



Nomads News

www.hitchin-nomads.net

The news letter of the Hitchin Nomads Cycling Club

Editorial

It is always pleasing when we have new members join the club, especially in the case of Michael and Charlie who are both 14 year olds. These are the first youngsters apart from Tom Durkin who have joined the club in many years.

Well chaps, this is our worse start to the Interclub series for many years. Thank you to all the riders who supported the club, overall there were some good rides especially from those riders who had to find their bikes buried at the back of the garage and had forgotten that the bike needed a service.

My thanks to Peter Hanlon for his article about the long weekend away cycling in Mallorca with James Cornell, Neil Fraser, Paul Riley and James Spence.

Clive

New Members

We welcome Michael Levet, Charlie Bexfield and Steve Makowski to Hitchin Nomads.

You are all very welcome and we hope that you enjoy many hours and miles of cycling with the club.

Race Results

Briercliffe 10

Tuesday 7th

| | |
|-----------------|-------|
| Neil JJ Fraser | 25:50 |
| James Spence | 26:56 |
| David Ledgerton | 27:22 |
| Nick Senechal | 28:09 |
| Jason Stuart | 28:32 |
| James Gomm | 29:43 |
| Tim Wallace | 29:44 |
| David Summerell | 30:51 |

| | |
|------------|-------|
| Non-Nomads | |
| Oli Groom | 24:55 |

| | |
|----------------------------|-------|
| Rik Palmer (API) | 25:09 |
| Andy Herbert Stevenage CC) | 25:32 |
| Jon Gilham (Stevenage CC) | 25:54 |
| Keith Carne (CC Ashwell) | 27:44 |

Timekeeper Frank: Turner
Pusher Off: Tony Furby

Interclub 10

Sunday 12th

| | Time | Score |
|------------------|-------|-------|
| Oliver Groom | 23:26 | 46 |
| Pontus Axelsson | 25:06 | 37 |
| David Ledgerton | 25:54 | 28 |
| Scott Edwards | 27:24 | 21 |
| Paul Riley | 28:03 | 18 |
| Clive Collins | 29:47 | 11 |
| David Summerell | 30:09 | 10 |
| Julian Siedlecki | 30:28 | 08 |
| Richard Bland | 31:01 | 06 |
| James Cornell | DNS | |

Total Score 185

Points Table

| | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|-----|
| 1 st | Beds Roads CC | 336 |
| 2 nd | Icknield RC | 326 |
| 3 rd | Hitchin Nomads CC | 185 |

Briercliffe 10

Tuesday 14th

| | |
|---------------------------|-------|
| Andrew Saunders | 25:19 |
| Pontus Axelsson | 25:33 |
| James Spence | 26:21 |
| David Ledgerton | 27:21 |
| David Summerell | 29:57 |
| Charlie Bexfield (Junior) | 32:57 |
| Oli Groom Puncture | DNF |

| | |
|-------------------------|-------|
| Non-Nomads | |
| Sam Hayes (BRCC) | 25:09 |
| Rik Palmer (API) | 25:33 |
| Keith Carne CC Ashwell) | 27:48 |
| Lyndon Lewis (BRCC) | 27:54 |

Timekeeper: Frank Turner
Asst Timekeeper: Michael Levet
Pushing Off: Tony Furby

Well done to Charlie Bexfield for setting a good time in his first 10 mile time trial.

April Club Runs

| | |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| April 19 th | Marston Moretaine |
| April 26 th | St Neots |

May Club Runs

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| May 3 rd | Saffron Walden |
| May 10 th | Panshanger Aerodrome |
| May 17 th | Lassiters Cafe Harpenden |
| May 23 rd | Afternoon Family Ride |
| May 24 th | Woburn |
| May 31 st | Van Hage Garden Centre Great Amwell |

Racing in April

| | |
|------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 26 th April | Club 30 Club Course Sign on 09.45 |
|------------------------|--------------------------------------|

Racing in May

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| May 17 th | Club 50 Norlond TT Combine Course F1 |
| May 31 st | Interclub 25 HNCC Club Course |

Marshals Required

The club are required to supply marshals for the Norlond TT Combine event on the 17th May on the F1.

Would members who are available to cover this event please contact Richard Bland.

Mystery Members!

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

Also someone renewed their membership at the HSBC Bank on the date below

02 Feb 09 CR PAID IN AT HSBC BANK PLC
HITCHIN £15.00"

Could you please contact Nigel Tooke to confirm your payment?

CTT Reminder

| Event | Course | Date |
|----------------------|--------|---------|
| Bossards Wheelers CC | F12/10 | 9/5/09 |
| Shaftesbury CC | E2/10 | 9/5/09 |
| Norlond TT Combine | F1/30 | 10/5/09 |

| | | |
|-------------------------|--------|---------|
| VTTA (Lon & Home Conty) | F12/10 | 13/5/09 |
| Lampard RC | F12/10 | 16/5/09 |
| Norlond TT Combine | F1/50 | 17/5/09 |
| North Road CC (25TT) | F14/12 | 23/5/09 |
| Herts Wheelers | F20/30 | 24/5/09 |
| ***** | | |

Nomads Vuelta a Mallorca

5 go mad in Mallorca

They call Mallorca the bicycle island, and from the moment you catch your first glimpse of this Mediterranean jewel, you can understand why. The mountains rise straight out of the sea on the westward side of the island creating alpine-esque climbs, rocky outcrops and the smoothest of descents, which curve their way through hairpin bends that unwind to a gently rolling plain to the east. Look past the Mallorca of package holidays and club 18 – 30 and find ancient Spanish villages centred around cobbled squares rich in cafe culture.

At this time of year Mallorca is the base of many pro and amateur cyclists preparing for the season ahead. Lured by the Mallorcan climate, this is a great opportunity to get in early season miles and climbs. Late afternoon sees lycra clad lads and lasses tucking into cafe con leche and the finest Spanish tarts (A far cry from the Silver Ball). Every lamppost holding up more than it's own weight in Carbon fibre.

The 5 Nomads who made the trip, James Cornell, James Spence, Paul Riley, Neil Fraser and Peter Hanlon, joked excitedly in the taxi to the base for the weekend. The picturesque village of Soller (pronounced Soya), nestled in a valley in the centre of the climbing country. Joking slightly less excitedly we sheltered under the Cafe umbrella from the torrential rain as we waited for the bikes to arrive. (Ryanair's luggage fees and the less than careful baggage handlers make hiring a bike an easily justified alternative. The chance to ride a full carbon road bike for four days, adds more weight to the argument.)

The bikes arrive, the rain stops and we're out for a quick 2 hour shakedown ride. Saddles adjusted, we ride down to the Port of Soller, in medieval times the easiest way in and out of Soller, and the point at which the oranges and lemons that adorn every terraced mountainside, depart for Northern Europe. Swinging our way inland we trace a pleasant,

but surprisingly steep, short climb on back roads that barely see 5 cars a day. We begin to stretch out along the road as those with miles in the legs set the early pace, but before long we're at the top and regrouping. The official translator for the weekend, Neil, has already impressed everyone with his linguistic abilities. As well as cycling, Mallorca is also popular with walkers and Neil sets several German walkers back on the path to civilisation.

The first descent of the weekend gives the little cogs their first taste of the action, and despite the wet roads, 5 of the biggest grins arrive at the bottom and ride back into Soller. There be plenty more of that before the weekend is out!

Exhilarated by this we tear straight through Soller and out the other side on the road to Deia. There's still time before the sun goes down so we tackle the much longer climb up to the top of the pass that leads to Deia. The roads are so smooth (so that where all the EU subsidy goes) and they switchback on themselves over and over again, as our climb affords us magnificent views across the Soller valley and along the rocky coast in either direction. It's getting late but there's still a steady stream of cyclists shooting past us down the hill. We stop at a bar, but it's shut, so it's jackets on for the descent back into Soller. After the earlier warm up descent we're really getting into the zone now and it's 20 minutes of sweeping bends and high 60's KPH as we carve our way downhill and back to the hotel.

Although we've only been out 2hrs and notched up 22miles, we've built up quite a thirst so an evening of cerveca's and vino tinto.

Saturday dawns bright and although a little shabby from a reasonably late night it's breakfast and a quick wander to the local bike shop to stock up on supplies and replace forgotten items. The English lady who runs the shop laughs as we joke about getting transparent gilets so we don't offend our sponsors. After far too much fanning about we eventually get going. James C has lined up a roughly 100 mile route tracing the up and down coastline to the south of the mountain range to the port of Andratx. We retrace our steps from the night before up to Deia, regrouping at the bar (still shut). The cyclists

are really out in force today and we pass the first of what may have been 2500+ cyclists that pass in the opposite direction during the day. Their mostly miserable b'stards though and as we occasionally get passed by the odd pro team, our greetings of 'ola' our ignored as they put the hammer down. The Nomads whippet Neil isn't having any of that though and he shows them his rear wheel with his lightning burst of speed.

We stop for coffee and cake in the village of Albanfayor at the bottom of a very long descent. It was our turn to tear past the hordes of cyclist suffering on the way up. By this point we're naturally settling into two groups, but the downhill evens out the climbing ability a little and we're all at the cafe. While we wait for what turns out to be one of the best apple tarts we've ever had, we look again at the map, it's already mid afternoon and we're barely a quarter of the way in to the planned ride. The relaxed atmosphere of the serving staff means we have plenty of time to discuss the route. Eventually the Fast group cut the route by a quarter settling instead for an impressive 78 miles of heavy climbing and descending. The slow group decide to retrace their steps back to Soller and settle for 50 miles.

The slow group benefit from the shorter ride and a bowlful of spaghetti and a bottle of red wine in the square compliment the days exercise. "Man cannot live on bread alone...", you need olives as well!! Another night of good food, good wine, and good banter follow. The atmosphere is relaxed, the legs tired, but the mind is still buzzing from an excellent day's riding and the thought of Sunday's ride, the "Puig Major".

Another fine morning and things are a little more sprightly. We know the drill, and breakfast and prep scoots along and we're out on the bikes by mid morning. By now the 3 days consecutive riding is taking its toll down below, and with unfamiliar saddles, it's a tender moment for the first 30 mins for a few. The route today takes in the Puig Major, the mountain pass that sits behind Soller at 1495 M from almost sea level. A long 26Km climb with an average gradient of 7% but with a nasty kicker at the end as 3 of the last 4 Kilometres are over 10% gradient. We climb through olive groves and lemon and orange tree orchards, tree lined hairpins circumnavigating the hillside as we climb up

and up, K after K. Neil Fraser again set the pace, at one point even racing a guy on a horse and cart. Neil won (of course), the rest of us had to ride through the horse droppings, a side effect of the excitement for the horse.

We re-group at the 1Km tunnel at the top, that takes us through to the other side and a short but exciting downhill stretch takes us to a lunch stop. It's difficult to read the bike computer screen when you go above 60KPH, and with no Max Speed option, we're left to discuss how fast we actually went. (I like to think I hit at least 55 MPH on this stretch, so possibly a new PB). Olives, cheese, Serrano, bread, coffee. We while lunch away whilst watching the passing cyclists, every passing female cyclist getting the full Nomads welcome. Both groups return to Soller by different routes, the fast group taking in a few extra miles before returning via the Col de Soller.

With the flight not until late afternoon, for those who are up for it, a chance to bag a few extra miles and climbs. We leave early for once and head back up the col de Soller, over the top and down the other side, rear wheels fishtailing on the damp tarmac. We turn at the RAB at the bottom and head straight back up to the top again. It's easier this side and now that we're warmed up we fly up in 20 minutes. As we descend the tight hairpins we discuss the run in back to Soller. It's a main road with smooth tarmac and downhill for about 4 Kms. We easily hit mid 70's KPH and with a Cheshire cat grin it's back for breakfast.

Queueing for the Ryanair check in, we're rudely brought back down to earth. As we listen to the arguments about luggage and photo id at the front of the queue, we while away the hours (yes hours!) dreaming of doing it all again next year...

We intend to organise another trip next year, the week before Easter for your diaries, all welcome. You'll have a great time and get some great early season miles in. Smooth roads, warm climate, great climbing and banter second to none.....

Peter Hanlon

Media Watch

The Ultimate Time Trial

Progress so far

Cyclist James Bowthorpe started off from Hyde Park on the 29th March to attack the round the world cycling record set by Mark Beaumont last year. James has set a schedule of a 120 miles a day to cover the 18,000 miles in five a half months and is due back in Hyde Park on the 13th September. If he returns on the 13th, he will have reduced the record by three weeks.

17th April.

James has completed twenty days of his record attempt with 2023 miles under his belt, he is just north of Istanbul.

His schedule has another 149 day to go.

His web site is:

www.wherewiththeworldisjames.com