



The Spokesman
February 2012

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Latest bits:

- * Ely Hardriders 2012 postponed due to icy roads? Contact Steve Laurie for the latest.
- * Watch all the fancy new stuff on the website—it's dead clever.
- * Shelton wins the MTB championship!
- * Has Simon caught TB from the badgers, or has he been on the turbo since Christmas?

2012 Race Calendar unveiled!

Now that the exertions of Valentine's day are behind us (you did spend the evening on the turbo, didn't you?) we can all look forward to those lazy hazy days of summer with renewed optimism.

Once again, our Race Secretary and resident genius Paul "Magneto" Millard has worked wonders and created a full calendar of events for the coming season, with some old favourites and a couple of unusual ones— one so new there there isn't even a course map on the website yet!

At least this will give me a better excuse for getting lost during a race than when we were up at Ely a couple of years ago...

Turn to page three for more details of the courses, and start your mental preparation for the event: just like the Olympic stadium except easier than standing up on smooth wood with a 44 degree slope.

Traditionally, the summer season kicks off with a short and sweet 6 and a bit mile lap of the Newton circuit. Just one lap remember, so don't think of laving something in the tank for the second lap like I did once: just go for it from the off and mind the wing mirrors on the parked cars in Little Shelford.

The start time is a little earlier than the norm due to the tilt of the earth's



Memories of sun-kissed tarmac...

rotational axis, so remember to tell your boss you've got to leave work early for the kids' school play or something.

That's about it really, except to say that the race fee has now increased to £2.00 for members, to pay for the Olympic Velodrome presumably—but how much fun can you imagine for so little money?

The Most Inglorious Team Cambridge Off-road Excuses Trophy

I don't know if we've been struck down by track fever or simply a case of DFS (Decidedly Fixed to the Sofa) syndrome, but this year's showing in the annual off-road contest has been looking as sparse as Ed Milliband's manifesto.

Basically, we've got three entrants at the time of writing, of which only Kaptain Kev has a full record of attendance, followed by new boy Shelton Pell and finally Paul "Magneto" Millard, taking a one-off opportunity to

capitalise on his uncanny knack of riding faster off-road than on tarmac...

The observant reader will note the absence of my name from the register, but please be assured that

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The Rise of the Phoenix

By Champagne Charlie

After last year's anti-climactic end to the season, in which my rear wheel finally gave up the unequal struggle with the savage potholes on most of our courses and the task of supporting the weight equivalent to two roadies and their baggage, the first event of 2012 marked the first opportunity to get my race bike out of the garage, whence it had been unceremoniously dumped four months previously.

My scantily-built machine, with its skinny 531 frame dating from around 1989, came equipped with Wolber profil 18 tubular rims on Mavic hubs – a very light combination which made for a fast and flighty ride, becoming scary on anything downhill and bumpy.

Moving hands to change gear or adjust one's attire could bring on a nasty speed wobble, and it certainly made me have to learn to ride more smoothly than the level my other bikes would tolerate.

Trev to the Rescue!

Thankfully, Trevor Avis gave me a lift home, and the search was on for a replacement rim.

EBay revealed that these rims are as rare as rocking horse poo, with one or two in Australia, one in London belonging to some fixie-merchant and nothing to match my spoke count.

Luckily, as I was telling my mate Andy my tale of woe, he said

he'd got some Mavic CXP23's hanging in his shed with nothing to do. Bingo! Proper rims of an appropriate vintage, with the right drillings and everything!

I picked myself up to the sound of friendly amusement, but as I attempted to spin the wheels it was obvious that the rear was Pringled



One wheel on my wagon,
an' I ain't rollin' along...

Sadly, all this excitement was bound to come to an end, but it did so in the most ignominious fashion, when I failed to clip in on leaving the Bottisham lay-by to ride home.

I picked myself up to the sound of friendly amusement, but as I attempted to spin the wheels it was obvious that the rear was Pringled – no hope of repairing it.

The only trade-off was having to convert from tubular tyres to clinchers, which I was a bit sad about as I had really enjoyed the lively feel of tubs and had gone three seasons without a single puncture.

Nonetheless, this couldn't be sniffed at and so the bits went to Mike at Townsend's Cycle Centre on Chesterton Road for one of

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The Most Inglorious Team Cambridge Off-road Excuses Trophy

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I will be well furnished with a comprehensive set of implausible and feeble excuses come the day of reckoning.

Actually, now I come to think of it, I can't even remember the ones for the November and December events. I do recall that the January race was on the weekend of my brother-in-law's significant birthday party; a night which resulted in yours truly doing the "Oops Upside your Head" rowing thingy (see Champagne Charlie's Training Guide for details).

The next race date will also see me many miles from Thetford forest, thus leaving the door wide open for the lesser mortals to snatch victory from under my august nose.

Still no word from Simon either—might he turn up at the last gasp and blow the competition into the bracken?

We shall know before long... see back page for "The End".



"I talk to the trees, but they don't listen to me..."
Captain Kev scours the wilderness for another red and yellow jersey.

The Rise of the Phoenix...

(Continued from page 2)

his excellent rebuilds, and a while later I picked them up to wait for the tyres that I had put on my Christmas list. These turned out to be Conti GP4000S's (thanks Mark) and with some tubes from Andy's shed (again) I was nearly ready to roll.

A ride to Aero Cycles, which for the uninitiated is an industrial unit at the far end of Haverhill where various bike nuts from Haverhill Wheelers hang out, provided the vital but missing rim tapes.



Them's a strong set of hoops!

These went on with no problems whatsoever, but by the time I had replaced the gear cable I was already regretting chucking the bike into the garage without

any thought given to its condition after four months' neglect.

Come the day, the bike felt good despite the mismatch between the blue anodised rims, the purple forks (a replacement for the originals that were seized to the stem when I got the bike) and the grotty off-white painted frame with greasy finger marks; the ride was noticeable more secure and less jittery, and although the small extra weight was detectable it did not make a difference in practical terms.

Get down...

More significant at the time was the physical impact of the fairly radical riding position (compared to my tourer and mountain bike), requiring more hip flexion than my decrepit skeleton can easily manage, exacerbated by the clash between my knees and my sagging midriff.

Oh, for those hazy days of summer when one's fitness is at a peak and body and bike are at one!

Obviously, riding in January in longs and jacket is not a fair comparison, but I was pleased with my time (about 2 minutes down on summer) and the lack of judder on the bumps was welcome.

The day totalled about 40 miles, but by this time my neck muscles were screaming from the unaccustomed posture and I had long since switched from race mode to "grovelling homewards".

Oh, for those hazy days of summer when one's fitness is at a peak and body and bike are at one!

Still, there are a few performance improvements in the offing, including replacement of the dodgy steering bearings for a nice vintage Mavic set that Mike has stashed in his toolbox, and of course the long-overdue re-spray that should be worth at least 30 seconds over 10 miles!

Round the 'Pole

For those of you that haven't ridden this circuit before, here's a quick resume of F14z/12.4, which has to be one of the finest examples of the historic and somewhat obscure system of coding that dates back to the days when time-trialling was not a legal pastime, still less the great hope for Olympic glory that our present-day media seems to expect.

The start is just opposite the comparatively luxurious lay-by near the LazyDayz café on the A603. Forget the sausage baguette for now: this is race day and you're here to sweat!

The first leg is familiar to veterans of the "over the hill" course F16/10, with its steadily increasing gradient requiring a determined in the saddle effort until the very last stretch demands a bottom gear honk to reach the summit.

The downhill is scary-fun, with meandering creases in the



Team Cambridge Cycling Club

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The friendly family cycling club:
meets Mondays at Scout HQ,
195 Perne Road, Cambridge CB1 3NT

Get it all online
(almost before it happens!)
www.team-cambridge.co.uk

Something's happened to the TC website!

There's a technological revolution going on right under our noses, threatening to change the way we live. It's a good job that bikes are still made of steel.

Our very own webmaster Paul "Magneto" Millard has been burning the midnight oil, possibly aided and abetted by Simon "the Badger" Bowden, since he hasn't been seen in daylight in the last three months, plus maybe one or two others of the club's gifted and talented set.

What does this mean to you, gentle reader?

- No doubt you wanted a scrolly rolling calendar to remind you how much pain next Monday's circuit training would inflict? - you got it!
- You couldn't live without a hot link to the latest issue of the Spokesman? - of course not!
- You always assumed that an RSS feed would be totally irrelevant but could get you the sack for skiving - not any more!
- Our sources have been led to understand that a spell-checker is currently under development.

Whatever next, eh?

Round the 'Pole

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tarmac hinting at a speed wobble but never quite as bad as they look.

Keep your wits about you for the sharp left at the cross-roads, then keep hard at it all the way through the Eversdens, slightly uphill all the way. This is territory that suits the road-bike riders, and the twists and turns through Kingston village and the fast downhill turn onto the B104 reward those with the bottle and handling skills to match.

The B1046 is one of those roads that is always good on two wheels (or even four, if you must!). This stretch is mostly uphill, but the frequent bends and changing gradient disguise the amount of work required and it's tricky to judge the combination of effort and recovery for best progress.

Another turn onto the A1198 Ermine Way, the Roman empire's gift to cyclists. Take care on the turn, as although traffic is fairly light for the size of the road, it is usually fast moving. The last leg is nearly dead straight, with rolling climbs and descents seducing you into implausible levels of effort leading to a final top speed descent through Arrington towards the roundabout. At this stage I was seeing stars from the effort, but still trying to beat the speed limit: magic!

One last left turn at the roundabout and you're at the finish. Don't save anything for the second lap!

Shelt onballs

...courtesy of The Quiet Man™
"I only used to have a couple of cloth-covered dangly things... but then Meg got me these multi-coloured testi-pots!"

Racers please note:

The CTT standard entry forms have been revised this year. This means that the form you've saved all your past PB's on is no longer current—annoyingly, it seems you can't leave your times for various distances on the sheet but will need to edit them for the particular race distance.

Must have been designed by Andrew Lansley...

Stop Press! The MTB series has concluded in spectacular fashion, with new recruit Shelton Pell snatching victory from the established off-road campaigners. Not only that, he did it in only three trips into the woods compared to Kaptain Kev's four, scoring a treble twenty maximum score! Now some thing must have happened in the last few months to make him that quick—was it shopping at Paul Littlebike's Cambourne salon, or was it due to spending autumnal evenings chasing Simon Denney across the fields? Respect to the lad though: I've laboured for years through mud, sweat and obesity with nothing better than second place to show for it—mind your back next season!

It's The End!



Shelton Shakin' it.