

# blah

NORWOOD PARAGON SPRING 2007



## IT'S ALL LOOKING GOOD.....

Having been in the Paragon almost 18 years now, I think that the club is about the best I've known it. The last few years has seen an influx of strong new members, superb racing results and a camaraderie that really makes you feel part of a decent club. Seventeen of us went to Mallorca in March to get the miles in and while I treated it as a holiday, the majority referred to it as a training camp and we all came back considerably fitter than when we left.

The Les Ingman open road race was held on 22 April and it was a good hard event with no less than 11 of our members racing, more than I've ever known and certainly more than when I promoted the race. With the club BBQ afterwards and a fine sunny day it was all a great success.

This edition of Blah has all the race results to pore over, along with some very interesting & surprising facts in our rider profiles and much more.

As ever, if you have any comment, articles or items for the Blah please pass them on to me.

*Stephen Roach, April 07.*

### **New Faces** (Members).

*Paul James* has joined us from the Crawley CC and rides both road and TT:

*Matt Starey* is ex member of the Clarendon CC and is currently a BC Private member.

*Fraser Dawson* is a triathlete & training partner of Nik Ffoulkes.

*Rob Enslin* Currently a member of the awcycles.co.uk racing team and ex Twickenham CC. He wanted to join a club for the club life and so decided on the Paragon as Second claim.

*Ben Moores* Brother of 1st cat member Chris. Currently studying at Cambridge but is keen to cut his teeth on the road having already had success at Hillingdon this year.

*Simon Hazeldine* Has joined us from the 34th Nomads and rides the road mainly SCRL events.

**Robin Buchan Open 25.** Sunday 13 May. James Shrubbsall is our promoter this year and if you're not helping or racing then do come out and support our club's open TT promotion.

**NorwoodParagon.co.uk** Our club website is updated regularly so please use this resource if you have the facilities. Contact Peter Ansell with items for the site.

**Email Lists.** We still haven't quite got there with our club group distribution lists, but we'll be sending a note round soon which should make communication a bit easier for all of us.

**Club Kit.** Pete Ansell holds the stock of club kit, so please contact him if you need any. PeterAnsell@btinternet.com or 020 8668 5652. He also has the old style kit at greatly reduced prices, so if you need any training kit it's well worth considering.

### **Its all for Charity mate**

*Ross Bartlett* completed the Swimathon event (26th March) and swam the full 5000m (200 lengths \*25m pool) at Bicester Pool in the time of 1h 35m 32s - raising £135 for the Marie Curie cancer charity.

*Stephen Roach* also completed the swimathon back in January and while not managing Ross's 5k distance, did raise over £200 for the Spastics.

Topping all of this was *Justin Lomas*, who completed the Calais to Cannes charity ride in 5 days and despite being a relay he still covered about 1250km, which is quite a distance for March. A full report will appear in a future Blah.

**For Sale** - Bike Frame. Look 241 57cm c-c in Kelme team yellow with ITM millennium forks, campag headset, bracket, millennium seat pin and matching look 295 pedals. £160  
Contact Andy Murray

# NORWOOD PARAGON 25 MILE TIME TRIAL

**SUNDAY MAY 13 2007**

Run on the **G25/53** (near Horsham)  
See how close you can get to Stuart Dangerfield's  
superfast course record of **48-44**. First rider off 0630

Closing date for entries: May 1, price £7.00  
Please send to: Mr James Shrubsall, 29 Runnymede,  
London SW19 2PG. For more info call: 07738 351417  
Cheques made payable to: Norwood Paragon CC



fig 1. The time triallist

## Member Spotlight — Steve Calland

### **First cycling memories**

A few of us on “the estate” used to own Grifters and we use to organise races around the block. I remember holding the lap record for a while as an 8 yr old!

### **What sort of rider are you?**

A slow starter but a fast finisher.

### **What got you into racing?**

Watching the televised circuit races of the early 80’s with huge crowds and great tv coverage. That gave me the idea but a local rider and his family were all mad keen cyclists and it was our friendly rivalry that pushed me more into it.

### **What was your first race**

Three sisters motor racing circuit as a 12 yr old. About 80 riders in the juvenile event and I finished one ahead of about 80!

### **What was your racing highlight?**

World Road Race Championships in 1995 which just pips racing with Miguel Indurain (5 times Tour de France winner) and Lance Armstrong in a 3 day stage race in Colorado the same year. I can still remember the moment I got dropped by ‘Big Mig’ on a long drag – I was right on his wheel for about 500m of the climb.



Winning stage 2 of the Easter 3 day



A young Steve celebrating a win

### **Most memorable training ride**

Every winter youth hostel training weekend with my first club, ABC Centreville of Manchester. We would do around 120 miles each day with saddle bags and they were real club runs with great café stops. One especially stands out; after doing 110 miles as a 15 yr old we were trying to get to a Hostel somewhere in Wales. Between about 12 of us we had one working rear light as we were still riding at 7pm without a clue where the place was. There were no

lights on the building as we had the keys for the weekend!

### **What’s your most embarrassing cycling moment?**

Crashing in a televised circuit race in Aberdeen on the last lap and taking down the series leader Chris Walker with me! He wasn’t happy.

### **Best cycling moment**

Winning the Shaw Town Centre criterium in 1990. It was a big race with the pro’s and it was my local race. Felt great to win in front of loads of people I knew and I won £300!

### **Top training tip**

Slowly, slowly catchy monkey! Or.... save your race legs for racing.

## Race Reports

**23rd Dec – 17<sup>th</sup> Feb**

Although the racing season hasn't really started, several members of the Norwood Paragon have been competing in some of the Winter series road races and early season Sporting Time Trials to test their mettle. Following on from last year's success the club has already netted a couple of wins and several podiums which bodes well for 2007.

Chris Moores has raced at Hillingdon in the E/1/2 Winter Series road races where he came 2<sup>nd</sup> in round 4 and 15<sup>th</sup> in round 8 and Paul Davies finished in the bunch in round 9. New member Dan Sullivan has had a successful road race debut in the 4<sup>th</sup> category races of the Winter Series. In round 11 Sullivan won the bunch sprint to take 2<sup>nd</sup> place behind G Wood (Southend Wheelers) and in round 13 he took first place comfortably out-sprinting the rest of the field. This was a fantastic achievement for his second ever road race and earned him promotion to 3<sup>rd</sup> category as well.



Les Ingman road race 2007

In the Time Trials, Norwood Paragon has been represented by several riders with a team in the GS Stella sporting TT weekend down in Storrington. This event involved an 18km hilly TT on the Saturday and a tough cold 45km event on the Sunday. Steve Calland, Dave Kennett, Mike Hawkins and Marcus Brueton braved the elements to take part with the four of them finishing just outside the top 20 in the 18km event – Calland (28-02), Brueton (28-03), Kennett (28.13), Hawkins (28.15). P Tadros (InGear) set an impressive new course record to win the event in 25-05.

On the Sunday Hawkins succumbed to a cold and didn't race, meanwhile Calland took 16<sup>th</sup> place with 1-04-51 and Brueton was further down in 1-08-24. Tadros once again took first place in a time of 58-15. James Shrubsall was also testing his fitness in the sporting Time Trials with a respectable ride in the Kingston sporting TT. The Paragon rider finished in 23<sup>rd</sup> place with a time of 37-16, whilst B Instone (A3 CRG) won the event in 31-02.

Meanwhile off road Paul Davies rode the first round of the Gorrick Spring Series at Tunnel Hill. He raced in the Super Masters event and stayed with the lead group on the first lap, but then dropped back slightly as the distance took its toll and he finished in 7<sup>th</sup> place with a last lap surge keeping him in the top 10.

There was also some cycling action indoors as three members of the Norwood Paragon rode for the Croydon based Cycling Weekly "Media Team" in the Rapha Roller Derby Competition. Mike Hawkins, Steve Calland and Simon Richardson went up to Shoreditch Town Hall, to take part in this inaugural event which pitted various teams against each other on rollers in front of an audience of over 250 people.

They had to compete in heats where they rode 500m sprints against another rider with the winners going through to the next round. The charged atmosphere complete with music and DJ's saw former Belgian Kermesse expert Richardson demonstrating his top-end power as he sprinted his way into the final. Calland reached the quarter final and was left to watch Richardson riding against fellow Cycling Weekly team mate Neil Webb for the number one spot. Richardson won it by a whisker and is the Rapha Roller Derby champion for 2007.

### **Results 5-11 March 2007**

The Norwood Paragon made the most of the warm weather last weekend, racing both on and off road. Simon Warren rode the Jock Wadley E/1/2 136km road race in Essex which featured a strong field of almost 70 riders. Warren jumped away in a break on the 2<sup>nd</sup> lap with six other riders which opened up a gap of over 2 minutes on the main field. However they were not working effectively and a fast moving chase group lead by Pinarello's R Prebble bore down on them on lap 7. The main field had broken apart by now with the large group of 20 at the front battling it out for the lead. Various attacks saw this front group also break up with Prebble taking a small posse away with him and Warren unfortunately losing contact and dropping back to the main bunch. With one lap to go Warren made another bid for freedom from what was left of the bunch, however he was caught less than a kilometre from the line, finishing in 31<sup>st</sup> overall.

On Saturday Dave Kennett and Marcus Brueton rode their first open road race of 2007 at Crowhurst in the Surrey League 2/3 57m race. They rode quite aggressively with both riders featuring in several breaks, yet they never quite managed to stay away with the race reaching the last lap with the main bunch still intact. One lone rider - D Gardner (London Dynamo) succeeded in slipping away from the bunch and just took the win as the sprint roared in behind him. Brueton managed a respectable 12<sup>th</sup> place with Kennett in 18<sup>th</sup> having worked hard to up the tempo in the closing laps.

Kennett was in action the next day as well, alongside fellow Paragon Mike Hawkins when they rode in the Surrey League 2/3 race at Alfold. Kennett once again featured in several moves, but the strength of various riders in the bunch ensured that the race was together by the end. London Dynamo scored another victory courtesy of P Delahunty with Kennett and Hawkins safely in the bunch.

Norwood Paragon's TransWales and Enduro MTB expert, Paul Davies was in action on Sunday when he rode the Gorrick Spring Series MTB race at Crowthorne. He started quite strongly despite having problems with his pedals initially and settled into the top 5 of the Super Masters Race. The technical course was fairly dry allowing the riders to enjoy the singletrack and roost through the "Corkscrew" section which led to a few crashes nonetheless. Davies himself fell victim to a crash as a rider he had previously overtaken collided with him on some roots and Davies hit the deck. The Paragon rider remained steadfast as two others passed him during his recovery and he proceeded to chase them back down. Davies caught one of them to take a well-earned 6<sup>th</sup> place with Pedal-On's Scott Forbes winning the race.

### **Results 12 March – 9 April 2007**

The last few weeks have been busy for the Norwood Paragon culminating in the Easter weekend's stage races, Herne Hill Track meet and National MTB series race at Thetford Forest.

Fourteen members of the Paragon went away to Mallorca in March on a training camp leaving a handful of riders to contest the races back at home. One of those was the irrepressible Simon Warren who rode in the Hounslow Spring RR on 25 March. This E/1/2 race featured a strong line-up including the Rapha Condor and PCA Evans teams which dominated the race. Warren managed to get into the early break and stayed clear for 30m, but this split up and he ended up back in the bunch. Warren made further attacks and tried to break clear of the disintegrating bunch, however his earlier efforts had robbed him of precious speed and he finished in the main field as PCA Evans' G McCauley took the win.

Fellow Paragons Russell Painter and Andy Waterman raced at Hillingdon on the same day in the E/1/2 race. The windy conditions ensured the race split up early on with a group of five breaking clear and Waterman in a chasing group of 15 behind. Painter managed to bridge across to his team-mate and worked hard helping this group to lap the field, however the leading break, of six now, successfully stayed clear with L Atkins (Pacific) winning the race. Painter finished in 17<sup>th</sup> place ahead of Waterman in 22<sup>nd</sup>.

There were two stage races over Easter, both lasting for three days, one for 1/2/3 category riders and the other solely for 3<sup>rd</sup> category. The Norwood Paragon had two riders in each event who were riding well after their Mallorcan training miles. In the 3<sup>rd</sup> cat event, Dan Sullivan and Jason Humphries rode well on the first stage with Jason safely in the bunch whilst Sullivan took an impressive 3<sup>rd</sup> place, behind M Biekowski (Oxford Uni). Humphries was unable to race the next 2 stages, but Sullivan rode well finishing safely in the bunch at Dunsfold after riding round a crash in the closing stages and then finishing 23<sup>rd</sup> in the final stage at Lyne which was won by N Whelan (Ewhurst Control). This was a fine performance for Sullivan to get on the podium in his first ever stage race and he finished 18<sup>th</sup> overall with Biekowski the winner.

Steve Calland and Dave Kennett rode the 1/2/3 event which covered just under 70 miles each day on the same circuits as the 3<sup>rd</sup> cat event. Calland got into the break on stage one which stayed clear for over half of the race, but later lost its impetus and 3 riders broke free and the bunch caught the remainder. Artic Shorter Rochford's D Axford won the race with the two Paragons safely in the bunch. Stage 2 was at Dunsfold on the aerodrome circuit made famous by Top Gear. Once again there was a break of about 15 riders and Calland likewise was again in the thick of the action. The group stayed clear to the finish, however they lacked organization and looked in danger of being caught in the last few miles. This prompted Calland to jump clear on his own with barely a mile to go. He stayed clear to take a well-deserved victory as the bunch failed to catch the break due to a crash in the closing stages which unfortunately included Kennett. The final stage at Lyne was heavily controlled by Artic Shorter Rochford who were protecting the yellow jersey of Axford. The race stayed together until the last 10m when a small group clipped away which was not a threat to the overall lead. Sigma Sport's C Tune won the stage with Axford winning the race overall. Calland finished 13<sup>th</sup> overall and was 5<sup>th</sup> in the points competition which was won by Sigma Sport's D Duguid.

Norwood Paragon's Graeme Gardiner also raced at Dunsfold on Sunday in the 30m 4<sup>th</sup> category race. Previously Gardiner has suffered misfortune with punctures on this circuit, however this was not so on this occa-

sion and he comfortably sprinted his way into the top ten, finishing in 6<sup>th</sup> place behind the winner D Barclay (Private).

Cambridgeshire-based Norwood Paragon rider, Justin Lomas made the long journey down to Betteshanger near Deal on Saturday to ride in the 1/2/3 circuit race. His efforts were rewarded as he rode strongly in the race, coming 2<sup>nd</sup> in the bunch sprint behind a breakaway pair, placing him 4<sup>th</sup> overall.

Meanwhile on the track, Simon Warren was back in action at the Herne Hill Good Friday Meet. Warren rode the points race and elimination races, but missed out any points as he was outgunned by a very strong field including recently crowned world champion Bradley Wiggins. The elimination race lived up to its name though as Warren crashed heavily when three riders collided in front of him leaving no escape. The unlucky Paragon cut his elbow badly requiring stitches, but he was pleased to see his bike was OK!

Thetford Forest was the scene of the action for the Paragon's Paul Davies as he rode the first round the of the National MTB X-Country series followed by the 100km enduro on the Sunday.

Davies raced in the Masters category and also had to contend with crashed riders although was unscathed himself as he battled his way past them at the start of the race. This cost him crucial time into the singletrack and he had to work his way up through the 65 strong field. Davies rode well to finish in 8<sup>th</sup> place, even sprinting away from another challenger in the last 100m. G Warby won the race and the men's elite event was won by O Beckinsale.

Sunday's 100km enduro on the same fast flat dusty trails of Thetford Forest saw the riders setting a punishing pace. R Seymour took the win with Davies in 15<sup>th</sup> place which was another fine result as this was an open event against all categories.

Finally there was the Brighton Mitre Hilly 10m TT at Kirdford on Saturday which Rob Douglas rode for the Norwood Paragon. This was the Douglas' first event of the year and also his first competitive ride on his new TT machine. He didn't fail to deliver, getting into the top 10 with a new personal best for the course despite the breezy conditions. Douglas finished in 9<sup>th</sup> (24-45) with P Tadros (In-Gear) winning in 22-08 - over 90 seconds ahead of 2<sup>nd</sup> place.

### **Results 10–15 April 2007**

The sunny weather over the weekend brought out the Norwood Paragon with six riders taking part in the Surrey League races at MOD Chertsey including new member Simon Hazeldine.

Steve Calland, Mike Hawkins, Justin Lomas and Andy Waterman rode in the 50m E/1/2 race on the fast closed road circuit. Calland and Lomas managed to break away with a move of ten riders. This break worked reasonably well to stay clear of the bunch where Hawkins and Waterman rode to protect their teammates' position up the road.

In the closing stages four riders clipped away with A Christensen (agiskoviner) taking the win. Lomas and Calland were in the remains of the break with Calland finishing 2<sup>nd</sup> out of his group and placing 5<sup>th</sup> overall whilst Lomas was in 9<sup>th</sup> place followed by Hawkins (19<sup>th</sup>) and Waterman (22<sup>nd</sup>) in the bunch.

Simon Hazeldine rode his first race for the Norwood Paragon in the 3<sup>rd</sup> category 40m event alongside teammate James Shrubsall. Hazeldine who has been racing for a few year's powered his way round the course – "riding like an ox" according to feedback from other riders. This race came down to a bunch sprint which was won by Addiscombe CC's J Cornall, with Hazeldine in 13<sup>th</sup> and Shrubsall 16<sup>th</sup>.

On Sunday Norwood Paragon's Rob Douglas rode the Redmon CC 25 on the Kingsfold course which is a mix of single and dual carriageways. The calm conditions led to some fast times despite the chilly start. Douglas put in a quick time to finish in 13<sup>th</sup> place (57-17) whilst Paul Mill won the event in 51-49.

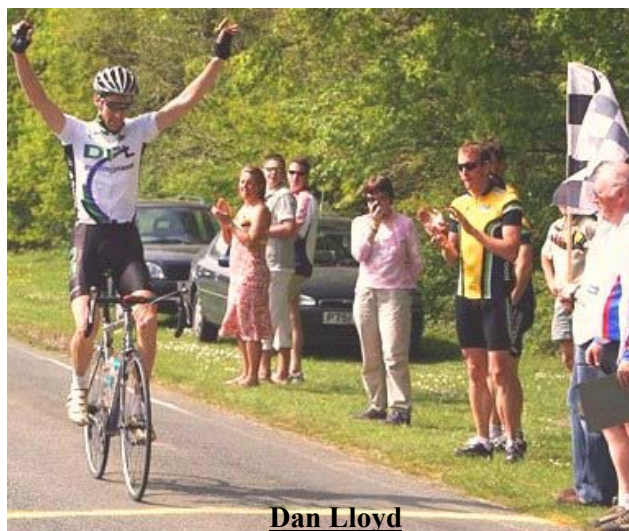
### **Norwood Paragon Results 16-22 April 2007**

Norwood Paragon's Jason Humphries raced at Hillingdon last week in one of the first evening road races on this circuit. He rode the E/1/2/3 race which saw a large field taking part including (former) continental pro G MaCauley (PCA Evans). Humphries rode strongly and managed to stay out of trouble to finish in the bunch despite ending up on the grass at one point. Beyond MBC's P Crook managed to jump away in the last kilometre to take the win. Also on Sunday the Paragon's Rob Douglas rode the SCCU 25m TT on the Broadbridge Heath G25/53 course. Douglas had an early start with the ambient temperature hovering below 5C, thus making it hard to get up to speed. He was slower for the first third of the course, but went on to average 27mph for the remainder giving him a total time of 57-42. This placed him 11<sup>th</sup> overall and was a personal best for this event, by over a minute. Mike Coyle (VC Etoile) made the most of a later warmer start to post a time of 53-51 to comfortably win the race.

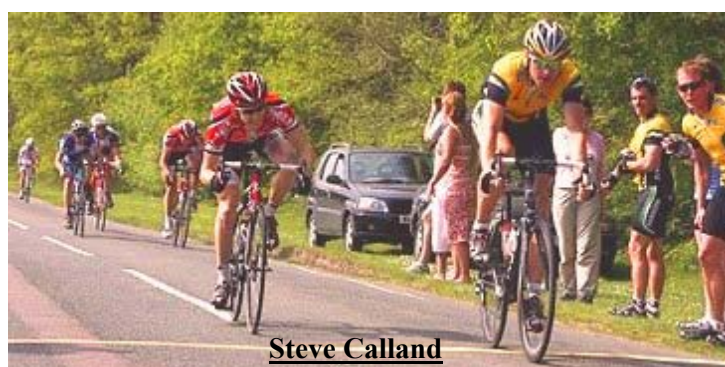
## Les Ingman Memorial road race

Our annual promotion took place on Sunday 22 May over 85 miles around the Bletchingley circuit. The unusually warm weather coupled with the arduous climbs up over the North Downs made this a particularly tough event. The race is part of the South East Series and attracted a strong field including several Elite riders. The Paragon themselves fielded eleven riders reflecting the current strength in depth within the club. Unfortunately one of the eleven – Justin Lomas – punctured on the first lap and despite getting a front wheel from a team-mate, was unable to continue as his rear tyre punctured just as he made contact with the bunch. The race itself split early on with two riders from the promoting club featuring, however this was brought back by Dan Lloyd (DFL), fresh from a period of racing in Europe as he wound up the pace on the approach to Outwood. A lead group of 12 riders soon developed, containing our own Steve Calland. They quickly built up an impressive lead, dropping a few weary riders along the way. Lloyd attacked with four laps to go, taking Alex Higham (Bike & Run) and Andrew Bye (Kingston Wheelers) with him as the others failed to respond. The remnants of the lead group stayed together, knowing that they were now looking at fourth place at best. There was another chasing group of five riders behind the fragmented lead group including Steve Gower of Sigma sport, whilst another 5 Paragons rode behind as the main field fell apart quite dramatically. Bye was all but finished when the leaders went through the bell leaving Lloyd to attack Higham on the final ascent of Scots Hill. The DFL rider held a gap all the way to the line, and never once looked like losing his lead. Bye, only a second category rider, put in the performance of the day, losing minutes on the leaders, but holding off the chasing group to take third place. Behind Bye, Calland won the sprint for 4<sup>th</sup> place ahead of Artic RT's M Holmes. Dave Kennett finished in 20<sup>th</sup> place with fellow club-mates Dan Sullivan (23<sup>rd</sup>), Mike Hawkins (24<sup>th</sup>), Nigel Carpenter (26<sup>th</sup>), Darcus Brueton (27<sup>th</sup>) and Paul Davies (29<sup>th</sup>) all completing the race. There was also a welcome return from injury for AW Cycles team's elite rider Rob Enslin (16<sup>th</sup>) who has recently joined the Norwood Paragon as a second claim member.

- 1 Daniel Lloyd DFL E 3:26:03
- 2 Alex Higham Bike & Run London E @ 0:23
- 3 Andrew Bye Kingston Wheelers CC 2 @ 6:57
- 4 Steve Calland Norwood Paragon CC 1 @ 7:37
- 5 Matt Holmes Arctic RT 1
- 6 Darren Barclay Arctic RT 2
- 7 Anders Christensen agiskoviner.com
- 8 Chris McNamara Wildside RT E
- 9 Ben Pochee Bike & Run London 1
- 10 Tim Elverson VC Meudon E @ 8:17
- 11 Toby Neave Wildside RT E
- 12 Steve Gower Sigma Sport RT 1V
- 13 Richard Simmonds London Dynamo 1
- 14 Paul Mill Team Edwards 1 @ 11:03
- 15 Simon Lawn Sigma Sport RT 1
- 16 Rob Enslin awcycles.co.uk E
- 17 Jason Edwards Wildside RT E
- 18 Andy Davies Fit-For 2
- 19 James Beaumont Kingston Wheelers CC 3
- 20 David Kennett Norwood Paragon CC 2
- 21 Robert Stimpson Python RT 3
- 22 Ian Paine London Dynamo 1 @ 1 lap
- 23 Daniel Sullivan Norwood Paragon CC 3
- 24 Mike Hawkins Norwood Paragon CC 2
- 25 Neil Linford-Relph VC Meudon 1
- 26 Nigel Carpenter Norwood Paragon CC 2V
- 27 Marcus Brueton Norwood Paragon CC 2
- 28 Graham Wood Crawley CC 2V
- 29 Paul Davies Norwood Paragon CC
- 30 Ben White Finchley RT
- 31 Ian Jones Bayeux Landscapes 3V



Dan Lloyd



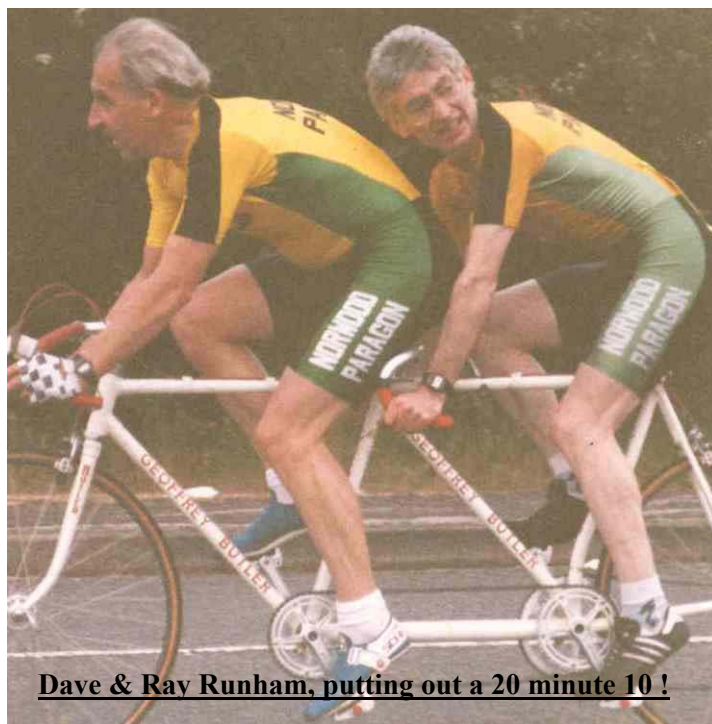
Steve Calland



## Member Spotlight — Dave Adams

### **First Cycling Memories**

My first cycling memories are of reaching the age of 14 years without being able to ride a bike. We lived in a prefab at the time on a small estate of prefabricated houses erected on the abandoned tennis courts/bowling greens and allotments of the old Loughborough Park sports ground, which must have been something special in its heyday in the early 1900s I guess. Everybody my age and younger seemed to have no trouble learning to ride a bike, and my inability started to become quite embarrassing. Everyone said that one just pushed the pedals round and you learnt to balance the bike. Well, this just did not seem to work for me, I then realised that one doesn't really ride by balance, but more by constantly making small corrections to the steering to stay upright. With this my solution I was riding and back with the rest of the gang. We shared made-up bikes between three of us, made from discarded pieces we found on old bombsites. We added a few new bits and pieces bought in, built up to single-gear bikes, having one rear brake. One of our main exercises was to accelerate as fast as possible then brake to lock up the back wheel and skid to see who could execute the widest swathe of gravel dust.



**Dave & Ray Runham, putting out a 20 minute 10 !**

### **My Most Embarrassing Moments**

On my 15th birthday, just prior to leaving school in 1955, my dad presented me with a brand new, emerald green Raleigh Lenton sports bike, complete with three-speed Sturmey Archer hub gear and front dynamo hub. Everything on it was chrome-plated steel – rims, cranks, pedals; it must have weighed a ton. I was aghast. This was nothing like the cycle I had in mind! He of course thought that this was what any boy would have wanted. I was so ungrateful. This was nothing like the cycles I had seen riders on coming down from Brixton Hill after a day in the country. They were hand-built lightweights with single fixed gears, or the latest continental derailleur gears. But this was my first bike and I was stuck with it. Within days two 'friends' invited me on an evening ride to Crystal Palace. They both had super lightweights. From Brixton we proceeded past Brockwell Park, then left to Croxted Road – fine so far, this cycling was great, freedom at last! – then approaching the junction with the Gypsy Hill turn-off the road started to change. I was having to push really hard on the pedals as the road got steeper. Being just a

back street rider I had never had aching legs before. We could see the Crystal Palace tower above us and the road was just getting steeper all the time. My two companions were beginning to draw away from me. There was no way I was going to get off and walk, the shame of it. So I did a U-turn and rode back home. After that loss of face I retraced this route many times to conquer this hill and never had any fear of having to walk up to the Crystal Palace.

### **My First Race**

One of my work mates was a member of the Fountain CC and encouraged me to join. The clubroom was in a pub off Peckham Road, Camberwell Green – not far from Gillotts bike shop, whose window we used to drool over. The club met on Sundays at the fountain at Dulwich crossroads, hence the name of the club. The club's evening '10's started at Locksbottom, Kent, proceeded up Badgers Mount, turned, and finished back near Farnborough Village. The most enjoyable part of these summer evenings was the tear-up back home via Bromley with a mass sprint at Catford along Canadian Avenue. After this I was soon persuaded to enter a 25-mile club event. We met up at Streatham Common horse trough, very early on the morning of Sunday August 5, 1956, to ride out to my first race. The start was opposite Chessington Zoo; we must have been the first club off. It was surreal with the early morning mist, no sounds, no traffic, just the animals in the zoo. There were no people around other than the four other starters and Wally the club timekeeper. Was this a real race? Where were all the crowds, the supporters? I didn't know the course at all. The instructions were to proceed towards Leatherhead, then stay on the A24 until you saw the turn marshal and retrace. It was a

rolling sort of course with loads of roundabouts. Apparently this course was not just unpopular with riders – marshals did not seem too keen on it either. I remember catching my two-minute man as he returned from some sort of detour, then picking up one more before the finish. Wally told me I had done a 1.11.12 and won the event. Although I did realise that it was an unpopular course without the best club riders participating, to say you won your first race, well that is something special.

### **Best Cycling Memories**

Riding club runs with the Fountain in the winter of 1956/57 was a great experience with riders such as Ron Poole, a strong sprinter on the track, a prolific winner at grass-track meetings. It was said he won enough canteen of cutlery sets to sell off and put a deposit down on a house. His wife Joan was an international rider and won stages in stage races all over Europe and was National Road Race Champion (Harry Featherstone used to partner Ron in Madison races in the 1950s). Guests on runs included the Australian track riders Bob Jobson and the track builder Ron Webb. After meeting at Dulwich the club would proceed to elevenses, lunch and tea, all at a very leisurely pace except for massive accelerations of pace whenever a village sign appeared, everyone twiddling 64 or 66 fixed like maniacs.

After failing to win our club Open '25' at Easter with my 1.8.20 (the winner was at least eight minutes quicker, a certain Robin Buchan of the Paragon). I decided to target something in my range – an event restricted to middlemarkers made sense and I found one in August, the Camberley Wheelers CC, open to all riders not having beaten 1.6.00. I became so determined to win this event that I took my summer holidays one month before to train for it. The first week off my trainer partner for the day was club member Peter Holdway, a promising track rider. We intended to go to Portsmouth but after sprinting for most of the village signs going down the A3, Peter suggested a truce and we turned at Waterlooville for home. Later that year he sold all his bikes (I bought his road bike) and took up weight training. Some years later I saw him on TV as Peter Cortez the professional wrestler. Another midweek training ride consisted of riding solo from Brixton out to the start at Camberley and riding the course (the A327 Camberley to Reading road) and then back non-stop with one water bottle and a small bonk bag. I had convinced three other club mates to ride so that we could get club support/transport – a small van, bikes strapped on top and us cramped up inside. I did manage to win the event with 1.3.55 and we won the fastest team prize, and after concentrating all my efforts on winning this race I had a great sense of satisfaction. I came down with a bump the next day as I had agreed to ride a track meeting at Preston Park Brighton with Bill Dabkowski for this we had no transport and rode down with our racing wheels on sprint carriers attached to our front forks, all the way down to Brighton. Bill was a good sprinter and won some of his races but I was just too tired and jaded from the previous day and just got round. We then had to ride back from Brighton; we both agreed that perhaps a 50-mile ride carrying one's kit was not the ideal way to warm up for track sprint events. That certainly was a case of being up one day and being down the next.

After last year's success Bill had inspired a neighbour/friend to join the club and enter the KW novices. This guy was impressive, strong on and off the bike with a barrel chest of at least 40 inches. When asked by Bill what time he expected to do for his first '25' he looked in my direction: "If I can't do a 1.3 I shall pack up this cycling lark and take up running". Well, Ray Runham did win with a 1.3.23 on a hard, cold morning by over four minutes and our club won the team prize.

My 1958 season started in February doing a 1.6.22 in the Castlneu CC, MG 72-inch '25'. As I was still a junior I decided to ride as many third-cat and junior races as possible before June, as the distances were short, mostly over 45/50 miles. I succeeded in taking three wins, two seconds, a third and two fourth places. My best season so far, unfortunately jumping me up to a first-category licence.

Tandem racing was still popular, with clubs promoting events that attracted 40 to 50 pairs, these were very competitive events. Ray had managed to borrow a tandem and wanted a partner, someone had suggested me being light with supposedly strong legs as the ideal stoker. Well we gave it a try and found we did gel well together and had great fun restoring the tandem to race standard. Our objective was the Old Ports Tandem '30' in September, and from 44 pairs we came second in 1.4.15. It was a good debut against many experienced tandem riders, and started a friendship which has lasted 50 years.

### **My Worst Cycling Moment**

By 1960 I had began to adapt to the senior races and managed a win in the Ashington Road Race in Sussex. My worst experience came one July day racing around Westerham. Conditions were bad after con-

tinuous rain. I was with a small group chasing a pair of breakaways, and descending Ide Hill the guy in front skidded and fell off in front of me. I picked myself up and straightened the bars, and despite realising that my front brake was broken and not working I continued chasing. I had moved up to third place when I braked near a bend, skidded, hit the deck and the car coming in the opposite direction. I regained consciousness in Farnborough Hospital, suffering from a punctured and collapsed lung due to a broken rib. I have no memory of this crash, but I presume I had locked up the back brake and skidded into the car. After a week in hospital, I was allowed home and spent the next month sleeping sitting up in bed or a chair.

After being home approximately two weeks, I woke up one night with a crushing pain in my chest and gasping for breath. I had had a pulmonary embolism but survived due to cycling fitness/luck who knows. My employers refused to pay me any wages while away sick as they considered that, as I was cycle racing it was self-inflicted! To add insult

to injury Kent Police decided to prosecute me for riding a bicycle without due care and attention. I could not believe they were serious and turned up in court not knowing what to expect as I had been racing in an official road race under BCF rules and just skidded on wet roads and they would let me off. How naïve! I was found guilty, fined £5 with £2.10.0d costs – so much for encouraging sport! Have things changed much, I wonder. The BCF did pay for the damage done to the car and my club paid the fine for me. I did appear to recover my health by riding a 50-mile TT in September with a time of 2.3.14.



**An apprehensive looking Dave at his French Team presentation**

### **Best Cycling Moments**

Once I had achieved some more results/wins, one of my ambitions was to race in France. For our club dinner that winter the guest speaker was the journalist/Francophile Jock Wadley. In conversation with Jock, he encouraged me to go to France later that year, as he was very keen to get as many Brits racing abroad as possible. In fact he had a trip planned for May 1, and said he would be happy to give me a lift and to help me join a club in Rouen – Jacques Anquetil's club in fact. Jock's advice was to train lightly before going so as to be fresh to learn the French way of doing things. So on May 1 with my bike safely packed in the boot of Jock's friend Mal Rees's car we drove to Lydd and flew to Le Touquet, then drove to Rouen to meet Jock's friend Paris-Normandie journalist Pierre Lardièrre. It was M. Lardièrre who had agreed to find me a 'pension' – instead he had arranged for me to stay with his own family for the next three months. Then it was off to meet Andre Boucher, Directeur Sportif of AC Sottevillais, and the man who trained Jacques Anquetil. The day after this meeting I rode behind the Deryn of M. Boucher for him to check out my riding position, he then followed me to study my pedalling action and position. The whole session lasted about an hour, and then it was back to his shop for his assessment with the help of a young French rider who spoke excellent English. It was explained that Thursday afternoons were when the whole club met up for the main training ride of the week. All the various categories would be split into groups according to their experience and fitness. Although I had not done any road racing since my crash the previous year my fitness was not too bad, and I was given a place in the first group. From his Deryn M. Boucher monitored all the groups, often pacing back dropped riders or turning them off for home if he thought they were over-reaching themselves.

I failed to finish my first race and then packed in my second race feeling awful. The next day Mme. Lardièrre sent for the club doctor who diagnosed influenza and wrote a prescription for some items of medicine. This was my first experience of French medical practice and their favourite method of ingestion - suppositories

were virtually unknown in Britain. I well understood the sign language as regards their application and, sick as I was, I declined Mme. Lardière's kind offer to administer the medicine.

After just over a week of rest I was keen to get back to the bike again. Mondays and Wednesday were designated easy days – a potter of just 15 or 20 miles. My regular training partners on these rides were Marcel Demare and Jean Jourden. Jean was leading the Paris-Normandie Maillot des Jeunes competition and had recently won the 'Route de France' similar to our Tour of Britain and he was tipped to be the star of the future. On approaching our meeting point I saw a third rider waiting, none other than Jacques himself. We had been introduced a few days earlier at M. Boucher's shop, he having just returned from finishing second in the Tour of Italy. M. Boucher asked Jacques what his English was like, he apologised saying he knew some Italian and Spanish but no English. Now he was quite happy to include some easy rides in his preparation for the Tour, which this year started in Rouen. Here I was following the wheel of Anquetil, the cyclist I had admired above all others. Not just because he had won the 1957 Tour at his first attempt, or his six consecutive Grand Prix des Nations wins. It was his style on the bike; he was perfection in motion, a really aerodynamic shape, not with a low handlebar position as some people has assumed, just a perfect reach and balance with great power delivered with a smooth pedalling action.

It took a few weeks to recover from the influenza, M. Boucher being very concerned in case I attempted too much too soon. He was a great trainer, showing the same care to his riders whatever their category. After this I managed to finish two minor races, nevertheless helping Marcel win one of them as most of the other French riders now expected every Englishman to be the next Tommy Simpson and marked me very closely. My health was still a little fragile with a constant eye infection, my money was getting low, and with the Lardière family due to take their annual holidays this was my cue to return home. M. Boucher agreed to accept me back the following year and suggested that I start in February, I agreed and promised I would improve my French by then.

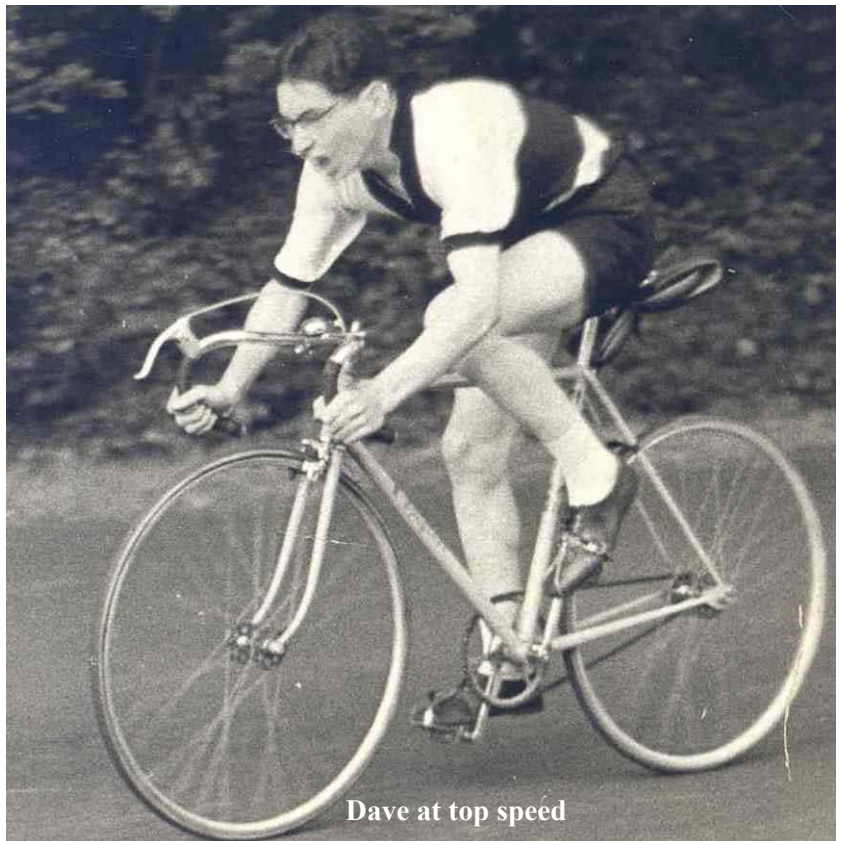
That July Anquetil won his second Tour de France, in August Jean Jourden won the amateur World Championship. After all that, returning to Britain was an anti-climax, cycle racing here would never have the same buzz and the poor public perception of cyclists and our sport did not help. After this my enthusiasm for the bike had started to wane. I knew in my heart I had had my chance in France and having seen what it required to succeed in this sport I didn't have the confidence to make the sacrifices needed to achieve my early ambitions, and finally stopped racing in 1963.

#### **Top Training Tip**

Ask Keith Butler.

#### **What Sort of Rider Are You**

Some friends bought me a T-shirt back from Wyoming and on it printed 'The older I get the faster I was'; that just about sums things up.



## Wozza's Good Friday stack

Club member Simon Warren's Good Friday track meeting came to an abrupt end when he was involved in a the crash that marred the Elimination Race eventually won by Bradley Wiggins. Here's his account of the incident:

*'Rode the points race, got no points, but when Wiggins went on the front I was about 10th wheel and I didn't get dropped, I was happy about that, it was evil though, but I wasn't racing I was just surviving, it was horrible at times. Next was the one mile dash, I went for a glory lap on the first lap got a gap and pleased my fans and the public, someone else tried, I tried to get on their wheel, couldn't and sat up as the bunch came past but I'd been out the front so I was happy.*

*'Then came the elimination race. It was very nervous, a lot of bumping, a lot of riders, we nearly came off a couple of times. I was in a terrible place most of the race but managed to survive about 10 laps, maybe more. Then came the crash, nothing I could do, one guy lost it, hit another, it was all in slow motion, I saw a gap but it was shut as someone else fell then comes the moment you realise you are next.*

*'It's a moment along with the other crashes I've had that will forever be frozen in time, one minute you are doing 25mph, the next time you are stopped, you can see the bikes on the floor in front of you and you know it's going to hurt. I hit the ground with my left hand and fore arm. The rest is a blur, although I remember the bike travelling about 3 meters further than me. I sat up and started my body check, my fingers hurt first as I'd taken the skin off them, then my left elbow, then the left elbow hurt a lot.*

*'I got up walked to the middle and started to bleed. Simon R helped me out and checked my bike which looks fine. St Johns patched me up and said they would call me an ambulance as the cut on my elbow was exposing the bone, I said 'nonsense', packed my stuff up, rode to the station, got the train to London bridge and then rode 5 miles home to get my lock then rode to casualty.'*



Poor Wozza is somewhere in this picture

## Norwood Paragon Training Weekend – Newbury

This year's training weekend saw a small select group of Paragons congregating in Newbury at the end of February to tackle some of the windswept Berkshire and Wiltshire roads. The weekend almost ended before it began as the Hungerford B&B contacted me just two days beforehand to inform me they had to cancel our booking due to illness. Undeterred, I spoke to the others and then found a guesthouse in Newbury which could fit us all in.

The forecast for the weekend was for mild weather with westerly winds bringing regular showers. After a bit of faffing we set off due west to pick up the original route planned from Hungerford up to Wantage. Unfortunately the four OS maps I ordered had not arrived and we only had a photocopy of a road atlas for guidance – although this is better than the method used by somebody I know who rode to the Cotswolds simply using 4 small photographs he had taken of a road map! Needless to say we went east instead of west and I was somewhat confused as we seemed to be heading towards Reading! After a quick rethink we turned off the A4 and into the lanes which were traffic-free, however they were neither mud nor gravel-free. Having gone round in a large circle we had our first puncture with Simon the victim. He quickly repaired it and then went to put his Assos gloves back on, only to find he had placed them in a some dog-sh1t, to make matters worse he had trodden on them as well. We tried not to laugh as he grimaced and washed them in a muddy puddle. At least it had started to rain by now to take our minds off this unfortunate incident.

I knew we had to head North to Compton and the hills before Wantage and was pleased when we were able to pick up a familiar B road at Hermitage. We then made good progress and concentrated on sprinting for every town signpost in sight. I'm sure that Wozza made a speciality of the downhill signposts and young Ben managed to slip past me at one point as I focussed on his brother Chris. All this shenanigans ensured we soon met up with Ian Murray who had ridden across from his new home to meet us near West Isley. Unfortunately I was only initially able to say a fleeting hello, as we caught him right next to a town sign (which I won incidentally). As we edged nearer to our lunch destination, we enjoyed the fine views across the Downs with plumes of smoke from the distant power station to the East.

Wozza assured us he won the sprint for Wantage – even though there wasn't actually a town sign on our way in – but we let him have it, as long as he washed his hands before lunch. The bakery in the town square served up some fine nosh to refuel us. Unfortunately we managed to annoy the camp owner of Marjorie's ladieswear emporium by leaning our bikes against his shop window. Not content with this, Russell managed to stir up the local geriatrics when they opened the door to leave and let in a cold draught. At this point Russell urged the little old lady "well hurry up then!" to which she responded with a cry of "who said that?" and shook her walking stick at him. We quickly placated her and suggested she checked out Marjorie's latest collection.



With lunch eaten and barely 30m ridden we knew we had to step up the pace and Ian was there to help maintain an even tempo on our way to Marlborough. He left us shortly before we rode up Scary Hill towards Lambourn and the Valley of the Race Horse. Once again the roads were quiet and we quickly reached Marlborough where a tailwind was waiting to carry us home.

I got a family pack of Twixes and a bottle of coke to keep us perky, then having re-tightened Ben's loose crank we set off towards Hungerford. We were now on familiar roads and revelled in the tailwind which saw us maintaining 30mph most of the way with only the hill out of Froxfield to slow us down. This 17% climb certainly took its toll with Russell and Ben dropping back, as Simon and I rode with Chris, only to see him make a crushing attack on the steepest section and disappear – I concluded that his legs must no longer feel "like a bag of spanners".

Hungerford Common, Kintbury and Enbourne quickly passed as the pace quickened near to home. I dropped back in attempt to keep the group together whilst Chris and Wozza battled over the Newbury sign with Chris taking the honours and probably the overall lead for the day.

Back at the guesthouse we quickly cleaned up both ourselves and the bikes and settled into the luxurious lounge to watch England play very badly against Ireland in the rugby.

Sunday was another windy day with less rain forecast and we all had tired legs after the 90 miles of the day before. Ben Wilson (Mallorca training camp rider) and Nigel Moores (father of Chris and Ben) were our guests today to make up a magnificent seven. The route was a variation on a previous ride to Stockbridge near Andover. We re-traced our steps to Hungerford and then followed a very quiet road south over Inkpen Hill. We were surprised to find the thumping bass of an overnight rave in an old barn on the slopes of Inkpen Hill. The dopey looking teenagers cheered us on as we rode past with us both wondering who was the more incongruous? The hill was as steep as I remembered it and I was glad of the 45 minute warm up approach which just gave me the legs to hold off Chris to the top and take a couple of quick photos from the Ridgeway.

We had a slight tailwind for most of the morning, which saw us make swift progress on the B roads through the thatched villages of St Mary Bourne and Newton Stacey. We were delayed by two punctures, but still reached Stockbridge before 12.30 with Wozza winning a 45mph downhill sprint for the signpost. We squeezed into the café and enjoyed an over-priced small lunch before heading northwards back home.

We had already covered 45m to lunch and after Saturday's circuitous route none of them trusted me when I said it would only be 35m home. The headwind meant that our flattish route was quite tough, but we rode steadily together with Nigel keeping a fatherly eye on Chris and Ben who seemed to intent on half-wheeling each other. With Ben Wilson's local knowledge we successfully found our way through the maze of minor roads north of the A303 and picked up some beautiful lanes past The Chutes and onto Vernham Dean – where Wozza won the sprint on a sharp bend and then had to turn round in order to make the turning up to Ham and Inkpen!

We were now heading due east again with the wind behind us and quickly found ourselves back in Inkpen and close to home. I reassured Ben and his father that we would wait for them at the Newbury sign and then we began a serious chaingang for the last few miles with Russell proving he has plenty of speed on the flat and various attacks kicked off as we stretched the group. I inadvertently created a gap and tried to stay clear, only to find a charging Wozza towing Chris across who repeated the previous day's victory as they had dumped Russell and Ben along the way.

The sun was shining and it felt positively spring-like as we waited for the Moores family to be re-united. Nigel managed to demonstrate quite clearly where his sons get their fitness from. We had covered almost 80 miles and I think I managed to restore some credibility in my map-reading by the end of the weekend. I was glad of the thermos of coffee which I had snaffled from breakfast, which we quickly polished off before the London boys went off to the train station and the rest of us made our separate ways home.

We had a fun weekend with some quality training on beautiful, quiet roads, which will hopefully give us the edge for the racing season. Thanks again to Steve Watkins for advice on the routes and I hope to see some more of you next year - there's plenty of room at the guesthouse.

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### **Letters / Write to reply**

I do congratulate you on the production of the new Blah, you have obviously put much thought into content and the use of colour certainly peps up the presentation. As a club member for more than 60 years I can tell you that a good readable printed publication does much to hold the club together, especially appreciated by members who have moved away from the Croydon area.

I think that it is even more important when the old habit of meeting at the club room every week is no longer practised. There's no doubt that new technology and the wide use of e-mail has transformed the way of life, not that I am critical of the development, but face to face contact still has much to commend it.

You must remember that when I joined the Paragon (1945) there was no such thing as open road racing, unless you belonged to the BLRC (the League as it was known), Mountain bike racing, BMX, cycloX or speedway. The only departure from road time trials, the odd closed circuit race and track racing was bicycle polo, where the Norwood Paragon reigned supreme, having won the National Championship six or seven times. In those days racing strictly followed the weather seasons. Track racing opened at Easter and closed in September. Time trials followed a similar pattern, probably a little longer, social occasions like the odd fancy dress Christmas morning 25, and there were one or two cross country events, the Bagshot scramble, a forerunner of today's cycloX being the main event in the country.

Pre-season race preparation, in our part of the world were the annual coast runs, the Paragon's Worthing blind with a large field of up to 80 riders was a highlight. It was the only real road racing we were able to enjoy with primes at certain points, but stops for elevenses, lunch and tea were not excluded. You will also be interested to know that everyone was riding a fixed wheel so the massed field was well-behaved and crashes very rare. That 'opener' started the training programme which then developed into midweek evening chain gangs and Saturday morning sessions before the first event of the year, a medium gear (72 inches) 25. If you were bold enough you could enter the Balham Rough Stuff.

The forerunner of turbo trainers, rollers, known as home trainers, was the only serious winter racing, mainly contested by track riders. Highlight of this discipline was at the BAR concert, which in those days was a splendid affair, at the Albert Hall in London. Heats were disputed over 880 yards (half mile) and riders had helpers holding them up. The final was over 1320 yards (3/4 of a mile) and riders were unheld. How's that for a test?

Life today is rather different, but I thought that these recollections of 60 years ago would be of

some interest when compared with foreign training camps and turbo trainers. You are welcome to use it in Blah if you wish.

Keep up the good work.

Johnnie Dennis

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Just a short note to thank everyone involved with the Les Ingman memorial road race. I thought the race was run exceptionally well and the organiser and his team of marshals and helpers were fantastic. As one of the many Paragons in the race it was brilliant to have so many helpful and cheery helpers. Many, many thanks for a great race and for laying on the weather as well.

Kev.

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I note that in the previous edition of Blah, Alison voices the opinion that the walking weekend is becoming too expensive for the younger members of the club.

However, most of the people who take part in this weekend prefer to stay somewhere that is a little more comfortable than a youth hostel and I can assure Alison that a considerable amount of time and effort is put in each year to find reasonably priced accommodation. There is of course nothing to prevent those who wish to stay at a Youth Hostel from doing so and joining in the walk each day, as did happen some years ago.

Yours sincerely,

John Pocock

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### **Ride to Submission by Kevin Davey**

*It goes a bit like this.....*

*I meet Nige at his workshop. He says, "we'll go reasonably hard today". I pull alongside him and we head out to Peaslake side by side. We go through Peaslake towards Ewhurst. On the slight drag Nigel's front wheel edges 2" in front of mine. As we've only just started, I feel okay, so pick up speed and we're side by side. Again, another 2". Again I pickup speed and pull alongside. This repeats until I can't go any faster. At this point Nigel edges forward, realises I can't follow and slows up. He keeps edging forward and dropping back, which causes me to maintaining a pace I know I cannot keep up. But, I keep the pace up! Eventually, I'm beaten into submission, usually around the back of Baynards or if going well on the drag up Weare Street. At Newdigate I get the question that I have been dreading..."straight on to Leigh for some through and off or left over Henfold Hill?". I always reply..."straight on, but make it steady". It never is and I ride until I can't go through anymore. At the end of the ride Nige then says..."that was a good 80% effort". I reply..."yehhhh! 80% for you and 100% for me!" I get home and don't move for an hour.*

If you have any similar tails of training sessions; past, present, pleasant or unpleasant then please let your Editor know.



## CAPTION COMPETITION

This month we see Cycling Weekly hack, Simon Richardson hard at work (!) at the Tour of California. But just what caption would best accompany this picture?  
Answers on a postcard or email please.....



### Last Months Caption



*"And there's a signpost just round the corner here so you can lead me out and I'll bag the sprint - they won't know what hit them!"*

*"It looks a long way on the map, but actually it's only 145miles"*

*"Mike do you know how this works? I'm useless without auto-pilot"*

## WHAT'S ON

- 1 May, 1930h Newdigate GS187**
- 6 May Gorrick Enduro - Bagshot**
- 10 May 'Local' Handicap South Nutfield**
- 12 May Robin Buchan OPEN 25 time trial**
- 17 May 'Local' Handicap Newchapel**
- 18 May Pub Night – 8pm at the White Hart - Bletchingley**
- 22 May Time trial 1930h Newdigate GS187**
- 26-28 May Tour of Wessex Sportif**
- 3 June SE Divisonal Champs**
- 8 June Overnight MTB ride to Brighton**
- 10 June Cycle Kingdom Classic, SE Series RR**
- 19 June Time trial 1945h Bletchingley GS335**
- 22-26 June Pearson's Jaunts Stage Race**
- 23-24 June 24hr MTB race**
- 30 June Surrey League Team 4 Up TT, - Loxwood**
- 3 July Time trial 1930h Newdigate GS187**
- 7 July Tour de France – London**
- 10 July Time trial 1930h Bletchingley G335  
Inter-club against the Addiscombe CC**
- 15 July SCCU Champs, Lingfield**
- 24 July Time trial 1930h Bletchingley G335**
- 14 August Time trial 1930h Newdigate G187**