

The Team Cambridge Newsletter – November 2010

“ I love deadlines - I love the sound they make as they go whooshing by” – Douglas Adams

The Muddy Big Issue!

As forecast, this issue is all about brown slimy stuff - in your gears, brakes, socks and teeth. We've got articles from our amazingly youthful new MTB guru Kev, our slightly less youthful lighting alchemist Paul, and a bit of nonsense from me (again). And, for those of us who get nervous leaving the tarmac, we've got Tony's write-up on Alan's Team Cambridge Open 10.

Scared of the dark? Not me!



See the full Dusk 2 Dawn article on page 4.

Later still, this one...

Thanks to the belated publication of this issue, we have the great pleasure of announcing Yellie's triumphant performance in Round 1 of the Winter series.

Miss Danielle Parker (as she is sometimes known) completed the two laps of the fun class, coincidentally in the exact same time as her Mum.

Compare the pics from the links below and guess who came in first:-

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/davefranciosy/5162117344/in/set-72157625332569694/>

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/davefranciosy/5161512623/in/set-72157625332569694/>

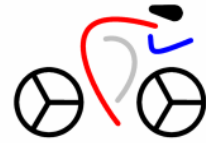
The Tour of The Cornfields. Sunday 5th September

This from MTB guru, Kev "Super Fit" Parker:-

A dry but breezy day saw Team Cambridge members Simon Bowden, Champagne Charlie, Steve Keogh and I head out to Bassingbourn to ride the 60 mile cyclo sportive. On arrival the main news of the day was of the withdrawal of fellow Mud Muncher and D2D rider Andy "Hamster" Hammond.



Whilst attempting some DIY the day before, Andy managed to fall off a ladder and on to a rotary washing line. A collective "Ouch" was said by all as a form of prayer. Andy is making a good recovery and will be joining us at the D2D as team manager to organise food and changeovers etc. No further news of the washing line has been received so I can only assume the worst.



The course was a series of country lanes, farm tracks and bridle paths that wound out from Bassingbourn taking in places such as Hinxworth, Dunton, Potton and an interestingly named village of Cockayne Hatley. When we crossed into Cambridgeshire we found ourselves on more familiar tracks that took in places like Kingston, Caldicote, Toft and Hardwick.

There was a nice climb over Orwell/ Barrington hill that lead to a fast decent to the road where the last 8 miles or so was on the black stuff back to Bassingbourn.

The four of us lined up in the second group along with Charlie's workmate Andy Chapman of Ben Haywards/OTH. Two minutes after the first bunch of 20 riders of a full field of 200 (minus the Hamster) our bunch was released into the wild. We soon settled down into a good rhythm catching up with a few riders from the first group but also being caught and dropped by the cross bike riders who were intent on hammering it from the start!

The first puncture came at around ten mile in temporarily splitting our little group. Si and I stopped to help Steve who had dropped back slightly as a result of his softening tyre. Charlie stuck with his mate Andy for a while until he realised, one, we weren't behind him and two, he would not survive Andy's quickening pace for too long. Puncture fixed and off we went in pursuit of Charlie.

We regrouped on a steep climb a few miles short of the feed station which indicated the half way mark. During our brief food stop we noted that the first 30 mile were done in just over two hours.

Editor's note: For anyone in doubt about the effectiveness of hydration on a long ride, try doing this with only one bidon and "enjoy" the ride!

Tarmac Terriers' Tribune – Race Results

(by our supplier of souplesse, Tony Clarke)

Team Cambridge Autumn Open

F16/10

17th September

"Alan's annual organisation of the end of season 10 was rewarded by a nice morning with sunshine and little wind, although rather chilly.

The event was well run as usual, with every competitor being presented with a bottle of beer to celebrate the end of the season. There was also the usual spread of cakes as a reward after the event.

I did not start, due to being distinctly "under the weather" with a chest infection, but other club riders all started. Riders' times were very varied with some riders still fit and others relatively unfit, having already started the end of season wind-down. President Doug presented the prizes after the event.



Around 40 miles just at the edge of Comberton, Simon fell victim to a thorn and Charlie appeared to have punctured in both legs. With a new tube for Si and an energy gel for Charles we were on our way again.

Steve Keogh at this point opened up a lively debate on which chocolate bar was the best. Steve, who decided that raisin and biscuit Yorkie bar were the ultimate, was not impressed with Simon's Twix suggestion.



If it weren't for the fact that we were riding along a road at 18ishMPH they probably would have had a Harry Hill style "FIGHT!" to find out which one was best. My Picnic suggestion seemed to appeal to both of them.

So with peace restored to our little bunch, we rode on to tackle the Orwell climb. That done it was 9 miles on the road into a stiff breeze back to the HQ.

Two punctures and a food stop gave us an official ride time of five hours with my bike computer displaying a ride time of 4 and a half hours.

We were all pleased with our grand day out and some quality MTB miles in the bank and with all eyes on the D2D it was decided to stay well away from ladders...



Team Cambridge Autumn Open - Results

Tony Clarke	Team Cambridge	DNS	Tim Davies	Icknield RC	23:21
Sue Clarke	Team Cambridge	32:08	Simon Bowden	Team Cambridge	26:28
Nick Jackson	Cambridge CC	24:18	Ken Platts	Cambridge CC	23:56
Derek Bailey	Ely & District CC	30:48			

Two-up: Nick Jackson & Alan Kidd 24:25 ... and that's your lot for this year!

St Ives CC Cross Country Races - September

From our prolific MTB guru:-

After the strong winds during the day and torrential rain on Saturday night, Sunday awoke with glorious blue skies and plenty of sunshine, just right for day out at Hinchingsbrooke Country Park. A bike, a dog and a picnic was packed in to the car. Angie opting to ride her road bike to the event.

After riding the new bike around parts of the course on Friday night I was still not sure about riding the rocket Ron's so after the deluge in the early hours of Sunday morning it was off to the garage for a tyre change. In the end a Ron stayed on the back with a mud gripping Moto Raptor on the front. *[For you roadies, tyres aren't always bald and have to have weird names – Ed]*

With a locally run event right on our doorstep it was a bit of a disappointment that the event did not attract more local riders, with only fifteen veterans joining seven ladies on the start line for the first of the two main events.

With a small field it was only going to be a fast start. I managed to slot in behind Over the Hill rider John M^c Andrew (this is where I would like to have written "where I stayed until the last lap where I produced one of my club run sprint finishes") but in reality I was never going to keep up. At the end of the grass straight and into the trees I started to lose touch with the first five riders.

Now in among the trees I managed to pull away from most of the riders that were behind me.

Once the single track through the woods was over it was out in the open and around the lakes to complete the first of the 5 laps. At this point the remaining rider on my tail overtook and managed to pull away and over the remainder of the race gain two minutes on me.



I went on to ride the four remaining laps on my own but on the final lap I had to push hard to retain my 7th position from St Ives CC rider Alan Moules who started to close the gap.

The Event winner was John M^c Andrew (Ben Haywards/ OTH) with 55 second lead over second place Daran Blackwell (Specialized /Dee Cycles). 7th placed at 9 minutes behind was Kevin Parker (Team Cambridge/Mud Munchers

...and that's a result! Nice one Kev.)

9 at 10, 10-10-10 – Team Cambridge Hill Climb

from Directeur Sportif, Paul Millard:-

As is the tradition with the Hill Climb report we start with the weather: well let's just say that the mud-munching crew were just a bit jealous they did not have the same conditions the previous weekend. So what was it like? It was a bright sunny day with a slight warm breeze that was warm enough for riders to be wearing their shorts and racing jerseys. This is a stark contrast to previous years where rain jackets and scarves were the order of the day.

Whether this is a result of some of our stalwart members being away on holiday, Doug and Pauline down in sunny Devon (we do hope Pauline has a better visit than last time when she broke her foot), and Sue and Tony sunning themselves in the "good ol' US of A". This saw Angela stand in and help with the timing and was supported by Yellie, who could not be persuaded to race up the hill.

"I don't think he's letting go, Ange!"



But despite the good weather only nine were persuaded to turn up with five actually taking to their saddles to give it a go. The racing was hard as you would expect; after all it is a hill climb, with lungs bursting and legs being pushed to the limit.

The good weather certainly helped get the best out of everyone with the Twiglet, a.k.a. Peter Millard, being first up and doing a personal best by nearly two minutes getting up the hill in three minutes dead. With the rest of the riders following close behind we knew there would be a new champion.

Last years champ, Simon Denney, was sidelined nursing an injury and helping out with the timekeeping. And the times were close, with the winning margin only one second. Kevin Parker came out on top in 2:28, after having one of his best seasons for 'many a year' beating new boy Phil Leonard who came home in 2:29 with third man Paul Millard 5 seconds adrift and Steve Laurie a further 3 seconds back.

...and now, the bit we'd been boring you all to death about for the last five months; it's time for a bed-time story...

Dusk 2 Dawn – the Big Wet Muddy One!

(by Simon Bowden, seen here demonstrating the theory of evolution near the Go Ape arena.)



"Just like last year I wimped out of riding the first lap, happy to let Kev take the strain, and I was second man. This meant that at 6am I was waiting for Kev in the change over area, ready to head out on the Team's 8th lap. I had managed to get about half an hours' sleep earlier and as I lay back in the car I'd noticed that it had stopped raining – I was very happy.

The rain had started pretty much at the off, just like in 2008, and the lap times had increased from just under an hour to nearly two hours. The going was hard with a considerable portion of my second lap spent running through the mud rather than riding.

The left pedal had scraped and battered my right calf whilst running so I'd decided to wear my longs to protect it. I'd also put on a long sleeve top and base layer so that standing in changeover I was feeling warm on this mild night - School Boy Error!

Le Grand Depart



As Kev handed over the wristband I sped off down the initial long fire road section. It was still muddy but at least the rain had stopped so I was convinced the going was easier. That thought didn't last long as I hit the first section of singletrack, which was also one of the worst mud sections and I was immediately off the bike running.

I was on and off for the next three miles, however I could see the course was drying out and the going getting a bit easier. I also realised I was wearing far too many clothes and the sweat started to pour off me. As I hit the 6 miles to go sign I rode past a runner but he soon hopped back on and overtook me; pretty soon we'd picked up a third rider and the pace picked up, we were actually racing. This is the point where the smile was put firmly back on my face and I really started to enjoy myself.

The light had also increased as dawn broke and I switched off my lights. As we approached The Skip I got off and ran and slipped through the small bomb hole. The last of the pair stumbled on the exit and I was past them and off I went as fast as I could, which was getting quicker all the time with the mud drying and the light allowing me to pick the better lines.

As I approached Howes Pit I wondered if the organisers might have closed it as they had a couple of the other bomb holes, but they hadn't - as I went over the lip I saw the lake of mud in the bottom.

If I'd stopped to think I doubt I would have ridden in but you really had no choice, it's too steep to run down. Anyway I stayed upright and climbed out. The next bit was my favourite bit of the whole course, but it had been reduced to a slog through the mud; on this lap though I managed to ride some bits whereas on my 2nd lap I'd had to run all 3 sections parallel to The Beast.

Le Chef



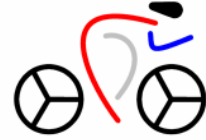
Looking at my watch I could see I was making reasonable time and in particular the last three miles went very quickly so as I entered the arena I wasn't too surprised to find Steve wasn't waiting to take over. The other waiting riders told me that this had happened to several other teams – as the course dried out and dawn broke, lap times were dropping dramatically and teams were misjudging the hand-over times. I raced over to the campsite and found the boys all ready to head over to the arena to see me and Charlie come in on our last laps but it was still only 7.45am and we had time to get another all important lap in. This had been my thought as I raced round, if I could just get back before 8am Steve could get out for another lap.

At the camp the boys were changed out of their riding gear and were not ready to go out again, the only option was for me to do another lap. Psychologically as you come to the end of a race you push yourself harder because you're near the end and the pain will soon end. This mental bargain was immediately forgotten as Kev and Paul quickly got me ready to roll again. I managed to ditch the base layer but I was worried I was a bit dehydrated. As I set off I wondered if the boys were going to be fed up having to wait at least another hour for their bacon and eggs.

"Kev, that's not the wristband you're pulling!"



By this time the fire road had an obvious dry path to follow but I was running again as soon as I hit the single-track and I immediately questioned the sense of a second lap as I could feel my lowered energy levels. I started on the bottle Paul had given me and restrained the urge to drink it all at once. I could still turn the pedals though and it was running which was fading fast. As on the previous lap I found I could ride even more of the course than before and the lines were easier to see so I just kept going. The only problem was thirst. I got half way round and gave in and finished off the bottle knowing I'd make it to the end. I started to dream of a Coke at the finish (which in the end was kindly provided by Kev).



When I got to Howes Pit I caught another rider (there weren't many left out on the course) and I saw that he had half a bottle left and I toyed with the idea of asking for a drink until I noticed his handle bars had snapped off and he was left to run the last 4 miles. He said he'd been in second place and had just been passed to drop back into third, I don't know which category. After that I was soon back at the arena and the Teams put up a great cheer as I crossed the line.

A cheer like that isn't quickly forgotten and it sealed what turned out to be another great Dusk 'till Dawn.

When we looked at the Timelaps monitor we'd moved up into 10th place, a brilliant achievement: in the end we'd kept going where many teams had packed up hours ago. Off back to the camp for that well earned fry-up.

Cheers to Kev, Paul, Steve, Charlie, Phil, Peter and our Catering Manager Andy. Brilliant.



Parker's Piece - Off Road Ramblings

“Hello, this is not a race report, just a few words from me about mountain biking or the dark side as some of you tarmac warriors call it.

August bank holiday, and all the Parkers went to Hertford in Hertfordshire (other Hertford's are available) for a long weekend break. After a quick look at some OS maps on line before hand I found a few bridle paths in a nearby wooded area that has lots of names such as Bramble, High field or Hoddesdon park wood. Anyway, whatever it was called it was there to be explored.

Well, the wood was approximately two miles across by one mile deep spanning across two hills. There were two main fire break type paths that divided the wood into four sections. Off the main paths there were a number of smaller trails that have been carved by mountain bikers and some motocross bike tracks were evident. These trails would wind up and down the hills and always returning you to one of the main paths, so there was little chance of getting too lost.

Over the bank holiday I visited these woods for some D2D training either on my own or with Angie and the girls although each time we returned to camp the good effort was undone by lots of wine and big dinners. With this in mind, this could make a good site for a Team Cambridge “training camp” hmmm. Only being about an hour's drive away it could also make an alternative from Thetford as a place to play in the mud.

On the note of training for the D2D we had a few goes at riding the course before the event. Our first night out Simon, who was inspired by Paul's homemade lights last year, came along sporting a set of lights that he had spent many a night in his shed building. The Wallace and Gromit lights worked well and did not need any running repairs.

On a Sunday ride before the big event of the season, Paul and Peter, Angie and Danielle, my work colleague Phil and I rode around the ten mile D2D course for the first time in daylight. Danielle loved the flowing single track and did the bomb holes like a pro. In fact she was so inspired by the ride she has asked if she could enter the fun ride in winter series! Looks like there maybe another Parker on a club trophy in the not too distant future.

Night rides.

If you are interested in going out on your bike off road and in the dark then there are a number of groups that go out of an evening. Tuesdays and Thursdays you can hook up with the CAM MTB group. They start from the corner of Brookside and Lensfield road at 7.30pm. Mark Tallack is a regular rider on these sessions so look out for him if you go. For more info go to www.cammtb.co.uk.

There is also a Wednesday evening ride. This time you will find Simon Denny and a group of off-roaders from the Cambourne area riding round the surrounding bridle paths. They meet up at the new bike shop, Massif bikes on Broad Street, Cambourne at 6.50pm for a 7 o'clock start.

Winter Series now open.

Winter series dates are now on the Thetford website and the entries are open and filling up.

Round 1: November 7th fire road 24 Santon Downham

Round 2: December 5th fire road 6 Brandon

Round 3: January 30th fire road 24 Santon Downham

Round 4: February 27th fire road 10 Mayday Meadow

(See next issue of the Spokesman for results – Ed)

Competition Time

As Jeff tried to cycle
up the hill, he soon realised
he was in the wrong gear.



Where's Jeffrey?

... I always thought single-speed looked painful...

Entries on an email please, to

news@team-cambridge.co.uk

Super new prize!

Thanks to our new competition sponsor Simon, we have a glittering prize this month. Ride with these on your bike, and the sparks will illuminate your trail like Fairy Dust!



In the next issue of The Spokesman...

Well, to be honest I'm not too sure, but I'm sure we'll think of something! We've got some pics of Winter Series 1 at Santon Downham, with excellent race-faces being displayed to full effect.

New feature for 2011.

"Odd Bikes" – the sort of bike you'd built if you had a spare day in the shed and a crate of beer to hand. Get your cameras ready, because this is going to rely heavily on reader contributions, unless I rip it all off the internet (again).

(Champagne) Charlie

One last thing...

Entries for Club standards, records and the Best All Rounder trophies need to be returned to Paul Millard by 13th Dec on the claim form below.



