the course – the event has started and it's no longer allowed but I manage to find a small lane where I can do a couple of miles each way. The weather has changed on crossing the Pennines, when I left Ashton it was overcast, dank, very windy and quite a nip in the air. Here it was quite warm – no warming oils needed and that wind-blocker vest stays in the kit bag – and the wind is a gentle drift from the west. During my warm-up ride, the sun suddenly disappears, I look up to see a huge black cloud, the temperature drops to a chill and the trees start to sway in the wind, I do a U-turn to go to the start and I legs bend in the head wind. It'll be side/head on the outward leg which will now be quite hard. But at this point I didn't realise how hard it would be on the second 2½ miles to the top turn.

The first 2½ mile split was 6:53 – not quite the fast start I needed but OK on this now quite windy day. Next split was a total disaster at 7:26 – barely inside evens. The

wind was rising and my legs simply wouldn't go any faster. The turn arrives - thankfully.

My brain guesstimates that I need to ride the final 5 miles in around 8:30 to get near that life time best – oh, oh, you're having a joke, get real and come back from planet Blib. I can't do the sums but I'll aim to average 33mph. The A1 traffic count is actually quite low, but the difference in speed is awesome.

At the HQ a local chap advised to "blast it" as soon as I hit the A1. I did, the speed reaches 35s very quickly. I'm now using just one gear – 115". On the downhill rolls the speed is consistently above 32s and then just under 29s on the uphill rolls. The next 2½ mile split bleeps out of the computer – it's 5:08. Not fast enough, I needed it to be a minute faster. I try even harder, the speed lifts, then drops, a few cars pass, the speed lifts again to over 33s then another car lifts it to 35s but it drops back to under 30s on an uphill roll. I just can't summon the strength to hold the speed above the 33s that I'm aiming for. On the final uphill roll to the finish my legs have gone and the speed really drops back. My three minute man catches me as we both pass the "1 to go" marker, I try desperately hard to lift the speed just one more time but the tank is on empty, the legs have gone.

The final five miles were covered in 10:19 – that's probably my fastest ever 5 mile split. My first half split is normally 30/45 seconds to maybe a couple of minutes slower on a really tough day but today it was a full four minutes faster on the return leg. Alas, it's just not fast enough to recover from the hammering I took during the second 2½ mile leg. I'm disappointed with my 24:37 – I'd wanted so much more from this course and my final ten of the year. Never mind, next year awaits!!

Dave Wentworth

Club ten course – suggestion for change

Since I was the one who first approached Steve R with my ideas for two ten courses rather than the one, thought I'd better explain why I wanted change in the first place. I did originally have three options but Steve talked

me off the one based on the A507 at Stotford/Arlesey.

I've been reading the comments on the Forum with interest and note many of the likes & dislikes. At the moment feelings seem fairly well split between supporting change, not seeing the need for change and the don't mind either ways. I've not responded to any of the Forum comments because I don't think it yet covers the whole interested membership. Hence the Newsletter approach.

Why change? Well, we've been riding the current ten course I reckon since 1983/4. The previous course was a "testers" course, the current a "road-mans" course. As a club should we not be providing something for all our members and not just for those who can ride a "road-mans" course?

My thoughts were to alternate between the hillier and flatter versions to give every body a chance to ride something they like – or where they can do a time that they are happy with. My initial ideas produced some constructive comments like it would be nice if both courses could start and finish in the same area. No problems.

When I came back to riding bikes after 15 years out of the sport I started riding the club events. They were very enjoyable for a while – then the staleness set-in and my times just stagnated. By my third year back I wanted to ride Opens again on the faster courses – that's my want in life. Just one problem – I was never ever going to get a time fast enough to get in events on the E2, F1 or F20 if I just rode the club course. So, I had to trade-in the club events for Opens on faster courses in an effort to get those times down.

It's not been easy! Finally, I got a time just about fast enough to get a nine spot on the E2. Yes, a middling 24 gets you a nine spot – one of the last times to be accepted by the organiser. The 26s I was doing on the club course wouldn't get a ride – it's as simple as that.

Life would have been so much easier if we'd have had a selection of faster and hillier club courses. I could have ridden mid-week events and spent Saturdays with Jill. I could have spent time with club-mates rather than with people I've never met before. I could

have saved myself the expense of entering Open events.

In the olden-days when I raced in Cheshire we used a selection of 4 or maybe even 5 courses. Every one starting in a different place and each a slightly different type of course. It was the variety that people enjoyed – something different, a different challenge each week, different winners on different types of course.

OK the two suggested courses. Both would start and finish in about the same place. One will be reasonably flat, the hillier that will have a more difficult start than the existing course.

The start/finish area: The unclassified road between Stanford and the Bedford Road in Shefford. It's the bottom end of the start road that we currently use for the club 25 course. The hilly will start by going up-hill, the flat by going down hill. I reckon there'll be plenty of space for parking and it sees just as much traffic as the start for the current 25 course.

The flat course will turn left at the junction with Bedford road, into Shefford, left at the RAB and then all the way up to the G&M RAB, turn and retrace. To allow safe entry to the start/finish area continues past the lane to the RAB with the A600, encircle and then turn left. The finish should be before the uphill starts!

The hilly course will start towards the bottom of the hill, proceed up hill, bear right and to G&M RAB using the normal route. Left at G&M, through Old Warden and then the major change – don't turn left to Ireland but straight on to the T-junction, sharp left, past the pub and then right at the junction (where we normally turn left over the old railway bridge). Down hill to finish well short of the junction to give up time to actually stop!!

If anyone wants to see the actual courses being suggested then just drop me an email on dave.wentworth@btinternet.com or call me on 01908 561768.

We could also have 25 mile versions of the hillier and flat courses, all starting and finishing in about the same place.

Dave Wentworth

Club Ten Course

Suggestion for the Status Quo

The current ten course that is used by the club has been in use since about 1988, prior to that time the ten course used to start at the Broom crossroads proceed to Growers, turn right at Growers (there wasn't a roundabout at that time) proceed to the Old Warden roundabout then left onto the A1 proceed to the Bidlake memorial where sharp left then return to the Broom crossroads where left towards Broom and finishing approximately 50 yards after the crossroads turn. The 25 course also used a lot of the A1. The club decided at the time that the traffic count was getting too heavy to justify racing on the A1 in the evenings.

So the two present courses were developed for the safety of the riders.

There is full agreement within the club that the current club courses are slow in comparison with open courses but the main concern for the club is the safety of their members when they are racing.

No one is in any doubt that open time trialing as a branch of cycling is in decline, but at club level it is still very popular so that at whatever level you race at you are guaranteed a ride.

On a personal basis, I was over in Dave's neck of the woods in 2000 and rode the F5B/10 and returned a time of 24.53. This was a Saturday afternoon event and was held on the 8th July and there were only 70 riders. I would suggest that if I had entered the same event this year I would have got in on my time from the interclub in April of 27.04.

My point being that there isn't any real need to have a fast club course.

Taking Dave's point that you need a fast time to ride a fast course doesn't really hold water because we have had riders that have ridden the F1 this season with entry times of around evens.

It's the particular event that Dave's arguing for rather than the course.

That's not to say that as a club we shouldn't investigate the possibilities of a flatter course but **safety** has to be the first priority.

Clive

Captains Corner

Dave's idea of a change of ten course raises a number of questions which were debated at committee. The key issue is can we find an alternative fast course that fulfils a number of key criteria. These being:

- Safe for all riders
- Convenient for timekeepers to get to (without them we have no events at all!)
- Good parking
- Ideally with similar location for timekeepers so were not making them stand by the side of a busy, fume filled road

If such a course can be found then we just need to decide on whether it replaces what we have, alternates with what we have (to give us a tester's course and a roadman's course) or do we use it just for pre-club run 10s for example.

So stage one is to identify suitable course, so if you can think of any that we can look into please drop anyone on the committee a note.

Steve

September Club runs

23rd Sept	Frosts Garden Centre Wavendon
30th Sept	Welwyn Sports Centre

October Club runs

7th October	Willington Garden Centre
14th October	Country Homes & Gardens Melbourne
21st October	Emily's Tea Rooms Whitwell
28th October	Brinfield Garden Centre Goffs Oak