



# Nomads News

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

The news letter of the Hitchin Nomads Cycling Club

## Editorial

New members joining at this time of year is always encouraging because these riders are ready to cope with the winter weather. The flip side is that if you don't put the winter miles in along side the new members you know that come the spring you will struggle to keep up with them, always nice to have challenge. We welcome the Cave family.

Well done Roy on your ride at Blenheim Palace, I checked the pictures on the CTT web site, aggression at its best and thanks for the article.

Many thanks to David for both his articles, the article about the Dutch riders riding home from Wales is interesting. The fact that it would be the riders grandparents and great-grandparents that would have experienced the invasion and liberation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> world war years and these young riders are prepared to ride hundreds of miles (or should that be kilometres) to say thank you.

We are now at the tail end of the season where the 8 stone wringing wet guys come into their own when they defy the laws of gravity in galloping up hills at an unseemly pace, either in the Autumn Hilly or the Charlton hill climb. The club like to take a group photograph at the Charlton hill climb for the web site gallery as a representation of this year's membership.

Clive

### **New Members**

We welcome Richard and Liz Cave and their children Josh, Naomi and Sam to Hitchin Nomads.

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

### **Best event ever!**

#### **What do Michael Hutchinson and I have in common?**

We both took part in a 20 Kilometre time trial on

October 4<sup>th</sup> at Blenheim Palace, and we both rate it as the best event we have ever taken part in. And that is where the similarity ends! He beat me by a substantial margin and I thoroughly enjoyed what was only my second solo event this year in my first season back after a two year break from racing.

The event was part of a range of activities that day that included a family ride, two sportives, a cyclo cross and the Brompton World Championship.

In the time trial there were 300 riders of all levels of experience ranging from complete novices through normal club riders to top class competitors like Michael Hutchinson, Matt Bottrill & Julia Shaw. All taking part in an event on closed roads.

The riders started at 30 second intervals, with odd numbers starting on the left hand side of the road and even numbers on the right hand side. After about 300 yards there was a sharp right onto the circuit through the grounds of Blenheim Palace, on which we did 3 laps. What was interesting after the first lap was that riders who were just starting were joining the circuit as you came through. We were all instructed to keep to the left to allow faster riders to come past and at no time was it crowded. The biggest hazard was from the occasional Pheasant crossing the road!

The course itself was technical and quite hilly but great fun. When you completed the third lap it was your responsibility to move over to the right hand side of the road and enter a 50 yard "funnel" to the finish line.

I realised this week that it is 50 years since I joined the Nomads as a 13 year old and took part in my first time trial, a club 10 on the Hitchin-Sheffield road.

Our course then used to start on the outskirts of Hitchin and go to the outskirts of Sheffield, turn in the road (around a marshal who could stand there quite safely!) and return to where we started. In the late 1980's I took part in the Isle of Wight festival weekend time trials, where junctions and

traffic lights were marshalled by volunteers and the police and we were waved through as priority, but the event at Blenheim was the first time on completely closed roads.

Riding through a finish area where the crowd were behind barriers, there were official photographers, a commentator and where a BC official motor-bike marshal patrolled the course was great. Just wish I had gone a bit faster!

I really recommend you give it a go next year. I certainly will.

Roy Robinson

### Results

#### Blenheim Palace 20K TT

Roy Robinson (Hitchin Nomads) 45:42

Non-Nomads

Nick McCormick (Epsom CC) 33:50

Steve Robinson (Team Sales Engine) 34:04

Paul King (Team Sales Engine) 35:00

It is nice to see the Nomads represented at what I feel will be an event for all testers to mark in their diaries for the future.

I have noted the times of Paul and Steve (son of Roy) because they are ex Nomads, in fact Steve holds second claim membership to the club.

Nick is the son of Mick McCormick who still holds a number of Nomads club records.

If you go to the CTT web site there are a number of pictures of Roy giving it a 100% effort.  
\*\*\*\*\*

### October Clubruns

18 <sup>th</sup> October	Ware
25 <sup>th</sup> October	Whitwell

### October Club Events

18 <sup>th</sup> October	Autumn Hilly
25 <sup>th</sup> October	Charlton Hill Climb

### November Clubruns

1 <sup>st</sup> November	Waresley Garden Centre
8 <sup>th</sup> November	Panshanger Aerodrome
15 <sup>th</sup> November	Mogerhanger Hall
22 <sup>nd</sup> November	Reed
29 <sup>th</sup> November	Lavendon

### Hog Hill by Accident

There is much to be said for using a GPS when cycling, but it can produce surprises. The great advantage is to be able to do all the route planning in advance, and on the day just follow the arrow, concentrating on

the ride and the scenery instead of the navigation. This works even better with an Audax, where the whole point is that the organiser has used his or her local knowledge to present you with a brilliant route that you might never have found unaided - and if you're lucky, there will be a track file ready to download into your handlebar GPS.

The downside is that you can get lazy, rely on the electronics, and never bother working out in advance where you are going to be going. Which is what happened to me.

I'd entered the 200km Golden Tints event from Henham, as I have done a number of times before. It didn't start too auspiciously as, after less than five miles, my front tyre blew out owing to a side-wall failure.

Fortunately I had a spare folding tyre, but I was behind the entire field, which had not really had time to spread out, by the time that I had fitted it. I rode alone to the first control at Coggeshall as a result, where a few riders were still around. These quiet minor roads beyond Thaxted were familiar from previous events, but it's great to be able to go a little further afield than the typical ride from Hitchin.

I rushed my cake and cup of tea to avoid being last away. Even riding mostly alone, it feels better to be among the field and properly part of the event. I passed a couple of riders on the way back south of Braintree and via Dunmow to Henham, where the famous apple pie and custard was waiting for me; it might not be the reason I do the Shaftesbury CC events, but it's certainly an attraction!

Five miles into the second half, problems struck again, and I broke a spoke. Under way again, the section beyond Takeley was particularly enjoyable because it was mostly new to me. I passed through Hatfield Broad Oak on flat roads, where it was easy to build up a rhythm. Towards the M25, it became a little more hilly (for Essex), and I began to feel the distance, as I was now at the 80 mile point (and I carry a weight penalty!) I think we were taken over Theydon Mount (which is well named) on purpose...

I was still following the little arrow on my GPS without really knowing the area. It was

only a comment from another rider back at the HQ that had given me a clue where we were going, so dependent on my GPS was I. After a short section of dual carriageway, contrasting with the back roads on which we had spent the rest of the day, we were there.

Not having been to Hog Hill before, it was a really interesting choice of control point for me. The new, purpose-built road and BMX circuits seemed to be in use mostly by families on fun rides, although one enthusiast was complaining about the kids sitting down having a chat in the middle of the track, at the bottom of a hill! The view over central London is quite spectacular, reinforcing the success in choosing a location with challenging hills for racing.

I don't think I'll be competing there though. I rode once at Eastway years ago, but I haven't road raced for decades.

The rest and a few drinks seemed to make all the difference, and I rode much more positively all the way home, even enjoying the hills. West of Harlow and through the Hadhams, I was back on familiar roads. I even began to wish that it was a 300; I've never ridden one of those. Still, I obviously wasn't setting the world on fire, as each time I stopped, the same couple of others would catch up with me, and we'd have a chat before moving on in our separate ways.

I needed lights for the last three or four miles and finished in something over eleven hours, but as I haven't completed a 200 for a bit I'm happy - and I had seen the sun rise, as I drove out, and then set as I neared the end of the event.

David Rossall

\*\*\*\*\*  
\*\*\*

## **International Cycling Close to Home**

Cycling can be full of surprises. Riding home from work as usual, I was approaching the mini-roundabout in Todd's Green when about 20 cyclists in matching yellow tops, with a lead motorbike, came the other way. They turned left and I turned right, as usual, onto the back of the group. I think there was a following van as well.

It was obviously a club run rather than a race, so I sat in down the hill. One rider had a sort of torch (a smoking tin can on a pole) on the back of his bike, but they were all on good bikes in proper kit. What was going on? I chatted briefly to one rider, and it transpired that they were from the Wierlerstad 's-Hertogenbosch club, and riding from Wales back to the Netherlands to commemorate the liberation of their town by 53rd (Welsh) Division in 1944. They had just ridden 170km from Cheltenham on the second leg, and were arriving at their hotel (which must have been in Stevenage Old Town somewhere).

After 500 metres or so I had to go left and they right, so I wished them a good trip and left them to it.

There is more information on the story here:

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/wales/8300017.stm>

<http://wierlerstad.shertogenbosch.com/>

David Rossall

\*\*\*\*\*  
\*\*\*

## **For Sale Poyzer Bike**



**Colour Orange, Campagnolo throughout  
Frame size 22" and 24" to seat tube,  
Top Tube 20 1/4", Bar Stem 5" 3TTT  
Wheels; Mavic Reflex Super Sprints with Tubs  
and Hope Hubs  
Gears; 52/42 Chain Ring with 8 sprockets  
Bars; Super Competition 3TTT  
Saddle; Italia Turbo Matic  
Computer; Cateye Mity, 2 Classic Tool Bag  
Zefal X3 Pump**

**Price £400**

**Provenance**

**John Poyzer built the bike in the early 1990s with SLX tubing. John was a small independent frame builder resident in Lower Sheldon, Bedfordshire who is now retired.**



**Anybody who is interested can view the bike at  
Emily's Teashop, Whitwell.**

**Clive**

\*\*\*\*\*

**For Sale**

**Santini Leg Warmers**

**Santini leg warmers Blue in original packaging  
and never been worn. Size Large £10**

**Contact Clive**

\*\*\*\*\*