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RIDING NORTH

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of the C.T.C

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EDITORS' NOTES

"The views expressed by the contributors are not necessarily those of the editorial staff". How often do you see this or a similar qualification in a commercial magazine? It is no less applicable to this issue of "Riding North", for your editors have had absolutely no choice between what to include and what to leave out - if we had omitted any contribution because we didn't like it, there wouldn't be an Issue 14, because we had nothing to take the place of any discarded material. Nevertheless we are grateful for those members who have taken the trouble to provide copy.

We had hoped to include an up-to-date full catering list, but unfortunately are not sufficiently well-informed of currently recommended establishments.

Please get your contributions to us in good time for issue 15 and tell us of any listed refreshment stops that are no longer available and, of course, any new ones that we ought to include, especially any like the one pictured below by Albert Burman.



‘Twenty pots of tea for one!’

JOHN ALWYN TAYLOR

Alwyn was a life member of the Cyclists' Touring Club and became President of our DA in 1979, holding this office until his death in June of this year at the age of 72.

With Jessie, his wife, he ran the Youth Hostel at Pateley Bridge just after the second world war, and following a period away from Yorkshire, they spent some years in charge of the Farndale Youth Hostel.

By the time he became DA President, they had moved to Malton, running a small hotel which became a special attraction for cyclists.

After Jessie's death in 1982, following a long illness, Alwyn's health also deteriorated, but he was only too happy to maintain his links with the Club whenever he could.

In the last 14 months of his life he was a founder-member of our Ryedale Section, being one of those present at the inaugural meeting at Malton Youth Hostel.

A CTC member for 50 years, he served on the organising committee of the York Rally, and also had a long association with the YHA and the Rough Stuff Fellowship.

DA SECRETARY'S NOTES

A hearty welcome in this issue to the DA's third Section - York CTC Wednesday Wheelers.

In the summer of 1985, a small group of members, mainly retired, started getting together for all-day rides on Wednesdays, a development pioneered by Walter Rich who had some fond memories of a mid-week section from his days "down south".

After a full year on an informal basis, the group held an AGM, as a result of which the DA Committee was approached in September and readily agreed to accord the group formal status as a Section, with Walter as its Secretary.

Elsewhere in this issue is a short piece written by Walter Rich describing the Wednesday Wheelers programme.

JUST AN ORDINARY DAY'S CYCLE RIDE

When the presentations were being made last March my daughter asked me what you had to do to get an award.

I explained it was for various rides that were over and above the normal Sunday ride. She was not content with this and wanted to know what rides she could do to qualify for next years awards. As she is an 8 year old "stoker" a great deal was going to depend on him up front,

A study of the proposed awards rides revealed:
50 miles in 4 hours - a possibility, but the atrocious
weather put paid to that.
100 miles in 8 hours - definitely out!
150/200 Audax ditto
24 hour standard ride - ditto
BCTC local heat - Father did not wish to show how
little he would know in the quizzes.
(Elected to marshal instead)
Rough Stuff Standard Ride, Sunday 7th September.

This was to be it I explained; it was just an ordinary ride of about 50 miles with a few bridleways and farm tracks thrown in, and we had included some of these in nearly all our runs anyway.

On receipt of the route sheet there were one or two bits I could not quite make out, but then it was an old O.S map. There were also a few stretches that were not marked as rights of way, but probably an oversight by O.S., I thought. A phone call to the landlady of the Cross Keys at Thixendale confirmed that she would be happy to be invaded by an undisclosed number of cyclists for Sunday lunch.

Sunday morning and a good forecast. A large gathering at the station, AND at the time stated the run left. It went at the fastest pace I can remember out through Stockton on Forest then left onto a bridleway to Sand Hutton. Most acceptable; a little damp in places and one member collected a puncture. A checkpoint and posed photo-stop at the other end before regrouping and on through Buttercrambe Woods to Stamford Bridge. Ah! tea stop! But NO, straight through Stamford Bridge to Fangfoss. Surely everybody knows the CTC stands for Cafe

To Cafe, and we had passed one by without a backward glance. A little deliberation in Fangfoss, should it be 1st or 2nd left? 2nd was the choice. A nice bridleway with views towards the wolds, a few puddles but quite rideable. Another photo stop halfway and on to the checkpoint at Bishop Wilton, coffee and Rowntrees without charge. Things were getting better by the hour.

A rusting Ordinary (penny farthing) cycle was found in a garage while looking round Bishop Wilton, and enquiries were made if it was for sale. No, it was not for sale; no, it would not be restored; it would stay there until it rusted away! Nowt so queer as folk. It probably helps to explain why the East Riding was given to Humberside!

Sun shining brightly, we set off with the wind behind us, but before I had a chance to appreciate all the view, it was left and up this blooming great hill. Bottom gear and struggle to the top, then straight over, ignore the sign that was private but respect strictly private sign. Kept the fish ponds to our right. Didn't look too much like fish ponds to me, but accept Alan's word for it. THEN end of track, end of path, almost end of civilisation as we know it! Left through the grass field. (It was a very wet, bumpy, grass field). Several discussions as to the best way of crossing it without getting wet, muddy or lost, resulted in some riding, some pushing, some pulling. I choose the first, finding out it was the wrong choice when the back wheel sank up to its axle in mud. Still it was quite a spectacular stop we came to. The mud we splashed out managed to reach nearly everybody. Strong complaint from the daughter as to what Mum would say about the state of her clothes. Told her to worry about that when it arose. Just concentrate on getting out of the swamp we were in without getting any wetter, and to stop worrying, there were no bulls in this field or snakes in the water. Well, it made no mention on the route sheet about them.

Re-grouped at the end of the field and scraped away enough mud to allow the wheels to go round before setting off up the steep white hill. Sweat pouring off, we reached checkpoint number 3.

We then flew down the hill to lunch at Thixendale. A few pints, a few sausages, a few eggs and loads of chips soon improved the outlook, even for the person who arrived with half a handlebar, A small repair job with wood and electrical tape before setting off towards Leavening, but within a few hundred yards it was right onto a track and up and up. We dismounted to get a

better view just after the chain came off. It also fetched a few off just behind when we failed to give the signal 'stopping quickly -chain off'.

Near the top another fence to get over, this time very carefully as it was electrified, and on to the next fence. Over that but no sign of a way, just an enormous ploughed field. Much discussion as to which was the best/easiest/official way across it. Final decision was to go sort of round the edge. At the other side another fence and down a 1 in 3 escarpment. It was a rather undignified and hurried descent, finally stopping when the tandem decided to stop obeying the laws of gravity.

This time a gate blocked our way, secured by binder twine. A Swiss penknife soon saw to that and we set about climbing up again through three-foot high grass. The grass on the other side looked greener and shorter, and after getting over a barbed wire fence it was upward, and then up, followed by a bit more climbing. By this time I had had the panniers off and on more times than a tart's drawers.

There was a rideable track if I'd had the energy after the last section, so we admired the view as we walked. Then a really good track which all rode, and which lasted about 100 yards, then a wet track that got wetter then disappeared into a field. Definitely no bulls, I assured the back half, they could not stand the hills.

Footpath to Wharram Percy it said. It omitted to say that it was more suitable for goats than cyclists. I had almost forgotten about the view when Charlotte said how much it looked like Switzerland. As I have never been on a day ride to Switzerland I accepted it. And in doing so missed the goat track that led down to the church. Still, it was nearly as pretty, our route through the bushes and another fence.

After looking round the church we set off on the lastleg which was North West. We went North North West and had to decide whether to retrace or continue downhill when we reached the end of the field, the way ahead was blocked by a double barbed wire fence. The majority choose to continue DOWN, a few of us decided to retrace UP. Rather apprehensively when we saw 80% going in the opposite direction. In a few minutes we found the planned route. A quick skirt round the strictly private sign, it was much easier that side than the "official" route on the other side of the hedge. A little walk and a little ride saw us arrive at the final checkpoint. Nearly as much relief on

their faces as ours when we met. It had been over two hours since they last saw us, and it was only 2 miles away.

Suggestion made that they disqualify all those who approached from the wrong direction before we quickly disappear home.

Grateful thanks to the checkers who gave up a whole Sunday, and of course to Alan who planned it all. Great, really enjoyed what turned out to be not quite such an ordinary ride.

PETER GRAY

* * * * *

COXWOLD CYCLISTS' SERVICE

This year saw quite a large increase in the attendance at the Cyclists' Service held at St Michael's, Coxwold.

1987 will be the 60th service, and will be held on May 31st. The Archbishop of York has agreed to give the address, so we hope to see you there.

There will be the usual CTC ride from York, leaving at 9.30am, and refreshments will be available in Coxwold Village Hall. As we cleared the place out of food this year, enquiries are being made to see if Coxwold can be declared an EEC food mountain for next May,

I managed, with a lot of help, to write a small article about the history of the Service, and I would like to expand this. If anybody has any memories or facts I would be grateful to hear from them.

PETER GRAY

...AND FINALLY, TO THE CHILTERNS

Having qualified for the final of the British Cycle Tourist Competition by winning the North Yorkshire Heat in June, I headed for Stoke Mandeville, near Aylesbury in Buckinghamshire on the morning of Saturday, August 30th. Circumstances meant that I couldn't go earlier and see a bit of the area beforehand, so M1 it was with the bike in the car boot. After leaving the motorway and passing through Towcester and Buckingham, I was able to see some of the attractive local villages and assess the terrain whilst driving. Certainly more rolling than the York area, but nothing to deter a former West Yorkshire hill eater like me. (Well, I could ride up them once upon a time!)

On arrival at Hampden Hall Agricultural College, our base for the weekend, I met John Churchman from Bingley, a former winner of the Competition and the Club's new Honorary Consulting Solicitor. After a brief natter, we joined the queue for our room keys, etc. By the time we'd had a few sarnies and a cuppa it was time to report to the starting marshal to collect numbers for bikes and person and a map of the area - yes, every finalist is given a freeby O.S. map - in this case Sheet 165, Aylesbury and Leighton Buzzard. Not that some of them are ever fit to use again after all the planning and replanning that takes place over the two half-days of the event. (Thinks, "must remember to say 'Thank you' in case there's a courtesy check!") Also received were the first set of instructions -telling us how to use the later instructions! Also details of the evening meal and a warning that if we rode too slowly there would be no meal - heaven forbid! Next page gives route info for the first section.

Eventually we were off, started at minute intervals by Frank Ghysens, South Bucks D.A.'s oldest active member, and Ivy Thorp, the Club's President. Soon after leaving Stoke Mandeville we did a little loop through the lovely village of Weston Turville - definite candidate for observation questions later, as was the next village, Halton. Close by was the RAF base complete with some large 'planes which I guessed must be transporters.

First bit of rough stuff came soon, up a long forest climb marked by the inevitable "You must ride" sign. I soon wished that I had a lower - much lower! - gear. Anyway, it eventually levelled out and we were stopped in a clearing and asked some questions - I can't remember what they were, so I couldn't have got many correct! Soon we came to a roundabout - yes, at a junction of forest track! Is this the Forestry Commission's idea of a joke? Before we had gone much further we were stopped by Chris Jennings from

Leeds and asked to point out where we were on the map. My reward for getting it right was a piece of his Kit-Kat and words of encouragement for the rest of the day. At the next stop I was asked what I would need to check in order to preserve life if I saw someone lying unconscious at the roadside. Having said that I would make sure that he could breathe, it seemed almost too obvious to say "Is he breathing?", but these were two of the answers required, as was a check on bleeding. No problems there, but I was glad they didn't ask what I would do if any check was negative!

Soon it was back to "proper" roads through St. Leonards to the next set of questions, at Brazier's End - they could only choose such characters as Bob Carmichael-Riddell, Ossie Gray and Bill Leggitt to check there!

Next it was afternoon tea at Cholesbury Village Hall. I was told "Five minutes and back to work" by the marshal! "Work" was map reading, to find the route back. Shortest route which satisfied various conditions including crossing canals seven times - some of the bridges in this area were like riding up a house roof: We then had to give the grid references of four points on the route. When checked, I had one wrong, so I had to go back to the map and re-plot my route using the correct details, having lost some points. Then I was away again, following the map.

This is always the interesting bit because, despite being given the correct grid references, I still met riders going the other way and crossing my route - stick to your guns, Andrew! Eventually the finish was reached, but there was still a quiz. "But first, get your meal because you're only just in time" - there were still riders behind, but I think they all got fed.

After the meal I headed for the quiz, and this was something really different. We were being asked to say where pictures were taken. But this was no ordinary observation test - they were all of places we hadn't been! We were told that all the places were within a small area of map and had to identify them from unique features - for example, one was a picture of a church with a spire, and there was only one of those on the map in that area. Some of the others were a bit harder.

After a quick change it was time for the Social Evening, which included a slide show about the Lake District by John Gosnell. We were told that the names of the top ten riders were on a notice at the front. As I felt to have done reasonably well, I thought I'd take a look. Yes, I was 5th at the half-

way stage. Chris Boulton from Leeds, last years winner, felt that he'd done badly, but looked anyway and seemed surprised that he was leading again.

On Sunday we were set on our way by Stan Smith, the South Bucks D.A President. The route took us through pretty lanes passing signs warning of a half-marathon, but we did not see any runners. More obvious observation points in Monks Risborough and Princes Risborough - I actually used my camera here - I hadn't carried it all this way to leave it in the saddlebag. Then up into the hills at last, to the wonderfully named hamlet of Parslow's Hillock and its equally quaintly named pub, the "Pink and Lily". Next were Loosley Row and Lacey Green - where do they get these names?

We were then told to follow arrows and marshals' instructions to the morning coffee stop at Great Hampden village hall. Being a suspicious type, I tried to keep track of where I was going along lanes and bridleways. It was just as well, because on arrival a marshal showed us a large scale map with various points marked and asked us to list the ones we had passed in the correct order. Only experience of the Competition leads you to expect such things, although I had not seen it done quite like this before.

After coffee and buns, we were off again. Soon we found Bob Carmichael-Riddell and friends, armed with outline maps of the UK and Ireland with various features marked for us to name, such as a canal in Kent which few knew, and Cape Wrath which most knew. The final test was to mark the position of the Yorkshire Wolds - I needed shooting if I got that wrong!

Next was a real rough stuff test, like something out of the Krypton Factor. We had to manoeuvre the bikes along a narrow ridge before plunging down a ditch and up the other side, turning as we went. Needless to say the foot went down, but only once. The following section was up and down the Ridgeway Long Distance Footpath to Casden, the start of the pace-judging section. I was to plot my route on the map and say how many minutes it would take me to get back to base. It was a pleasant route, passing Chequers, the Prime Minister's country retreat - it's much bigger than I thought, like a big private park.

Back in time for lunch, but not just yet - there's one more test: the Observation Quiz. They even managed to introduce something new on this one. Instead of being asked where the pictures were taken, we were shown about a dozen pictures, only six of which were on the route - "Which six:" was

all they wanted to know. Sounds easy, but wrong guesses gave minus points, so it was safest only to give the numbers you were certain of and leave the rest. In my case, I recognised three.

After lunch came the wait for the results. Eventually the organisers emerged from the locked room into the sunshine. This is always the worst bit. However, I was equal 5th and pretty happy with the weekend's performance. The winner was Chris again, a startling result, considering that he is the first person ever to win twice on the trot, especially when you realise that until last year he had never even entered a heat.

So come on you stayaways, there is always a chance for a novice to do well. Let's see if we can have more riders in the local heat in 1987, assuming that we have one, than the 13 that turned up this year. Then we could get more than one finalist to enjoy a great weekend off (I think next year's final is in Leicestershire). Even if you don't get to the Final, the event is great fun, especially when the sun shines:

ANDREW RICHARDSON



ON BLAKEY RIDGE - DECISION BEFORE THE STORM

WEDNESDAY WHEELERS

York's new Section, the Wednesday Wheelers, started life just over a year ago with a run led by Arthur Beecroft along the side of the Selby Canal. Since then we haven't missed a Wednesday run, despite some horrific days last winter which occasionally reduced our numbers to two or three stalwarts. At that time we called ourselves the Midweek Riders; but at our first AGM, held this August in the corner of a well-known cafe in Sherburn-in-Elmet, we decided we wanted a change. We felt that names like "Wednesday Vets" (or, as one wag suggested, the "Wednesday Geriatrics") might convey the wrong impressions (At least two or three of us are lean, fit, hard-riding lads!) And anyway, we are open to all comers regardless of age, sex or race.

So it's now "Wednesday Wheelers" - a Section dedicated to 50-60 mile outings with plenty of time for looking around us. And though a few of us are at an advanced and garrulous age, we all reckon to talk a great deal of sense and know what's what!

There are now sixteen names "on the list". Fourteen of us sat down to our Christmas lunch at Millington last December (which we hope to repeat this year) and this summer we have had an average of eight riders on each run.

Arthur Sykes gets up at some unearthly hour occasionally to leave his home at Brighouse in order to join us at elevenses. Mary Woodhead, a "founder member", lives at Airmyn, Goole, and joins us on our East, West and South runs. In the summer we often find her waiting at Exhibition Square to accompany us northwards, too. Des Reed, another founder, lives at Malton, and is generally with us by elevenses. Many prominent members of the Clifton CC are regular Wednesday Wheelers, including their Chairman, Arnold Elsegood.

Many ideas for the future came bubbling up at our excellent AGM: treasure hunts in the winter; an annual photographic competition; midweek hostelling runs in spring and autumn, and a summer breakfast run.

From October 1st, our starting time from the Square will be 09.30. If you are free on Wednesdays, why not give us a try?

WALTER RICH

"WHEEL TAK' THE HIGH ROAD" (Part One)
(or the Hepworth Family on Tour - yet again!)

"Go to Scotland at Whitson" our neighbours said, "The weather's wonderful." So, one late April morning we cycled to York Station for a 340 mile train journey via Settle, Carlisle and Glasgow to the west coast port of Oban. There a short evening ride along the sea front brought us to the Youth Hostel. Buoys and lighthouses twinkled outside as we settled down in our family dorm for an early night.

On Saturday we rose early for the 8.00am sailing to Craignure on the Island of Mull - our touring base for the next week. With cycles secured on the car deck, we climbed to the buffet at the "Pointed" end for the 45 minute journey. At Mull we waited patiently while cars were waved ashore. Then we wheeled off the car deck, across a single-lane bridge which connected vessel and pier. At this point the crew decided to admit vehicles queueing ashore across the same narrow bridge. With children and laden cycles, we were suddenly squeezed to one side by oncoming vehicles -very nasty!

Muttering dark curses against Caledonian McBrayne, and all who sailed with them, we rode off along the A849 to Tobermory, 21 miles away. Then the sunshine gave way to a series of squally showers. Ten miles on, at Salen, we sought refuge in the "Puffer Aground" restaurant for coffee.

A "Puffer", we learned, was an almost extinct steamship, once commonly used for transport of merchandise between coastal villages. When moored between high and low tide marks, the vessel remained upright and "Aground" on its distinctive flat bottom once the tide went out, and cargo was easily transferred between ship and shore.

We continued along the A849, now a single-track road with passing places. After two uphill pushes and some exhilarating descents, we arrived in better weather at Tobermory. with our cycles secured to the harbour railings, we repaired to the nearby cafe for a welcome cuppa. As the church clock struck 5 pm, the nearby hostel opened. Its cycle accommodation also served as the "Coal 'ole" and garden shed. We squeezed in our two adult cycles, 8 year-old Mark's Raleigh Micron 5, and younger brother Richard's Hann Trailer, then settled into our family room.

Our Sunday ride was to Glengorm Castle, ten miles distant. The first three were purgatory as we pushed up steep hills in wind and rain, across

myriad cattle grids. Over the summit the rain stopped and we descended through a wooded glen. Glengorm was, we found, a private mansion, not open to the public. By way of compensation, a deer suddenly darted across our path, then skipped nimbly over a fence into the forest. Mull's 5,000 deer allegedly outnumber the resident human population!

We lunched at a nearby Forestry Commission picnic site then rode back to Tobermory, and walked a mile round the western headland to Rubha Nan Gall lighthouse. Nearby an engraved plaque enabled visitors to identify the many islands and mountains seen from this tranquil place.

Monday was a day of rest - from cycling! We walked two miles round the opposite side of Tobermory Bay, past a spectacular waterfall to Aros Country Park. We arrived at its picnic area just in time to shelter beneath our trusty tarpaulin from a heavy shower. The sun emerged and we squelched our way round a lakeside path. A fish farm, felled timber and other tourists evidenced the local economy.

After lunch we returned to Tobermory for a pre-arranged boat trip round the bay. The operator, a local hotelier, entrallled us with tales of the area's wartime naval role, and the sunken Spanish galleon in the bay. We saw basking seals and soaring eagles. Then the rain returned. Buffeted by salt spray and squalls we headed for the harbour. The Cap'n knocked a pound each off the fare on account of the bad weather, and we headed for the hostel to dry out.

We said goodbye to Tobermory on Tuesday and set off to Salen via minor roads. A stiff push up the B8073 brought us into open country. Then, twice in eight miles, the road fell and rose to 500 feet via hairpin bends. At the first watershed, Mishnish lochs provided a pleasant interlude. The final descent, brakes squealing, was into Dervaig village. Here the cafe, loo and craft shop were visited. Then a left turn past the village school brought us onto a minor road and an exhilarating ten mile run to Salen under a blue sky and with the wind behind us.

At Salen we visited the old pier, now derelict. Then, back up the road to Mrs McAuley's B & B. Out came our posh clothes, and, spruced up, we walked round the corner to the "Puffer Aground" restaurant again, for a slap-up meal. Well, it was Jan's birthday (no prizes for guessing which one!) Here we saw a painting of a boat at Salen's pier, in its heyday. It was the island's principal ferry terminal until storm damage and a local philanthropist

combined to build a replacement pier at Craignure, ten miles away. From this latter place an alternative route was created across Mull to the neighbouring, holy Isle of Iona. Salen, once an important place on the pilgrims' route, has sunk into somnolence.

A hearty breakfast preceded our Wednesday departure on the B8035, the former pilgrim route to the Iona ferry terminal at Fionnphort, 37 miles away. Mileposts dated 1897 marked our progress as we rode along the coast by Loch Na Keal, with the 3,000 ft bulk of Ben More above us. Then we pushed up hairpin bends into Glen Seillisdar for a rideable ascent to its summit. There another cycling family, with "Bike Hods" in tow, rested in the grass. We descended slowly through loose chippings to Loch Scridan for lunch, then rounded its eastern end to join the A844 from Craignure.

This road was also single track with passing places, and rose and fell like a big dipper. Heavy showers returned and our progress was constantly impeded by inconsiderate motorists returning in haste from Iona to catch the last Oban boat from Craignure. Most of them refused to use the passing places, and attempted to pass us at speed on the single track sections. Jan and I resorted to cycling two abreast to slow oncoming drivers down, for our children's safety. In this manner we arrived tired, and somewhat disheartened, at Fionnphort in the early evening. At "Staffa House" our B & B hostess, Mrs McRae, made us welcome. We cleaned up, and walked to the local pub for dinner. And then to bed!

Our hostess's husband was a fisherman. After breakfast we bought two fresh salmon steaks from him, then boarded the nearby ferry for the brief crossing to Iona. After a tour of the Abbey, we rode to the island's north beach and lazed till lunchtime. Then the M.V "Columba" sailed into view on its bi-weekly "Sacred Isle Cruise" - a round trip from Oban. She dropped anchor off Iona and the local ferry brought her passengers ashore for an hour. We had earlier arranged to travel to Oban on the return leg of this cruise. As we arrived back at Iona's ferry terminal, three luckless Geordies were riding off on decrepit local hire bikes. One's pedal crank promptly snapped off! Some hire firms leave a lot to be desired!

The tiny ferry brought us alongside "Columba's" open car deck doors in a six-foot swell. Quickly the two vessels were lashed together with a giant inflated "bag" between. "We'll have them bikes first" said a burly bosun. Jan's with Hann and luggage attached was whisked across in an instant by the crew, followed by Mark's and Dad's. With all passengers aboard we cruised to Oban

in style. There "Columba's" hydraulic lifting deck raised our cycles to quay level, and we returned to our old family room at the Hostel for the second week of our holiday. A succulent fried salmon tea ended the day!

PAUL HEPWORTH

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SUGAR BEET

Help the CTC to beat falling beet! Lorryloads will be transported once more, between October and March, from around North Yorkshire to the processing factory in Boroughbridge Road, York.

Members who witness incidents of load spillage, or see overloaded vehicles, are invited to give details to local police. Remember that spillage of sugar beet imperils the safety of all road users and pedestrians.

Thank you for your support.

PAUL HEPWORTH



IN WINTER'S GRIP NEAR MIDDLETON ON THE WOLDS

THE DA AWARD SCHEME

The scheme was set up in 1979 to encourage members to complete "Standard Rides" - cycling a pre-determined route and distance within a specified time - never faster than 12½ miles an hour, with a choice of distances from 50 miles (in 4 hours) to 240 miles (in 24 hours).

Three successful Standard Rides in a year entitle the member to a medal - bronze in the first year, silver in the second, gilt in the third and so on. For seven or more consecutive "medal" years, the award is a 'year bar' to add to the medal ribbon presented for the fifth year on which hangs the 6th year medallion.

Since its inception, a few other events have been included as qualifying rides, notably the GHS Memorial Rides in April, Audax events organised by the DA and an untimed Rough Stuff ride.

In its eighth annual programme, just completed, the DA Award Scheme's eleven events attracted 35 members to up to nine successful rides. The 17 members who completed at least three events earn medals as well as their share of the 107 certificates which they and the 18 other participants will receive at the annual Awards Evening on 28th February next.

Incidentally, the numbers of members who entered, certificates and medals awarded are the highest recorded in the scheme's eight years.

If you haven't tried an Award Scheme event before, they can really be good fun. Probably the most suitable for the novice are 100 km (that's 62½ miles if you don't understand this Common Market stuff) in 6 hours or the Rough Stuff ride. In the 1987 programme, the 100 km in 6 is likely to be in March or April, with the Rough Stuff ride in September or October.

Any group of members can organise a Standard Ride. All you need is a course approved by the DA Committee - we have quite a library of approved routes - sufficient entrants to make it worthwhile, and a few helpers to act as timekeeper and to man the check-points. Check-card forms and wallets can be provided by the DA Secretary.

CYCLING IN THE FOREST

Though Britain has a lower proportion of forest land than most Northern European countries there is nevertheless much forest in the country which can be exploited for the benefit of cyclists. Cycling in the woods may not suit everyone and inevitably most of it will be to some degree riding of the 'rough stuff' kind. Still as a cyclist and as someone who is also very involved with the management of forests, I think there is good scope for exploring these areas with a view to developing their cycling potential.

The last census of woodlands in 1987 showed that there was an estimated 5 million acres of woodland in Britain. This represents about 9% of the land area. The ownership of these woodlands can be broadly split into 4 categories. There are the woodlands which are part of farms, mostly small woodlands; there are the woodlands in the ownership of the traditional estates which have usually been in being for a century or more; there are the woodlands managed by forestry companies set up since the last war and, lastly, there are the woodlands managed by the Forestry Commission. It is with the potential of the 2 million acres or so of Commission woodlands that I am strictly concerned in this account, though I would expect proposals for cycling to be sympathetically received by some of the other ownership categories, especially the forestry companies. The traditional estates do have problems of their own, but an approach might be worthwhile.

The road and track system within the Forestry Commission woodlands represent a major opportunity for developing cycling routes. It is likely that the Commission will actively support proposals given some encouragement, and indeed it has developed a policy on cycling with this in mind. Two fairly obvious possibilities are linear routes connecting points of interest or forming shortcuts between public roads and, secondly, circular routes within a forest. Forest paths, existing or possibly constructed, can also be incorporated into routes.

There are now cycling routes in Achray Forest in the Trossachs and in nearby Strathyre Forest. A route has been established in the Beddgelert forest area in Snowdonia and a 'mountain bike centre' in

South Wales makes use of Towy Forest. A cycling week held in the New Forest is an annual event.

Don't think though that cycling is without its problems for the Forestry Commission or other forest owners. Perhaps surprisingly, the conflict between cyclists and vehicular traffic on forest roads is not thought to be significant because of the generally low intensity of use of such roads. Nevertheless, care should be taken, and the Forestry Commission has devised a 'Forest Bicycling Code', which may read somewhat tritely to us responsible cyclists, to encourage safe riding on its routes. Conflicts between cyclists and walkers may be an important consideration. Unauthorised use of cycle routes by horseriders or motocyclists can be a problem but this will be minimised if cyclists are prepared - as they should be - to lift their bikes over locked gates. Naturally enough, if the Forestry Commission gives free use of its land and its routes, it will wish to avoid being made liable for any bent wheels, frames or bones, and covering themselves legally against claims for damage or injuries is an important point to all landowners. So take this as formal notice that anyone cycling on Forestry Commission land does so entirely at his or her own risk! It is quite reasonable too that a landowner will wish to guard against the accidental creation of a public right of way; this is not too difficult now in England and Wales after the 1980 Highways Act. Not all the Commission's woodlands are owned freehold. Some are held on long leases, in which case the terms of the lease may well prevent cycling and other recreational use of the woodland concerned.

To get the best out of our woodlands for cycling requires the expenditure of time and imagination in the design of routes. This is where an interested cyclist can be of real use to the forest manager. The latter will normally have little idea of the capabilities of modern bicycles and their equally modern riders. Advice on what constitutes an acceptable route will be valuable.

What then can the North Yorks DA do? The largest block of Forestry Commission woodland close to York is that in the Cropton, Dalby and Wykeham areas on the North York Moors north of Pickering. The way is open for some careful exploration in liaison with

the local forest manager to decide upon possible routes. Contact me in the first instance if you are interested.

Oh! and by the way, treat the CTC's policy on forestry with a healthy scepticism until you have ridden out into the woods and seen for yourself what the forests are really like. You will soon realise that forestry has many benefits other than just for cyclists... but perhaps that can wait for a later article!

JOHN MORGAN

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YORK'S NEW OUTER RING ROAD

The first section of the York Outer Ring Road is now open. The only concession which its designers have made to cyclists' safety are the roundabout junctions with Haxby Road and Millfield Lane, Poppleton. Here underpass facilities are available for travel on the radial roads to and from York.

"Coincidentally" the by-pass has had to be raised above ground level at both these places to bridge adjacent railway lines.

At all junctions with major roads, small diameter roundabouts have been installed, and 50 mph speed limits round them applied for to the DoT. Minor roads and lanes which cross the by-pass do not merit special treatment. Here users must wait for a gap in traffic both ways along the by-pass before crossing.

15,000 vehicles a day, including 15% HGVs, are expected to use the by-pass when completed. Members who encounter problems at roundabout and flat junctions are invited to send written comments to:

and a copy to:

Col. G.A.Leech, OBE
County Surveyor
N.Yorks County Council
Northallerton
DL7 8AD

Ron Healey,
CTC Rights/Planning Officer
6 Howard Drive
York
Y03 6XB

"BIKES" OF HOLGATE ROAD YORK

This newly-opened shop is located at the bottom of Holgate Hill, at the junction of Acomb and Poppleton roads, and opposite a well-known Tetley's House.

"Bikes" specialise in re-furbished, second-hand shopping, commuting and children's cycles, and will offer part exchange on your old "banger".

A range of accessories is stocked, and a cycle hire scheme is being arranged.

PFH

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YORK - SELBY CYCLE PATH

At the time of writing, the path has been completed to Moor Lane bridge, south of Naburn, from its present northern extremity at Copmanthorpe Lane, Bishopthorpe.

A public meeting was held by York City Council in August at the Sixth Form College, Tadcaster Road, to discuss various options for a linking route from the main path into York City Centre. A further public meeting is planned at a city centre venue towards the end of the year. Watch the press for details, and do come along if you can.

One recent proposal is to extend the main path under Tadcaster Road, then parallel to it to a junction with Moor Lane, near York Technical College. This would provide a segregated link to the path from the west side of York. Scope would also exist to connect with the A64 cycle path from Tadcaster.

PFH

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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.