



EASTBOURNE ROVERS

Issue 5 – March 2007

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The Official Monthly Newsletter of the Eastbourne Rovers Cycling Club

Editorial

Many thanks for all the great contributions this month. Don't forget it's your newsletter and its success depends on your contributions. Please don't be shy and email me anything of interest, photos greatly appreciated. *Theresa*

Useful Contact Info:

Brian Holt: Secretary : 01323 520646 / 07767 666393
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Theresa Abbott: Club Coach/British Cycling - 01323 470 739 – tabbott777@aol.com
Dave Cox: Evening Time Trial Series and Sunday Rides - 01323 507916
Alan Symonds: Press Secretary: 01323 844053 – agenservice@tiscali.co.uk

What's On – on and off the bike

Club Night: Every Monday evening from 8.00pm – 10.30pm (excluding bank holidays) at the Stone Cross Memorial Hall (opposite the Red Lion Public House). Chance to meet and socialize, catch up with recent news and gossip. Refreshments available.

Coached Turbo Sessions: Stone Cross Memorial Hall every Monday evening during the club night from 8.30pm to 9.30pm (set up at 8pm). A structured turbo session held throughout the year. Free to club members, only £2 for non-members. All welcome, its getting really popular, - come and give it a go! A couple of spare turbo trainers are available. Any queries please contact Theresa Abbott – 01323 470739 or email: tabbott777@aol.com.

Winter Club Runs: Meet at the Horse and Groom Public House at Polegate crossroads at 9.15am each Sunday. Variations to the type and length of ride will be made to suit the ability of the riders. For any further information please contact Dave Cox : tel: 01323 507916 or any other members of the committee.

Forthcoming events:

March 2007

March 25th: CTC DA 50k Ride . From the Dicker Hall starting at 10am. Entry Fee £2. Organisers: Mick and Rose Hills, 24 Hillside, Portslade, Brighton, East Sussex.

EASTBOURNE ROVERS CYCLING CLUB

PRESS REPORT: ALAN SYMONDS

Eastbourne Rovers Cycling Clubs Early Season 10 Mile Club Time Trial took place on Sunday 18th February starting at Pevensey. Conditions were dry with a slight breeze out to the turn at Little Common

Results:

1. Steve Frame not long back from a training camp in the Canaries provided a convincing win in 23 mins.04 secs.

2nd. Stuart Davis in 24.23.

3rd. Ivan Johnson in 24.27.

4th. Michael Valks 24.49.

5th. Adam Ford 25.51

6th: Paul Humphrey 26.17

7th: Kevin Burton 26.20

8th Paul Fuller 26.53

9th John Molton 26.58

10th: Paul Valks 27.01

11th: Julian Sykes 27.28

12th : Peter Moon 27.36

13th: Alan Symonds 28.40

14th : Emma Richards 30.13

15th: Tony Murphy 30.35.

Meanwhile long distance rider Richard Thomas has been getting in the miles on Audax events with the Worthing Winter Warmer on the 10th February. This was a 100 Kilometre ride starting at Ashington at 0900 hrs. and the forecasters came up with an accurate description of wet and windy for the day.

The first section went through Adversane and Plaistow with a 3K climb to the initial control near Blackdown. The second control at Burton saw 71 K covered and a number of riders who suffered punctures in the wet conditions. The final 30K section had rain for the last half hour and Richard completed the course in a riding time of 4 hrs. 20 mins.

Not content this Richard in true long distance character was down to ride the Dave Hudson Hailsham 200 the following day. Starting in the dry the weather had deteriorated by the time riders reached Alfriston before turning back to Woods Corner and the first control at Brightling which Richard described as riding in rivers rather than on roads. By the time he arrived at the Light Railway Café at Dungeness for the second control the weather had improved. It was then out to Lydd and on to the World of Water at Rolvenden where another break was welcome. The final 40 K went via Woods Corner and Cowbeech before returning back to Hailsham. With Richard completing the course in 11 hours riding time.

Other results:

GS Stella: 3rd Feb 11.2 miles : Steve Frame 30.55 and Steve Humphries 32.08.

EASTBOURNE ROVERS CYCLING CLUB

**DON'T MISS THE EARLY SEASON
TIME TRIALS!!!**

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SUNDAY MARCH 4TH 2007

25 MILES ON THE EAST HOATHLY COURSE

SIGNING ON FROM 8.00AM FOR 8.30AM START

***IT IS COMPULSARY FOR ALL RIDERS UNDER 18 TO WEAR A HARD SHELL HELMET AND STRONGLY ADVISABLE FOR ALL OTHERS.
IT IS ALSO ADVISABLE TO AFFIX A REAR LIGHT.***

EVENING SERIES TIME TRIALS 2007

EARLY SEASON	4 MARCH	25 MILES	8.30am	EAST HOATHLY
THURSDAY	26 APRIL	10 MILES 2 UP	7.15pm	PEVENSEY
THURSDAY	3 MAY	10 MILES	7.15pm	PEVENSEY
THURSDAY	10 MAY	10 MILES	7.15pm	PEVENSEY
THURSDAY	17 MAY	10 MILES	7.15pm	PEVENSEY
THURSDAY	24 MAY**	10 MILES	7.15pm	PEVENSEY
TUESDAY	29 MAY	14.07 MILES	7.15pm	PEVENSEY
TUESDAY	5 JUNE	10 MILES	7.15pm	PEVENSEY
TUESDAY	12 JUNE	14.07 MILES	7.15pm	PEVENSEY
TUESDAY	19 JUNE**	25 MILES	7.15pm	EAST HOATHLY

THURSDAY	28 JUNE	10 MILES	7.15pm	PEVENSEY
THURSDAY	5 JULY	14.07 MILES	7.15pm	PEVENSEY
THURSDAY	12 JULY	7.2 MILES	7.15pm	BIRLING GAP
THURSDAY	19 JULY	10 MILES	7.15pm	PEVENSEY
THURSDAY	26 JULY	14.04 MILES	7.15pm	BIRLING GAP
THURSDAY	2 AUG	10 MILES	7.15pm	PEVENSEY
THURSDAY	9 AUG	7.2 MILES	7.15pm	BIRLING GAP
THURSDAY	16 AUG*	10 MILES	6.45pm	PEVENSEY
THURSDAY	23 AUG*	10 MILES	6.45pm	PEVENSEY

PEVENSEY COURSE – Meet in the lane behind Pevensey Castle

EAST HOATHLY COURSE – Meet at the Village Sports Ground

BIRLING GAP COURSE – Meet in the car park ½ mile east of Birling Gap going towards Beachy Head. (Horseshoe Plantation)

Entry on the line is £2.50 for Non-Members.

**Denotes Club Championship races.

Sign on before 6.45pm please.

*Sign on before 6.15pm please.

*****HELMETS ARE COMPULSORY FOR RIDERS UNDER EIGHTEEN AND STRONGLY RECOMENDED FOR ALL RIDERS. FOR YOUR OWN SAFETY IT IS ALSO ADVISABLE TO FIT A REAR LIGHT*****

For further information please contact

DAVE COX Time Trial Secretary 01323 507916

“Try the track” at Preston Park, Brighton - by Gavin Smith

Club members who enjoyed the visit to Calshot late last year might well be interested in the four special “open track” sessions arranged at Brighton’s Preston Park for April 2007.

They will take place on Wednesdays 4, 11, 18 and 25 April, starting at 6.00pm and continuing until nightfall. Please note the early start time.

The Sussex League is hoping that several new riders will be tempted to give track riding a try during these informal evenings, prior to the official league meet calendar which begins in May.

While these evenings are mainly taster sessions aimed at new trackies, experienced riders will also be very welcome. All seniors are invited to attend, as well as any youth riders aged 12+, provided they are on track bikes.

These will not be structured coaching sessions, but simply a chance for riders to get the feel of the track while riding fixed wheel, both on their own and in groups. However, coaches will be on hand to offer guidance and tips on position, bunch riding, etc. All these taster sessions will be free of charge.

Preston Park’s legendary refreshments will be available, and there will also be a strictly limited number of track bikes for loan on a “first come, first served” basis.

This is an ideal opportunity to sample the delights of riding on fixed-wheel at Brighton’s very own track. And, of course, if you enjoy the evenings, you might like to take part in the official Sussex League meets starting on Wednesday 2 May at 7.00pm.

These meets will then take place every Wednesday evening (weather permitting) until 15 August. Preston Park has been dubbed “the friendliest track league in the country” and a warm welcome is always given to new riders.

Seniors (on track-bikes) get five different races per meet and youths (on freewheels) get three. An evening for a senior would typically have an 8-lap scratch race, a handicap race, a devil, a points race and an unknown distance event, but there is a 4-week cycle of races which varies the fun! And every 4 weeks there are championship events for sprints, points races and scratch races.

The League has its own monthly newsletter, reports and results are posted on cycling websites and there are great refreshments every meet, as well as a commentary.

Any Club members wishing to have more information are asked to contact me on 842282 or email gavmn@tiscali.co.uk.

LEWES WANDERERS RELIABILITY TRIAL – Report by Richard Thomas

This event was a challenge, as last year the ride was too easy so organiser Jeremy Meades made it a lot harder this year. Gee, thanks Jeremy!

There were 2 rides, one of 52km in 2hr 30 mins and a longer ride of about 94km in 3 hr 50 mins. Both routes were hilly, going north into the Ashdown Forest.

It was not the most successful ride ever! It was designed to be tight on time after last year's easy ride and so it turned out. On the short ride there were 15 riders, all of reasonable quality.

Me, being a bit of a wimp opted, along with Nigel and Theresa, for the shorter ride. All the hard riding Rovers took the longer ride, these being Graham Hadlow, Dave Cox, Kevin Burton and Adam Ford.

The hard riding fast guys went off at around 8:20am, and we left an hour later. A Worthing Excelsior rider charged off at the front followed by a couple of VC Londres riders, I chased after them, not wishing to lose a group as it were. After Chailey cross roads I dropped off the back of this group and the rest of the bunch came round me and thrashed up the road to make contact with the lead group whilst I waited for Theresa who was being shepherded by Nigel. However, after about half an hour my average speed had dropped too low to finish in time and Theresa was urging me to go on, so I did and I caught the group of about 10 riders between Highbrook and Wych Cross. Soon after Forest Row the route turned south and uphill onto the top of the Ashdown Forest via "The Wall" Ouch! A 30x28 climb of about a mile or so it felt. Soon after this, at the top of the Ashdown Forest, a control manned by Pete Baker and his wife gave us the chance for a welcome stop to consume a cake and a cuppa! We stayed there for about 10 minutes, getting cold etc, and I then realised that we had only 40 minutes to do the remaining 22km, having taken 1hr 50mins to do 30km. Deep do-do! So we went off at a considerable pace, dropping down through Nutley, Fletching to Piltdown pond, well not all down hill! We then turned right with a thrash into the wind back to Chailey, the route being the reverse of the first part of the Mid Sussex Hilly Audax 100km run in October. Time was rapidly running out and the first group of four riders, including yours truly, got back to the hall with just 4 minutes to spare. Phew. Our riding speed was 23.3km/hr, riding time 2 hrs 15 mins so we had 11 mins stopped. Only 8 riders got back in time on the shorter ride, with our group of 4 back first then 4 others 2 minutes later. Unfortunately Nigel and Theresa did not make it back within the time limit. It was a hard ride bearing in mind states of fitness for most riders at this time of year.

Of the longer ride only Graham Hadlow and one other rider for another club got back in their allotted time, I believe our other riders went off course near the end somehow! The route sheet was a bit vague in places and that is probably the reason why. They should be able to report a bit more about their ride.

AUDAX NEWS from Richard Thomas

There's a lot of it about

The "Worthing Winter Warmer" and the "First Hailsham 200" Weekend 10th/11th February 2007

Three "one hour" turbo sessions, a ride out and back from the ESCA lunch and the short 50km Lewes RR Trial (totalling 160km) was the total extent of my riding in the second half of January, since the last 200km.

As usual Mrs T was overseeing my "training" regime and suggested that it might be a good idea to do a bit of "training" before these two rides. So it was that Saturday 3rd February saw me grinding it out around the lanes of Berwick, Ripe, Golden Cross, etc, further enhanced by a CTC ride on Sunday and a Wednesday ride with those "retired" riders, so that I had 205km under my wheels in the 7 days up to the "double".

The "it" in the title is water. Glad to learn that we no longer have a hosepipe ban!

Whilst in the pub at lunchtime on the CTC Sunday ride I was told that the weather for the next weekend was going to be "wet and windy". It is annoying how accurate these forecasts are these days!

I awoke at 5:30am on the Saturday morning, and readied myself for the depart an hour and a half later in the car, setting off for Ashington, just north of Worthing. It was raining as I left home but had stopped by the time I reached my destination. Nearly 100 riders had entered the event and we rolled out at 9am, heading for the first control near Hazelmerer at 45km. I was going to take it easy as I had the 200km the next day and was rolling along when a "groupetto" of the Lewes came by, so I had to join them, didn't I! I stayed with them until the information control at the bottom of the 3km climb up to the control. We had some rain and as I was following wheels (mostly mudguardless) I was definitely "spotted Dick".

A leisurely stop at the control at Blackdown and the chance of joining a slower group saw me leaving with a small group of like minded souls. The ride to the next control at Burton at 71km was uneventful even if we were required to negotiate steep descents on narrow roads. The p**c**re fairy was very busy as we passed many riders by the side of the road with either wheel out etc. The last 30km took a more "laney" route than the previous year, including an instruction which stated "granny gear may be needed for 80 metres" as well as a steep climb to Rectory Lane within 2 kilometres of the finish, hence it was a bit harder but quieter than the main roads the previous year. It rained for the last half an hour and I was wet through again at the finish in 4 hrs 55 mins, with an average riding speed of just over 23km/hr (4hrs 20mins riding time).

As I drove back I thought of the task ahead for the next day, "only" 200km, and wondered if the weather would improve. I set my alarm that night for a 5:30 wake up, woke at 4am to hear the wind lashing the rain against the windows and wrestled with the temptation not to go, but what would Mrs T say!

So I got up when the alarm went off and left home after 7am, giving me just 20 minutes to ride out for the 7:30am start at the Hailsham Leisure Centre. I took my life in my hands and rode up the A22, swinging right towards Hailsham. Just as I passed the BP garage at the junction of Ersham Road, the riders came the other way. I was late!

Not one to be panicked, I was happy with this situation as I did not want to get caught up in the "burn-up" to the first control. So I picked up my Brevet Card from the control and left about 10 minutes "late". It was not raining and I plugged alone into the wind down to Seaford before turning north over High and Over, where John Seviour was manning the checkpoint at the top of the climb (to make sure that no-one turned right to Alfriston at the bottom of Chapel Hill!). The black clouds were clearly visible from the top of the climb and soon after the heavens opened and I had a wet ride to Upper Dicker and on through to Cowbee, Dallington and Woods Corner to the first control (and a feed) at Brightling at 51km. Some of the roads looked more like rivers! By this time I had caught up with some riders and left there in a small group for the ride to Dungeness at 105km. The weather did improve, there was some blue in the sky and with a tail wind we made good progress to Mountfield, then via Cripps Corner to Broad Oak and on to Rye. After Rye we stuck to the main road for 8km before turning onto the Cycle Routes and Ness Road to the Light Railway Café at Dungeness. The wind was a bit "niggly" on the last bit.

I needed something to eat here as I was a bit "bonked", and consumed a bacon sandwich, some fruit cake and a mug of coffee. Suitably refreshed our group of five, including Martin Malins and Jack Williams left and fought our way via Lydd for 8km into the headwind across the open and bleak landscape before retracing part of our outward leg along the Cycle Routes.

There were many puddles along the way and I went down one particularly deep pot hole which picked up my front wheel and forcefully deflected me and the bike diagonally across to the other side of the narrow road. I hung on despite banging my hand on something hard on the handlebars and my riding companion stop in his tracks, which were by now also mine and no-one fell off (sorry Graham!). Such are the perils hidden under water.

We arrived at the World of Water (apt for today!) control at Rolvenden at 3.55pm, having got there via Brenzett, Warehorne, Bethersden, Smarden, Biddenden and Woolpack Corner. This is a dangerous bend and we came across a multicar pile up right on the bend. Sobering!

I was very hungry by this point and tucked into my pre-ordered meal (such service by Dave Hudson and all included in the entry fee) of bacon and egg sandwich, apple tart and custard washed down with a mug of coffee. Only! 40km to go but the stamp for the brevet card stated "stoke up for the hills". A characteristic of Dave's routes is always a hilly last stage just when you are on your last legs. Nice!

We rode about half in daylight/dusk so only had 20km of darkness for the final lanes to Hailsham via Woods Corner, Dallington and Cowbee. We were back by 6:30pm, 11 hours on the road, and more than half the 60 starters from 75 entrants were still out there. Why does it take so long to do only 125 miles when even I can manage a 100 mile TT in under 5 hours.

Must be something to do with the terrain, weather etc. I now have two very dirty bikes to clean, still it fills the days, isn't retirement great!

PS Adam, saw you as you left Hailsham, how did you get on?

STOP PRESS For those who "enjoyed" this year's ECSA Reliability Ride, the date for this year's event is **SUNDAY 18th NOVEMBER 2007**. The event will again be promoted by Tony Palmer of the Worthing Excelsior, same event headquarters and with some promised changes to the route (as they don't want us to get too familiar with the route). Dave H will again be providing the food at the finish, which alone is enough of an incentive to ride and finish!

We came second in 2006 to the Lewes and Worthing came third with 8 riders finishing. Worthing are looking to field 20 riders next year so we need do the same or better!

WHERE TO SEE THE TOUR IN 2007 by Gavin Smith

The Tour de France visited England in 1974 (near Plymouth) and 1994 (Dover, Brighton, Portsmouth). It is due to come here this year. The next time it will visit our parts could well be over a decade away, so let's make the most of it this time around!

Some fans might be tempted to take the train to Victoria on Friday 6 July, then walk the mile to Trafalgar Square for the team presentations in the evening. Full details have yet to be announced, but this is likely to be a stylish affair with lots of razzmatazz and there will be a chance to see some of the Tour stars close-up.

The real action begins next day, though, with the prologue TT in central London. You can find the full route on www.tourdefrancelondon.com. Be warned: to get a prime spot on the barriers, you'll need to be in place several hours before the race starts, and you'll have to jealously keep your place. If you position yourself along Constitution Hill, you'll not only be placed just a few hundred metres from the finish, you'll also see the riders go by in both directions. Alternatively, if you're not prepared to get in place hours early, just wander around the whole route and soak up the atmosphere, perhaps getting back towards the finish area towards the end of the event.

I must admit that seeing a big race in this country gives me a big buzz. I think it's because it's so rare for bike-racing to be king in England. It's great to see that - for once - all traffic is barred from the road for the sake of cycling. And, although it's great to see much of central London completely closed for the prologue, the buzz will be more acute on the road stage on Sunday 8 July, from London via Greenwich, the Medway towns, Maidstone, Tunbridge Wells, Tenterden and Ashford, then near Hythe to finish in Canterbury.

The roads will be completely closed to non-race traffic about half-an-hour before the famous publicity caravan starts rolling by. This in itself is a great spectacle and it takes about an hour for all the vehicles to pass, as they drop off free samples of various goods for people to scramble for. About half-an-hour after the caravan has passed, the race convoy including British and French police outriders, the riders themselves, then the team cars loaded with spare bikes will come by.

There are no end of great spots to see this stage. For example, the climb out of Tonbridge towards Southborough, or the climb to Goudhurst (this might be the best place to go if you're cycling out from Eastbourne). If you want a long, straight stretch of road, and you've got a powerful pair of binoculars, how about going to the 6-mile-long Stone Street Roman road which is the B2068 beginning about 5 miles north of Hythe and ending just four miles from the finishing sprint in Canterbury?

The ultimate challenge, though, is to see the race twice on the day. I'd say you could either see the publicity caravan twice and the race once, or the publicity caravan once and the race twice. For example, if you first of all station yourself between the Medway towns and Maidstone, on or near the A229, you could see the caravan and the race go through. Then, swiftly join the M20 Dover-bound, then exit at junction 9 on to the A28. After around 9 miles turn right through the village of Shalmsford Street to take the lanes which will bring you out just after the end of Stone Street (mentioned above). This route should get you back on to the course in time to at least see the riders a second time, and will probably be the Smiths' choice on the day.

Have any Club members got other suggestions of good places to see the Tour this year?

Guide Dogs for the Blind, Tour de France Cycle Challenge – article by Mike Horner

Geneva to L'Alpe d'Huez, 30th August to 5th September 2003

The "Guide Dogs Tour" officially began at Geneva Airport late in the day on August 30. It was a warm sunny day despite the fact there had been severe storms only two days before. We introduced ourselves to each other and promptly forgot each other's names.

There were bikes everywhere, mostly cosseted in travel bags and so numerous we began to suspect the group was larger than the 43 promised. It eventually became clear that in fact there were several groups meeting at the airport and we had often been mingling with people we would probably not be meeting again.

The support team was in place directing operations and luggage and bikes were duly loaded onto trucks and the humans onto a magnificent coach, well cleaned and awaiting its normal clients who are into skiing not cycling.

The plan for the day was quite simple. Go to Annemasse by coach and install everyone in the Hotel des Alpes. (What else could it have been called?) Annemasse is a sister city to Geneva but in France whereas Geneva is in Switzerland. Since our tour is to be in France the organizers decided to have even this first night stay in France so as to avoid getting Swiss Francs as well as Euros. Once at the Hotel with luggage and bikes offloaded it became general knowledge that only 42 bikes had arrived since one had been mysteriously mislaid by British Airways at Heathrow (Thiefrow?). Fortunately there was a spare bike available from one of the two locals and Enzo the bikeless was at least guaranteed some form of two-wheel transport the next day.

We were all paired off in rooms, except those who had paid extra to keep their snoring to themselves. This forced at least some people to remember each other's names.

After checking in the hotel we had time to discover if our bikes had survived the air journey and in general they were in good shape. Finding the bike store would turn out to be a game we played all the week. This one had the unique feature of being completely dark since the lights were on a timer and no one, including the hotel electrician could figure out how to keep the lights on permanently.

Dinner was served at 8 pm (very French) and a few adventurous souls tried some wine encouraged by the local cycling / wine drinking participants.

Colin Hill of Guide Dogs introduced himself as the tour leader and talked about the event and some sensible rules of the road. (Crash hats, group size, eating, drinking, resting and so on.) Colin promised a speech by Alan from the support team at Breakfast time telling us the support people's side of the story. Colin looked so fit and spoke in such a way that some people thought that they had signed up for a race not a tour.

The general plan was to have an easy, flat, first day of some 40 km and then to tackle some serious cols on each of the four cycling days all of them being about 90km on the road. A total of 400 km, approximately 250 miles.

Day 1, Annemasse to Thonon les Bains

As promised Alan (of Graham Baxter Sporting Tours) delivered a talk over breakfast and offered sound advice on how to cycle over several days of "hilly" countryside and yet to conserve your strength.

The support team were introduced and delivered messages about various things as far apart as signing up for massages and what to when you got lost. (They actually followed us around with water and repair kits and once in a while became the sag wagon. Our luggage was taken to the next hotel and rooming lists prepared ahead of time. All very professional and obviously these guys had been there and done it all before.)

Bikes were tuned up. Enzo was reequipped with garish running shoes to go with his new steed. Luggage was loaded and then suddenly nothing happened.

Departure was scheduled for 11.00 am and everyone was ready well ahead of this. This situation never arose again! The explanation soon came. A group photo had been scheduled and no one was to depart before this essential task had been completed.

Finally a group of 10 set off on the recommended itinerary that was in fact back towards Geneva and then along the lakeside and into France. One of the locals took the lead and cycled at a leisurely pace eventually ending up at the beautiful lakeside village of Yvoire at noon. In some mysterious way the group had grown to 24 people and an order for the local fish specialty (Filets de Perch) was negotiated for the majority.

Fortunately this was a good choice and the weather and scenery were so magnificent the first hour or two were agreed to be a good beginning to the tour.

After lunch people had much more energy and several sub groups formed and went off at high speed towards Thonon and the hotel.

No one got lost and the weather continued to be warm but not hot.

Stories were exchanged and some individuals went into the town to explore.

We found the bike store and checked in with less hassle than the day before.

About 10 percent of the group had a massage.

Dinner was brought forward to 19.30 and was excellent.

More people were into wine drinking and the local people were busy translating French menus and recommending wines for certain foods.

The noise level at dinner was higher as people began to relax with each other.

Our leader introduced the idea of a Yellow Jersey award of the day as the highlight of his evening talk. Enzo, victimized unkindly by British Airways was the first winner.

Day 2, Thonon les Bains to Le Grand Bornand

Breakfast was early and attended by all. The practice of making speeches at meals was now expected and this time we had to make a choice. One mountain pass or two?

It seemed this group is entirely mad and everyone planned doing both Cols on offer despite the knowledge that the second of which is, in Tour de France terms, "A First Category climb."

The weather had held up and the world looked inviting. Bikes were extracted from their hiding place and tyres pumped up to 7 atmospheres. (After some discussion and multiplying 7 by 15 psi without a calculator!) Dual water bottles were armed and the race began! Or so it seemed to those with a more decorous pace in mind.

More courageous now, the 43 heros (actually 38 heros and 5 heroines) moved off soon after breakfast and having mastered the crossing of Thonon despite the French road signage scheme, they all emerged onto the Col de Jambaz.

Local maps do not even grace this "Fast climb" with the title of Col. It turned out to be 25 km taking us 700 metres higher than when we started.

The view and the descent were wonderful and then we entered the township of St Jeoire where the map-readers began to argue among themselves. Certain souls with inbuilt compasses stumbled over the lower reaches of the Col de le Columbiere by accident.

Some time later after 15 km of strenuous climbing the teams regained 1600 meters to get the sort of view only available in the French Alps. Most people stopped for a lunch and enjoyed the fruit of their exertions. A few less sensible souls went directly down a fast descent and ended up in a very sleepy French skiing village having the usual very long French lunch break and experienced their very first frustration with the non British culture. One small group discovered a snack bar by a swimming pool and the owners must have thanked their gods for the number of Croque Messieurs sold that day.

The luggage was all laid out awaiting the athletes.

The room lists were in place even though there were arrivals two hours early.

Bikes were hidden away like treasures. (Value estimated as 60k pounds!)

Massages were requested, granted and delivered to tired limbs.

Eventually all group members were assembled at dinner where even more wine was ordered and consumed. The speech by Colin congratulated everyone and certain smugness was felt in the room. Alan made his intervention and offered a three way choice. Two Cols, One Col or no Cols.

The group decided more or less unanimously to do the two Col option.

Someone had arranged to meet his wife in the beautiful city of Annecy that was on the no Col route and despite lobbying he had no takers and tomorrow was going to be another two Col day.

Conversation became a hubbub as tales were recounted and friendships blossomed.

Wine drinking went on into the bar and for a few hours the skiing village of Le Grand Bornand came awake in summer. David Johnston was Yellow Jersey person for his wild efforts that day. (He is an Ozzie!)

Note: to be continued next month

Message from Kevin Burton:

**RE: IN LAST MONTHS NEWSLETTER DAVE COX MISSED ONE RIDER
SECOND FROM LEFT WAS JASON SALTER (ROAD RACE SECRETARY)**

Try this one now!

PLEASE FIND PICTURE ATTACHED TAKEN FROM CYCLE - FEB/MAR 2007 EDITION
ISSUED TO CTC MEMBERS. **WHO IS THE RIDER IN THE OLD EASTBOURNE ROVERS KIT** SHOWN ON A
PAGE ADVERTISING HOLIDAYS ABROAD?

I know who it is but I'm not telling !! Theresa



Come and support Adam at your local bike shop. He's ready and waiting to tune up your bike for the fast approaching season.

kontour cycles

station road, polegate
01323 482368

*club discount for members
10% on accessories
15% on high 5 energy products
20% on inner tubes*

agents for :

dolan; campagnolo ; shimano
high 5; continental; Michelin and many more

wheelbuilding
servicing
repairs

April Newsletter will be out end of the end of 1st week in April 2007. **Please send in lots of articles as I am on holiday 19 March – 2nd April and would like to come back to a nice full newsletter article “inbox”. If you could send me articles before I go away that would be even more helpful. Lots of you are racing now, don't forget to email me your results.**

Articles wanted, please don't be shy. The success of the newsletter depends on you. Let's have some more responses to *letters to the editor* ! Closing date for articles for next issue is **2 April 2007**.

Please contribute something for members to read and enjoy! Please keep up the good work and great articles.

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Theresa Abbott