



September 2016

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**Cover photograph:** *Track Cycling at Newport by Chris Nyonyintono*

**Design & layout:** Adrian Sherwen and Simon Ker

# Editorial September 2015

Nigel Sherwen

*My apologies for a rather later than usual summer issue of the magazine, which is partially due to my time campaigning against the Council's proposed London Road changes, more on that later. On the plus side, as I write this Mark Cavendish has just won his second stage out of three in this year's TdF by a "fat tyre's width", as one commentator remarked. Peter Sagan continues to amuse me in his post-race interviews, what an "off the wall" character!*

*I am glad to see that the Club's record membership last year looks set to increase again this year, and already we have 60 women, a new record! It is good to see and welcome new people on the club runs and I am sure some of these will join us as full members. This year we had a record number of entries in the closed road Velothon Sportive in Wales.*

*In the last issue there was much on road racing, sportives and time trialling amongst other issues. This time we have a subject that hasn't had much coverage in the magazine, and that is track cycling, which is appropriate with the Olympics coming up soon. The editor's interview and the Story of Moulton Cycles both provide a good idea of how cycling in the UK has developed over the years. I do hope you enjoy this issue.*

*I mentioned the London Road; it is so disappointing to have a major setback after all the campaigning in 2013/14 to achieve some infrastructure improvements for people who want to cycle. After much campaigning cycle lane improvement works were carried out in the first half of 2015, but much of this is now under threat to accommodate more vehicles and parking!*

*Finally on a positive note we again have a stage of the Tour of Britain in Bath, (8th September) this time it's a finish. There are also stages in neighbouring Bristol. So it's a good chance to get out there and see some first class professionals racing.*

# Bath CC Track Cycling

Chris Nyonyintono



For those who have read “The Rules”, you may be familiar with following:

“Fair-weather riding is a luxury reserved for Sunday afternoons and wide boulevards. Those who ride in foul weather – be it cold, wet, or inordinately hot – are members of a special club of riders who, on the morning of a big ride, pull back the curtain to check the weather and, upon seeing rain falling from the skies, allow a wry smile to spread across their face. This is a rider who loves the work.”

(Keepers of the Cog, 2009)

Although reported to be sacred, “The Rules” can/should be taken with a pinch of salt. That said, by my own admission I think I’ve actually become soft in recent times – living in South East Asia for the past 5 years has definitely affected my ability to slog it out day-after-day on West Country roads during the off-season, now that I’ve returned home. And whilst concluding

from the Strava activity feeds last winter that even the most hardened of Bath CC’s riders – Simon ‘turbo trainer’ Ker and Gary ‘rollers’ Sheppard – also hibernate from the occasional wet weather ride, what also became clear was that the indoor track at Newport had yet to be explored en masse by Bath CC.



*First briefing*

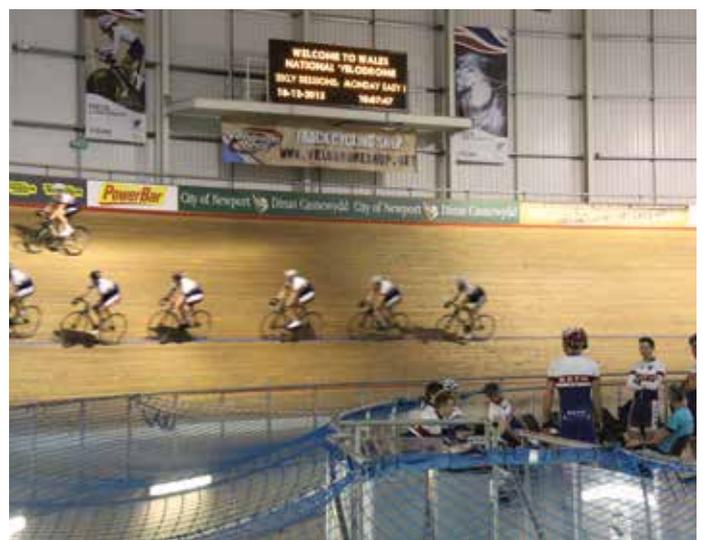
For those who haven't seen the Welsh National Velodrome, it's fair to say that from an architectural viewpoint, its warehouse-like exterior isn't exactly on a par with the swooping design of the London 2012 velodrome in Lee Valley. The track however is reported to be almost as quick, and more importantly this fantastic indoor facility is only 50 minutes away from Bath. With regards to track coaching at Newport, this is of course top class. Not only have the likes of Geraint Thomas and Luke Rowe developed their talent on these very boards, but so too have the British Olympic and Paralympic teams as part of their preparations for Athens 2004, Beijing 2008, and London 2012. And on the very morning of the beginners & intermediate course put on last November for 18 Bath CC budding track cyclists, the Chinese Olympic #2 team had just stepped off the track – the track is in hot demand.

The aim of the 5 hour intensive course for the Bath CC riders was to learn and practice all the essential skills and behaviours needed to ride safely on the track with others during future drop-in sessions. The added incentive was that upon course completion, successful riders would also qualify to take the 1 hour accreditation test; a pre-requisite if wanting to participate in the weekly Vets sessions, Structured Quality Training (SQT) sessions, and Track Leagues, not to mention gain access to the 4 other indoor velodromes dotted around the country.

So, riding on the track looks easy right? Well in theory yes, but judging by some of the nervous looks after the morning briefing, there was quite a lot to think about. Obvious differences such as riding a fixed gear, no brakes, and no hoods to rest upon do take some getting used to. Knowing what speed you should be carrying as you ride on the slippery painted concrete infield, across the *côte d'azur*, and around the 45 degree banking also requires extra concentration, else the laws of physics will get the better of you and your slick tyres. And with up to 40 riders on the 250m track at any time, some of whom maybe travelling in excess of 70kmh, the

space and margins of error can be rather cosy. Holding your line, checking over your shoulder, and communicating with other riders definitely require a new level of focus when riding on the track.

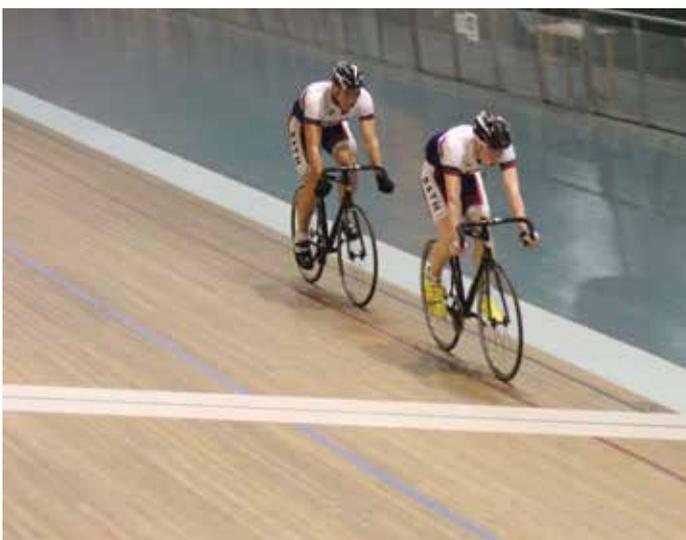
Riders started the day with some timid solo laps of the track, but finished with 3 fast and furious rounds of pursuit a.k.a. last man standing. The improvement in bike handling skills and group riding confidence that happened in between, was largely down to the drills led by the very experienced Newport coaching team, but even simple things such as the track markings and track rules played a part too – the blue, red, and black painted lines made holding your line easier than out on the road – always peeling off up the track made the rotation of a single file pace line a formality. 'Stacking' without question proved to be the toughest challenge of the day – the equivalent of Red Arrows formation flying on the track, involved riders completing multiple laps of the track whilst stacked 5 high, with the bottom rider having to ride up to the top of the stack and the rest cascade down by one position, every lap. And just to make sure everyone got a proper workout, upon sound of the dreaded whistle, each rider in turn had to ride off the front of the group and 'take a lap', and then get ready for their next effort.



*Riding on the blue line*

With the session drawing to a close, Craig Gulliford, Darren Edwards, Simon Ker and Conor Chandler all claimed bragging rights by winning their respective rounds of pursuit, and more importantly all 18 Bath CC riders successfully completed the introductory course. Since then, 8 riders have gone on to pass their accreditation, and have subsequently worn the Bath CC jersey at a number of SQT and drop-in sessions throughout the Spring. For anyone keen to try or get back into track cycling, all the information can be found on the [www.newportlive.co.uk](http://www.newportlive.co.uk)

The 1 hour taster session is a perfect introduction to track cycling and costs only £15. For the more committed, the beginners & intermediate courses look to be running throughout this summer, as are the various drop-in sessions, most of which are also open to complete beginners. For those looking to stay sharp (and dry) when weather takes a seasonal turn for the worst, the Winter Track League is due to start in October... I think I might actually be looking forward to winter training for a change!



*Craig and Alex taking a lap as a pair*



*Simon Ker taking a lap*



*"Stacking" early attempt*



*Charlie Shields Charging*

# Working as a Sustrans Volunteer

## Julian Carpenter

I became a Sustrans volunteer in 2013. As a volunteer in the Bath area, I help lots of workdays to promote Sustrans and maintain the National Cycle Network.

The geographical scope of the Bath Group is three NCN Routes:

Bristol - Bath NCN Route 4, but only as far as Saltford (i.e. in B&NES local authority area).

NCN 410 Saltford to Pensford

The Two Tunnels NCN 24.

The Avon Kennet Canal towpath as far as The George pub, this is part of NCN4. This section from the A36 has recently been resurfaced with Cycling Ambition Fund money and includes a ramp and steps down to link with Grosvenor Bridge.

The type of work undertaken as a volunteer varies enormously. The priority is to keep the Network in top condition for people to enjoy.

This includes:

- Cutting back encroaching vegetation, including chopping down saplings and even small trees
- Clearing litter
- Leading rides to audit and improve signage. Sustrans volunteers can request signs from their website and then will attach them to street signs where needed.

In the winter, we have 'winter work parties,' these are maintenance workdays to tackle issues caused by bad weather. The volunteers clear litter and leaves to ensure the path isn't too slippery. We also clean and repair faded or damaged signage.

We are currently mentoring a 16-year-old from Bath who is doing his Duke of Edinburgh Silver Award, using CycleBath voluntary work as his community element of the Award.

We are not allowed, currently to use power tools. We do use large saws, scythes, spades, shovels, long-handled 'loppers'. So there is an element of risk. The co-ordinator carries out risk assessments of all activities and briefs members of the team on the day.

It is very rewarding to receive direct thanks on the day from passing cyclists who appreciate us clearing the paths of sticks and leaves, improving the view by lopping vegetation and widening the paths as the vegetation encroaches on the tarmac.

The commitment is not huge; it is 2 hours work, once a month in the winter, plus social rides and promotional activities at events in the summer. If you would like to get involved, contact me at:

[Jcarps@live.co.uk](mailto:Jcarps@live.co.uk)



# The Editor's Interview:

## A Conversation with Club Members

### Rod and Sylvia Green

Nigel Sherwen

#### **NS:** What brought you into cycling?

**SG:** I've had some sort of bike ever since I got my first kingfisher blue Raleigh at the age of 8 which I adored. Many bikes I've had since then were very second hand shopping bikes (especially when I was a student) which my Dad had rescued and painted up for me. He managed to transport them to Hull for me where I was at university, but the last one was left behind when I graduated.

My father had declared that I wasn't safe with drop handle bars after I'd borrowed my brother's 'racing' bike when I was 13 and buckled the front wheel going into a huge pothole. It was very traumatic being dumped on the side of the East Lancs Road (the main route between Salford and Liverpool) – I must have looked a pathetic sight sitting crying besides my brother's damaged bike. A family passing in their car saw my predicament, pulled up and delivered both me and the bike home. It took a great many years to free myself from my father's declaration and decide that I'd like a proper bike and more importantly, that I would be able to ride it - probably. I finally got my first proper road bike, my Cannondale, in 2003.

**RG:** My best mate since the age of 4 (later best man) Dave Walker and his father Norman. We were 12 and Dave had a drop handlebar 'racer' with a 4-speed Simplex derailleur gear;

I was riding my single speed sit-up-beg Royal Enfield that I had got for my tenth birthday and which I had outgrown. Norman lent me his own bike which was much more suitable for a future TdeF winner.

Dave and I would do 'epic' rides into Cheshire, Derbyshire (the Peak District), Staffordshire and occasionally north into Lancashire from our homes in Old Trafford. A fantastic magazine called Coureur (later Sporting Cyclist) introduced us to the exploits of the Continental greats of the era: Anquetil, Bartali, Bobet, Coppi, Darrigade, Koblet, Kubler, Poulidor, Riviere etc. Fausto Coppi was my absolute favourite but having blond hair at the time I remember trying to achieve a style like Jacques Anquetil's together with his wire-framed sunglasses.

One afternoon on one of our rides we were passed by a chain gang of three riders. The inevitable happened: we joined them. After a few minutes I was gobsmacked to recognise one of the riders as Reg Harris. The others were two young Americans he was training. We had seen them introduced at the Tuesday night track league meeting at the Harris Stadium the previous week.

By this time I was riding my own bike, a hand built Reynolds 531 Pennine Richmond with 5-speed Cyclo Benelux gears. I had saved up from my paper round to buy it. The frame cost £13:10 shillings with the whole bike £32:10

shillings. I wished I had saved up for a bit longer to be able to have a 'double clanger' i.e. a 10-speed. I soon had the 'opportunity' to do more saving though because I rode, fortunately at slow speed, into the back of a car and had to pay to have the frame rebuilt with new top and down tubes.

**NS:** Have you continued to cycle since then, or has it been more sporadic?

**SG:** I mainly used a bike as transport until I was 40 when I got a Muddy Fox mountain bike. I had great fun going out on my own on Sunday afternoons when Rod returned from the club run and could be left in charge of our boys.

Eventually in 2003 I decided that I'd like a proper road bike which is when I got my Cannondale. I familiarised myself with it for about a year before I decided to try it out on a club run.

**RG:** The first phase of my cycling career came to an end in 1960 when I was 16. I have no idea why. Anyway the finale was marked by our one and only tour. Dave and I set out from Old Trafford, with our Greenspot Nomad jackets and Carradice Camper Long Flap saddlebags, heading for the South Coast. Our first stage was about 108 miles to Chaddesley Corbett near Kidderminster. Google Maps now shows a shorter distance than that but the tracks forming part of the National Cycle Network did not exist then and neither did Google Maps. We made it to Hastings, staying in Youth Hostels, from where we turned to home via Canterbury, the Dartford Ferry across the Thames estuary, Suffolk and Norfolk. We ended up at the Youth Hostel in Grantham in Lincolnshire so our last stage was 120 miles via Nottingham, Derby, Buxton and Macclesfield – quite a tough ride through the Peak District.

The second phase started in 1980 and was also due to a 'Norman', a neighbour. One day I saw him ride down the road on a rather nice, pale

blue metallic Freddy Grubb. It turned out that it was of a similar vintage to my Pennine; he had had it resprayed and rebuilt by John's Bikes so he could go for rides with his son. My Pennine frame was languishing forlornly in our garage so I wasted no time in getting it to John's Bikes who organised a respray and rebuilt it with contemporary components, this time with a 'double clanger'. About three years later, after much deliberation and as a slightly early fortieth birthday present to myself, I bought a Colnago frame together with a full Campagnolo Super Record groupset and other choice bits and pieces – a lovely 'best bike'.

Looking back, I now realise that in the period 1960 to 1980 I could call myself a 'non-cycling cyclist', an oxymoron I know but I always retained an interest in cycling and would seek out races to watch: stage races; city centre, park and airfield criteriums; the occasional time trial.

**NS:** How long have you been a member of Bath Cycling Club and were you a member of a cycling club previously?

**SG:** Needless to say I have never been in any other cycle clubs! In fact it wasn't even in my mind to join the club at all. It was 2004 and I had a friend who also had a decent road bike and a partner in the club who persuaded me to do a club run as she was keen to join. There were hardly any women in the club then and it seemed a rather masculine activity so it was helpful to have female and moral support. It was a baptism of fire! I remembered the collapsed state Rod used to come home in when he first joined and I was just the same. But I did enjoy it at one level and was determined to stick at it.

**RG:** I joined the club in the summer of 1985. Until then I was mostly riding on my own but also with Dennis Davis, a friend and colleague from work (many will know him as an event

timekeeper). Dennis was a longstanding member of the club and it was due to him that I joined. My first club run was to the Garden Centre at Milbury Heath; the return trip was marked by simultaneous front and rear snake bite punctures. Of course I didn't realise the rear was punctured until I got back aboard after replacing the front tube. It was very embarrassing but the other participants were extremely patient with their new recruit. I don't remember those early club runs as particularly hard but I do remember Sylvia's words when visiting friends one Sunday afternoon: "Don't worry about Rod. He's not ill. He did the club run this morning" as I flopped on the sofa.

I have never been a member of another club but as a thirteen year old I 'nearly' joined Seamons CC in Altrincham, Cheshire. I say 'nearly' because I rode out to their HQ one Friday evening, was studiously ignored by those present and was too shy to make my presence felt so I returned home mission aborted. I don't think BathCC would have treated a youngster in this way.

**NS: As members who have been with Bath CC for many years how do you think the club has changed compared with your early days with the club?**

**SG:** The club has changed in all sorts of ways since I joined, but for me the most important change is how many women have joined. I think this is really important as it makes the club more inclusive. Cycling has a much higher profile generally now so it is inevitable that more women would be attracted to cycling, but not necessarily to Bath CC. I think the introduction of Saturday morning novice rides has been extremely important in attracting women to the club who then go on to join and ride regularly with the club.

The development of the Odd Down circuit has

also greatly increased the profile of Bath CC and attracted young cyclists to the club.

**RG:** This is a very interesting question. What is most striking is how the club remained unchanged, in a good way, for 20 – 25 years. The membership remained at a sustainable 110 – 120 member, obviously with some yearly turnover. The club organised, extremely competently, four or five open time trials per year plus a varied series of club time trials; the very popular Park Races. The various Club Captains turned out in all weathers to ensure the club run went ahead. The largely unchanging cast of officers looked after the 'business'. I'd like to thank all those stalwarts who secured the basis for what the club has now become. With the well-documented increase in the popularity of cycling the club has more than doubled its membership and has managed to attract really great younger people whose energy, ideas and leadership now ensure that the club offering is widely appealing, not least to women, as Sylvia says.

**NS: Have you been involved in other sports activities?**

**SG:** Well, I played netball for my school, but that was a very long time ago and I haven't played since my schooldays.

When Rod and I were first married we lived in Lancaster and we joined the fencing club there. Rod had fenced at university and was pretty good at it. I won one novice competition, but didn't really progress from there. We didn't keep it up when we came to Bath and for a while life and then specifically family life took over.

**RG:** Thanks to Sylvia for remembering fencing, how could I forget? I did take it very seriously for 10 – 12 years and enjoyed considerable success in various competitions. When we moved to Bath from Lancaster in January 1974 I had to devote my efforts to completing my PhD and I had no time for fencing. I remember going

along to Bath Sword Club, an excellent club, in the summer of 1974 but I found my taste for fencing had completely disappeared. I gave all my equipment, and I had a lot, to the University of Bath fencing club.

**NS: I recall that some years ago you used to ride time trials: what was it like for you?**

**RG:** I rode my first time trial in September 1986, a 25 on the P201 (main roads from the vicinity of Ringwood down to the edge of Bournemouth) where I did a '6' (1 hour 6 minutes and some seconds – I was quite pleased with that). In the following year I rode the same event and actually beat Rob Pears. It was his first event but in the intervening season I had ridden two or more evening club 10's a week and open 25's most weekends. Needless to say, I never beat him again. I regret that I failed to get under the hour for 25 miles but I did beat 24 minutes for a 10. I continued with time trialling for about five or six years until the realisation dawned on me that my bike was doing many more miles in the boot of my car than with my backside on the saddle. I then restricted time trialling to the end of season two-ups which I really enjoyed and of which I have many good memories. I also used to ride our own club two-up held for a number of years on the Castle Combe circuit. I remember that you (Nigel) and I teamed up one year. I can't remember where we stood in the results but I'm sure we both had our excuses well-polished and we put on a good show when passing the crowds gathered near to the entrance to the circuit.

**NS: I know that you have also done some cycle touring. Have you had any memorable trips?**

**SG:** All the tours we did were memorable although there are not as many trips as I would have liked. In truth the only holidays I really wanted were cycling ones. But our End to End in 2010 was great – we did it from John O'Groats to Land's End. It was hard doing Corn-

wall at the end when we were tired, but I suppose it is hard whichever direction you do it in. We also travelled across France from north to south which was fantastic cycling through some spectacular and dramatic scenery and up and down steep hills. I'll never forget riding down into the Cirque de Navacelles (a 150 metre deep trench of the Vis gorge) and back up the other side and riding along the Gorges du Jontes with vultures circling really high overhead.

But the trip that I have to really hold onto in my head is when we visited friends who have a house in the Loire then cycled along the Loire as far as Nevers then back to the ferry. It was not a strenuous ride but the river was incredibly beautiful and of course with so many chateaux on its banks it was a feast for the eyes. We admired them as part of the scene but did not go in them – it was a cycling holiday! I took some photos as we went along but didn't realize that they were not being backed up on my phone and when we got home I needed to send my phone away for servicing. When it was returned all the photos from that trip had disappeared! I was devastated. I can recall many of them clearly and I regularly think of them to ensure that I don't forget so that I can still have memories of that tour.

**RG:** I too really enjoyed our 'credit card touring' i.e. not much luggage. In my case what would fit in a Carradice Camper Long Flap saddlebag more or less identical to the one I had in 1960. Sylvia insisted on a more modern version but now recognises that nothing can beat the Long Flap.

For our ride across France (2011) we intended to use the 'Manche to Med' route of Sheila Simpson, a luminary of Audax UK and CTC tour leader. This starts in Ouistreham (Caen) and finishes on the coast south of Montpellier. We booked the ferry one-way to Caen; we weren't sure how we were going to get back but I entertained the idea of riding back. Sylvia humoured



*Rod and Sylvia with Howard Burton in France*

me by sketching out a route. In between booking and setting off our friends had bought their house near Angers so we had to divert from our 'official' pre-planned route after 20 miles or so. Our first day ended after about 100 miles in a Campanile hotel on a ring road south of Mayenne, of which we saw nothing. Our room was on the ground floor and we were able to wheel our bikes straight in. After a shower, dinner and a good night's sleep we were on the point of going for breakfast when I 'twanged' a couple of spokes in Sylvia's back wheel. I was horrified to discover that they, and many others, were so loose that the wheel was on the point of collapse. Of course, I didn't have a spoke key so I had to go round all the spokes with a small pair of pliers to get some modest tension into them. The next job was to get onto the internet to find a bike shop. Having located 'Planet Bike' about 3 miles away we set off to ride there, very gingerly. It turned out to be a motor bike show room! Anyway one of the staff was able to direct us to an Intersport which happened to be more

or less adjacent to our hotel. All's well that ends well because for 10 euros the wheel, which was brand newly built by a local bike shop (not the one at the top of Chelsea Road), was completely fettled. I kept an anxious eye on it for a few days but it was fine. After a couple of days with our friends we set off towards the Med, rejoining our pre-planned route after about a day and a half or so and onwards to Montpellier and the Mediterranean coast. Did we turn round and ride home? Not exactly but we did take the train to Limoges from where we could easily get on to the 'official' route and ride the 3 or 4 days that we had missed in reverse.

**NS: I recall that in 2012 you were both in the group of Bath CC members who spent a week cycling in France at the invitation of club member Howard Burton who has a home in Provence. What are your recollections of that week and cycling in France as opposed to in England?**

**SG:** It was a fantastic week with many terrific rides and climbs. The ride to the Gorges du Verdun was of course truly memorable. We had ridden it before with Howard but it is an unforgettable experience and can't be beaten anywhere in Europe. I have other less dramatic memories, especially the ride up the wooded road to St Paul le Foret where the grassy banks on the side of the road were just full of Autumn crocuses (known as naked ladies because they appear to have no leaves around them). It was such a marvellous sight.

**RG:** It was indeed a fantastic week not least for the hospitality of Howard and Stella. Apart from the first afternoon when it rained, Howard ordered up a great week of weather and a great program of rides. We gave that wet afternoon a miss – why get bikes and kit filthy for a 20 mile ride? If I remember correctly you (Nigel) also had the sense to give it a miss. If we had not done the ride before, the Gorges du Verdun would have been the standout. I have to say that it seemed rather easier than the previous occasion when we were on our 'touring' bikes. I was apprehensive about one particular climb but we got to the end of the Gorges without noticing it. Of the other 'big rides' the one to Castellane (the Gateway to the Alps) was spectacular. On a later visit to Claviers, Howard and I set out to replicate it but the ominous clouds and rumbles of thunder to the north caused us to cut the ride short; we made it back to Claviers just in time.

In our experience a major contrast between riding in France and England is the absence of yobbish harassment of the kind we experience quite frequently here. I can remember only one instance when we were riding along the coast just south of Montpellier to Aigues-Mortes.

**NS:** We have missed seeing you both out on club rides over the past year or so.

**RG:** Yes, unfortunately I have been off the bike for a year or so: initially because of a virus and a series of niggling 'sports injuries' which I was getting treated by massage, physio etc. It wasn't until November that it was found that these were linked to a rather more serious spinal condition that required urgent treatment. This has left me unable to ride at the moment but I do get on my turbo for a gentle spin when the mood takes me. Over the years I have done quite a lot of riding with our President, Brian Turner. A standing joke between us was for one of us to point out the other's next bike when spotting somebody on an electric bike. I'm afraid the joke is probably on me. I certainly intend getting an e-bike, not now the top of the range Colnago I promised myself when I retired. If this works out an e-bike section might be added to the club's offering although it might have only one taker initially.

Sylvia more or less gave up club runs to keep me company at home but as I have got better she is getting back into her stride: firstly with the Saturday morning 25 milers, perfect after a layoff, graduating to the 40 milers. She has also done some of the Friday women's rides again perfect because I know that they don't avoid the hills. It wouldn't surprise me if she started to make an appearance on Tuesdays soon.

# Letter from Corsica- the Yellow Jersey

Howard Burton



I'd had the dates in my diary since January but 6th June arrived very quickly, as I found myself outbound from Toulon on the ferry to Ajaccio with ESM (Etoile Sportif Montauroux) for five days in southern Corsica. My preparation had been far from ideal, having only arrived in France a week before. My hill training being the usual few extra ascents of Bannerdown and one ascent of the local col de bel Homme. As always my fellow riders were tanned, shaved, lean and looked 'en-forme', in contrast to my winter pallor, slightly bulging mid-riff and (quite) hairy legs.

Not to worry I could pace myself through the week. No chance. The first ride started in a car park outside the port after we had assembled our bikes and changed into our lycra in full view of curious passersby. Our destination was our hotel in Propriano, some 70 kms away but more importantly for me the temperature was already well above 30C. We bowled along the flat coastal road and I had to concentrate on the wheel in front as Laurent 2, (not to be confused with Laurent 1-Monsieur Le President) cajoled me 'non echappee le trou'. After an hour of this we reached the first serious hills and I realised I wasn't going to do this. I was already exhausted and dehydrated. Thank God for Claudi in the

broom wagon, which I gratefully collapsed into, with its supply of cool water and gels.

Everybody else made it on their bikes to the hotel, situated in a beautiful westward facing bay. As always everything was well organised for the twelve riders with support vehicles and crew. In addition this year Mark, a Belgian sports journalist joined us, introducing a new ritual. During his coverage of 'Le Tour' he had collected a complete set of jerseys which were to be awarded at the end of each day. The polka dot for the best climber, the green for the most ecological (never quite understood this one), the white for the rider who lost the most weight, perhaps not the best encouragement to keep hydrated. The first three were to be judged by Mark and the final, the yellow, was to be awarded by ballot amongst us all, to the rider who had on the day shown the most balls (something lost in the translation here-Ed.) The first evening awards set the scene for the rest of the week, as after a boozy dinner the winners were announced. Green to Laurent 2, Polka to Manolo and White to Herve who had managed to loose 2.4kgs during the course of the ride, soon to be replenished by copious amounts of pasta and the local red wine. My old sparring partner Jean-Michael, a fellow vieux, was voted the Yellow Jersey, well deserved, as he kept going in the searing heat, over some very short sharp ascents and stayed with the group until the end.

During the course of the evening and talking to some of the others who obviously thought I wasn't going to survive, I devised a strategy that might get me through the week. Basically it was let the others go on the ascents and keep drinking (water).

The next day was 94 kms to Les Aiguilles de Bavella, with 2290 metres of climbing. It started with a 2 hour drive to Solenzaro, not the ideal preparation. Time to dwell on the ride ahead and worry about not making it. When we eventually started I plodded alone on up the slopes, having the occasional enquiries from the support crews, 'Ca va 'oward?'. Eventually I spied the Yellow Jersey ahead and Jean-Michael and I were soon riding together. But his efforts of the previous day caught up with him and he abandoned on yet another vicious slope. I only managed to keep going to by tacking up the road. After two and a half hours of climbing I reached the col de Bavella, exhausted but relieved to have made it. The others had waited and we then had a fast, exhilarating descent, it was good to be riding in the group again. There was even time to admire the scenery with the spectacular rocky spikes of the massif dominating the landscape. A few sharp hills at the end of the ride but this time I had company as David and Cyril stayed with me and towed me to the finish at the hotel.

When it stops it seems worth it but during the ride when the slopes are 14%, the temperature 41C, heart rate 160, back in spasm and feet cramping I start composing my resignation letter. I'm too old, too heavy and not fit enough.

But then, that evening the Yellow Jersey winner is announced, 'C'est 'oward! Wow, from zero to hero. A few more glasses of red to celebrate and then the realisation that it all starts again tomorrow. And this time I have to defend the Yellow Jersey. I now know how all those 'Mail-lots Jaunes' must feel. Well perhaps.

# The Story of Moulton Cycles

Richard Grigsby



*Richard racing on a Moulton Triathlon Model at Salt Ayre track, Lancaster*

Alex Moulton set about completely redesigning the common bicycle in the late 50s. He not only looked at the safety bicycle that most have us have ridden since it was designed by Starley in 1888 but also recognised the benefits of other designs: Multi-tubed Pedersens, with many triangles composed of ½ inch tubes had an obvious influence on Alex's more recent designs; The Curley Hethchins with its extrovert curved stays designed to absorb road shock were also acquired and tested. Being an engineer foremost and a leisure cyclist secondly Alex was able to sit back and work on the principle needs

of a bicycle. He demanded comfort, speed and load carrying. He also strived for recognition on many fronts.

Whilst Alex developed a bike for the masses, a human-powered Volkswagen Beetle, with a single unisex and unisize offering he also came up with something that hit the spot with the swinging singles and quirky fashion trends of the 60s. The small wheels were much stronger than the common 26-inch standard of the time. Being stronger meant they could be lighter so they accelerated quicker, changed direction easier

plus were easier to stop. There was loads more space above each wheel and also between them meaning small folk weren't discriminated against as per conventional design wisdom (sic). True, the lack of inertia when using small wheels may have been unnerving to some and hands-off riding only good for some but Alex sought to adjust the rake and tail of the front-end to slow the rapid steering response (the much later designed but ubiquitous Brompton appears oblivious to this quality).

Alex used his engineering experience and past partnership with Alex Issigonis by adding a master touch with front and rear suspension to smooth out bumps and allow more speed. A full-suspension road bike invented in the late 50s no less!

Throw the wacky and faddish 60s into the mix where miniskirts, Minis and scooters topped the modern fashionista's list Alex's bicycle had obvious appeal. After the first few years and ever-increasingly bigger premises Alex was making 1200 Moultons a week.

From the age of 9 years old I had a 2-speed back pedal brake/gear change Moulton Mini in the late 60s and used it for everything – paper rounds, commuting to school plus regular fishing excursions. The rear rack and top-case carried plenty of goods and front racks balanced loads.

One of the major milestones in Alex's bicycle production was a partnership with Raleigh. At the time Raleigh made a 20-inch wheeled 'shopper', which was a god-awful piece of cheap engineering that probably put more people off cycling than the Chopper. Raleigh, seeing Alex's success, took on the Moulton production in a move that any cuckoo would have been proud of... Fortunately Alex stepped in and brought production back to Bradford on Avon using what is now the Antony Best Dynamics unit on Holt Road.

Having established the brand production inevitably slowed and in time interest waned. In the early 80s Alex completely redesigned what was called the 'F' frame with a brand new bike having multiple triangles made up from small diameter tubes. The frame was effectively 3-dimensional and boasted much greater stiffness and strength than the conventional '2-dimensional' diamond frame bikes. The simple rubber choc at the rear was replaced with a miniaturised 'Flexator' scaled down from Alex's famous air suspension for the Minis. The front end kept the internally sprung fork but added damping in the form of infinitely adjustable friction pivots on a trailing link design similar to that Greeves used on their motorcycles.

The price of this new machine was high. It was no longer a bike for the masses that was afforded and aimed at trendy young things to scoot down to the wine bar. It was a premium-engineered brand aimed at those born to ride a Moulton. People who worked as architects, musicians (Norman Foster and Peter Gabriel were early owners) were drawn to Alex's girder frame design. Alex was always interested in proving that his bikes were faster than conventional designs and managed this on many occasions. John Woodward set place-to-place records – famously riding from Cardiff to London on an early F-frame with a 4-speed Sturmey Archer hub gear in record time. In 1963 four amateur track cyclists lapped their opposing team in a 4km TTT in Coventry and in 1986 Jim Glover set a speed record, which still stands, at 51mph for the fastest upright bicycle (with an aerodynamic cover) in the world. I was also one of Alex's many racers and used his bikes in time trials, triathlons and the odd road race. I really enjoyed racing his bikes but things weren't easy in the beginning. Alex wanted me to ride alternate TTs to give his bike a fair comparison with a contemporary TT machine of the day i.e. 1988. His machine was an AM7, which essen-

tially is a tourer and has seat angles to suit. My machine was a Geoffrey Butler, built by Cliff Shrubbs and can still be seen under the masterful power of Tony Thorne. Switching from one bike to another on a weekly basis was too much for the back and hamstrings so I thought "sod this" and sold the GB to concentrate on developing the Moulton.

And develop it did. In 1989 the birth year of our first child Florence I had a clock ticking for me. My TT notes provided some surprising information:

28th May I took her under the hour with a 59.45 in Bath CC's Open 25m TT

4th June I rode the National 25m TT doing a 59.56 using my home made 'Billy Goat Gruff' tri-bars that had a 2nd set of brake levers accessible from the racing position as per the RTTC (now Cycling Time Trials) regs. My pic in the 'Comic' attracted much mirth and I even got a death threat for riding the Moulton!

15th June got me down to 23.05 in the fast Corsham RC 10 from Holt Water Station

5th July saw me and Phil Marshal win Bath CC's 15m 2-up in 35.03. My notes mentioned I didn't like the minimal suspension movement on the out-of-the-saddle climbs but did say how comfy the tri-bar position was on my home-made elbow rests

8th July I did a Moulton PB in Cheltenham & County's 10m event on the U7 clocking a 22.40. Richard Prebble won with a 21.37

19th July I won our club 15 with a 34.20 using 100 and 108" gears. I see from my notes of 2nd August that I set a Bath CC club record of 11mins 48seconds for a 5m course on the roadwork stricken U53!

But, before that... I did one of my best rides ever on the Didcot By-pass on a day many will still remember for it's extreme weather conditions. As soon as you got out of the car the sweat was running off everywhere. It was 100

degrees Fahrenheit and probably 90% humidity. I recorded a 56.22 and caught one of my heroes of the day – Derek Rogers who was riding a colossal fixed gear, aero helmet and disc wheel. He packed when I passed him – realizing he was the mirage I had been chasing for the past 20 miles!

1990 saw me on a white Moulton Speed with my own tri-bars. This bike was fitted with 57/52 chainrings and a 9-17 cassette eliminating the AM7's gappy higher gears.

My notes stated that I was disqualified from the Westerley 25m TT, which was funny at the time with a small group of trembling RTTC officials surrounding my bike after the event. No one spoke to me by a simple 'DQ' was put against my time, which I recorded unofficially as 57.57.



Richard at speed in the Dover Triathlon

I continued to use the Moulton in triathlons where the suspension often really helped, as roads could be really rough and dangerous in transitions. I remember gaining a lot of ground around Holme Pierpoint in the National Team Relays triathlon. I also set a course record and fastest bike split in the tough Fowey Triathlon. 1991 and 1992 did not have many entries in my race diary as I returned to higher education but in 1993 an entry stating I won the Corsham 10m TT using Tommy Simpson's track Moulton

cheered me up no end. 24.03 on the 6th May using a 100in fixed gear – ouch!

In 1994 a guy called Rob Pears started appearing on the leaders' board and I was pleased to get within a minute of him. I was using a specially prepared Moulton Triathlon with .... Wait for it.... A suspension lockout device!!! This meant you could lock the suspension off for out of the saddle hill climbs but immediately restore it for the descent and flats where it would allow the small wheels to drop in and out of undulations without upsetting the momentum of the rider. A 22.45 minute 10m TT on our local course was the fastest I had ridden in 5 years.

My involvement with Alex Moulton Bicycles was as a consultant. I was loaned a Moulton for many years and my technical feedback as a cyclist and chartered mechanical engineer allowed me to liaise with Alex and his team to improve his bikes from a rider's perspective. I am very grateful to Alex for giving me the opportunity to be involved for so long and value his friendship and generosity. I am finally in the position to own a Moulton again and have a gleaming AM Super Speed, which lives permanently in the Moulton offices as it demonstrates the perfect, set up for a sporty and comfortable bike. This particular machine has been in Number 10 and has also travelled to China with David Cameron on a trade visit arranged by the inexhaustible Steve Harvey, International Sales for Moulton Bicycles.

The late Dr. Alex Moulton was a lifetime member of Bath CC and although only ever a leisure rider he really valued the connection. My Moulton journey started after a visit by Bath CC (organised by a good friend Neil Davis) to the works in 1986. Alex's butler served tea and several Moultons, including one with a front 'Zipper' fairing, were lined up for us to ride. The rest is history!

The Moulton Bicycle Company is still in full swing and making bicycles from their works in Bradford on Avon. Many bikes are sold abroad and, despite Japan being their stronghold for 20+ years, emerging Asian countries such as China and Thailand show immense interest. Two main models are produced in B-on-A with the New Series being more tour oriented and the Speed models having adjustable front suspension. The more reasonably priced models in the TSR range allow riders entry into the Moulton wonderland.



*Richard racing recumbents*

See [www.moultonbicycles.co.uk](http://www.moultonbicycles.co.uk) for details

## The Current Committee of Bath CC

President	Brian Turner	president@bathcc.net
Chairman	Simon Hodgson	chairman@bathcc.net
Vice chairman	David Stoyle	vicechair@bathcc.net
Treasurer	Alison Vaugniaux	treasurer@bathcc.net
Secretary	Julia Adamson	secretary@bathcc.net
Committee members	Ruan Bester & Simon Ker	committeemembers@bathcc.net
Club captain	Luke David	clubcaptain@bathcc.net
Women's captain	Claire Phillips	ladiescaptain@bathcc.net
Off-road section	Vacant	offroad@bathcc.net
Road race secretary	Darren Edwards	roadrace@bathcc.net
Time trial secretary	Nigel Vaugniaux	timetrial@bathcc.net
Membership secretary	Aileen Brown	membership@bathcc.net
Compliance & welfare officers	Liz Matthews	welfare@bathcc.net
Youth	Darren Edwards	youth@bathcc.net
Webmaster	Paul Dale	webmaster@bathcc.net

## Delegates

CCT West Representative	Dave Summers & Tony Thorne	cttwest@bathcc.net
WTTA Representatives	Tony Thorne	Pete Wison
wtta@bathcc.net	BC Representative	David Stoyle
bc@bathcc.net	Western Counties RRA	Paul Arayan

## Club Run leaders – runleaders@bathcc.net

Julia Adamson, Aileen Brown, Martin Croxford, Tony Dale, Simon Hodgson, Rob Macmillan, Claire Phillips, Nigel Sherwen, Brian Turner, Paul White, Amanda Whipp  
Jon Whitehead, John Witty, Nigel Wright

## Some Other Officials

Clothing Secretary	Simon Williams	clubkit@bathcc.net
Magazine editor/distributor	Nigel Sherwen	mag@bathcc.net
Cycling Rights Officer	Nigel Sherwen	cyclingrights@bathcc.net

## Sunday Club Run's List - September 2016 – January 2nd 2017

Date	Time	Coffee Stop
04 Sep	08.30	Bath CC RR HQ Bishop Sutton Village Hall
11 Sep	08.30	Maiden Bradley Hard Riders HQ
18 Sep	08.30	Tetbury Café 53
25 Sep	08.30	Tortworth The Farmers' Table
02 Oct	08.30	Cheddar Simply Gorgeous
09 Oct	08.30	Stourhead (Bath Open Hill Climb, Hinton Hill
16 Oct	08.30	Cranmore Station
23 Oct	08.30	Woodborough Garden Centre
30 Oct	08.30	Clevedon Scarlets Café
06 Nov	08.30	Wells Costa Coffee
13 Nov	08.30	Malmesbury Summer Café
20 Nov	0830	Eastwood Park Garden Centre
27 Nov	0830	Lydeaway Farm Shop
04 Dec	0830	Tyntesfield National Trust
11 Dec	0830	The Edge Café, Wotton under Edge
18 Dec	0830	Burrington Combe
Boxing Day	0830	Chew Valley
02 Jan	0830	Thornbury

Runs' Leaders, please arrive 10 minutes before start time to sort out groups.

Prospective members welcome: please contact Membership Secretary Aileen Brown. 0785 4149008 for those less than 18 years of age Parental Consent is required; Under 16 a Parent or Carer must accompany the rider (See Bath CC web site [www.bathcc.net](http://www.bathcc.net) ).

Essentials: BCC membership card (for emergency details), pump, inner tubes, water bottle, tyre levers, money. A bike lock is highly recommended.

Club Runs start from Cleveland Bridge, Bath. Aim to return by 13.00 – 13.30 hrs.







Bath CC, "Riding on the Black Line"