



Nomads News

www.hitchin-nomads.net

The news letter of the Hitchin Nomads Cycling Club

Editorial

I am wondering whether we are beginning to pay the price of multi-channel television and where we are entering an age where each citizen will have fame for precisely 10.2 seconds. We have two articles concerning television that are due on our screens shortly.

Firstly we have Tim with his article about human power generating electricity and then we have Rene being interviewed by Claire Balding.

With hindsight I am glad I didn't volunteer for the Human powered experiment, had I been fit I think that would have been my cup of tea, but reading Tim's account of the day I think I would have been on my knees by lunch time. It certainly clocked up some interesting facts of what is required to power a house.

The interview with Rene Stacey and Claire Balding was superb, in fact Claire commented on Rene's comic timing. Although I was a bit concerned about whether Rene would be able to cope, it happened that she is recovering well from her illness and took to being interviewed like a true professional.

Welcome to our new members although Nigel and family seem like old members now as they rode the evening 10s which finished a month ago.

Insurance when you are on the bike is a must these days; if you haven't joined the CTC then you can always join the silver standard of British Cycling which gives you insurance cover. The BC contact in the club is Nick Senechal.

Julian is doing a fine job galloping around the countryside helping to sign the route for the Tour of Britain and finding time to send the membership daily reports. Thanks Julian.

I think all those who rode to Richard and Ann's for breakfast, felt that it was well worth the ride, and I for one enjoyed the eggs. I have this image of James' hen laying the egg then it was collected, cooked and on my plate all on the same day.

It is nice to see that we still have some members racing at the back end of the season; we need to keep up the momentum so that we as a club are

able to give a good account of ourselves in the **interclub hill climb due on the 11th October.**

Clive

New Members

We welcome Nigel Wilson and family and also Andrew Stevenson to Hitchin Nomads.

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

Racing Results from Richard Bland

Team Sanjan Design 10

Saturday 22nd August

Course F2A/10

David Ledgerton	24:00
Richard Bland	28:13

North Midds & Herts CA 25

Sunday 23rd August

Course F1/25

Neil Fraser	0:58:47
Simon Layfield (2nd Claim Member)	1:01:02
David Ledgerton	1:01:37
Richard Bland	1:13:23

Particularly well done to Neil, who smashed through the hour barrier for the first time and won best improvement award on what was a hard morning, I believe his was the only improvement on the day.

Icknield RC Charity Open 10

Sunday 13th September

Course F1B

David Ledgerton	23:55
Richard Bland	28:10

Richard

Breakfast Club Run to No. 30

Thank you to the 16 members of the Hitchin Nomads who crazily spent their Bank Holiday Sunday riding to St. Neots for a spot of breakfast. You helped to raise over £100 towards my chosen charity Macmillan Cancer Support. Your Committee very kindly agreed to support me once again and agreed that Richard and Ann Bland could host another club run breakfast. Your kindness has edged our fundraising target ever closer to the £4k mark (our total to date is approx £2050).

I jet off in just over 6 weeks to Beijing via Dubai (unfortunately no stop-over!) to walk 80km of the Great Wall. In a team of 30 people we will walk between 4 and 7 hours each day to cover the distance. We are all raising funds for different charities and have our own personal reasons for doing the walk. Mine is mainly for the experience as well as to raise funds for a great charity, my partner in crime, Daisy wants to raise money for the nurses who helped support her mum and step-mum in their final days after their battles with Cancer. Whatever our reasons, the trip will be an amazing experience, one we'll never forget, and I can't wait to go.

I've been asked to let you all have some photos when I'm back, which I'll make sure I do, along with a final fundraising total.

Thank you once again for your support.
Jess

Message from Ann

As Jess's very proud mother, I would like to add my huge thanks to Neil Fraser for suggesting, another full English Breakfast Club Run to No. 30, to the HNCC Committee for supporting Neil's proposal, to Keith Rapley for organising the ride and to James Cornell's generous hens for laying the eggs.

Ann Bland

Cyclists' Touring Club

As Hitchin Nomad CC is affiliated to the CTC, paid up club members are eligible to become CTC members for £12 a year compared to the normal £30. You will get CTC insurance plus all other benefits except receipt of the quarterly CTC magazine.

One copy is received by myself which is available for circulation amongst members. Anyone wishing to become CTC associate member, or would like to be put on the circulation list for the magazine, please contact me ASAP.

Frank Turner

A Star is Born

The club were contacted by the Lion Television Company asking us if we were able to give them any information about our former club president Harold Briercliffe. They said that they had found some cycling touring guides written by Harold and were thinking of making a series of six programmes based on the guides in the same format as Wainwright's Walks. They found the guides on a web site www.abebooks.com. My first contact had to be with our founder member and vice-president Rene Stacey.

She was able to put the TV company in touch with Harold's daughter Ruth; they also expressed a wish to interview Rene.

The TV company arranged to interview Rene on Tuesday 8th September, the arrangement was for the director, his assistant and camera/sound operator to set up in Rene's home and to be interviewed by Claire Balding who is also riding Harold's bike in the programmes. Although Rene has not been well of late she rose to the occasion and I think she really enjoyed herself.

The director Steve Bailey emailed me the following day to say how pleased he was with the interview and I quote "I have to say she's one of the most remarkable people I've met in a long time. Her energy, superb sense of humour and positive outlook on life are truly inspirational. It was a genuine privilege and pleasure to meet her. She was also a fantastic interviewee!"

There will be a series of six programmes that are due to be broadcasted on BBC 4 in the spring of next year. My thanks to John Houghton for sending the 'First 50 Years' book to the TV company.

Steve Bailey has offered to write an article for the News which I am planning for November.

Clive

How many cyclists does it take to charge a light bulb?

I'm sure it's true what they say, the camera always adds 5-10 pounds, so it was with much trepidation I decided to squeeze into Lycra for a television programme to be screened on the BBC later in the year. For those of you that didn't see the email from Richard Bland last month, this was an experiment to see if a bunch of cyclists could generate enough power to supply an average family home for the day.

John Houghton's thoughts on the idea were simple. "Surly you can measure the output of a single cyclist, measure the power consumption of the household and a simple bit of maths would tell you how many cyclists you'd need." But that's like saying, what's the point in cycling all the way to a garden centre for a cup of tea and a slab of cake when there's tea and cake in the kitchen cupboard. It's not about the end result, but the way you get there and the people you'll meet along the way that's important.

I agreed that doing the maths on a whiteboard in front of a camera would solve the academic question, but I don't think it would make entertaining TV, but then I'm not sure if 80 men and women clad in Lycra is essential viewing either. Anyway I decided to go a long and see what it's all about.

I arrived on site in Milton Ernest, just north of Bedford, with around 50-60 other cyclists at around 8.30am on Saturday. We were greeted with the smell of bacon butties coming from the catering wagon, which is a great way to start the day in anyone's book (apart from a vegetarian's of course!).

The studio had been constructed in a turbine hall of a 1960s wind tunnel. (For more details, see http://www.open2.net/bang/set_one.html.) Saturday was to be a technical rehearsal. We were taken into the building where the bikes had been setup and talked through what would be happening and what the expectations were.

The Collins family had been recruited on the pretence they were being observed to see how they interacted in the house and what electrical equipment they used throughout a typical day. The house had been especially constructed next to the studio building.

No expense was spared on the construction of a lavish four bedroom house or its contents. Unfortunately, not the same could be said for the amount spent on the bikes we had to ride. Eighty ex-hire bikes from Rutland & Grafham water had been laid out in 10 rows of 8, each connected to a converted turbo-trainer with an electric dynamo

providing the resistance against the rear tyre. The bikes ranged from flat-bar heavy duty mountain bikes to sit-up and beg ladies bikes (minus the wicker basket at the front!)

From the bikes we could see a live feed from various cameras, positioned around the house and a reading showing the total voltage output of the riders projected onto a large screen. We'd be able to observe the family turning on electrical devices around the house, and we'd instantly know we'd have to cycle harder to meet the demand.

During Saturday's rehearsal, there were only 60 riders, but with 80 bikes we'd been promised more riders would be involved on Sunday, enough to fill all 80 bikes and to ensure we could have rest periods while other cyclists stepped in to take up the strain. While there were more cyclists on Sunday, we certainly didn't have enough to allow anyone to rest for too long before being required to pick up the mantle again.

Sunday morning start was a lot earlier, 6am to be precise. We were asked to meet in the centre of Bedford and were taken by coach to the filming location. The idea being that the family, who'd spent the night in the house, wouldn't be disturbed, or be suspicious of, a stream of cars arriving in the early hours. Our coach parked up behind the studio, out of sight of the house, and we all silently made are way to our bikes, remembering to collect a warm bacon butty along the way.

The morning started fairly steadily with young master Collins waking soon after 8am, putting on the TV and then, realising there was nothing on worth watching, returning to bed. This was meet by loud cheers from the cyclists that had had to pick up their pace to power the plasma screen as it flickered into life.

Following the technical rehearsals on Saturday our main worry was going to be the family use of the 8.4Kw power shower. Luckily, Mrs Collins made use of the shower fed directly from the gas heated water tank and children, being children, didn't bother. There were groans all around the studio and a couple of squeals of delight from the women cyclists as Mr Collins stripped to enter the shower. Thanks goodness he hadn't been working down a coal mine, and we managed to keep up the higher cadence required for the 7-8 minute duration of his shower.

The production crew did a grand job in keeping us fed and watered throughout, but there are only so many Nutri-bars and bananas you can stomach, especially while you're watching a video screen of the family preparing a full roast dinner using their electric oven.

The afternoon session became a little more

organised with the production crew bringing up to speed a row at a time and then allowing another row to rest. The enthusiasm was then maintained by having a 10 second sprint off competition between the rows. The maximum output was 2700w or around 330w per rider of electrical output. It's a shame the scientific element of the show didn't include calculations to show the losses of energy in conversion of food energy into mechanical energy and then into electrical energy. One rough estimate made by the crew had suggested it took 5 calories of food energy to produce 1 calorie of electrical energy. I'd suspect it was a lot worse than that, but if they suggest another show to try and work it out, I'd volunteer, just as long as it didn't have to be done on a sit-up and beg bike again.

I'm not sure what the final cut of the program will be like or what the overall angle or objective was. I certainly don't think the program will focus too much on the sport of cycling itself as it appeared to be geared towards the inefficiencies of our houses and the electrical items we use. It was a little disappointing that there wasn't a big name from the cycling world there to try and demonstrate the power output from a true athlete rather than mere mortals. Who knows, maybe that gets added in the final edit, by I doubt it. This was definitely a program about buying and using efficient electrical items and general energy wastage around the home rather than about the efficiencies and health benefits of cycling (an opportunity missed or chance for another show?)

I won't disappoint your enjoyment of the program (currently scheduled to air on the 24th October) by telling you the results, but safe to say, it's a good job smellivision hasn't been invented. At the end of the show and after nearly 12 hours of cycling, when 60 cyclists crawled onto the coach for the trip back to Bedford, there was a certain unmistakable odour in the air.

I've not done a 12 hour, but I'd imagine this was fairly similar, although imagine doing a 12 hour on a sit-up and beg bike into a constant head wind (without the cooling effect) at the height of the summer and you'd probably be getting close to what we went through.

Anyway, in answer to the original question, I think you'll find around 80 cyclists will now be looking very closely at their electrical consumption and will be "changing" all of their light bulbs for low energy ones, just in case there's a fellow cyclist tucked away in the garage being forced to powering it.

Tim

September Clubruns

20 th September	Forest Centre Marston Moretaine
27 th September	Saffron Walden

October Clubruns

4 th October	Royston
11 th October	Woburn
18 th October	Ware
25 th October	Whitwell

October Club Events

11 th October	Interclub Hill Climb HQ Streatley
18 th October	Autumn Hilly
25 th October	Charlton Hill Climb

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 120 miles a day to cover the 18,000 miles in five and 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.

14th September

James has completed one hundred and seventy days of his record attempt with 17296 miles under his belt; he is 30 miles west of San Sebastian, having flown from Boston, USA to Lisbon and then the route was south along the coast until he turned inland towards Seville. From Seville he has ridden more or less in a straight line north through Madrid to Santander where he is now following the coast east to San Sebastian.

His schedule has another 5 days to go. On leaving in March his schedule should have had him in London on Sunday, unfortunately he had a bad case of Delhi Belly and had stop in Bangkok for five days.

According to today's *Independent* www.independent.co.uk page three he will arrive in Hyde Park this coming Saturday. He has increased his daily mileage to 160 miles a day so that he can be in Hyde Park by Saturday.

His web site is:

www.whereintheworldisjames.com