



# Nomads News

[www.hitchin-nomads.net](http://www.hitchin-nomads.net)

The news letter of the Hitchin Nomads Cycling Club

## Editorial

The weather over the last couple of weeks has put the block on grabbing the bike for a quick spin. My thoughts are with the members who have had to battle to get to work, unlike some who can turn over in bed and have a lie in during the week. Then we have one of our number on a world cruise, sunning himself on the deck with a cool drink to hand. I thought I would share the 'Saga of the postcard' with you that I received from Geoff.

We still have room for members to attend the club prize giving lunch on the **22<sup>nd</sup> February**. Please select your preferences from the menu below and then contact Frank Turner with your choices.

**Scott will be at the clubroom on 18<sup>th</sup> February with club kit for sale.**

The revamp of the web site is a bit swish, a fine job David.

Many thanks to Jamie for his article. His article is timely because of the Old School competition that is being run by Planet X for the 2009 season, which includes our open event on the 7<sup>th</sup> June. I don't think we will see a 49.24 for 25 miles done in the old school style in 2009 but there will be plenty of sub-hour rides. I fancy having a go, and if I get inside evens that will be a result.

A gentle shiver that isn't anything to do with the weather goes through the body at the anticipation of the start of the season that as far as I am concerned is the North Road Hard Riders event.

A little bit of a diversion from cycling into the workplace from Peter Hanlon. He states in his article that he was waiting for results of a computer program to return. I just can't get the image out my head of Peter relaxing on a chaise longue in a toga popping the grapes into his mouth.

Clive

## February Club runs

<b>February 15<sup>th</sup> 09.00 Start</b>	<b>Country Gardens Melbourn</b>
<b>February 22<sup>nd</sup> 09.00 Start</b>	<b>Vanstone Park Codicote Prize giving Lunch 12.00</b>

## February Clubroom Hitchin Nomads Kit

The club clothing will be for sale at the clubroom next Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> February. If you have anything else to sell feel free to bring it along. Everybody that attends will receive a free water bottle

Club Room address is:

**The Settlement, Nevells Road, Letchworth.**

## Date for your Diary

**February 22<sup>nd</sup>  
Prize giving lunch  
at the  
Sun Hotel Hitchin  
12 noon for 12.30**

## March Clubruns

<b>March 1<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>Reed</b>
<b>March 8<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Barney's Café Hertford</b>
<b>March 15<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Waresley Garden Centre</b>
<b>March 22<sup>nd</sup></b>	<b>Café Bliss Bedford</b>
<b>March 29<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Burwash Barns Barton</b>

## CTT Reminder

<b>February 22<sup>nd</sup></b>	<b>North Road Hardriders</b>
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## Jamie's Famous Five

Some of you who trawl the internet for cycling stuff may have come across Testing Times on the planet x website. This featured some riders who were around when I started

cycling and started me thinking about what would I have as five great time trial performances. I won't try and come up with the five greatest, as this will be much harder. So below are what I consider to be five great rides. But what makes a ride great? Having some personal connection or understanding certainly helps, and you will see that most of the rides are from the era when I could actually ride a time trial with the hope of a reasonable time, but also achieving something, which breaks a barrier. For example, 1-00-02 may only be 3 seconds quicker than a 59-59, but the difference is much more to the rider that achieves it. So here goes:

49-24 by Alf Engers

Alf Engers had pretty much retired when I started cycling, but his reputation persisted. There were whispers of a comeback, and indeed there were the occasional rides, but age had finally got to him. In 1978 though he was flying. Engers was not "establishment", he wasn't worried that when he raced he might exceed the speed limit; he did what he wanted to do in his own manner. And look at the results. He had been after a 30mph ride and was the first to do this in 1978. What really sets his ride apart from others was that in the same event Eddie Adkins (he rode a Jack Hearne – so did I...Engers rode a Shorter, which at the time were based I believe in Luton.) had already broken the previous record by riding a 50-50. To break the record then by a further 86 seconds is phenomenal. Remember week in week out riders will have been straining to knock a few seconds off their best times.

3-31-53 by Ian Cammish

I always admired Ian Cammish. He seemed a very different character to Engers, and indeed some of the other big testing names of the time, a few of whom were prone to an element of self-publicity. Cammish would simply turn up, put in a winning ride and smile. He was the dominant figure over 100 miles for the whole of the 80's. I hated time trialling for more than 10 miles, so anyone who could ride the equivalent of ten tens in a row, each at 21-11, deserves recognition. The Nomads ten-mile record was slower than this at the time. It was a time that just did not bear thinking about, a 100 was a distant event,

where you found a rhythm and stuck with it. The time Ian Cammish achieved lifted this distance into a speed event. 100 miles at speed! At the time very few riders broke 4 hours. And remember this was before tri-bars and deep section rims. There was the odd concealed cable, which maybe saved all of 3 seconds!

Some event north of Bedford by Darryl Webster in about 1982

Darryl Webster was rider who could time trial, hill climb, road race and ride track – winning national medals at all of these. He was a young rider whose interests outside of cycling included punk music. I still try and imagine how someone who shaves their legs and wears lycra could be perceived by some punks, but as both tribes are, in their own way, outside of the more conventional norms of society they actually have more in common than you might think. John, you are punk at heart. Anyway, why this ride? At the time Darryl was flying, putting minutes into the opposition every time he rode. In 1982 I too was going well (for me) and actually entering open time trials (the road season generally started a little later). I rode an event, only about 18 miles, being two laps of a circuit, north of Bedford. Starting around five minutes after me (but not five minutes as I was not a seeded fast rider) was Darryl Webster. I expected to get caught on the second lap – nope caught before the end of the first lap. I have never seen a rider come past me and disappear up the road as quickly as he did that day. And for me, that is enough to be on this list. If you read the Testing Times you will see an interview with Darryl Webster – there are some sad moments to his story, not unlike Graham Obree.

55-00 by Tony Doyle

But that's not very fast I hear you shout. At the top you raved over a ride that was over 5 minutes quicker. What was this, all uphill? Nope. On one of Franks pre-war machines? Nope. It was on a 72" gear. Which puts it at 127 rpm – that's like riding rollers on the road. Ever tried riding your turbo at that speed for the best part of an hour? It hurts in ways cycling is not meant to. Mr Doyle – respect. The truth is Tony Doyle deserves to be in any list like this. He did things on the track for GB in the days when getting through

the first round was considered success (oh how times have changed). He was also a highly talented and well-regarded six-day rider who very graciously came and spoke to the Nomads at their clubroom at least twice. I shook hands with a world champion at one of the prize giving dinners.

Club hill climb around 1982 by myself

OK, so this ride doesn't seem to fit in with the above. But hey, I could never get up hills and to finish third, behind Andy Owens and Graham Hurst with a time of one minute and a fraction of a second (yes a fraction of second – look how long it takes now.....) was a ride that pleased me. So I don't care whether you think this ride merits inclusion in this list. I do and it's my list – if you want to object, come up with your own list!

Other rides of note, Ian Cammish under 1-40 for a 50, Chris Boardmans 25 record, Bradley Wiggins 10 record, BBs 12 hour ride, Clives 12 last year and so many performances by Graham Obree. I am sure the older riders in the club may recall rides from the fifties and sixties and you young whippersnappers, more recent times. Each period has its champions but as I said at the start, some personal connection, be it the time, the location or whatever, adds to the allure associated with it. Anyone agree or disagree with the above (but NOT the last one!)? Lets hear from you.

Jamie Tomlin

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### Blog On

Hi Clive

Here is a copy of my latest article that I post on my company blog. Feel free to use it in the club newsletter. It's a bit off the wall and it's nothing to do with cycling but it should make you smile

#### Grapes are a vines babies

A thought occurred to me yesterday while I was working with my operations team on a reasonably complex data issue. We were waiting for the results of a program to come back and I was nibbling at the grapes in the company fruit bowl. For those of you that don't have office based lives, the latest must have accessory is company provided fruit.

Fresh fruit is delivered to the office every other day, and staff get to munch for free. It's

a HR thing aimed at us all leading healthier lives. I'm all for it. So I'm sitting there eating grapes, big fat juicy seedless grapes, the best sort. I felt a bit guilty that they'd come in from Kenya via Airfreight, not so environmentally friendly, and I felt my carbon footprint flex ever so slightly. I'm eating grapes and suddenly the thought occurs to me, that these grapes are the vines babies. Grapes are the equivalent of eggs surely. The plant-world equivalent of an unborn foetus. I'm not a vegetarian. I eat meat and dairy, so really this shouldn't matter should it. Milk is not the innocent white-coloured water we pour over cereals, but the fluid used by a mother cow to feed baby calves. Eggs are unborn chicks. If vegetarians don't eat meat and vegans don't eat meat or dairy. What do you call someone who doesn't eat meat, dairy or fruit and vegetables??

Answers on a postcard...

Peter

**If grapes are the vines babies, what is wine?**

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### *Sunday Lunch at the Sun Hotel*

#### *STARTERS*

*Homemade Seasonal Soup*

*Chilled Seasonal Melon –*

*Served on a fruit coulis*

*Chicken Liver Pate*

*Prawn Cocktail*

*Sun Dried Tomato &*

*Goats Cheese Tartlet*

#### *MAIN COURSES*

*Roast Leg of Lamb*

*Roast Norfolk Turkey*

*Roast Topside of Beef*

*(v) Tagliatelle with Mediterranean*

*Vegetables & Goats Cheese*

*Poached Salmon*

*with Hollandaise Sauce*

*All served with Fresh Vegetables,*

*Roast & New Potatoes*

#### *DESSERTS*

*Lemon Meringue Pie*

*Apple & Plum Crumble with Custard  
Profiteroles with Chocolate Sauce*

*£10.00 Two Courses*

*£12.75 Three Courses*

Could you please let Frank know what your preference is.

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**The Saga of the Postcard**

Tuesday 27th January 2009

Hi Clive

Remembering your request for a postcard from afar, I duly prepared one for you, with a splendid picture of the Aurora. This was early yesterday morning when the ships postal service was just swinging into action.

As they provide the necessary postage stamp and post box on board I went to reception to obtain said stamp. The response was "sorry sir we don't have any yet". I decided to return the postcard to my cabin and proceed with my all day excursion (see later attachment) and deal with the problem later.

This morning I was off on another early morning excursion, but after returning about 14:00, I spent about 20 minutes looking for said postcard amongst the accumulated piles of "useful and informative" pieces of paper that keep appearing from all over the ship. Having eventually found it I attached a postage stamp acquired during my morning activities.

I then proceeded to reception to find the postbox, during the process of which I was distracted by a fellow passenger having a very heated argument with a receptionist. I'm not sure what it was about, but I managed to post the card in the "questionnaire box" by mistake.

Realising my error, I asked the receptionist if it was possible to "open the box", which was a much too difficult question for her to answer without referring to numerous levels of higher authority.

Changing tack, I asked for a postage stamp. The response was "sorry sir, but we've run out".

You therefore may or may not receive a postcard from Cape Town, but in case you don't you can rest assured that I will make a second and even more determined attempt at a later port on a later date.

Bye for now

Geoff

Foot Note

I received the card from Geoff on the Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> February.

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**Media Watch**

**Bradley Wiggins**

Did anybody watch the Fifth Gear programme on five last Monday? They invited Bradley on to the programme to do a cycle/motoring challenge where the speed differential between the bike and the car where both Bradley and the presenter competed head to head on the Millbrook circuit. The presenter and Bradley both got on a bike and rode through a time check to record their speed, which for Bradley was 30mph and for the presenter the speed was 24mph with a lot of heavy breathing. The next challenge was to get into a Maserati, which was capable of a 190mph, and drive around the two-mile circuit at Millbrook and see if Bradley could equal the presenters' speed. The presenter attained a speed of 152mph, and with coaching Bradley attained the same speed. Bradley's comment was that it was a similar sensation as on the track. My concern was that they were driving the car at these speeds without crash helmets and just ordinary seat belts. When you watch Top Gear on BBC and the personality in the reasonable priced car is wearing a crash helmet and has a proper racing safety harness.

Clive

**Zen**

I heard this comment on the radio.

Four wheels to move the body.  
Two wheels to move the soul.

**Mystery Member!**

Nigel has received a membership fee from someone who paid their £15 subscription into the Croydon branch of the HSBC bank on the 12<sup>th</sup> January.

Could you please contact Nigel at the address below to confirm your payment?

**SUBSCRIPTIONS**

**Your subs for 2009  
are due in January.**

**£15 per member £20 for families  
Please send your remittance to the  
treasurer Nigel Tooke**