



Team Cambridge Cycling Club

Ely Stages 2014 Tour Bid

Special points of interest:

- Only four pages!
- Very few photos!
- No carbon fibre!
- No Shelton!
- No race results!
- Hardly any gags!

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In a surprise move last week, Ely city council launched a last-minute move to make Ely the host city for one of the UK stages of the Tour de France.

A spokesman revealed that the bid had been hatched during an all-night meeting of the council, after watching the spectacular success of Stage 1 of this year's Tour.

A spokesman said:- "We considered that those poshos in Cambridge were getting too big for their Aston Martins and that we should stake a claim for Ely on the world stage."

"Our infrastructure for hosting a spectacular finish to

Since the last edition of The Spokesman, Bike Watch has taken on a whole new meaning! Following the reports from Hardwick, Over seems to have been the next target, with night prowlers having been heard rooting round. Fortunately this time nothing was taken, so be wary and make sure your pride and joys are all properly locked up and secure.



Roof mounted air conditioning units might not be an option in 2014.

the race is permanent and will provide a legacy for future generations of team coach drivers to train and compete at the top level."

A local commentator

added "We don't have a problem with cyclists passing through red lights in Ely—most of the residents are quite content to stand and watch them change colour."

BIKE WATCH

Bike Watch usually busies itself uncovering what is new in the Team Cambridge peloton; this usually means it discovers something created by boffins in a chemistry lab using carbon and other exotic elements.

Whilst this appeals to the 'techies' in us it is good to see this is not always the case and

that finding exotic machinery which has a classic pedigree (or to use the new in phrase, retro), is a delight, some might even say the best form of re-cycling!

My latest find can trace its roots back in to the last century, circa the 1980s. It is a good example

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Cross-Country Riding with Peter and Paul



Both of these are Paul; neither is Peter, and this photo wasn't taken on the date the article was written. The editor's predicament is clear for all to see...

One of the curious things about my dodgy hip is that bikes designed for comfort are no longer comfortable, and both my relatively Spartan road bike and my even more so mountain bike are better. I think this is because each has a short wheelbase which in turn reduces the flexion of the hip joint.

Anyway, the weather had been relatively kind and I had somehow achieved a Saturday free of work or other chores, so a deficit in miles needed to be addressed.

Thankfully Paul and Peter were in a similar position, so we met up chez Tallack to tackle my cross-country course.

This is a game of two halves, with a 21-mile loop to the South which can be combined with a 15-mile northern loop. This was described in a previous Spokesman, and a couple of years ago we did a group ride around both legs which I really enjoyed, although I normally ride solo.

The first leg heads out of Balsham past the water tower and downhill, before an overgrown

flat section revealed one of the pleasures of mid-summer Mountain biking - nettle rash!

Peter's hairy shins offered no protection, but Paul and I didn't flinch, being hardened through the experience of riding bikes in the 1970s and through the dawn of mountain biking in the 80s.

"How 'ard?" "Rock 'ard!"

After Peter's treatise on the medicinal benefits of native flora, we headed up the road and along a farm track, turning left at Wanker's Corner onto

"How 'ard?" "Rock 'ard!"

Thankfully, the two older members of the group managed to generate enough horsepower to counter Peter's considerable weight advantage.

the fast downhill run down to Linton and along the High St.

Across the A1307 and through the grain silos, the gravel track up to Catley Park makes the climbing manageable even when the weather is bad, and so this ride is a practical proposition pretty much all year round.

Thankfully, the two older members of the group managed to generate enough horsepower

to counter Peter's considerable weight advantage (about 2:1 in my case - ahem!) but his gain in strength this year is evident.

The next part is downhill and always tricky, where the track steepens under the trees to join a stream bed that is normally a bit damp, even in summer. The descent is muddy and when it is dry, the baked hoofprints make for a staircase descent.

My previous ride was just before last Christmas, when the heavy rains turned this section into an axle-deep torrent that I thought would be completely unrideable. Strangely it wasn't, perhaps due to the downhill gradient and that the current had washed away the mud to leave a firm gravelly bottom.

Washed along by the current, I almost managed to reach dry land until a hidden rut forced

Refreshingly Cool Water

my to lie down in the refreshingly cool water: luckily at this point it wasn't more than a foot deep.

Remember the days of old-skool bottom bracket bearings that has to be replaced every time they got damp? Thankfully they are no more, and once emptied, my bike is none the worse for its immersion.

Back to the present, we climbed again on the deserted single-track road that is normally the preserve of posh 4x4s and towards Little Walden aerodrome for some more nettles.

There's a straight downhill run towards Bartlow that requires cojones of steel to tackle at full speed, but the presence of some ruts made caution the

watchword and we kept it steady. Towards Shudy Camps there's a gravelly climb enclosed by a hedge that could be anywhere in the world but Cambridgeshire, and then it's back across the A1307 and through Horseheath to join the Roman Road westwards back to Balsham.

All good clean fun, and a reminder of the mtb rides we used to enjoy a few years ago!



Old Skool mtbs always needed regular attention to the bottom bracket bearings.

Cycling, but not as we know it...

Back by popular demand, your editor helped the 1st Balsham Scouts to win their cyclists' badges: here's how:-

The first session was on bike maintenance, which meant that the usual array of Halford's specials was wheeled into the Scout hut for inspection and straightening of saddles and brake levers since the last crash! Puncture repairs were promptly placed into the "advanced" category, but we persevered and demonstrated patching an inner tube, to the general bewilderment of

the audience.

On to the grand event, an off-road sortie from Wandlebury back to Balsham via the Roman Road one Monday evening. Luckily the weather was fine and dry with good light, so the inevitably cavalry charge soon developed.

We had a celebrity guide in the familiar form of Uncle Mark, aka "BabyCham" for the purpose of this publication. His experience of working in a bike shop gave him valuable skills in dealing with much-abused

bicycles, although thankfully there were only a couple of pinch punctures to attend to, and he was able to cruise along and marvel at the total barminess of the boys.

Nonetheless, some progress has been achieved since the previous year's foray – no tantrums or physical meltdowns, and our kamikaze pilot (with strong legs but the attention span of a moth) was content simply to ride into the nearest hedge instead of wiping out the derailleur of the rider in front, in lieu of braking!



Balsham Scouts' campaign to reduce traffic was a resounding success...

Big Game Hunting

After the Scouts and their machinery had been dispersed homewards, Mark and I needed to return to Wandlebury in the twilight to retrieve my car and for him to ride home.

He set off at a more normal pace, with troop leader Paul gamely joining in until parting at the Hildersham road. Mark turned up the wick towards Worsted lodge, and I responded, passing him on a wide

dusty stretch where the scrub had been cleared and the ruts leveled out, making one of the trickier sections more like what the Romans originally had in mind.

As I was passing, I heard the yell of "Muntjac!" and looked ahead, expecting to see a four-legged creature blocking my path and bracing to anticipate the trip over the 'bars and the fractured collar bone that

would inevitably follow...

Nothing there. I looked back to see Mark stationary, unclamping his back wheel.

"I thought you were saying...."

"No, you muppet, I was saying "puncture"!"

Oh well, it must be the experience of group riding in the Team Cambridge peloton that has primed me to expect the unexpected...?



"Muntjac!"



BIKE WATCH

(Continued from page 1)

of a specialist low profile machine made for time trialing. Often known as a low pro, this particular model was made by a well-known high quality bike maker of the day George Longstaff. It has been crafted from one of the most exotic of light weight steel tubing from TI Reynolds, 753. The focus for these types of machines is light

weight and aerodynamics, although this was in its infancy at this time.

As with all classic machines, parts get upgraded over the years. This example is no different, however some of the original features are still in evidence, the extra light aero brakes and the small 26" front wheel.

This particular example has a

chequered history and was reputedly once in the ownership of Alan Newark. For those not familiar with the name he was the local fast man and quite a rapid chap in his day... It then found itself in the hands of our very own fast man Steve Laurie (55min 25 and a record holder!) for short while before finally to its latest owner Ian Millard (some may remember seeing it a

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Are you sure the top tube goes this way up, Dad?

Team Cambridge Cycling Club

President: Doug Parker

Chairman: Tony Clarke

Hon. Secretary: Sue Clarke

Treasurer: Pauline Parker

Racing Sec: Paul Millard

MTB Secretary: Kaptain Kev

Membership Sec: The Quiet Man™

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Bizarre News: 'Doped' cows trample rest of the field in controversy at Great Yorkshire Show

What do cyclist Lance Armstrong, the record-breaking sprinter Ben Johnson and the prize-winning dairy cows of Yorkshire have in common? The connection sounds unlikely, but they've all been accused of using banned substances to lay waste to the competition in their fields.

For the past 155 years, the Great Yorkshire Show has been a quaint celebration of agricultural pursuits, but following this week's event two dairy cows are being investigated after ultrasound scans detected that their udders had been tampered with. The owners have been informed that they will be stripped of their rosettes and banned from future events if they're found to have cheated.

The substances used in these cases have not been disclosed, but honorary show director Bill Cowling warned that the "heinous" and "despicable" process of tampering can take various forms. Owners can use "copious amounts of glue" to ensure the teat doesn't wander off-centre and risk a downgrade from show judges. Glue can also be used to seal the ends of teats to stop milk running out of one side, which can "make it look uneven", Mr Cowling said.

David Martin, a member of the British Veterinary Association's (BVA) ethics and welfare group, said that some owners are even more unscrupulous. "If they go one stage further they can inflate the udder with gas and then seal the teats so the udder is fuller than it should be. It's what the exhibitors believe is wanted by the show judges. "It's basically the equivalent of athletes doping; they're just doing it with cows."

Ouch!

BIKE WATCH

(Continued from page 3)

fair few years ago!) and is now on loan to his brother Peter.

Some restoration work has been undertaken using some of Dad's now spare period parts including his old special light weight racing wheels!

If I mention, Campag Super Record hubs complete with oil port (polished of course), screw on block and Mavic Open GP4 rims, it will bring back memories I am sure, as will the down tube shifters, Flite saddle. "Ahh them were the days..." I hear some of you say.

Whilst trying to keep its period retro look some sacrifices had to be made in accommodating Peter's desire for a "faster set of wheels"! This meant re-building the front wheel, using

the original Wolber Profil 18 front wheel rim and flat bladed spokes onto dad's old super record hubs. In doing so they had to use the classic wheel building technique of filing the hub's spoke holes to allow the wide flat bladed spokes to go in.

Whilst this was all period the new ceramic bearings were definitely not, but one of the sacrifices made for 21st century technology. Their pearl like appearance making them the new "bikers bling" but more importantly, according to cycling guru Sir Dave Brailsford, gives you a "marginal gain" and we all know what that can lead to... I do have to say they do run very smoothly and just keep turning and turning and..., well you get the drift.

The only other modern technol-

ogy used is an Ahead set quill stem conversion, just to allow for a good riding position.

Peter's first ride saw him break his 25 mile P.B. although it nearly crippled him in the process. But he stuck with it and has also equaled his own 10 mile P.B. set earlier in the year, only 5 seconds off a gold standard and remains his goal for the rest of the season. There must be some life in the old girl yet and hopefully can still compete with the boffin-made exotica.

His greatest achievement on this bike so far was breaking the club 30 mile Junior record, beating his brother's record on his brother's bike. There must be some irony in that!

So all I can say is have a look in the loft, dig out those classics, sorry, retro bikes and re-live the glory days.

Well "Ta-ta for now" and keep a close eye on your bikes.

From



Well, by the time you read this, I hope to have a bionic hip and be thinking about getting back on a bike in time for next season.

In the meantime ride hard, ride safely and enjoy every minute!

Champagne Charlie

