

ISSUE No. 7

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## RIDING NORTH

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The Journal of the North Yorkshire D.A. of the C.T.C.

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Issue 7 - Spring 1983

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Copy deadline for next issue - 31st August. 1983.

## EDITORS' NOTES

With this seventh issue, RIDING NORTH enters its fourth year, during which time it has clocked up over 300 pages. (Yes, there IS meant to be an L in the seventh word in the second line). That may be a lot of pages, but it still is little more than half a page per member in the D.A., and surely it isn't much to ask each member to put pen to paper once in four years?

We are very appreciative of those regular contributors without whom we simply would not have a D.A. Magazine, but let's hear from the silent majority for the eighth issue. You don't have to be a Peter Knottley or an Ian Hibell - a simply worded report of an eventful club run or solo/family tour is all you need. You can remain anonymous if you prefer - so long as the Editors know whose work it is. If you are only able to manage some rough notes we are quite willing to knock them into the shape of a (slightly) more polished article if you would like us to do so.

So come on, you shrinking violets, don't be shy!

\* \* \* \* \*

### DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

April 17th	G.H.S. Memorial Rides
May 1st	D.A. Standard Ride - 100km in 6 hours
May 15th	Annual Cyclists' Service, Coxwold Church
June 5th	B.C.T.C. Local Heat (details K.Benton, 127 Greenshaw Dr., Haxby)
June 18/19	York Section Standard Ride - 220 mls in 24 hrs.
June 19th	Triennial Veterans' Rides (details H.Q., large S.A.E.)
June 26th-	Harrogate International Festival of Cycling
July 4th	
July 16/17th	York Rally on Knavesmire
July 31st	D.A. Standard Ride - 130 mls in 12 hours
Aug 21st	D.A. Rough Stuff Ride
Sept 25th	York Section Standard Ride - 100km in 6 hours

## AWARDS PRESENTATION and SOCIAL EVENING

The D.A. Annual Awards Presentation and Social Evening was held on 5th March at Guppy's Enterprise Club, Nunnery Lane, York. Fifty-seven members and friends enjoyed a pleasant get together, with a buffet supper followed by the presentation ceremony.

We were very pleased to have the company of J. Alwyn Taylor, the D.A. President, who presented the awards, and two Vice-Presidents, Norman Bottomley and Arnold Elsegood.

A highlight of the presentation was the long awaited appearance of the 1978 Centenary Ride Baton Book facsimiles, one of which was presented to each member who rode in that memorable ceremonial event. The highest prestige belongs to Eric Sanderson and Raymond Thompson who not only were in the D.A. group of twenty-two riders that carried the baton from Masham to Stamford Bridge that balmy May evening in Centenary Year, but who had also ridden in the Golden Jubilee Relay Ride in 1928. It was so pleasant to see them both looking so fit and well, and to have the opportunity to wish them many more years of happy cycling.

After members and guests had demolished the excellent buffet prepared by Mrs Ruth Dykes of Buttercrambe, and the awards had been presented, our powers of observation and memory were put to the test via a fascinating but far from easy competition organised by Ron Healey. Just how difficult the task was (to recognise over forty photographs of British touring scenes and identify their locations on a map showing only coastline and rivers) is illustrated by the fact that the winner scored thirteen (unlucky for some!)

The evening closed with a demonstration of head-banging provided to (by this time) a somewhat depleted audience by younger members, but who were old enough to know better.

A few days later it emerged that Mrs Dykes had actually provided more food than we could manage at one sitting, for early departing guests collecting their coats observed the odd 'doggy-bag' being filled - though we do not think for one moment that any dog was going to be lucky.

## BRITISH CYCLE TOURING COMPETITION

On the week-end of 11/12 September, my wife and I took part in the National Final of the BCTC. I had better admit from the outset that I was only competing by default as the winner of our local heat, Mike Haseltine, was unable to make that particular week-end. My wife was going as the first lady in the local heat and I was offered Mike's place in the final as the No.2 in the North Yorks heat.

We found ourselves a superb bed and breakfast house, deposited our belongings and set out for the start outside the Town Hall at Taunton. We had been told that we were to use OS sheet 151 and I had picked up the York Library copy in the previous week - not that I seemed to find time to look at it!

The crowd at the start were much the same as at our local heat - the serious, the carefree, the nervous and (like Ann and me) the apprehensive.

Our route took us out of Taunton, past (it transpired) thousands of hidden marshals checking that we did not mow down any of the Saturday morning shoppers and it was without hindrance that we came to the end of the first section. There followed a map reading/pace judging section and, as Intermediate Section riders will appreciate, with my immaculate sense of timing I was bound to be late and I was by 7 minutes.

On the next section the questions began. The hill climbing and the rough stuff were great, the questions were impossible. I cannot even remember the questions now, never mind the answers! After the end of the rough stuff, we were advised to walk down one section out of the hills and in fact we seemed to come down a quarry face to a junction where some local children had swung a sign the wrong way. Needless to say I took the wrong turning - and another load of penalty points - but I managed to back-track and find my way to the next question check and a quick word with Walter Lee, who had taken advantage of the overnight train to start a week's holiday in Somerset with a look at our efforts. It was then back to Croscombe Youth Hostel via another track for a cup of tea whilst I, as one of the earlier starters, waited for Ann.

An exchange of stories with other competitors and we were away to get changed for the evening social and something to eat. We dined with Keith Wray who had watched us pass at least twice during the afternoon from his post as a hidden marshal at two of the more complicated junctions. We sat around chatting waiting for the provisional mid term results and, horror of horrors, Ann was beating me by 2½ points! A better estimate of time, a few more inspired guesses at those \*\*\*!!\* questions and there it was - the humiliation! I resolved to do better the following morning.

Sunday started damp and misty but we soon warmed up as we sweated over the map reading. I felt better now - I was within the time and with only one small slip I felt confident of a good score. Within three miles however, I was hot and bothered. A careless misread of the map saw me turn left instead of right with a marshal to note a penalty point against my number. The coffee break followed this section and another map reading exercise started the next section. Our destination lay due north but, with the southern bent for trickery, the route had us heading due south before turning again to go north. I did not find two of the seven churches which we were supposed to pass, but with the consolation that many others had failed to do so too.

It was at this break that there was another worry. As cycling widows will know, it is lack of opportunity rather than enthusiasm that prevents the ladies clocking up the miles and Ann's total mileage in the previous three months had been thirty or so leisurely miles touring the New Forest, and when a marshal said that she had had to turn back at the start and this included one or two steepish hills, I began to wonder exactly what had happened.

My run back to the hostel was uneventful and it was with some relief that I found out that Ann had turned back not because of some physical or mechanical break-down but simply because she had made a wrong turn out of the hostel at the start and had become hopelessly lost. She had therefore gone back and was plodding round the proper course.

She was the last finisher, but not by much, and we tucked into an excellent three-course chicken dinner provided at the Youth Hostel whilst the organisers busied themselves over the marking.

It was not to be either Ann's or my own year to win anything, but nevertheless I did have a secret chuckle and sigh of relief when I was placed thirty-second and Ann was placed thirty-fourth.

Looking back on the competition, I would say that the standard required is no higher than that which we set in our own heat and indeed our local heat has attracted riders from outside the D.A. who wish to ride it simply because we come up to the National Final Standard. The second point is that as Ann proved, it is not necessary to be a mile eater to compete satisfactorily at National level. What it does require is a modicum of luck and/or inspired guesses at some of the nature and general knowledge questions. We are compiling such a list at the present time in readiness for the torture on June 5th, so book your places now.

KEITH BENTON

\* \* \* \* \*

### HARROGATE FESTIVAL

The D.A. and Audax UK are putting together a series of Audax rides for the Harrogate Festival. These include on the first Sunday, June 26th, a hilly 150 or 200 kilometre ride. Briefly the course is Harrogate, Otley, Pateley Bridge, Grassington, Horse House, Middleham, Healey, Lofthouse, Pateley Bridge, Harrogate with the extra 50 km spur available from Middleham to Richmond and back.

The mid-week events are 200 kilometres either out to the East coast or a Moors route via Helmsley, Bilsdale, Westerdale, Rosedale, Malton, Fridaythorpe, York and Harrogate.

The final event on Sunday July 3rd is the traditional 100 kilometre Super Grimpeur event on Greenhow Hill.

Full details of these events will be available later in the local shops and on the coming runs list.

The D.A. is also promoting an event in the second week in September from York to Scarborough, Flamborough, Hornsea and back, and again full details will be available nearer the time.



## BE A TOURING EXPLORER

What is the wording on the church clock-face at Fridaythorpe?

What is the name of an American on a plaque outside  
Flamborough lighthouse?

In whose memory is Egton Cross erected?

If you can answer these and other questions you could be on the way to gaining a CTC Touring Explorers Award. The T.E.A. scheme is divided into four classes beginning with the county award for visiting six specified places in one of the counties in your area. Next comes the Area award for visiting six places in every county in the chosen area. Following this we have a Regional award for visits to six places in all areas of the region. The National Award will go to those who visit six specified locations in all five regions of Great Britain. A super tourist no less!

The scheme is particularly suited to young cyclists but is open to all CTC members. Spring is a fine time to begin, so write now to Headquarters (enclosing S.A.E.) for local list. You may wish to start with England B Region - N.E.Area, that includes county groups Cleveland/North Yorks. and South Yorks/Humberside. Alternatively, if you stay at a Youth Hostel the questions for that area will be available from the warden. Entry to the competition is free.

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### ADDITIONS TO CATERING LIST

- |               |  |
|---------------|--|
| BOROUGHBRIDGE | - Farndale Guest House, Horsefair.<br>m/coffee, lunches, teas, snacks.<br>open winter all day. |
| MILLINGTON    | - Rambler's Rest - soup, snacks, coffee,<br>meals if ordered, Tel. Pocklington 2567            |
| WENTBRIDGE    | - Corner Cafe.   |

We hope to publish a full revised catering list in the next issue of Riding North. If you know of any good cafe or hostelry in our area which welcomes cyclists please let us know as soon as possible.

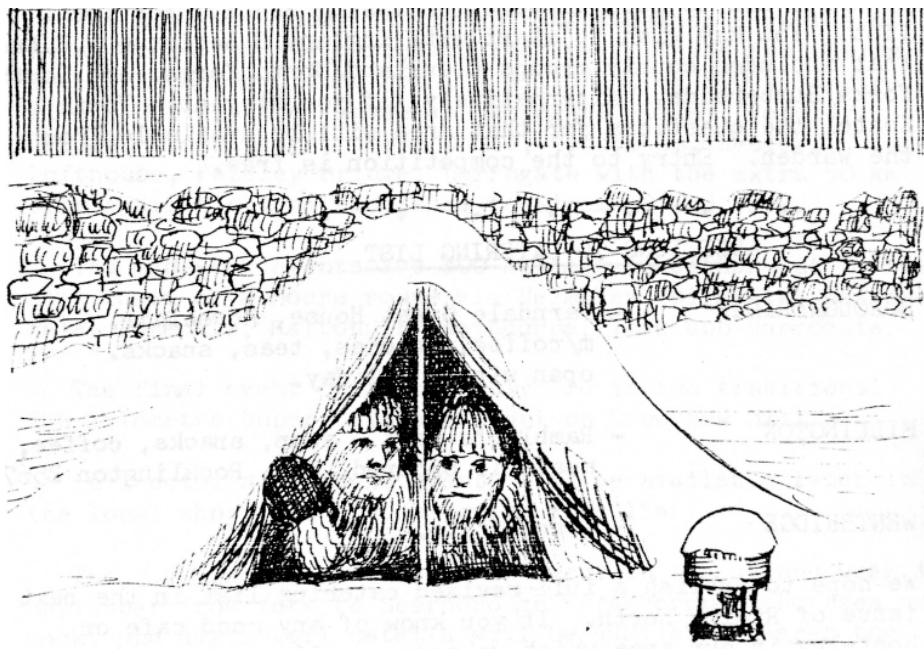
## RIDE-OUT LUNCHEON, 1983

York Section organised their annual ride-out luncheon on 23rd January. Most of the thirty-seven at table had ridden to the Ship Inn, Aldborough, near Boroughbridge by a circuitous route on a calm sunny morning between hedges white with hoar frost.

Unfortunately, owing to the proprietors' absence on holiday, the catering did not match the standard set last year. Photographs of some of the more mature members taken by Mike Cooper suggest that the deficiencies of the solid victuals may have been more than compensated by the liquid kind. Whatever the reason, it was a happy group that set off for the more direct return journey.

Pausing before Dunsforth was reached to repair a burst in a tyre which had been looking unreliable all morning, we eventually crossed Aldwark bridge and traversed Beningborough Park amid memories of last year's skating on bikes.

\* \* \* \* \*



IT'S QUIET FOR A HOLIDAY WEEKEND.

## TRY HOSTELLING

It is an astounding fact that each year many people join Y.H.A. but never get round to staying at a hostel. They may be uneasy about going alone or unsure how to begin, but this year the Association is aiming to help newcomers.

A special weekend has been arranged for April 8 - 10 when members can introduce their friends to hostelling, and newcomers will be specially welcome at all hostels. Non-members will be able to stay at normal charges without the need for even a guest pass.

That weekend, Aysgarth features a Saturday guided walk in Herriot country, with a talk in the evening by Brian Sinclair, the real-life Tristan.

At Earby on April 22-24 there will be a railway history weekend including a day-trip on the Settle-Carlisle line and a visit to the Yorkshire Dales Railway.

Again at Earby on May 6-8 a Canals and Brewery weekend is planned, visiting a local real ale brewery and a trip on the Leeds-Liverpool canal at its most scenic.

A hostel weekend with York Y.H.A. Group has been arranged for April 16 at Thixendale, then at May Day holiday weekend, April 30, they go to Once Brewed on Hadrian's Wall.

\* \* \* \* \*

## Y.H.A. LOCAL GROUP (YORK)

Y.H.A. members in York now meet on alternate Fridays at 8.00 pm in Guppy's Enterprise Club, Nunnery Lane, York. For a membership fee of 30p plus 30p per meeting you can join other hostellers for a chat and to help plan hostelling weekends.

If you are interested, please contact Gerry Boswell, 19 The Reeves, Acomb. Tel. 790119.

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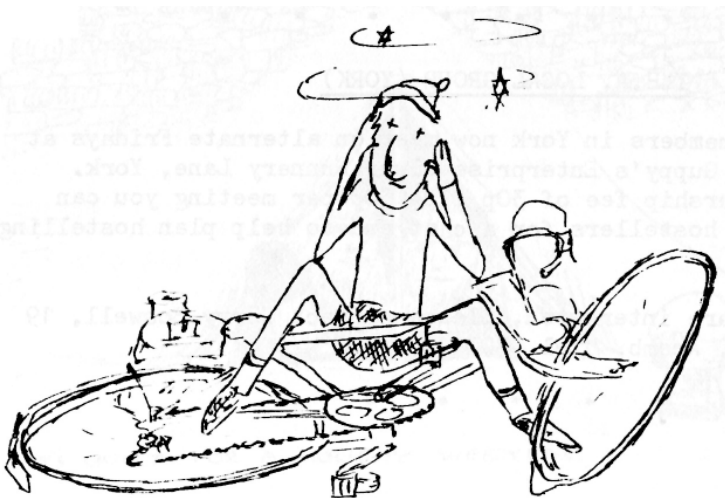
## BALANCING ON TWO WHEELS (OR NOT)

### A Behaviourist Theory.

May I congratulate Mr Peter Main on his extremely interesting article confirming my own work on this subject. Some time ago I had published in Scientific Armenian a series of articles (see footnote) and I refer to them now to correct a "sin of omission", for while explaining how a cycle stays upright, Peter makes no attempt to explain why they fall down.

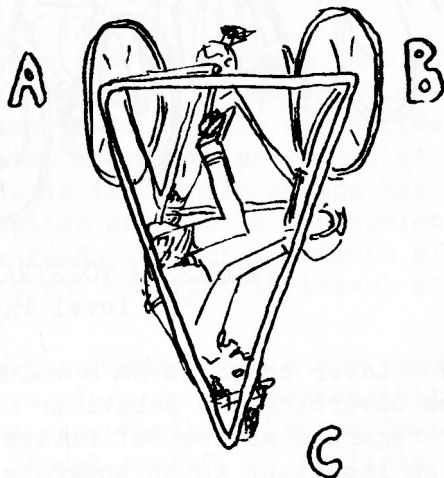
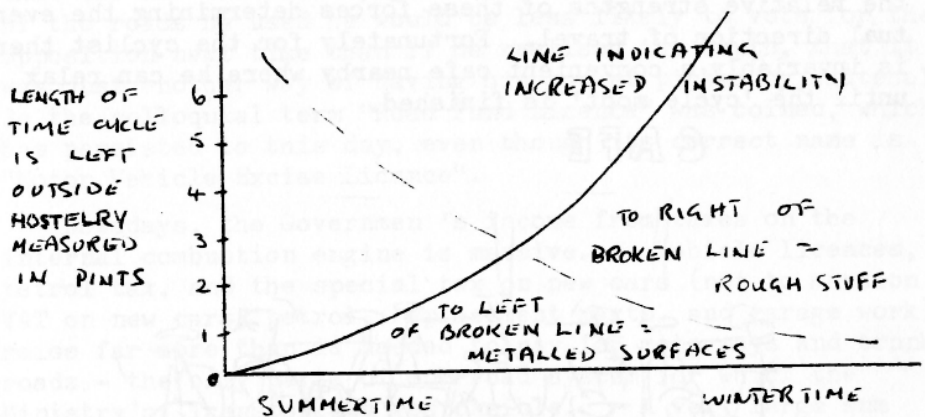
My paper entitled "The Unbalanced Cyclist" introduces and analyses fully a number of important concepts to explain how and why cycles fall over. These lead me to believe that cycles are sensitive to unfavourable conditions and react to them. Regrettably I can only summarise these ideas here.

The more perceptive pedallers among you will already have noticed a significant diurnal variation in the incidence of toppling cycles, reaching two peaks, one mid-afternoon, the other late evening. Uncannily, after interviewing the owners of a large number of these cycles, it transpired that many of the cycles had been left for some time in either exposed or otherwise inclement conditions against hostelry walls. One is led to suppose that somehow such exposure temporarily disrupts the cycle's innate sense of balance. There also exists evidence for a seasonal variation in the propensity for cycles to precipitate their owners to the ground. This being much greater in winter, particularly after frosts, than in summer, confirming the hypothesis that cycles dislike the cold.



This 'time' element does not constitute the whole argument but is complemented by that of 'place'. Hence in winter the normal susceptibility of the cycle is increased when in a 'high risk area', for example outside a fellow cyclist's house on Christmas Eve. This concept of place extends to summer, the cycle's dislike of unpleasant conditions being manifest in numerous falls when on rough tracks.

This, and a good deal more empirical evidence, was formulated into what I termed "The Law of Inherent Instability", a fundamental law which explains the interaction of these several variables of time, place, weather conditions etc. Drastically simplified the law may be rendered diagrammatically thus:-



It is possible (though not always desirable) to demonstrate this theory geometrically, using the familiar 'Base over Apex' syndrome.

I examined a far more mystifying phenomenon in a later paper entitled "The Law of Dynamic Gravitation, or the Anomaly of the Self-Steering Cycle". This law attempts to explain why cycles within certain areas are attracted to certain locations without conscious will or effort by the cyclist. I attribute this behaviour to 'specific localised power sources'. Though in this almost metaphysical field alternative theories have been advanced, a popular one, using my data, has attributed to these sites a religious or ceremonial significance. Others indicate a more secular reason, possibly a cycle 'moot' or parliament. Whatever the exact reason these points are liberally distributed throughout the country and the cycle is undoubtedly subject to an array of conflicting forces akin to that of planetary gravitation, the relative strengths of these forces determining the eventual direction of travel. Fortunately for the cyclist there is invariably a convenient cafe nearby where he can relax until the 'cycle moot' is finished.



PROFESSOR TOESTRAP, M.A., Ph.D., T.W.I.T.  
'0' level Physics with Chem.

Footnote: Later compiled in a volume "The Fundamental Principles Governing the Behaviour of the Bike", a work generally regarded as the definitive work on the subject, and probably as important to an understanding of the cycle as Einstein's Theory of Relativity has been to an understanding of the family.

## THE BRITISH ROAD - WHO PAYS?

It is widely believed that our road system is financed by tax on the motorist and that because we cyclists do not have to buy a licence we do not pay for the roads we use.

This is quite untrue, but do not blame the motoring lobby for it, They did not originate it, though they are happy to repeat it time and time again. Many years ago, when car licences were first introduced, the government of the day did not want to jeopardise their chances in the next election by alienating the motorist. Some wily politician had the bright idea that if the motorist could be persuaded that the new tax would pay for construction and maintenance of the roads he used he would be less likely to vote for the opposition next time than if he realised the truth, that it was just another way of having his pocket picked by Whitehall So the colloquial term "Road Fund Licence" was coined, which has persisted to this day, even though its correct name is "Motor Vehicle Excise Licence".

Nowadays, the Government's income from taxes on the internal combustion engine is massive. Vehicle licences, petrol tax, and the special tax on new cars (not to mention VAT on new cars, petrol, replacement parts, and garage work) raise far more than is needed to pay for motorways and trunk roads - the only parts of our road system for which the Ministry of Transport is responsible. A very large sum is left over to swell the Chancellor of the Exchequer's coffers.

As for these motorways and trunk roads that the motorist alone pays for, cyclists are not allowed on motorways (not that we would want to use them) and few of us ride on trunk roads from choice. Even the heavy programme of time trials organised on trunk roads in the racing season has negligible effect on traffic congestion or wear to the surface. In any case, legally trunk roads are public rights of way, and we have as much right as the motorist to travel along them if we want to.

The network of major, secondary and minor roads on which most of our cycling takes place is the responsibility of the local authority - in our case North Yorkshire County Council, whose income is called "local rates". Cyclists are ratepayers just as much as motorists, and contribute equally to

road maintenance even though a cycle causes far less wear of the road surface than a faster and heavier motor vehicle.

Faced with a widely-believed falsehood, fostered eagerly by the motoring press, and sometimes (would you believe?) even repeated in cycling magazines, the cyclist's lone voice in the wilderness hasn't much chance of putting the record straight.

"Why bother?", I can hear you say, "what does it matter if people believe we don't pay for the roads we ride on?"

Watch out. Apathy could cost you dearly.

With the man-in-the-street ignorant of the true facts, there is always a chance that some revenue-hungry government will introduce an annual licence fee for cyclists. Indeed, some people believe that this would have happened already but for its being realised that the cost of collecting the fee, enforcement, and maintenance of records would be pretty high (say, about £5 a head) so the licence would have to cost about £10 to make it worthwhile in revenue terms, which could be politically damaging.

Don't be led into favouring a licence scheme by the suggestion that it would stop cycles being stolen - it does not stop people pinching cars, so why should it be different for bikes?

The only sure way of preventing a future government from taking even more of our hard-earned cash than they do now is for each of us to become an honorary advocate of the truth. Even then, the gospel will not be spread overnight but, if we persevere, the situation will gradually improve. From now on, if you hear someone say that cyclists do not pay for the roads, say "Rubbish" firmly, but with a polite smile, and point out the facts about local rates.

#### MUDFLAP.

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SMALL ADS

Wanted, D49 R.H.Crank (165mm), or pair 165/170mm.  
E.Clarke, 56 Sherwood Grove, Acomb, York.

For Sale, Sun Tour 5-speed blocks in good  
condition. 14-24, 16-27 or similar ratio.  
Contact Editors to inspect. Offers?



### C.T.T.C.

The York Section Club Table Tennis Championship was held on 8th December as part of the Winter Clubroom activities. Spectators outnumbered competitors in much the same way as the Centre Court crowds at Wimbledon, and Walter Lee was seen to jostle two young members in an attempt to get to the Royal Box. Amongst the other distinguished spectators your reporter noticed Peter (out on parole) Wordingham, Photographer Lord Lichfield (impersonating Arthur Beecroft) and Keith Wray (impersonating a cash register).

The hardened 'professionals' soon disposed of the lesser mortals although there was a close contest between John Hessle and Phil McCormick in which John tried to tire his opponent by hitting the ball under the spectators' chairs as often as possible. Brute force and ignorance won the day and the captain went out 17-21 with 7 penalty points for next Sunday's run against Phil.

Keith Benton disposed of Andrew Kirby with a display of missile dodging and the only female contestant went out in the quarter finals when Pauline Wray failed to put Phil off his game with the fetching glances which had so easily distracted Gerry Boswell. Meanwhile John Green had defeated an out of condition (too much cycling) Gary Myers to work his way through to the semi-finals where he despatched the aforementioned Phil McCormick in a hard fought game 21-19.

Since he was late in entering the competition, Noel Drake found himself against No. 1 seed Iain Sellers and went out 1-21. The No. 1 went on to beat the veteran (and tired) Keith Benton.

The final was a disaster for John Green, although it must be said that the cruel and persistent barracking by 'Toestrap' did little to help his game. Having led 20-2 Iain tried for a spectacular finish to the match and promptly lost the next three points, but John saved the day for him by overplaying a simple shot so that Iain ran out the champion for the third time in four years.

A small but elegant trophy has been purchased from the tea money and will be presented to the Champion at the annual Award Presentation Evening. We

look forward to next year to see whether there is a young (or old) blood capable of toppling the Champion.

BJORN B.

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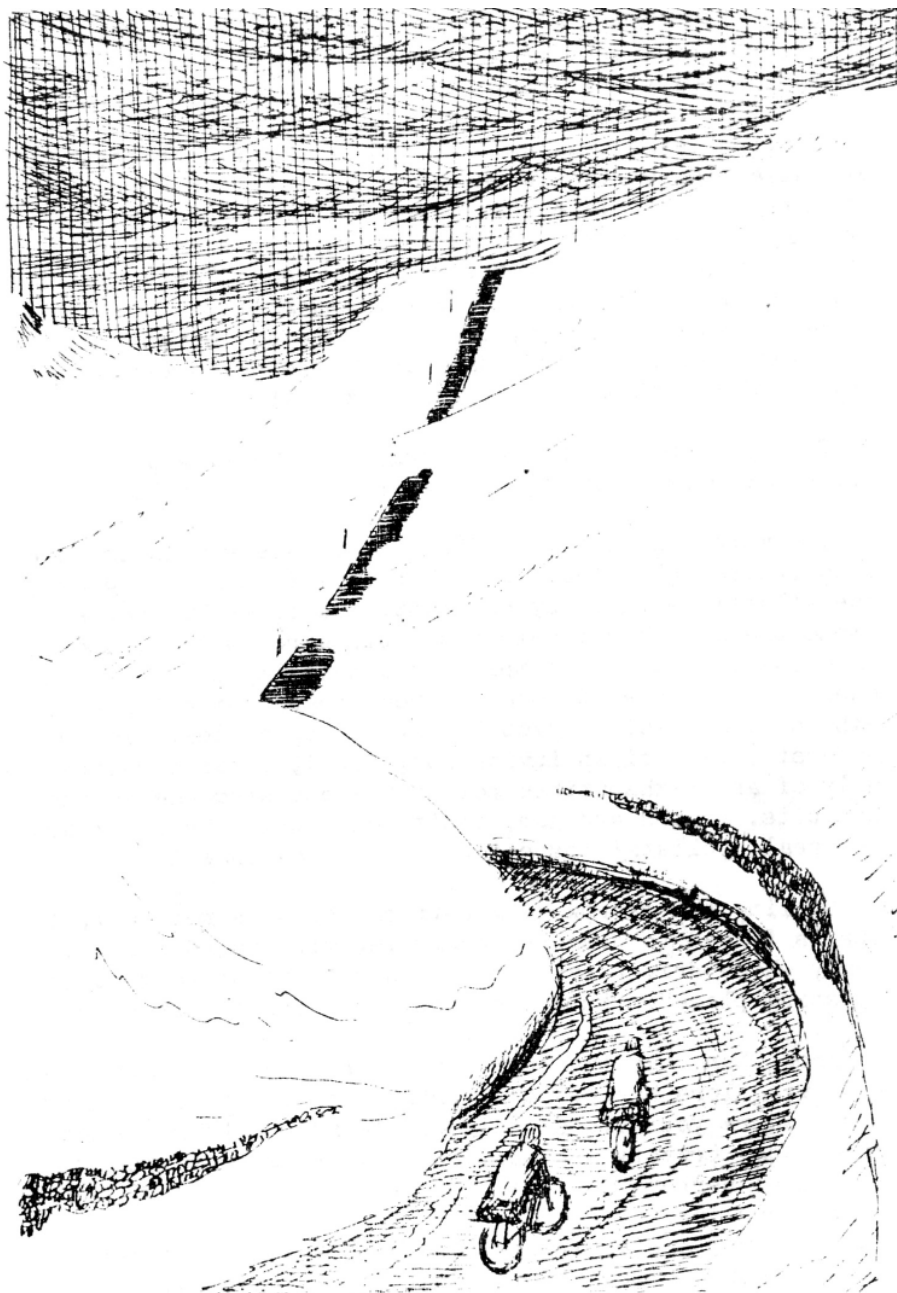
### ONCE BITTEN

Some time ago, I recall, there were just two members out on a winter Sunday ride - myself and a raw 13 year old. We had crossed the frozen wastes beyond Fawdington and were passing by the old airfield at Dalton. From some industrial premises emerged a large Alsation dog which began to snap at us. We accelerated but the dog continued to follow us for some time before turning into the drive of a bungalow. The youngster was, I realised later, somewhat shocked by this occurrence and a complaint was subsequently made in writing to the Police.

Most farm dogs seem to be kept well under control but there are dogs belonging to other members of the public that sometimes pose a threat to cyclists on their legitimate travels. Members may be aware that countrygoers' dogs must be kept under control when in fields with sheep, but may not realise that any infringement can bring a fine of up to £200. How odd that sheep are held in higher esteem than the public, for, if bitten by a dog in the countryside, a cyclist can only take civil action or apply for an order to keep the dog under control or have it destroyed.

R.H.

Editors' comment: An expert on dogs is adamant that they chase cyclists only when we are riding our machines. If you are chased by a dog, we are advised that you should dismount (on the side away from the dog?) when it will immediately become less ferocious. We have never had the courage to trust this method, however, preferring to rely on a strong pump and skillful aim!



SNOW ON THE BUTTERTUBS PASS

## THE HEBRIDES RIDES BY BIKE

Have you planned your 1983 tour yet? If not, think about the Hebrides, which are well worth a visit (and if you have, there is always next year).

The two largest islands among the Inner Hebrides, Mull and Skye, are worth a week each, and have the advantage of being more accessible than those in the outer group. The scenery is wonderful, traffic is light even on main roads at the height of the summer, and you have plenty of choice between easy terrain, rough stuff and hills. Excellent B&B places are easily found, or there are many opportunities for the camper either to get back to nature or to relax in the luxury of hot showers on formal camp sites.

Oban is your stepping-off point for Mull, and for Skye you can choose between Mallaig or Kyle of Lochalsh.

The more remote Outer Hebrides, or Western Isles, are uncompromisingly bleak, with hardly a tree standing against the Atlantic winds. By contrast, the friendly people are among the most hospitable you could care to meet, and meet them you should, for camping is almost impossible - the choice being between rock and peat bog. Being forced into B&B is no hardship - "you'll have a cup of tea?" is an understatement of an invitation, for it often consists not only of an inexhaustible pot of tea but also cheese and biscuits, scones and jam, fruit cake etc. The breakfasts are real cyclists' foundations for a day awheel.

Cycling the narrow single-track roads is not easy, for one is forced to dismount every few minutes to avoid a heavy lorry whose driver evidently does not intend to wait for a "passing place". But this should not spoil your tour.

From Oban take the ferry to Lochboisdale on South Uist, ride via Flora MacDonald's birthplace to Benbecula and North Uist, where you have a choice of ferry - either the small once-a-day private service from Newtonferry via the tiny island of Berneray to Rodel on the southern tip of Harris, or the car ferry from Lochmaddy to Tarbert a little farther north. From there explore this double island of Harris and Lewis - don't miss the stone circle at Carloway.

To get back to the mainland take the car ferry from Stornoway to Ullapool (or Tarbert to Uig on Skye if you have the time to see more of this attractive island)

You won't regret deciding to visit these delightful places.

\* \* \* \* \*

### TRAVEL CORNER

From British Rail we now have further developments on the carriage of cycles by InterCity 125 trains. North-south travellers on the East Coast Main Line routes have now a number of trains available midweek on which up to five bikes are accepted, subject to reservation. The booking fee is 70p and bookings must be made before 6 pm the previous day where the computerised booking system is operated. For 70p you receive a label, to be attached to your bicycle, which has a tear-off ticket.

However, from May 22nd there will be a charge for cycles so carried, which will be half the adult fare for ticket held, subject to a maximum £3 for a single journey and £6 return. The East Coast Line trains that can be used midweek are: Southbound from York, 6.15, 7.48, 8.00, 8.47 and 9.51 to King's Cross etc.; from Bradford, 6.38, and Leeds, 7.05/7.35 to King's Cross; and 7.00 Hull/7.54 Doncaster to King's Cross. Going north from King's Cross at 8.04 to Hull, 8.50 to Doncaster, Wakefield and Leeds, 9.30 to Doncaster, York and Newcastle, 9.50 to Doncaster Wakefield and Leeds, 10.35 to Newcastle and Edinburgh. It will be noted that riders from Leeds or York are still unable to travel north midweek to points beyond Newcastle except on overnight services, but they can use the ex Liverpool trains and change at Newcastle on to the 10.35 from King's Cross.

The midweek ban on cycles being carried by 125s on North-East/South-West trains through Birmingham and Bristol remains in force but Midland HSTs can take bicycles, within limits of space, on all but the 19.30 from Sheffield and 21.00 from St. Pancras. Again the half fare will apply from May 22nd but reservations are not necessary.

York cyclists should note that if travelling to London on the Saver ticket at £14 return, it can be used for the 8.00 train which takes cycles (Mon-Sat) but you are limited to return Saturday afternoon or Sunday.

## CHOOSING A BIKE - PART 2

In the first in this occasional series we looked at the type of frame to be chosen and in this article I would like to consider the question of wheels.

Almost invariably we are discussing the 27" type wheel when talking about the kind of cycling that most members prefer, and it is in and around this size that there is the most choice.

Looking at the hub of the wheel to start with, there are two main considerations, one being the type of fastening to the frame and the other being the size of the flange of the hub itself.

The quick-release method for wheel fixing is universally accepted as being the best for road usage and certainly so far as the tourist is concerned. It can have the added bonus that it is one fewer spanner to carry if the wheels can be detached by movement of one small lever. There is the possibility of the skewer breaking but it happens so rarely that it can safely be forgotten.

The subject of the size of the flange is rather more a question of personal choice. Large flange hubs are said to transmit torque better than the small flange and are in consequence used almost exclusively in tandems, but for most solo cycling this is likely to be of little importance and probably the best advice is to have your wheels built by a proven wheel builder for the quality of the build is far and away the most crucial factor in a good wheel. A reputable wheel builder will gladly recommend a spoking arrangement (e.g. crossed three) to suit the kind of riding you intend to do.

So far as rims are concerned, the alloy rim has become the accepted norm although it is true to say that whilst it will accept more rough usage than a steel rim, if it is severely buckled or has a flat in it, it is not as easy to coax back to its original shape.

I mentioned earlier that the 27" wheel is the norm. However there is the continental equivalent which is termed the 700C and this is the equivalent of the continental tubular tyre and is about 5mm smaller in diameter than the 27" rim. The 700C size is most popular in the narrow section and lightweight high

pressure tyres and it is only at the specialist cycle shops that you will find any of the heavier duty 700C tyres. The choice then between 700C and 27" depends largely on the type of riding you will do. If you are likely to tour or need something in the heavier weights then 27" is your safest bet since these are available in practically every village hardware shop. If you are more concerned with the faster type of riding, then it is largely a question of making your own choice. Up to one or two years ago, it was only the specialist shop which would keep the 700C size, but with the advent of the use of the size by such firms as Raleigh, it is now becoming more available in the ordinary type of cycle shop, although obviously these do not have the range of the specialist dealers. There is however the disadvantage that in the smaller towns it may not yet be available, and with the 27" size even a narrow section rim can be coaxd to accept the normal 27" tyre in an emergency.

I have deliberately excluded any comments regarding tubular tyres since these are not really suitable for touring and spares are more trouble to carry than spare inner tubes.

An ancillary question to tyres is mudguards, and in the Club we have always asked for cycles to be equipped with full mudguards. Anyone who has ridden in a group behind a mudguardless bike on a wet or muddy day will see the desirability of the rule.

It does however tend to detract from the sporty look of the cycle in the eyes of some of the younger members and there is no doubt that a mudguardless cycle seems to respond, handle and generally go much better than the small loss of weight and drag would logically suggest. Perhaps as with other things, it is all in the mind.

A quick word on the shorty-style mudguards so beloved of the "sports cycle" manufacturers and it is - throw them away, they are useless!

D.K.B.

## CHESTER SAYS "WELCOME"

Chester has always extended a welcome to visitors with the understandable exception of the Merediths, Rhyses and Cadwalladers so knowing that my Caledonian blood contains not one Cambrian corpuscle I was fully aware of the reception I should be afforded on that particular visit despite the unusual hour of arrival.

A meeting of the CTC Council was to be held in Chester on the Saturday morning which necessitated members travelling on the previous evening to be certain of being present for the commencement of business. Unfortunately for me the annual school day outing was arranged for the Friday preceding the meeting and my presence could not be spared. In the circumstances there was no possibility of my joining a train which would arrive in Chester at a reasonable time on the Friday evening and the only solution was to be on the train which arrived in Castra Devum at one-thirty in the morning and that involving a change at Crewe. On the night before a Council meeting I always choose to stay at a Handbook appointment as I cordially detest large hotels but I could hardly expect a welcome in one of our establishments at the time of my advent. Treacherously and guiltily I sought advice from the AA Handbook which assured me that the big place near Chester Station would be the oasis I sought. "Yes", said the receptionist in response to my telephoned enquiry, "we have a room and you may arrive at any time you wish." Beyond that there was just one slight complication; After the Council meeting the Mrs and I had to meet the BCTC Committee and local helpers for a Course survey so the tandem had to be available. So, the arrangement was that I should deposit the tandem at Leeds City Station in the morning and retrieve it in time for the departure of the night train. Dressed in anything but cycling raiment I wheeled the tandem to the front brakevan formally to observe the rite of being directed to take it to the rear van where one of the two chummy lads loading the mail confided his opinion that the tandem was a bloody nuisance. Fortunately I mentioned to a fellow traveller that I must change at Crewe for I was sleeping well before Morley Tunnel was reached. My new friend must have similarly succumbed as I realised by his violently and apologetically rousing me with "Sorry, mate, this is Crewe, we're just about ready for leaving". I was out of the carriage as quick as a shot then quicker than another shot back into the



carriage to recover the forgotten saddlebag. The Guard was preparing to signal "Right away" as I put the bag under my arm and sped along the platform as the fleetest wing three-quarter you ever saw, leaping over a couple of suitcases which were positioned to make the tackle before I realised that I was playing in the wrong direction. The driver sounded the customary valedictory toot, the Guard stepped on to the running board and I dropped my bag to gain his attention by waving my arms like the windmill inviting Don Quixote to combat. After a reluctant rearrangement of mailbags accompanied by some wordy information about being already ten minutes late I was handed the bike, caught my connection and arrived on Chester Station after no undue experience.

The man at the ticket barrier was so lonely and friendly that he insisted on helping to steer the tandem through the narrow exit and unknowingly receiving as reward a long winding highway of chaingrease on his trouser leg. Without pausing to discuss the latest trend in men's fashion I and the tandem hurried away with the freewheel ticking loudly as we crossed the otherwise silent concourse. My hotel was no more than a few yards away so leaning the tandem against its wall I entered deferentially to register my arrival and apologise for its lateness. "No, we've been expecting you, sir. If guests didn't arrive late I'd not have a job, sir. Had a long journey, Sir?" He had obviously left home with a heavy pack of Wigan accents which he attempted without much success to trade for local alternatives as he passed through the affluent Cheshire villages on the way to his present exalted post. "Would you cur for a cup of tea, sir?"

"Yes, that would be most welcome but first I'd like to put the vehicle away safely if you'll tell me where the garage is."

"Of course, sorry about that, sir; through the gateway at this end of the building, that was left open for you and I'll have the garage open by the time you drive round".

As I picked up the Bates the rumble of heavy sliding doors indicated that he was preparing to receive the Bentley. For the sake of effect I rode across the cobbled yard and immediately he saw the wavering light of the dynamo lamp he was straight back on the Pier or the Central Park terraces.

"Oh Hell, have yer come on a bike? Shove it at the back there so they can get cars out in 't mornin'".

He handed me the room key, the tea was forgotten and I was led through the outback of kitchens and storerooms to the foot of the stairs and told "324, third floor" after which it was a solitary safari in search of my room and a loo. As Wigan Willie no doubt confided to the day porter "That fellow who cam in at two o'clock this morning was only a damned cyclist: you'll get nowt off them."

Ah well, Saturday morning produced a good meeting with a good argument, the "Dublin Packet" produced a good lunch and the afternoon produced a sunny run across the Cheshire Plain to tea at Bangor Iscoed and a gang dash to Shrewsbury and the BCTC meeting.

It's a great life though, isn't it?

BOB.

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## PUNCHLINE

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...to good asking the couple  
join you in the Pompadour  
suite from Pampas through a gap they  
assumed was a mirror. They are as bemused  
as you. They don't care to ask but would like  
to know why a bidet designed to wash feet  
should be fitted with an over-rim parabolic  
spray-mixer. It certainly isn't clear to me.  
And anyone who doesn't know the function  
of a bidet and consults the brochures will be  
none the wiser. Armitage Shanks call it an  
*outstandingly practical addition to the bath-  
room—as is common knowledge on the Conti-  
nent*. One sees that with all the cycling people  
do over there, they need to wash their feet  
properly. The current boom in cycling in this  
country explains the re-entry of bidets into  
the market.

The typical customer is baffled because he  
can do little more than judge by appearance.  
He can sit on the WC and test height from  
ground but he certainly can't try the cistern,  
where most of his troubles will start. Gone  
were the overb... of yore That Were

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Kingston's 'Shoptalk', 9.2.83.



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The D.A. Committee would be pleased to hear from any member who may be prepared to play an active role in the formation of C.T.C. Sections in any other parts of the D.A. area, notably Harrogate, Richmond, Scarborough or Skipton. Please contact the D.A. Secretary initially.