



Nomads News

www.hitchin-nomads.net

The news letter of the Hitchin Nomads Cycling Club

Editorial

Our time trial secretary has kick started the season and is leading from the front by riding the North Road Hardriders event. Well done on your ride David and many thanks for your in-depth report of the event.

So here we go! Hello to the new season. It's now down to the rest of us to get the miles in to hang onto David's wheel. Hopefully with the pre-season miles in our legs we will all be ready for the first club event of the season on the 9th March. Either way we will find out who has put in the miles since the beginning of the year.

We have another feature for the News with our youngest member sharing his diary with the membership.

There was a good response to the club-clothing sale at the clubroom. There will be another sale at the clubroom in April.

My thanks to Mike Toddington for his article and also Jamie Tomlin for his reminiscences of his University and his junior racing days with the Nomads, true magic.

Seeing as it is the start of the season a club member suggested that it might be a good idea for the benefit of the new members to explain all our competitions that run through the season.

Clive

New Member

We welcome new member Jason Stuart to Hitchin Nomads.

Jason you are most welcome and we hope that you enjoy many hours of cycling with the Nomads.

North Road Hardriders Report

At 8:21 I wheeled up to the start line of this years North Road promoted Hard Riders event. As usual I was acutely aware of how little real training I'd done in the preceding weeks and that, apart from the downhill, the course was at best undulating and at worst hilly, not my ideal terrain!

However, unlike previous years when the start has been delayed to allow the frost and ice to melt or cancelled due to snowstorms, the conditions were almost balmy the sun was shining and air temperature was in double figures, just. Unfortunately due to road works and temporary traffic lights the first part of the course was off limits. I've never really liked Carbone Hill and Newgate Street anyway, far too hilly and too many people watching my early agonies for my taste especially as it is too early into the race to claim tiredness for the poor uphill progress!

So at **8:22** at the revised start off I went, the start of the 2008 campaign, great start all down hill felt easy! Then the first hill came along and progress slowed, a pattern to be repeated throughout the event. Essenden was finally reached but turning left to start the climb through the village a double blow was dealt not only was there the hill to contend with but a head wind as well. As usual there was good support at the steepest part of the climb, and it was good to receive encouragement from Sophie Bruton one of our new second claim members apologies if anyone else was there but mental capacity was reduced at that point.

At **09:22:04** I crossed the finish line glad to be able to stop trying at last.

It might sound as if I don't like this event but nothing could be further from the truth, its a great event with a long history and tradition and it's a great way to wake the body up to the fact that the season is fast approaching and that winter is nearly over, it is however a great shame that more Nomads don't ride the event.

For the record there were 87 finishes from a field of 97. Julian Ramsbottom DeRosa RT won with a time of **42:55**. I recorded **01:00:04** in 81st place and ex Nomad Rob Hemming Team Economic Energy finished in **56:25**, 68th place.

David Ledgerton



David in Action

**This is the last reminder that I will print
for your subs.**

Subscriptions

**Your Subs are due for 2008
£15 for single membership
£20 for family membership**

**Payments can also be made direct to the
HSBC bank account
Sort code 40-28-14 A/C no 20615021**

**If you are paying by this method the payee
should e-mail the treasurer to confirm that
they've made payment this way**

March Club Runs

March 2 nd	Royston Sports Centre
March 9 th	Barneys Café Hertford
March 16 th	Waresley Garden centre
March 23 rd	Café Bliss Bedford
March 30 th	Burwash Barns

March Club Events

March 9 th	Spring Hilly
March 16 th	Medium Gear 72"
March 23 rd	Two Up Team Time Trial

Tom Durkin's Diary Aged nearly 8

Hi I'm Tom I'm nearly 8 and I love cycling. I have been cycling for about 4 years. It all started with my Grandad and his old fashioned bikes. I have 7 bikes at the moment and I ride them on different occasions, and I have just outgrown my 1st Penny Farthing. I now belong to the V-CC, Welwyn Wheelers and Hitchin Nomads. I came 3rd in the Eastern Regional Finals and 3rd in the Welwyn Wheelers Track league (under 12s), I have won the cup for the Boot and back which needs to be returned this year, the Cambridge 50, emitremmus ride (101k). My fastest speed is 31.3 mph (WICKED!!). I'm good at knocking my Grandad's back wheel and flying through the air and when I was out with Grandad on Sunday going up to Melbourne we saw about 20 deer in the field next to us and then they all ran out across the road in front of us and there was 2 white ones (WOW!!). Oh yeah and I hardly never ever get punctures.

I will let you know how I get on in next month's newsletter.

Tom

Club Events Explained

March 9th	Spring Hilly AR
-----------------------------	------------------------

This event is the traditional start to the season. The event is about 15 miles galloping over a few hills good for opening the lungs ready for the following week.

March 16th	Two up Team Time Trial AR
------------------------------	----------------------------------

This event is about riding with a partner for 25 miles. It's best if you and your partner are fairly equal, so that you can give your best performance.

March 23rd	Medium Gear 25 AR
------------------------------	--------------------------

This is a traditional event from the dawn of time trialing. You ride a restricted gear of 72" over our 25 mile TT course. The idea is to find the best peddler.

Apr 1st to Aug 19th	Briercliffe 10 series. Every Tuesday through the season, apart from the four dates below
--	---

The ten series are good events to check the progress of your fitness through the season. The winner of these events is best of five events average. Also there is a medal for the veteran who is best on standard.

May 20th June 3rd /17th July 1st	Dave Gudgin evening 25 mile series
---	---

This evening series is again about checking your progress through the season. You are awarded a handicap at the start of the series and the cup is awarded to the rider who makes the best improvement. There is also a winner on scratch.

Interclub Series

April 20th	Interclub 10
June 29th	Interclub 25
July 27th tba	Interclub 15
TBA	Interclub 30
October 5th	Interclub Hillclimb AR

The above series of five events is a competition between Icknield RC, Beds Road CC and ourselves. We like all our riders to enter these events. The scoring is over the five events and the club with the most points at the end of the series is the winner.

Briefly, each rider is awarded a score according the position he/she finished in the event. The same number of riders are counted from each club to come to an overall score. If there are 12 riders from each club then they are the riders who score, any riders in excess of 12 don't score.

October 12th	Autumn Hilly AR
--------------------------------	------------------------

This event is the final event of the season, and along with all the other events that are marked AR is the 'All Rounder' competition. The competition awards points to the finish position but also awards points to the timekeeper and the pusher off.

October 19th	Charlton Hill Climb
--------------------------------	----------------------------

This is the traditional end of season lung buster, a minute and a bit of torture. The club like to take a group photo of the survivors at this event.

December 26th	Boxing Day 10TT
---------------------------------	------------------------

This is the final event of the year. It's a superb social occasion where you can ride your bike or just chill out and greet friends.

The other competitions are..

Clubmans Trophy

This is awarded for attendance on the clubruns, at the clubroom, also social events and any open events where you volunteer to help.

Geoff Denny Trophy

This is awarded to the person who assists the club by volunteering to time keep and assist at club events and marshal open events that the club are committed to.

The bottom line is that if you ride your bike or even move on behalf of the club then we have it covered and you are awarded points.

Jamie's University reminiscence

I said at the end of my last article that it then got serious. Serious may not be the right word but I was riding a lot. During the winter, long rides on Saturday and Sunday, sessions in the gym in the week and the occasional mid-week Wednesday ride. Whilst at University, Wednesday afternoon was sports time with no lectures or tutorials, so I would plan a route, estimate how long it would take and then give myself this plus ten minutes to do the ride before lighting up time (lighting up time at Uni for me was not when "relaxants" would be taken but when it got dark!). The ten minutes was to permit me to either suffer, have a puncture or a brief stop at a café for refuelling. The typical distance was 50 miles plus between Canterbury and Maidstone. For those of you who did the tour stage in Kent last year you will have covered part of my route, including a monster hill outside Ashford. I can recall this hill being very steep and starting immediately after a roundabout. If a lorry had to go up from a standing start it was possible to use them to help tow you up the hill. Once over the top it was an undulating run of about 6 miles into Canterbury, and on a fixed this was great fun. The café I would stop at was a wonderful old-fashioned café, with some of the best bread pudding I have had – and came after about 35 miles – perfect to refuel for the rest of the journey. Great cafes like this have been lost

with the growth of Little Chefs, Happy Eaters and by-passes. Which have been superseded by garden centres!

Club Life

Once the season was in full swing a typical week was – Monday, easy ride, Tuesday, evening ten, Wednesday, Welwyn track league, Thursday, St Neots time trial, Friday, evening off or in summer Welwyn track league open meetings, Saturday, easy ride, Sunday race and so to Monday etc etc. I always used to tell people I never trained. Looking at this I never needed to train.

The time trials tended to be the events that would be dropped if rest or additional (!) speed work was needed. I never enjoyed doing time trails as they lacked the sheer pleasure of seeing first hand the pain and suffering inflicted on your fellow riders (OK so I was more often the inflicted rather than the inflictor... but I had my moments...). Mind you, when it came down to a fast finish in a race it isn't until it's all over that you really see what has happened. Best tonic for recovery is doing well, even if the margin between a placing or nothing is very small.

Once you get into racing you also realise how important it is to have use of alternative transport.

The bike changes from being a mode of transport to an instrument of pleasure (wahey...! come and see my torture chamber for more instruments of pleasure...oops wrong magazine) which needs a car and a driver (who also acted as team manager, mechanic and supporter) to get me to and from events. The distances travelled became greater with frequent excursions to Essex, Central London, Cambridgeshire, and Northamptonshire and even as far as Liverpool. I do recall the occasional ride to an event, do the event, and ride home, but that would only have been for a local time trial (I am sure that Graham Hurst was known to ride to the E1 carrying his racing wheels, change his wheels once there, race and then change and ride back – just like they used to do in the early days when time trials started at 4 am, you rode in black alpaca and gave no indication to the world that you were racing.....cyclists have always been at the forefront of popularity with road users, so much so that we are encouraged to have our own bits of road, called cycle paths and encouraged to get off the main roads by psychopaths....sorry, waffling again.

Anyway speaking of Graham, anyone fancy going to try the track at Calshot?

The main focus of my racing was road and track. The evening track leagues were great; you had four races in an evening. If you did badly in one you waited 20 minutes and you had a chance to have another go. And if you did well, you couldn't wait to repeat it. The last race was always a ten miler done in the low twenty-one minutes. All on a ninety inch fixed. I never recall the twenty-minute barrier being broken at Welwyn, despite a reasonable prize being offered for doing so.

There was enough talent riding there but it would have needed a real group effort to do so. One year I was going OK, being able to do a flying lap of the track (458 metres) in less than 32 seconds. I figured that if an OK lady rider could do a standing start 500 metres in 40 seconds I could and if I tagged on my flying lap speed, coast for 40 more metres, that would make a decent 1k time for a junior.

How wrong I was, and how unprepared for the pain of those last 500 metres. I was young, I never appreciated that the first 30 seconds, despite a huge starting effort were easy, that it takes that long for the heart to fully register what you are doing to yourself and to suggest you slow down. Ouch, the lungs burst, the legs burn and the speed slows. Despite being an "experienced" track rider I was completely and utterly under prepared for the ride. Anyone can do a single flying lap of a track – beyond that the benefits from specialist training are huge. But I did it on a lovely track machine with the lightest, smoothest tubs I have ever owned.

Road racing was very different. Whilst a junior, I only ever raced against other juniors or third cats. The races would typically be 30-45 miles and no longer than 2 hours. I could manage that. The format was flat out for ten miles hanging on to the bunch, after this the speed would invariably slow and unless the route was hilly or there was some very aggressive riding it would end with a sprint finish. These were always fun, once in full flight you needed a sixth sense to know where other riders were as you just put your head down, hoped, and went for it. As age told and I became a senior the races became longer. I searched, often in vain, for second and third cat races only, otherwise I would be on the starting line looking around me and thinking I know him, he was in last weeks copy of Cycling, and him and his club mate looks like

he could be useful. The next 50,60, 70miles are going to be fun. And whilst the first ten miles still tended to be the fastest if the speed did drop you knew that it would always increase later. This became real racing where you had to take care when to make an effort, when to ease back, when to take on fuel and when to give up!

Most races were on a Sunday morning. I don't recall Sunday afternoons, as I would invariably be asleep recovering from the morning! And so another week ended and the cycle (pun intended) began again.

The racing and riding was fun. The experiences great. The sense of achievement, especially when you had done well, was the perfect encouragement to stick with the training. And the ability to eat loads to fuel yourself was an often overlooked benefit. But did I really use to cram my pockets with malt loaf covered in honey, eat cold rice pudding straight from the can and drink glucose drinks intended for patients recovering from operations (as an aside, a friend had a greyhound that was useless, I told him about this stuff, he gave it to the dog and it won next race out!) – this was under the counter stuff from Boots. It was just like being a real bike rider.

Jamie Tomlin

A new reality for inside Training?

Here in Vancouver on the West Coast of Canada, we have weather that is quite similar to the UK but we do get much more rainfall.

During the winter I am hard pressed to get out and ride my bike during the inclement weather. Being as I have a basement in my house I have wind trainer, which I use frequently. Although this is a good system for keeping fit, there is one significant problem. Boredom.

I have tried all kinds of ideas such as measuring time and distance combined with heart rate and accompanied by Tour de France theme music but still it is difficult to get up the enthusiasm to ride on the trainer. My sister-in-law owns a bicycle shop selling such brand names as Cannondale, Scott and other classy equipment. There is about a 50-50 split between road and mountain bicycles in her store.

Last week, my brother-in-law invited me to see a Christmas present from his wife. I went

into his basement and saw his road bike mounted on what looked like a complex wind trainer. It was fitted with all kinds of cables and was set facing a computer complete with a large screen. This, he explained was a tacx virtual reality trainer. I accepted the invitation to sit on his top of the line (what else) Cannondale and with the computer switched on began to peddle.

The screen came up with all kinds of options and I finally chose the video to ride a section of the Lombardy Tour. The screen showed an open road on a beautiful sunny day with traffic coming in the opposite direction. Each time a hill was encountered the pedaling became stiffer and cornering could be enhanced by the moving flexible steering column on the trainer. A detailed readout was given such as speed, distance, power out put etc, etc.

The speed of your ride controls the speed of the video, so you can just tour if you want. At times on high speed descents I actual experienced tension and vertigo.

Following this road ride I then took a mountain bike course, which was a another harrowing experience. With this system time passes very quickly, in what seemed no time at all I had actually been on the machine for more than 45 minutes and still wanted to try for more.

The experience has been on my mind ever since, I WANT ONE!!! Especially as I have since found out that there are a whole bunch of videos and computer simulations, which can be added to the system as extras. The system here in Canada will sell for the equivalent of about 900 pounds; I'm hoping that I will get a discount from my favourite bike store.

If any readers are interested in this system please take a look at the following sites: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eNu9bhJ7CD8> and: <http://tacx-video.com/>

If I buy one of these machines, I hope that I do not become so enthusiastic that I stop going outside to ride - just kidding.

Mike Toddington,
Vancouver Canada

Essex Roads CC & Basildon CC Charity Rides 20/40/75/100 Miles

This ride is in the Bike Events magazine along with the Orchids other rides, including a week away cycling in Holland at the end of July and a day ride in the New Forest on the 14th September. The 75 mile ride is under Audax rules.

From Lucy Dawes Fundraising manager Orchid-cancer.org.uk

I'm getting in touch to let you know about this year's OrchidCycle Essex ride on Sunday 8th June 2008 in Lake Meadows, Billericay. OrchidCycle Essex has been running since 2001, and this year we are hoping to attract over 600 cyclists to take part in the ride in aid of Orchid - Fighting Male Cancer.

The ride caters for all levels of fitness and cycling ability from the novice through to the serious club cyclist with 4 different rides of 20, 40, 75 and 100 miles. **For the first time ever, this year the 100 mile ride, the "Essex Tunner", will be a timed cyclo-sportive event** in a bid to attract the more experienced distance cyclists and we are hoping that the event will appeal to your club members.

Registrations are being done online via the everydaycycling.com website at

http://www.everydaycycling.com/edc/events/20080608_orchid_cycle_essex.aspx

further information can be found on our website

<http://www.orchid-cancer.org.uk/index.aspx?expand=Events>

<http://www.orchid-cancer.org.uk/index.aspx?expand=Events&file=E-orchidcycle>

Orchid is the only UK cancer charity to focus entirely on the three uniquely male cancers - prostate, testicular and penile cancer - and the funds raised from OrchidCycle Essex will help to save men's lives from these dreadful diseases.

Thanks so much for your time and I look forward to hearing from you and seeing some of your members on the day.

With best wishes,
Lucy

Audax

March 30 th	Start of Summertime Start at Costello's Café Fairlands Valley Park Stevenage. Three distances available 63k, 115k and 210k. Sign on for 09.30 for a 10.00 Start.
------------------------	--

Media Watch

Some of you may have seen this advert in last weeks Cycling Weekly, I think it's a great advert and worth reprinting here.

TT/ROAD BIKE

55cm Bianchi Mega pro frameset (Argos respray Silver) Rolf Vector Pro Wheelset. Cinelli Angel bars. Campag Veloce groupset. Amrosio carbon bladed fork seat pin. Look pp296 pedals. Excellent condition. Ridden twice since built. Marriage kids obesity and hairy legs forces sale £550 ono.

I think he's made a good case for keeping the bike, and if he had a wise wife she would encourage him to keep the bike *and* ride it.