

Letters

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This month: tricycle handcycling, off-road access, mountain biking coverage, off-road events in France, octogenarian cyclists, and more thoughts about bells

Tricycle trials

Your response to 'Three wheels good' in Cycle April/May 2012 missed the main barrier to trike ownership that I encounter as a disabled handcyclist: man-made barriers!

Cycle routes often have barriers to restrict illegal motorcycle use, although they only seem to stop legitimate use by trikes – unless you can dismount and lift your cycle over the top. When visiting a new area, the risk of meeting any of these barriers means it is often better to use roads instead.

On the plus side of trike riding: on my last ride, as I passed one group, I heard cries of 'awesome' ringing in my ears, and later a local football team out training parted each side of the path and clapped me as I cycled through! Despite the barriers to tricycle handcycling, I wouldn't be without mine.

I note that the June-July issue will have an



article on handcycling. Here's a photo from one of my two ascents of Mont Ventoux.

MIKE THOMAS

Great picture, Mike! The handcycling article will now appear in the next issue. *Editor*



Stopped in our tracks

I have been a member of both CTC and the Ramblers for a number of years as I support the overall aspirations of both organisations.

Reading the article 'Stopped in our tracks?' a sentence jumped out at me. If it is, or were to become, CTC policy to seek 'reclassifying the rights of way network into just two categories: restricted by-ways, for cyclists, equestrians and walkers...'; it would be an easy decision for me to resign my membership.

If I have to choose between extending the rights of cyclists or preserving the rights of the arguably even more vulnerable walkers, the choice will be very easy.

It doesn't seem too much to ask to be able to walk on a footpath without having to be constantly alert for approaching cyclists, who cycling downhill could be travelling

in excess of 20mph, giving precious little time to get out of harm's way children, dogs and elderly parents... or possibly all three.

Paul Denyer

Thank you for the great article 'Stopped in our Tracks', highlighting the disparity in countryside access for cyclists across the UK. The experience in Scotland shows that, through government legislation, access for bicycles can be extended across large areas of countryside without significant issues.

I would agree that we should aspire to the modified version of Scottish access legislation across the rest of the UK, as proposed in the article. However, how likely is this in the foreseeable future? What are we doing to lobby the government in Westminster (and those of devolved administrations), and what are the government's views towards increasing countryside access for cyclists? Is this on the agenda?

The article was well-timed to coincide with the 80th anniversary of the mass trespass by ramblers at Kinder Scout, which reminds us cyclists of the lengths to which walkers were prepared to go to improve their countryside access.

Dominic Berry

**Letter
OF
THE
MONTH**

CTC Off-road Adviser Colin Palmer replies: At the moment, we are introducing the concept through articles like the one in Cycle, and last autumn in the Rights of Way managers' magazine, Waymark.

We have also made useful contacts with the Shadow Environment Minister, and are in the process of working with the Search & Rescue Association to gain a Westminster debate on access. We will need a sympathetic MP to raise a well-briefed question on the topic.

However, it has to be said that there is no appetite in the Coalition for any major legislative change in this area, so we need to work at gaining political sympathies from MPs to create the right environment for change.



Off-road overdose?

Let's start with the obvious: CTC equals Cyclists' Touring Club. Now let's examine the content of the April/May Cycle magazine. Headline: 'Big ideas off-road'; image of two mountain bikers traversing rocky terrain. The rest of the issue has reviews of mountain bikes, off-road pedals and an off-road route to follow. Then we have some moaning about how access is restricted below the border.

I have nothing against mountain bike riders who ride legally. But if I wanted to read mountain bike articles, I would just go out and get a mountain bike magazine.

Where are the routes that are quiet, scenic, interesting and rideable fully-loaded? I would like to see reviews of great places to stay at reasonable prices. The articles discussing touring in exotic locations are fine but we have some wonderful locations at home.

Ian Jukes

The touring articles, particularly ones closer to home, have not been forgotten. Last issue we

shone the spotlight off-road. There will be a stronger touring focus in other issues. Editor

Off-road over here

Reading the article 'Mud, Pies & Off-road Highs' makes me realise how lucky we are in France. I live in south-east Brittany and could ride a 'Randonnée VTT' every weekend.

It isn't necessary to belong to any club and the Randonnée VTT is not a competition. The local club marks out three or four 20-50km circuits, mostly off-road. There is always a feeding-station and often a raffle and bike wash at the finish. You just turn up and pay the entry fee.

Maybe these events may interest some CTC members on holiday in France? The riders are always interested to find a foreigner amongst them, and you'd be surprised how many of them are happy to practise their English. There are events all year, though fewer in July and August. See vttrando.free.fr for events in Brittany (including Loire Atlantique), and velovert.com/evenements for events elsewhere in France.

Max Hembling, Overseas Touring Correspondent

Young at heart

Having seen an item in Cycle last year about a group making a presentation to several members who were in their 80s, I thought you might be interested in our Midweek Section, which currently has about 20 octogenarians amongst its number. The photo shows 13 members of that group.

Dave Rix, Essex CTC



Obituaries

Alan Mort, 1948-2012

Alan, from Kimmel Bay, was a popular and active member of Chester & North Wales CTC. On 5 February, he was fatally injured in an accident involving a Land Rover while cycling on the A548 near Flint. Alan was an enthusiastic participant in the CTC's annual Tourist Competition, taking sixth place as a member of the Chester & North Wales team in 2010. For 30 years before retirement, he was a highly regarded paramedic, much praised for his professionalism. Our sympathies to his family. **Michael Cross**

Dave Lukes 1942-2012

Dave was a strong, fit and active CTC member until he succumbed to a brain tumour this January, having bravely and optimistically faced surgery, radiotherapy and chemotherapy. He was an intrepid cyclist (and walker) and tackled many solo rides, including LEJOG, but he was equally a very supportive club cyclist. As a committee member Dave worked hard to improve cycling facilities in the local area and to widen the appeal of CTC in Beds by leading the drive to develop our website and offer new and exciting rides. **Pat Owen**

Bill Oakley 1931-2012

Bill died in his armchair on 27 February. He was a longstanding member of the Beacon RCC, Vice President and one time course measurer for the Club. A keen cyclist and successful time triallist, he was well known by friends and neighbours in Barnt Green. In his middle years he spent most of his holidays in Switzerland, dossing in barns and traversing the great road passes such as the Gross Glockner. He had been a CTC member since 1973. Bill was an expert grower of orchids. He was also a fisherman and collector of militaria; his prize acquisition was a Military Cross. **David Cox**

Ivan C 'Pat' Paternoster 1927-2011

A lifelong CTC member, Pat was born in Walthamstow, England, and died at home in Battle Creek, Michigan, USA, two weeks after his last cycle ride. In his 20s, Pat rode long distances with the Herts & Essex Wheelers, completing 407 5/8 miles in a 1951 24-hour time trial. Work as an accountant took Pat to Lagos, Nigeria where he co-founded the Ikorodu Road Cycling Club and met wife-to-be Juanita. In 1955, Pat became a missionary. He traded his bespoke bicycle for a 3-speed Phillips, which he rode, loaded with a wind-up record player, to remote Nigerian villages. **Philip Paternoster**



David Jenkyns sent in this picture of his 9-year-old daughter Ruby, 'looking stylish on her new white bicycle', he says

Ringling the changes

L Blackburn's letter (page 27, April/May), saying that the only way of warning a pedestrian of an approaching cyclist is to use a bell, filled me with concern. I held that view until recently, when an elderly lady walked across a cycleway in front of me. I changed course to skirt round the back of her and sounded my bell as a warning. Unfortunately, this simply alarmed her and caused her to change direction and go straight into my new path with disastrous consequences.

Warnings should be done verbally, with caution (a gentle 'Excuse me, please' should suffice), so as not to cause alarm and sudden unexpected reactions.

Norman Richardson