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RIDING NORTH

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

Issue 12 - Autumn 1985

Contents:

D.A. Secretary's notes	2
Editors' notes	2
Wheels in Wales	3
Artist's Eye	7
A Holiday Remembered	8
York to Selby Railway Path	11
Brevet de Randonneur	14
Crossword	16
A Dire Warning	18
Ever Fancied Six-Day Racing?	19
Artist's Eye	21
An Ill Wind	22
Welcome	22
Technical Tips	23
Answers to Crossword	24

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D.A. SECRETARY'S NOTES

Despite what some forgetful folk have referred to as the worst summer in living memory (it was rather unpleasant, especially on Sunday runs), the DA Award Scheme has been surprisingly well-supported in this its seventh year.

At the annual Social Evening in the early spring of 1986 (date and venue still to be arranged), 15 medals and over 90 certificates are due to be presented to over 30 members.

British Rail's latest move to dilute their "free cycle carriage" policy of the late 1970s seems more than ever to be intended to discourage rail travel by cyclists than to help us get around the country.

With HQ's blessing, the DA has launched a campaign to persuade BR to have a change of heart. The campaign is spearheaded by a leaflet produced by Ron Healey called "Welcome Back to 3rd Class Travel", a copy of which is enclosed with this magazine.

Do please write to Cyril Bleasdale at BR Headquarters and tell him (without being abusive) what you think of his new policy. A flood of letters from angry cyclists is more likely to make these misguided people change their minds than any well-reasoned theoretical argument from CTC HQ.

* * * * *

EDITORS' NOTES

Regretfully, this twelfth issue of Riding North sees the first price increase since the DA magazine was born in 1980.

While we do not aim to make a profit out of the mag., DA funds cannot stand for long the kind of loss made on issue 11 - caused mainly by that well-worn (but never-the-less true) phrase 'increased printing costs'.

Even so, a rise of 5p in all this time is less than 1p a year - little enough in these days when commercial mags seem to go up every month or so, and by 5p (or more) at a time.

At 25p, Riding North - in our impartial view - is still a good read. For that, thanks are due to the handful of willing(?) contributors, without whom we would not have a DA magazine.

(All contributions to the magazine will be gratefully received - preferably BEFORE the deadline date!)

WHEELS IN WALES - the Hepworth Family on Tour

On a dull May morning we boarded the Llandudno train at York. One change and six hours later we alighted at Betws-y-Coed.

During our 1984 cyclecamp we had stayed at a riverside site just north of here. This year our "shuttle" trailer and tents remained at home in favour of a Youth Hostel itinerary. Mark, our eldest son, was riding his own cycle a Raleigh Micron - long distance for the first time. His younger brother, Richard, had graduated to the Hann trailer behind Mum.

We rode away through persistent rain, past the amazed stares of the tourists. You would think they had never seen a Hann before! A slow climb up the A5 took us past Swallow Falls to Pont Cyfng, where we rested in a lay-by. Below, the Avon Llugwy hurled in full spate through its rocky gorge. An awesome sight, missed by most car-borne travellers.

The rain stopped and we pressed on to Capel Cu rig Hostel, our first stopover. After dinner a forest stroll preceded a sound night's sleep.

Sunday dawned overcast. We took the undulating A4086 to Pen-y-Gwryd hotel. Here we paused for refreshment in the Alpine bar. Its ceiling has been autographed by famous climbers. Next we faced the steep ascent to Pen-y-Pass. Mark had shown a tendency to wobble at slow speeds, so we pushed up this section for safety's sake. As we climbed, the magnificent Neat Gwynant pass fell away to our left. We called at Pen-y-Pass to refill our bottles and let the boys have a rest.

Here Richard's helmet proved its worth. While playing he slipped and fell about three feet onto a concrete path. Apart from minor shock and grazes he was unhurt. A quick repair job with our first-aid kit transformed his tears to laughter. Then we pedalled away past a queue of vehicles vainly awaiting spaces in the car park. On the main road the local P.C. was merrily booking illegally parked cars. We hailed a greeting to him and swept off down Llanberis Pass.

To admire the view safely and have lunch, we stopped further down the pass by the riverside near Gwastadnant, then on through Nant Peris to Dolbadarn Castle. We strolled a while through its ancient ruins. A last lap brought us to Llanberis Hostel, our home for the next few days.

After dinner the sun broke through, and we strolled outside in the warm evening. The boys disappeared to a nearby brook to start a dam-building programme.

On Monday we took the easy way up Snowdon - by train. The peak was cloud-capped when we arrived. Deprived of the view, we clambered briefly to the summit cairn then returned, cold and damp, to the train.

Returning to a sunlit Llanberis, we cycled along the village bypass. At its northern end we diverged along an access road leading to a beautiful landscaped picnic area by the lake. Here we spent a leisurely afternoon.

The access road is built along the old B.R. branch line, and continues for a mile further north as a lakeside footpath. Later we pushed along this path to a point where it enters a tunnel under the A4086. Here pedestrians are directed to ascend steep steps to the road. We wheeled through the tunnel, joined the road at the other end and cycled back to the hostel.

Tuesday was devoted to Padarn Country Park. Again our seven-wheeled formation delighted tourists as we arrived. First stop was the former slate quarry workshops with its giant, 50 foot diameter water wheel. We were pleased to note future plans to restore much of the machinery which had formerly manufactured all the equipment for the adjoining mines. The vast range of skills which this project demands will hopefully provide some long-term jobs in this unemployment black-spot.

Next we rode the lakeside steam railway. This service runs via the otherwise inaccessible eastern shore of Llyn Padarn, along the old quarry railway. We broke our return journey at the tranquil picnic halt, Cei Llyndan.

Back at Padarn we climbed the path via the old quarry hospital to the hilltop. Across the valley we discerned the hostel with Llanberis nestling below. At our feet there fell away the great gash of Vivian Quarry. It cleft the hillside from top to bottom, the result of mining vertical elate beds, and contrasted starkly with the horizontal galleries which predominate on the site.

We left Padarn with a healthy respect for slate miners, past and present. Ironical, perhaps, that a renewed demand for slate now outstrips the capacity of this decimated industry.

On Wednesday morning we strolled up to Hebron Mountain Railway Station. The signalman told us that he drives a bus in winter. Most of his colleagues are also seasonally employed. We lunched to the panting of passing trains before returning to Llanberis.

Our afternoon ride was along the A4086 to Cwm-y-Glo, where we diverged to visit the nee-Gothic Bryn Bras Castle. A lovely tour of the house and grounds was concluded with tea and barabirith in the tranquil garden cafe.

The mountain weather report was favourable on Thursday, so we hired suitable equipment and walked up Snowdon. Sheep were our sole companions until we joined the main path above Hebron. We reached a cloudless summit in the company of many other walkers and sought a tranquil refuge below the hotel for lunch. The view towards Harlech stirred memories of our 1983 cycle camp there at the lovely Barcody Fare site near Talsarnau.

Our descent was via the Miners' Track. We rested on the shore of Llyn Glaslyn awhile, then continued to Pear-Pass, from where the Sherpa bus returned us to Llanberis.

Friday morning found us Caernarfon-bound. Upon arrival we left our cycles by the car-park attendant's kiosk at the castle. A brief walk across the harbour swing bridge led to the local park. After lunch there we took a boat trip round the bay. We returned on the outgoing tide and entered the castle. Later, as we strolled along its ramparts, we saw the harbour devoid of water save for a freshwater trickle from the Avon Seiont.

There followed a brief ride along Bangor Road to "Sunny-side" Guest House. Our cycles were secured in Mrs Butters' garage and she showed us to our family room with a lovely view across the Menai Straits. We changed and walked back to the floating restaurant at the harbour. Initially grounded, it rose onto an even keel with the incoming tide as we dined.

After an excellent breakfast on Saturday morning we rode along the A487 to Anglesey. From Bangor we descended and crossed the Straits by Telford's magnificent suspension bridge. It was disappointing to find that the Museum of Childhood at Menai Bridge had closed pending its transfer to Beaumaris. We dined in the garden of a nearby hotel with super views of the Straits below us, then back to Bangor for shopping and on to the hostel.

On Sunday we returned to the island and rode to the Marquis of Anglesey's Column. Our ascent of its interior was rewarded by panoramic views of Snowdonia. To the west the Marquis's family home, Plus Newydd, nestled among the trees. Just north lay the famous village of Llanfair P.G., slowly sinking into somnolence with the diversion of its A5 passing trade. We continued along the A4080 to Plus Newydd and spent the rest of the day at this beautiful National Trust property. Then, drained by the heat, we rode to Llanfair P.G. station and returned to Bangor by train.

Our last full day, Monday, was spent on the west side of Anglesey. Alighting from the train at Holyhead we followed minor roads to avoid the A5. After viewing the prehistoric cromlech near Llanfaelog, we joined the A4080. Lunch at Aberffraw was accompanied by the passage overhead of jet aircraft from RAF Valley.

We pedalled to Newborough and turned right for the short ascent to the Forestry Commission site. From its entrance we descended for over a mile through shady conifers. Eventually we arrived at a discreetly landscaped car park and picnic area behind the dunes of Llanddwyn Bay. A short walk brought us to a gently sloping beach, almost deserted in the warm evening. I paddled in the iridescent water while Jan rested at the foot of the dunes. All too soon we had to leave. We called at the "chippie" at Brynsiencin for tea before completing the return ride to Bangor.

Tuesday was going home day. We rode to Bangor Station for the last time. On the train I mused over plans for 1986. "How about Aberystwyth?" I said. "How about Scotland?" said Jan. Sounds like a cue for "Wheel tak the high road..."

Ah well; we'll see.

P.F.HEPWORTH



A HOLIDAY REMEMBERED

It was 1937. It was my first real holiday (before the last war holidays away were for the few and I was one of the many) and my friend Charlie knew someone who knew someone else who had a houseboat on the canal at Leven, half-way between Beverley and Hornsea, so he organised a foursome to hire it for a week. The foursome consisted of Charlie, me, Charlie's girlfriend Mabel, and Vera, the cashier from the tailoring firm where Charlie worked. Nothing untoward was planned or indeed happened, but as I had doubts that my mother would have approved of the arrangements if she had known I didn't tell her about the girls (I told her when we got back and I don't think she was as shocked as I had imagined she would be). It wasn't to be a cycling holiday really, but if you knew Goole where we all lived you would appreciate that it would have presented difficulties to use public transport to say nothing of the extra expense, so as we all cycled, the bicycle was to be the means of transport.

Everything was settled and the day approached for the great adventure. As the other three all worked in shops which in those good old days did not close until 7 or 8 pm, and as I was an office worker whose hours were until 12 noon on Saturdays (but who didn't usually get away until 1 pm being the junior) I was deputed to be the advance party, to cycle over on Saturday afternoon and have everything ready for the others on arrival on Sunday. It was a pleasant ride in good weather (indeed the weather for the whole week was pretty good - summers were on the whole much better in those 'immediately preceding the war' years than 1985) but the boat was already occupied, not by people but by the largest and most varied family of spiders that I have ever seen. Literally hundreds of them and me scared to death of spiders. I don't know how I survived that night with such companions but I did and slept well and breakfasted alone. During Saturday evening and Sunday morning I had discovered where we obtained milk, vegetables and other supplies and I had also discovered our own private convenience. This latter was a small construction like the night-watchman's hut of old (but with a door I should add) complete with seat and bucket, no flushing WC, not even an Elsan chemical, just a plain old-fashioned bucket) and of course a spade. The remainder of the party stormed in (well maybe it would be better to say they drifted in) in due course - a pleasant change from the spiders - and between us we made the place a little more like home. I suppose the girls should have taken

charge of the commissariat but as far as I can remember we all joined in.. Minor details have been lost in the mists of antiquity (it was, after all, 48 years ago) but I do remember that we procured a chicken; no we didn't rustle it, we bought it plucked and drawn ready for the pot (I can't imagine any of our crew being brave enough to draw a chicken ourselves). The snag arose when we could not find a pot or pan big enough to get the chicken in. Charlie had the best idea - we would use the bucket, give it a good clean out, half fill with water and boil the bird. What's that? No, not that bucket, but the ordinary everyday cleaning bucket; I don't suppose it would have been an acceptable solution for a Corden Bleu chef but I don't remember we came to any harm; at least I didn't. Charlie did succumb to something or other later which necessitated Mabel doing a bit of loving nursing, but he was alright again within 24 hours. But I must report that that chicken tasted good. Boiled in a bucket on a cast-iron, coal fired stove in a corner of the one room that served in turn as kitchen, dining room, living room, dressing room and bedroom. You know we spent the week together in that room (or maybe it should be called a cabin, being on a boat) and I don't remember seeing either of the girls in anything other than shorts and skirts or pyjamas. I am unable to make up my mind as to whether I was the proper little gentleman or whether I was not very observant, probably the latter.

I have never been able to understand why but it seemed to fall to be my duty to go for the milk, which entailed forcing my way through a herd of cows whose idea of life was to stand shoulder to rump on the towpath and endeavour to jostle me into the water, luckily they didn't succeed, but it was a right battle each morning.

I wouldn't say all other duties were on a similar basis, quite probably I managed to duck out of something I should have done. But not all!! Eventually the bucket in the little hut filled up and there was a threat of immediate disaster if some action was not taken. Did Charlie flinch from the job? Did Mabel? Did Vera? Of course they did! So it was left to your humble scribe to get the spade, dig a large hole and then - the crucial part - manhandle the brimming bucket from the shed down the bank to the aforesaid hole and empty the contents therein without spilling it over my feet. Anyway I managed it and as it was presumably going to remain my chore for the rest of the week I didn't leave it so long before the next sortie. As you casually use your WCs at home, just think how many times four into one bucket will go before it

overflows. I don't suppose it had to be done every day but suffice it to say that the saying 'Sid, Sid, the Lavatory Kid' was born. (I remember that on the first RAF camp on which I served during the war the chap who did that - on a somewhat larger scale - got mentioned in despatches.)

Don't imagine that filling and emptying that bucket took all week, it just seemed like it. We also had a rowing boat and we valiantly rowed up and down the canal trying to catch fish for our supper - I don't remember having much luck -but I marvel at myself on the water, I have never learned to swim and whilst water fascinates me I have a healthy (or unhealthy) fear of being in it. When I say we rowed the boat, I mean Charlie and me, the girls wouldn't be expected to do such hard work. Oft-times we cycled the surrounding countryside or into Hornsea; one day we bussed into Hornsea and walked all the way back, all six miles of it, and the traffic that day on the main road to one of our coastal resorts was lighter than in the lanes around my present home in the country.

It was my first holiday, and although many details have been forgotten, and my companions have been scattered, I enjoyed every minute of it (yes, even emptying that bucket).

I had to wait for my next holiday until after 1946, but even when it came it didn't have the same thrill.

SID ECCLES

YORK TO SELBY RAILWAY PATH

Cycle routes free from motor traffic are a boon these days, for even in York where a high proportion of road users are cyclists there are many who are reluctant to get on their bikes because of the heavy traffic. The York to Selby path has been developed from a proposal by the Countryside Commission two years ago that the whole of the old route of the East Coast main railway line between York and Selby should become a path for walkers, cyclists and horse-riders.

Before British Rail are prepared to sell old railway lines to people other than adjacent landowners or statutory authorities, they have to be sure that fences, drains and bridges will be properly maintained by the purchaser. Sustrans Ltd is a company whose sole purpose is to create cycle routes and is quite prepared to meet BR's conditions, and so were able to acquire the disused railway from Tadcaster Road (London Bridge) York to just north of Riccall the rest of the railway route is required for bypasses of Riccall and Barlby. Sustrans has entered into an agreement with the statutory authority (Selby District Council) to meet standards of construction and maintenance. In effect, the Council does not have to create or maintain the path but would be able to take possession of it if Sustrans defaults on its undertaking.

To encourage high levels of use and so justify the project, the path will eventually link with traffic-free routes to the centre of York - across Knavesmire and via Terry Avenue and Skeldergate - and Selby (via the old A19 once Riccall and Barlby bypasses are open, and the river bank path), making a total length of 25 km (or 15 miles in English!). This is not an excessive distance for a day out on the bike, whatever the cyclist's ability or limitation, and the return journey can (in theory at any rate) be made by train if necessary.

Work started on the path in the summer of 1985, and it should be completed by early 1987. Meantime, provided you are careful, and obey directions from construction workers, why not give it an unofficial 'test run'?

A more detailed description of the route is shown on the map overleaf.

YORK TO SELBY

THE OLD EAST COAST MAIN LINE AND CONNECTIONS

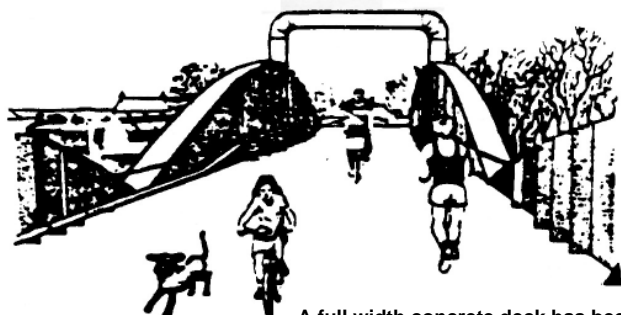
To avoid the dangerous Tadcaster Road (A1036) from the city centre follow Skeldergate under Skeldergate Bridge, then Terry Avenue and Campleshon Road to the Knavesmire.

It is hoped to upgrade the Knavesmire path which is already well-used by cyclists, and to arrange a direct route through the housing to the Polytechnic, past the Wilberforce home and Sixth Form College to cross Sim Balk lane by new lights. Meantime cross the Knavesmire and detour east round the housing.

The railway path will run through from here to Riccall. The ballast has been removed and it is possible, if rough, to bicycle all the way.

Short sections have been sold for housing but continuity of the route will be maintained through new cul-de-sac streets.

These notes read from north to south.



A full width concrete deck has been constructed on Naburn Swing Bridge. This is in itself worth a visit.

Through Barby the old A19 will again be used, joining the river bank just north of the present A63(T) junction.

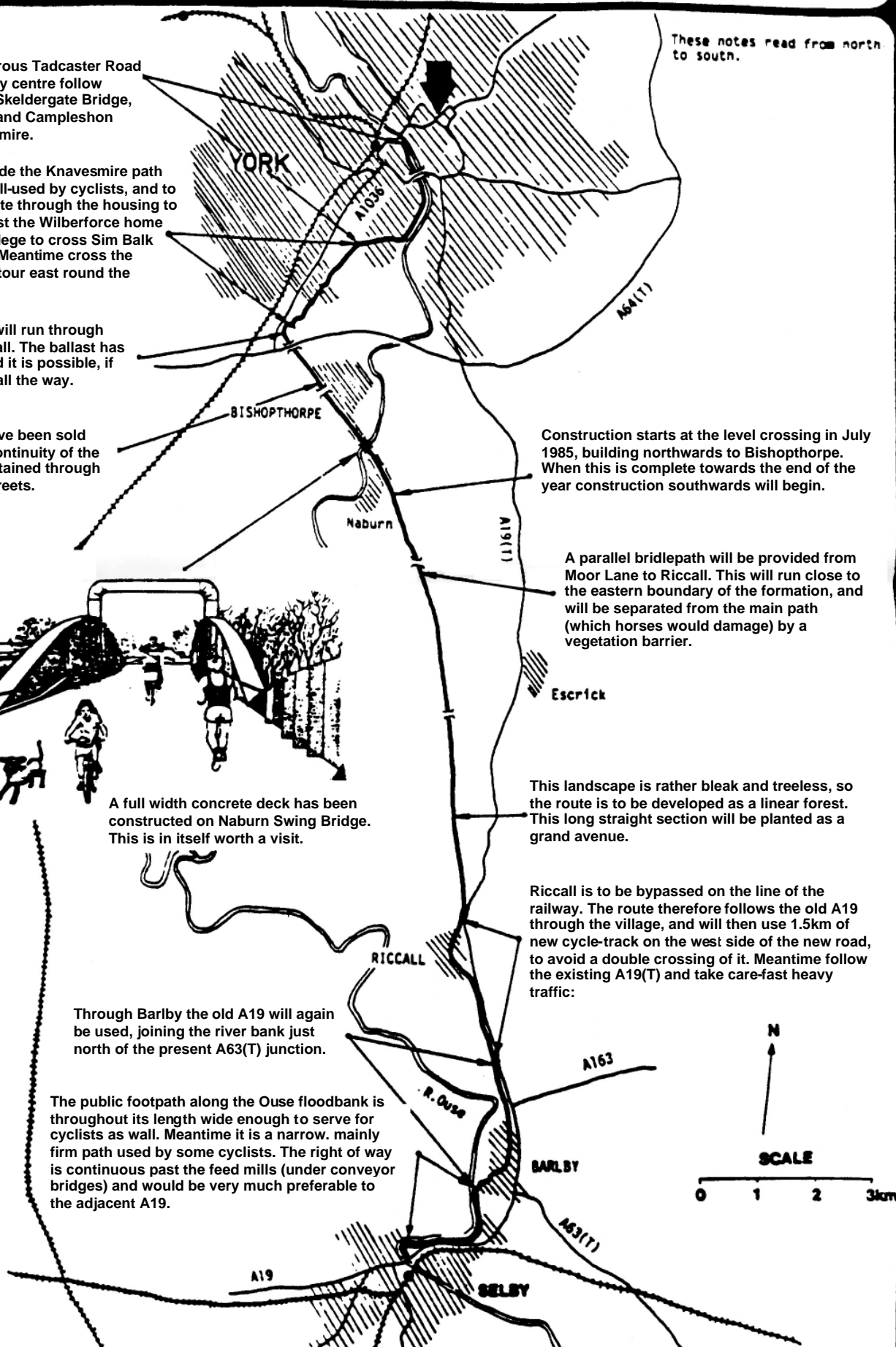
The public footpath along the Ouse floodbank is throughout its length wide enough to serve for cyclists as well. Meantime it is a narrow, mainly firm path used by some cyclists. The right of way is continuous past the feed mills (under conveyor bridges) and would be very much preferable to the adjacent A19.

Construction starts at the level crossing in July 1985, building northwards to Bishopthorpe. When this is complete towards the end of the year construction southwards will begin.

A parallel bridlepath will be provided from Moor Lane to Riccall. This will run close to the eastern boundary of the formation, and will be separated from the main path (which horses would damage) by a vegetation barrier.

This landscape is rather bleak and treeless, so the route is to be developed as a linear forest. This long straight section will be planted as a grand avenue.

Riccall is to be bypassed on the line of the railway. The route therefore follows the old A19 through the village, and will then use 1.5km of new cycle-track on the west side of the new road, to avoid a double crossing of it. Meantime follow the existing A19(T) and take care-fast heavy traffic:



N

SCALE

0 1 2 3km

BREVET DE RANDONNEUR RIDES 1985

The rides organised by the DA under Audax UK rules this year numbered six, five being offered as part of Harrogate Festival and the last being the 200 Km East Coast Event held on 8th September.

It was a pity that this year the organisers of the Harrogate Festival and the York Rally could not sort out the dates of their two Events and one suspects that the traders' interests rather than those of riders were paramount and so produced the clash of weekends.

For DA members particularly, it meant a clash of loyalties and interests and as a consequence, both Events suffered to some extent.

In general terms however, the Harrogate rides continued their successful growth. Last year for the 5 rides there was a total of 103 entries, and this year the numbers had swelled to 144. The Dales Events, the 200 Km and the 150 Km, drew the now usual comments on the spectacular scenery on the route from riders sampling our northern delights (Hartwith Bank, Greenhowe, Park Rash etc.) for the first time.

It was the first time that rider, on a tandem had tried the Event, but sad to say, Ben Stevens and his daughter from Arneside had to admit defeat over Park Rash and missed out the Reeth leg so as to be back in Harrogate before 10 pm.

The mid-week events were a choice of the long haul out to Flamborough Head and a more hilly route over the North York Moors.

The East Coast Event, even after 6 years, still attracts many riders. The Moors route used for the second time, attracted its fair share of riders and both groups enjoyed good weather. There was one incident on the East Coast ride when Sheila Simpson of SYNDA came down on a corner slipper with diesel oil and broke her collar bone. Fortunately she had no other injuries and was up and riding again within the month.

The final Sunday of Harrogate was reserved for the Super Grimpeur Event on Greenhowe Hill and unfortunately the weather reserved its worst for us. I don't think it stopped raining throughout the Event and the strong wind was a decided disadvantage when trying to recover lost time down Duck

Street, although, to be fair, it did help on the top part of Greenhow.

The most noteworthy performance of the day was that of Doug Stringer, a vet who completed the 4-climb course within the prescribed limit, Vets for this event are those over fifty and whilst they have successfully completed the course before and in fact, Harry Catlow has done the long 6-climb course although still a vet, Doug is, I am certain, the oldest to have completed the event at the age of 71!

At the other end of the age scale, Andrew Sellars completed both the 200 Km and the Super Grimpeur and, as the youngest DA member, wins the Organiser's Trophy for this year.

As mentioned, the last of the DA rides was the September East Coast Event and those of you who have battled round this course over the past 3 years will be astonished to read that it was held on a warmish, windless day.

The DA entry was disappointingly small this year although some DA members were not content with the 200 Ks and set off on Saturday evening on the 400 Ks event which had been organised in conjunction with SYNDDA, so that by the normal 8.00am they had already 200 Km in their legs.

For the faint hearts who wonder about the distance, please note that the youngest rider was 11¼ year old Richard Whitney and the youngest rider on the 400 Km Event was 15 years old and the oldest sixty-nine.

Audax means "to be bold" so why don't you "come on down" next year.

Speaking of next year, the new Harrogate Festival, "The World of Wheels Festival" has moved away from the traditional July spot of the York Rally to a new date over the May Bank Holiday. AUK will be inviting the DA to organise events again and these provisionally will be as follows:

25 May	Dales Grimpeur	200 and 150
28May	Moors	200
	East Coast	220

28 May

Moors and East 300 (This will be
Coast a new Event -
Harrogate, York, Whitby,
Scarborough, Flamborough,
York, Harrogate)

1 June

Super Grimpeur

14 September

East Coast

200

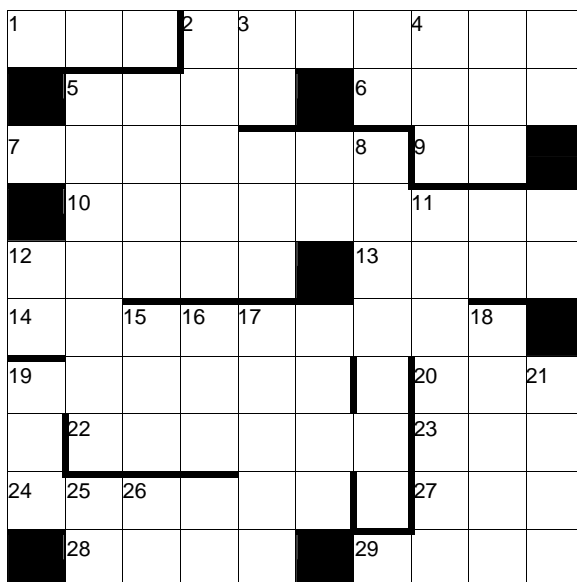
DKB

* * * * *

CROSSWORD

Test your brainpower with this puzzle from Des Reed.

(Answers on page 24)



ACROSS..

1.	A solid one is best .	3
2.	Makers of heavy duty hubs.	7
5.	Assists in reach adjustment.	4
6.	Don't-race after a heavy-one.	4
7.	Surname after G.H.	7
9.	Barrow boys' organisation. Abr.	2
10.	Judge Sturmey adjustment by this.	9
12.	A tough sort of racing.	5
13.	Nat.Sec.	4
14.	A costly block.	9
19.	Spokes and tubes are often thus.	6
20.	Holds a cotter pin in place. (Sometimes sits on saddle)	3
22.	Not allowed on time trials.	6
23.	A star rider.	3
24.	You could get a tyre infLated here.	6
27.	Portable kind is useful on tour.	3
28.	Desirable after replacing a chain.	4
29.	You deserve it now.	4

DOWN.

2.	Divers and cyclists have them.	5
3.	S.A. Hub. Abr.	2
4.	Price of a frame less VAT	3
5.	Common to brakes and harness.	7
8.	One of T.I's. bikes	7
11.	Most start their cycling in this era.	7
15.	When you think you'll get there. Abr.	3
16.	Also. Abr.	3
17.	To ascertain lightness you do this.5	
18.	King of the Road.	5
19.	For your touring necessities.	3
21.	School cycling training ends with this.	4
25.	Another S.A. Hub. Abr.	2
26.	Partner in shared B&B Guide. Abr .	2

A DIRE WARNING

It is my solemn duty to have to warn all tandem steersmen of a new hazard which they are likely to encounter when passing through rural villages. It is a relatively recent phenomenon but growing to be very common on Saturdays and Sundays.

Your first indication of such a hazard may be a sign in the grass verge or stuck on a telegraph pole. It will give a time and venue so you have some warning, but by then -short of an equally hazardous and hard to explain U-turn - it will be too late.

From the rear you will soon hear the plea: "Let's stop two minutes and have a look". Unless the heavens open suddenly or there is an exclusive catering house ahead to give you an excuse for proceeding, you will have no option but to comply.

And that is where the trouble begins as you dismount, park the monster (the steel one, that is) and begin to wander around the village green or farmer's field where the hazard is situated. By now you will realise that I am referring to the omnipresent car-boot sale.

Here you will find cars lined up with open boots or tables where various wares and assorted rubbish will be on display - a veritable flea market - some of it priced, some of it open to barter. There is a predominance of bric-a-brac, along with toys old and new, pictures, tools, games, clothing - indeed, almost anything that the vendors may decide to turn out before the affluent, gullible public. There is some entertainment value of course. For example, tuning in to the conversations of stallholders grumbling about their pitch location and the fact that the venture is raising funds for the local Conservatives!

The two occasions when I have been inveigled into such affairs have seen us return promptly for home having panniers loaded with wooden bricks and cuddly toys along with a £2 musty secondhand saddlebag and some tatty-looking toeclips and straps. More recently we came back with two carpet rugs strapped on top of the bag bringing us almost into the wide load category. Which reminds me, I must check the paper for forthcoming sales that can be avoided.

B. WARE

EVER FANCIED SIX DAY RACING?

or Watching the Race to Nowhere.

One of my ambitions was to go over to Europe and watch part of a six-day track event. So I booked a place on a tour to see the Paris Six in November organised by Chequers Travel.

The tour included travel, Paris from London and back, by coach and ferry, one night bed and breakfast in a Paris hotel and a ticket for the Saturday night at the Paris Track.

On the Friday evening, just before boarding the train down to London, a conspicuous luggage tag on my suitcase prompted conversation: "Paris Six?" "Yes", I replied. So I travelled down with Frank and Nick Beckwith of the Yorkshire Road Club, Frank being a veteran of six day track events. So I learned a little of what was involved with this strange type of racing.

On reaching Paris, a very competent driver took us round the Peripherique and through into Paris where Christmas shopping seemed to be in full swing.

We arrived at the hotel in the centre of Paris, booked in and spent the afternoon sightseeing. Frank, Nick and myself went for a much needed meal, then headed off in the direction of Montmartre and the Sacre Coeur - in the pouring rain!

At about 5 pm we arrived at the Stadium (a brilliant structure of glass concrete and steel, with steep grass banks) allocated to our seats. Looking down I could see the steep banked wooden boarding decorated with sponsors' names, with a bandstand and a couple of thousand diners eating in the centre of the stadium.

An amateur Madison race (riders are paired) was in progress, and the very youthful hand slings resulted in some nasty crashes leaving divots(!) where pedals had scraped wood, to be sanded down smooth again for the professional race. The sound of the clanging frames was about as welcome as tendonitis!

Finally we saw the professionals - names that I had only read about in various journals. Moser's pedalling fluency was an absolute joy to watch. The

pace of racing was extremely fast, and riders manoevered themselves with ease, particularly after hand-slinging a partner into the fray. One rider rode a lap whilst the partner rode at a slower pace round the banking, to join up, and by means of a hand-sling, swap roles.

To increase the excitement, lap sprints were on offer. A large horn was sounded, signifying five laps to go. The tempo of the orchestra gradually increased every Lap, matching the riders speed, with the final lap a mixture of tempo and speed faster than the William Tell Overture! Results were constantly flashed out on an enormous colourful scoreboard suspended from the ceiling.

A Swiss rider was clearly about to win a sprint - urged on by a block of fanatics ringing cow bells. It was like listening to the crowd urging on skiers at a down hill competition!

Eventually the night's entertainment came to an end at 1.30 on Sunday morning, thus back to the hotel. Overall, Bernard Vallet/Gert Frank were winning, closely followed by many pairs at only a lap down. Our own Tony Doyle was about 60 laps down - he was teaching a new track rider.

Well, I shall certainly go and watch this type of event again. I found it rather fascinating to see a side of cycle racing that I had never seen before. Perhaps Ghent in November?.....

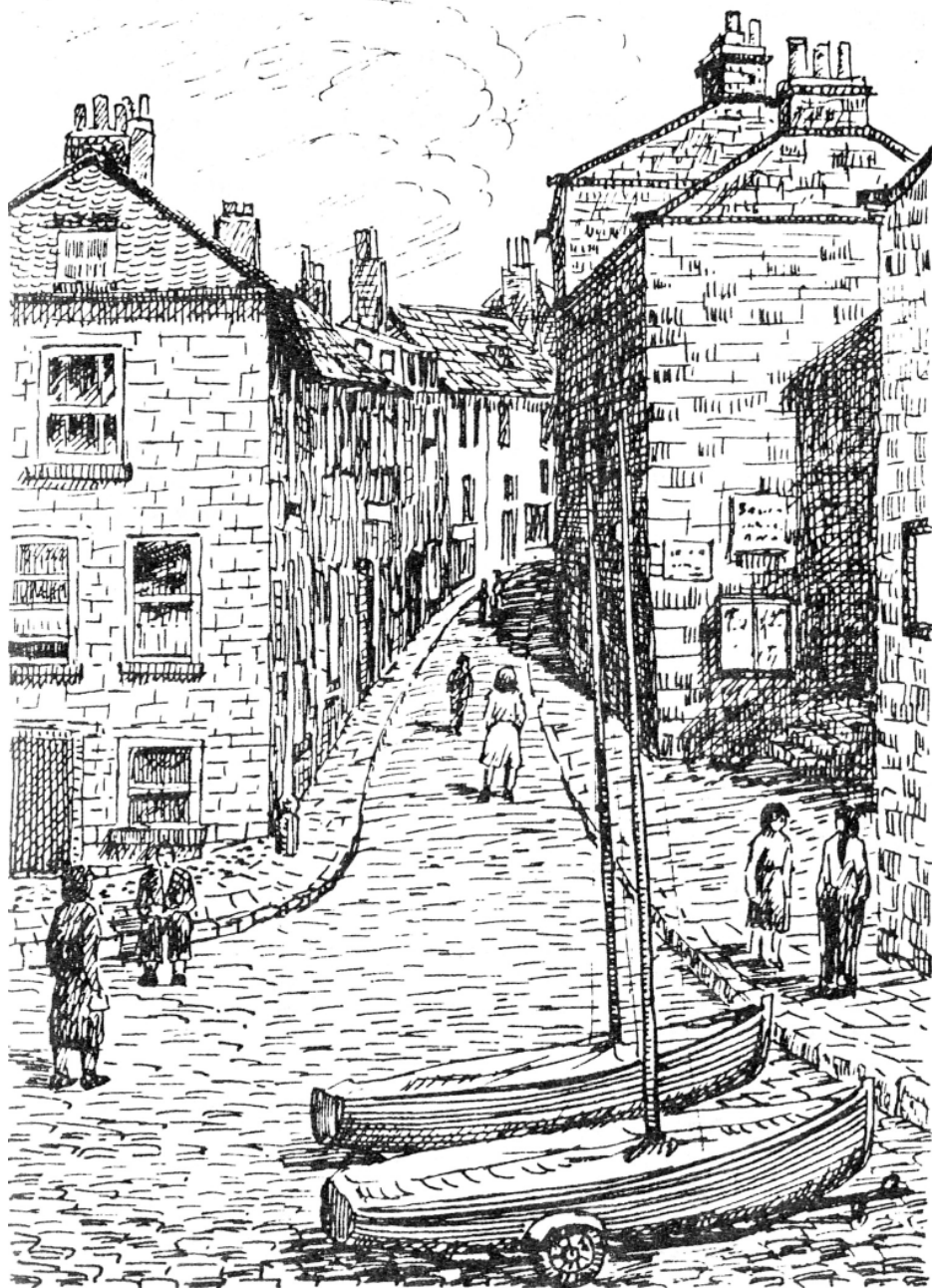
GRAHAM FORD

Editors' note: Graham will be going to either Paris or Ghent in November. Anyone interested in joining his party can get more details by contacting him at 14, St Nicholas Road, Copmanthorpe, 'York, YO2 3UX.

Telephone (0904) 705779.

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WANTED: Rear Panniers - not nylon. Peter Gray, tel: 470169



AN ILL WIND

On a very wet Sunday in September the runs list said Otley, but before leaving the station we decided that Harrogate might be a more suitable distance, this was rapidly amended to Knaresborough after we had taken an eternity to reach Hessay. Rowntrees waste put new life into my stoker (my daughter Charlotte) and we set off into the wind again. One hour later saw us collapse at Cowthorpe where further bonk rations were devoured. The decision was then taken to make for Wetherby being slightly nearer and with the chance of a couple of miles of back wind.

Sandwiches in the sun and out of the wind left us with just a cup of tea to find. There appeared to be only the rather expensive place by the side of the river, when I remembered visiting Thorpe Arch Trading Estate previously. Five minutes later saw us at the ideal refreshment spot. Beverages and food at reasonable prices, AL-K-HOL and a takeaway also available. A sheltered spot in the sun saw the stoker use more energy on the various and FREE amusements while the pilot made full use of the ice cream van there.

A ride that took 2 hours and 10 minutes going was reduced to less than 50 minutes on the return. A case of an ill wind?

PETER GRAY

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WELCOME

Welcome to Ryedale Section - covering the Malton / Pickering area of the DA. Full details of Sunday runs etc can be obtained from the Section Secretary, Kevin Blenkin, 153, Welham Road, Norton. Tel: Malton 4824.

Welcome also to York Section's Mid-week Group. This group caters for riders who are retired, unemployed, students, holiday makers or anyone who has free time mid-week who would like to join others for easy paced, companionable rides. Details can be obtained from Walter Rich, 59 Heworth Green, York. Tel: 425622.

TECHNICAL TIPS

1. Checking the seatpins fitted to various bikes, tandems and framesets in the house, I was recently quite amazed to find that I had five different sizes. There are, in fact, ten sizes used to suit the various tubes in frames from all sources and it can be disastrous if you attempt to force an oversize pin into your seat-tube, whilst an undersize one cannot be tightened sufficiently.

Most British-made frames accept one of four sizes, 26.2, 26.8, 27 or 27.2 diameter. It is therefore useful to know the exact size, which can be determined using a 25-50 metric micrometer on the actual seat pin, though sometimes the size is stamped on. It may be much more difficult to measure the tube bore, as necessary gauging tools are less readily available.

Alloy seat pins are most commonly used but they tend to bind unless lubricated with paraffin oil. Though much lighter than steel, the conventional alloy pin has a limited life and tends to fatigue-fracture at the point where it begins to reduce in diameter. This is even more likely to occur in cases where the soft metal has been scored by action of the saddle clamp.

The amount that the seat pin protrudes from the frame also has a bearing on the likelihood of fracture, and it is essential to retain at least 65mm of pin inside the seat tube. Some of the fluted micro-adjusting seat pins appear to be stronger but it pays to examine the tube gauge (thickness of metal) when making your choice. Saving weight in this area can often be false economy, and the exceptionally heavy-rider would be well advised to stick to steel saddle pins, though they may not be available in every size.

2. Your hub thread, where the freewheel screws on, will invariably be a British Standard Cycle thread, 1.370" (34.8mm) diameter and 24 TPI (threads per inch)/1.06mm thread pitch. On the corresponding freewheel you may find stamped 1.37" 24. This is incidentally the same thread as your bottom bracket left hand cup. Thus you may use the cup to check thread pitch as an alternative to a Whitworth form thread gauge for 24 TPI. Occasionally, hubs or freewheels having a different thread find their way into this country, so it

is worthwhile checking prior to assembly. The alternatives you would find could be from France or Italy and the size difference is not discernible. A check must be made of thread on each item, if not marked, using a thread gauge either Whitworth or metric.

If the 24 TPI Whitworth gauge fits snugly into the threads for the full length, then it is either an English or Italian thread. The other difference between the two threads is diameter, the Italian being larger at 35mm. If the 1mm pitch metric thread gauge fits the hub it is from France and will have a diameter of 34.7mm.

Thus you conclude that it should be impossible to easily screw an English or French freewheel on to an Italian hub. In fact, the French freewheel will only fit a French hub since the English and Italian have a different pitch/TPI. Similarly, an Italian thread freewheel will fit rather loosely on an English threaded hub. Even with the correct match of items it is easy to strip the hub thread for it is a relatively soft material. The advice then must be; take extra care when fitting a freewheel, go carefully and ensure that the treads are concentric when starting. At the first sign of tightness at the beginning, dismantle and start again.

R.H.

ANSWERS TO CROSSWORD:

ACROSS: 1. End. 2. Balance. 5. Stem. 6. Meal.
 7. Stancer. 9. T.A. 10. Indicator. 12. Grass.
 13. Leg. 14. Freewheel. 19. Butted. 20. Nut.
 22. Pacing. 23. Ace. 24. Garage. 27. Gas. 28. Wash. 29.
 Rest.

DOWN: 2. Bends. 3. A.M. 4. Net. 5. Stirrup.
 8. Raleigh. 11. Teenage. 15. E.T.A. 16. Etc.
 17. Weigh. 18. Lucas. 19. Bag. 21. Test. 25. A.W.
 26. R.A.

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York - Graham Ford, tel: 705779

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.