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UCI World Cup Cyclocross in the UK!



Oh, the grand old UCI, they had thirteen thousand men; He marched them up to the top of the hill, and he marched them down again!

A nice surprise late in the year; my brother told me about the UCI cyclocross stage being held in Milton Keynes in late November.



Andy and I were working a Saturday morning shift, so rewarded our labours with an afternoon watching some great racing.

We arrived during the women's race, the juniors having competed in the morning.

The pace was surprising and the conditions tough; despite it being a warm sunny day, the going was

heavy and huge amounts of strength were needed to scramble up the steep banks.

The crowd exceeded all expectations and the large contingent of continental fans was eagerly emulated by the Brits, roaring with gusto and ringing their cowbells in a cacophony of enthusiastic chaos.

And, a British third place for Nikki Harris gave some local credibility to the day!

How to ride up a muddy staircase

Woodhill Park in Milton Keynes was a great natural amphitheatre, with a hilltop just right for flying flags, some tarmac (fast) climbs and some muddy ones, and slithery descents to be taken at full chat, or else risk losing valuable seconds.

The big crowd magnet though, was at the back of the course where a series of steps about

10" high was set into the hill, after a strength-sapping series of uphill terraced switchbacks.

Most riders opted to dismount and run up the steps, but as the men's final got into full swing, the increasing loudness of the cheers from the crowd suggested that something special was happening...

Yes, the biggest roars were



awarded to those who rode up the steps; I'm still not sure how they actually did it!

The Team Cambridge 25th Anniversary Ron Edwards Memorial Event!



The day dawned bright and clear... no actually it didn't and the threat of thunderstorms nearly put paid to six months' planning and preparation as Champagne Charlie was putting the finishing touches to probably the longest title in the time-trialing calendar.

Thankfully the clouds parted just as the car park was filling up with eager competitors, and our eager band (well,

quite eager for pressed men) of marshals, helpers and pushers-off marched away to take up their positions at roundabout, slip

road and kitchen sink.

The temperature in race HQ was a chilly 17 Celsius due to the air-conditioning, whereas outside it was

climbing into the thirties. Thankfully The Quiet Man™ came to the rescue and located the thermostat, but it was no comfort to the competitors as they returned from their ride dripping with sweat.



If lifestyle choice permits, Vancouver Island is as amenable to cycling as any place on the planet.

Doing What Bears Do (in the woods)

Last summer the Tallack tribe fulfilled a twenty year ambition by returning to Vancouver Island to revisit Mrs T's relations and take another dose of big country, big dinners and the warm and gentle humour that seems to characterise the Canadian people (apparently they've never heard of sarcasm).

Most of this involved four wheels rather than two, with a V6 engine, but if lifestyle choice permits, the Island is as amenable to cycling as any

place on the planet. The roads are wide and the traffic is relatively slow and sparse (although less so than twenty years ago) and there was a noticeable minority out there pedalling. One thing to watch though, is that either side of the main road there may well be nothing but trees and a very, very long walk if you run out of inner tubes or water.



Cycling in the Salmon Capital of the World

Opportunity knocked when we arrived at Campbell River, halfway up the island and proclaimed as the world's salmon capital. There were plenty of folk fishing, but I had my eye on the local bike store and their offer of a day's MTB hire for \$40. I added an inner tube, bottle and pump to the tally, as the local park is about the size of Thetford forest with at least as many miles of single track and on my count, four people and one bear. Luckily (for me and the bear), I was going downhill and therefore fast enough to have the element of sur-

prise, so the bear leapt off into the undergrowth and I didn't have to test my wildlife-whispering skills in earnest.

The photos will tell the tale of the ride for now; maybe I will expand on this when space permits. Suffice to say, my four and a bit hours elapsed shortly after my legs did, and after a mad forty-minute time-trial back down the fire-roads to the waiting bike shop and family, I handed back the once-clean but now filthy Trek without the unperturbed owner batting an eyelid, collapsed into the car and promptly slept all the way to Chemainus.

Tarmac Terrier's Tribune (sort of)

The Tarmac Terrier had his mind on other things much of this year, so the race reporting has been patchy, to say the least.

However, cobbled from the ever superb Team Cambridge website, as few snippets:-

The Ron Edwards Memorial 10 mile club event (not the other, open, event) was aptly won by Franz Fuerst of Cambridge CC. Well, second place just wouldn't be good enough, would it?

The 2014 Handicap series was jointly won by Trevor Avis

and Peter Millard, at either end of the age spectrum (ahem). Both winners justly deserve the honours, having campaigned regularly and consistently over this and many previous seasons. Many talented contenders were close behind, including Racing Ralph Hancock, Kaptain Kev and the irrepressible duo Simon and Alex.

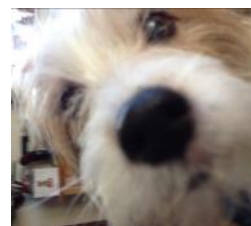
Next up was Trevor Kimber, seeking a return to form for the 2017-18 season with a carefully planned training strategy. Your scribe unaccountably achieved 12th place,

with a mere three qualifying rides. 'Nuff said.

The Transmedia series was fairly similar, but Trevor came out top dog just ahead of RRH with fewer gaps in the roll call.

Peter pipped Trevor on the Circuit series, and now that he is of age this leaves the Juvenile entries a bit thin on the ground with just Danielle and new boy Adam Tallack contending.

And finally, the 2014 awards will be presented at the 25th Anniversary Prizegiving Dinner on 7th February 2015!



Tarmac Terrier, looking forward to a Prizegiving Dinner...

Wot! No Car?

The back end of November brought a reality check, when your scribe was faced with the prospect of no motorised transport for a couple of weeks.

Simultaneously, both my car and van had expired with flat batteries, but one had also developed a mysterious wiring fault 'twixt fuel pump and engine, and the other needed a new alternator, glow plugs and a credit-card melting dose of TLC.

So, no problem I thought, I should be able to live up to my expectations and ride my bike for a bit?

Well, I wouldn't have made it to Milton Keynes without the courtesy car, nor several other places besides, but it was nice to cycle to the office a few times, and the weather was unseasonably kind.

Perhaps I ought to be doing this a bit more often?

After all, the ride from Tallack

towers to HQ is about as pleasant as one could wish for, with a new cycle path keeping me off the A505 and a quiet ride round the back of Abington and Granta Park as a welcome relief from the A1307 as well.

It was quite a relief to get the motors fixed at last (apart from the expense), but a New Year Resolution has been made...

A New Year's Resolution has been made!

Want more Cyclocross? Oh, all right then...



TEAM CAMBRIDGE CYCLING CLUB

President: Doug Parker
Chairman: Tony Clarke
Hon. Secretary: Sue Millard
Treasurer: Pauline Parker
Racing Sec: Paul Millard
MTB Secretary: Kaptain Kev
Membership Sec: The Quiet Man™
SpokesTwit: Champagne Charlie

The family friendly
cycling club,
where red and yellow
is always the new
black!

www.team-cambridge.co.uk



Keceeeep Cycling!
Happy New Year and
Best wishes for 2015.
(Champagne) Charlie

Well, that's it for the first twenty-five years' of a little cycling club tucked away in a corner of Cambridge.

Not the biggest club nor the longest established, but in the eight years or so that I have been a member, Team Cambridge has given this cyclist a feeling of modest camaraderie that gives more than it demands and has made life better for me in many ways.

Here's to another twenty-five years: the club may not be much bigger and the riders not much faster (or younger), but when the vigour of youth is less vigorous than it used to be, there is satisfaction to be found in hosting events and seeing the next generation reach new heights.

And that, possibly, may be the defining feature of Team Cambridge: that riders from eight to eighty-eight can turn up and ride, with coffee and biscuits at the end and a warm welcome to anyone who likes to ride their bike, however they please.

The Device of Truth?

When I started planning this edition oh, all of six months ago, I was going to expand on the wealth of information that my Garmin device could offer up.

Unfortunately, this noble ambition might have benefited from some attention in the intervening time.

Perhaps if my Garmin had logged the hours I had spent at my desk instead of on my bike (or any other activity which is considered acceptable in modern society) then it might have reflected somewhat better on my year.

Just to clarify, acceptable activities for the over-forties include spending time with the offspring (painful but necessary), spending time with the spouse/ partner (much simpler if he/she is a cyclist; practically unachievable otherwise) and beautifying one's home/ garden/

planet with grace, charm and recycled materials.

Frankly, for the mortal being this is far too lofty an ideal and almost on a par with the physical and mental sacrifice that got Chris Hoy his first gold medal.

So, what are the alternatives?

Perhaps obviously, if a trifle unimaginatively, there is the traditional refuge of the crisis-stricken: golf. I make no apology for using that word in this essay, on the basis that it is offered in a spirit of self-help rather than simple amusement.

Apparently, although I cannot claim to have explored this avenue, it is possible to monitor one's performance at golf using a Garmin device. I leave you to speculate why?

Rumour has it (although this might form the lion's

share of one or more future editions of the Spokesman) that The Quiet Man™ himself has found an altogether more imaginative means of satisfying nearly all of the manifest demands that the middle-aged male is forced to confront, by taking up dancing lessons.

Great minds have boggled for far less, but I can see the potential in this: possibly slightly later than Meg, who by now will no doubt have anticipated the prospect of being swept off her feet by Pasha Kimber (but Bruce is always a possible outcome).

Hopefully by now any readers still remaining will have been diverted from the topic of my own personal Garmin record, but just in case I offer you this - how will The Quiet Man™ choose to record his performance on the dance floor?