

1987

On the 11th February our Vice-President Len Neil died. This was a loss not just to the Norwood Paragon but also to the Catford, 34th Nomads and Rodney CC as he was one of their Vice-Presidents and to the Wren Whs to whom he was the President. Len Neil's life was literally a "rags to riches" saga for in spite of indifferent health while a young man he started his business largely as a result of compensation received after an accident in Blackwell Tunnell. He was able to buy out the Rag Trade firm he was working for and eventually became Chairman of the Reliance-Fernhill chain of companies with centres in North Woolwich, Woodborough (Wilts), Nottingham and Halifax.

Cycle Sport, particularly in South London owes a lot to the generosity of Len Neil and the number of "lame ducks" he has helped out with finance and/or advice. Len joined the Paragon in 1960 and was elected Vice-President in 1966. He was the instigator of "Len's Ten" that became THE end of season race for his adopted clubs.

Five years ago he volunteered to sponsor the Norwood Paragon Cycling Club from his own finances hence the Club became the Norwood Paragon/Reliance Fernhill. It would seem he had some form of premonition when it was decided that the sponsorship would last for 5 years and it terminated on the 31st December just a few days before his 77th birthday and a few weeks before he died.

His love for our sport was deep seated and it cannot be stressed sufficiently just how generous he was towards the promotions and promoters of his favourite clubs.

The first pedals turned in anger were in the East Surrey Hardriders on March 1st that turned out to be a day of torrential rain. Our sole representative was Steve Rickwood who recorded a 1.29 in spite of a puncture and he finished in the top half of the result Sheet.

The CDCA event for the following week was cancelled due to snow but the Surrey League race at Ellens Green went ahead. Steve Rickwood was in the morning event but punctured (again) after a mile. He decided to wait around for the longer and harder race in the afternoon. Despite an admitted lack of fitness he lasted 8 of the 11 laps before cold and cramp got the better of him.

The first Club '10' was held on the 14th March and because of roadworks near the official Finish became a 9½-mile time trial. Gethin Butler was fastest with a 21.59, Graham O'Sullivan was very pleased with his 23.04 for 2nd place, Chris Marshall, 24.14, came 3rd, Steve Rickwood, 25.00 was 4th. The three Butlers held up the result with Keith on 28.40, Allison 289.07 and Marilyn 29.33. It was one of those mornings when everyone thought they had a head wind to the turn only to find the chilling truth when they made the turn at Clarkes Green.

The next morning Harry Featherstone and Gethin Butler rode the Antelope 2-up '25' where contrary to expectations they did not tear each other to bits. They finished with a 57.30 for 5th place and were also 2nd veterans team. (Gethin a veteran at 18?). Just to keep fit Gethin dropped in to ride the Surrey League road race at Newdigate and finished just in front of the Lead Car. No he did not win he was nearly a lap down. His morning exertions had caught up with him.

On Saturday 21st March Harry Featherstone rode an event on the Tonbridge by-pass and despite being told it was a good day for a '21' only managed a 22.00 for 2nd place! This event promoting Club is unknown. On Sunday Jack Platts rode the Norland Combine '25' and recorded a 1.7.59. Chris Marshall started his first road race in the Surrey League 3rd category event on the Cutmill Circuit. He sat in the bunch feeling his way around for a couple of laps and then took the bit between his teeth and attacked. There was mayhem at the back of the field as riders were dropped by the dozen. However when they returned to the steep climb near the Finish after another lap the crafty riders still on Chris' wheel attacked and left him floundering! He continued to the end crossing the line in 33rd place. He enjoyed his experience so much he promptly entered two more road races. Steve Rickwood had to ride the afternoon event with Gethin Butler, as the morning event was full. It was rather unfortunate for as they set off on the first lap it started to rain and never let up. Both of our lads retired frozen after seven of the ten laps. Only 16 of the 54 starters finished – a break of three, 8 in the bunch and 5 stragglers! Welcome to road racing in March!

Steve Rickwood rode a '10' (promoting club unknown) on the Tonbridge by-pass and was not pleased with his 25.09 despite the strong winds. Gethin Butler tried the Surrey League 1st category race at Tilford and was pleased to finish with the bunch in 11th place in a very fast race when 70 miles were covered in 2.48.

Sunday's Club '25' became a Club '10' as roadworks and traffic lights on the proposed course made the full distance impractical. As it was a very windy day many riders were extremely glad of the reduction of distance. Graham O'Sullivan made fastest time of 25.48, Chris Marshall came 2nd in 26.16, Steve (never been so slow) Rickwood made it to the Finish in 28.28, Marilyn Butler took 32.44 while husband Keith had mechanical problems and called it a day at South Holmwood and reckoned he had the best ride of the morning. Later the Club Committee decided to award the Jim Fox Cup to the fastest Club rider in the Robin Buchan '25' yet the Club records say that the Cup was awarded to Graham O'Sullivan who won this event!

Harry Featherstone went to the new E34 course for the ECCA '25' and was unimpressed after taking 1.0.38 to get round. He did collect 3rd prize and 3rd handicap in an event won with a '59'. However it did take a bit of time to persuade him that any course is going to be slow in gale force winds!

Back south of the river the Surrey League races were on the Staplefields circuit. In the morning race Steve went away early but could not hang onto

the chasing group when it caught him. Ray Puttick had the misfortune to be knocked off his machine on the penultimate lap. He managed to smash his front wheel so that it had two ends but contrived to leave his tubular untouched and unpunctured. Clever man is Ray! In the afternoon race Gethin Butler attacked after 2½ of the 5 laps catching Steve Payne (Tooting) with the pair of them staying clear to the Finish. With one lap to go they had a lead of 3.48 but this was reduced to 10 seconds by 3rd placed man Ernie Bore (Farnborough & Camberley) and about a minute on the bunch. Gethin won the sprint for the line and with the 6 BCF Licence points gained he became a 2nd category rider.

April 4th was yet another rainy day. The slower members of the Butler family rode down to the Portsmouth road for the De Laune '10' finishing with a 28.02 for Allison, a 28.27 for Keith and a 29.32 for Marilyn and they got soaked for their pains. Gethin went down to Dunsfold for the Surrey League road race and finished in 5th place in the 75-mile event. On the 5th Harry Featherstone rode the Bournemouth Jubilee '25' and did a 57.43 for 4th place. Steve Rickwood collected a 3rd place in the Surrey League 3rd category event on the Capel/Rusper circuit but Chris Marshall punctured and came in some way down. Gethin Butler was in the afternoon race over 72 miles. He also punctured and had a fast wheel change. This enabled him to get back to the main bunch but he had missed the break so rolled over the line in 32nd place along with Ray Puttick.

In the Kingston Phoenix '10' on the 10th April we had five riders. Graham O'Sullivan was the best of them with a 25.14. Steve Rickwood made it in 25.55, Allison Butler 27.57 and Marilyn Butler 31.29. Keith Butler punctured and by doing so probably saved himself the ignominy of being beaten by his daughter again. There was a fair old scrap in the SCCU '25' on the Sunday morning. Chris Gibson (Wandsworth) was fastest with a 58.28. Brian Molloy (Tooting) and Gethin Butler tied for 2nd place with 59.20. Harry Featherstone was just 1 second slower and Pete Danckwardt (Worthing Excelsior) was 5th with a 59.24. Graham O'Sullivan finished in 10th place, 1.2.51, and the Paragon won the Team race. The battle between Harry and Gethin is not without humour. For the SCCU event Harry persuaded Gethin to borrow his, Harry's, second best pair of wheels. It was a bit of a cheek, therefore, on Gethin's part to beat Harry by 1 second. Chris Marshall, Ray Puttick and Steve Rickwood finished equal 13th in the Surrey League race at Ewhurst.

In the Surrey League Easter 4-day Gethin Butler, as a first year senior rider, was up against serious opposition. Overall he finished in 15th position behind Barrie Clarke (then Surrey RCC later a top professional). Harry Featherstone finished 7th with a 59.58 in the Basildon '25' and Chris Marshall took 1.5.07 to get round on a hard morning.

The Easter riding did him no harm at all and on the following Saturday, 25th April, he did his season's best '10'. He came 6th in the Southboro '10' with a 22.36. Our only other rider was Steve Rickwood who clocked a 24.31. Graham O'Sullivan rode the Epsom '10' and finished in 24.51

On the Sunday the Paragon had five riders in the Bournemouth Arrow '25'. Gethin Butler finished in 56.59 for 5th place beating Harry Featherstone's 57.14 for 6th. With Graham O'Sullivan coming in with a 1.0.58 for 21st some hopes were raised about a team win but the Antelope team were a minute quicker. Chris Marshall, 1.1.05 (23rd) and Steve Rickwood 1.2.56 (32nd), both produced their season's best rides. Allison and Marilyn Butler took the prize for the fastest ladies team in the South Easter RC 2-up with a time of 42.56. The course had to be shortened from its intended 25 miles due to roadworks. During the week Allison came 10th in the SWLLCA '10' with a 26.31.

The De Laune '25' had three Butlers riding on a day of blustery winds. Allison was the best of the three with a 1.10.57 (and 2nd fastest lady), Keith clocked a 1.14.59 and Marilyn a 1.20.52. Gethin Butler was racing around the Tooting Sporting '42' and taking 2nd prize with a 1.44.43 although well behind Simon Barnes (Poly) who won in 1.39.31. Graham O'Sullivan finished 21st in 1.56.12, Chris Marshall was one place lower with his 1.56.32 and Rowan Vacher reappeared on the racing scene with a 1.59.05.

Bank Holiday Monday saw six Paragon riders in the Hampshire RC '25' on a bitterly cold windy day. Harry Featherstone rose to the occasion with a fine ride of 59.34. With this ride he took almost everything he could. He won 1st place, 1st veteran, 1st veteran on Age Standard and 1st team prizes. Gethin Butler was feeling the effects of the Tooting event the previous day in similar conditions and came equal 3rd with Ian Draper (San Fairy Ann) on 1.1.19. Chris Marshall took 1.6.11 for the distance but was 16th with this time and it enabled the Paragon to take the Team prize. Allison Butler was fastest lady with her 1.10.47 whilst Keith and Marilyn Butler coasted round in 1.14.28 and 1.17.51 respectively.

Harry Featherstone rode the Hillingdon veterans '25' finishing with a 58.24 for fastest time and 3rd place on Age Standard. Gethin Butler made fastest time in the Club '10' on the 9th May with a 22.42. Gavin Sherlock came 2nd with a 23.10 and Graham O'Sullivan 3rd on 23.48. Marilyn Butler won the handicap with her 27.49 coming down to 20.48 just 1 second in front of Graham Moore. In 3rd place was Gavin Sherlock with a nett 21.01.

That afternoon Graham O'Sullivan rode the Redmon '10' but slowed a little from his morning effort. Graham finished in 24.41, John Mcnee took 3rd handicap with his 26.14 and Ethel Mcnee crossed the line in 30.54. Gethin Butler and Chris Marshall went to the Catford '10' and Rowan Vacher joined them. Gethin finished in 5th place with a 22.16, Rowan was 34th with a 23.52 and Chris finished in 41st place in 24.02.

Sunday 10th May was Moon Trophy '25' day and the Paragon had 12 names on the Start sheet. Fastest rider on the day was Harry Featherstone with a 59.31 with Gethin Butler 2nd, 1.1.16 and Gavin Sherlock 3rd, 1.3.18. On the handicap side, which it is all about, Harry came 7th, 58.31, Gavin 10th, 58.48, Terry Slattery and Allison Butler equal 13th with a 59.27 nett time. This gave us 2nd team behind the Anerley. Graham O'Sullivan, 1.5.43, Chris Marshall,

1.5.05 and Harry Featherstone won the Tankards for the fastest team over 30. In the Surrey League race for 3rd category riders Steve Rickwood finished 6th.

The Norwood Paragon Crystal Palace promotion was held on the 12th May. It was a cold cheerless night but the action was at least hot. The juvenile race was a benefit for D Cross (VC Londres) who went away from the Start and was never headed. The Senior event over 30 laps was bedevilled by the rain that had held off until after the race had started. Crashes were frequent on the wet corners and it was a relief when Russell Williams sprinted across the line to bring the evening to a close. Dave Marsh (Bedouin) came 2nd, Richard Hallett (Sydenham Whs) 3rd and Nick Gritton (VC D'Or) 4th. On the Thursday evening Gavin Sherlock came 4th in the Surrey League handicap on the Charlwood circuit.

Harry Featherstone was unable to ride because of an attack of laryngitis over the week-end of the 16th/17th May but he did take his protégés out to their races. On Saturday afternoon he took Gethin Butler, Chris Marshall and Gavin Sherlock out to the Tonbridge By-pass for the SECA '10'. Gethin was 10th with a 23.11, Gavin was timed in with a 23.26 and Chris Marshall did a 24.39. Later it was discovered that Gavin had been disqualified for not keeping to the left side of the carriageway on the slope up to the turn. Keeping to the left means that the traffic cuts across your bows on the first two exits but if you stay over to the right all traffic can over(under)take with ease and you only have to worry about the traffic coming from your right at the roundabout. Thirteen riders were disqualified for this infringement.

On the Sunday Harry took Graham O'Sullivan and Gethin Butler out to the ECCA '50'. Gethin finished with a 2.1.37 for 10th place and Graham a 2.4.01 for 16th. A broken spoke and brake blocks rubbing on the rim did not help Gethin's cause. Chris Marshall took a mixed team to the Bournemouth & District Womens Open '25'. Allison Butler did her best ride of the season with a 1.7.06 that won her 2nd fastest time and 2nd on handicap prizes. Gavin Sherlock did his best of the season with a 1.0.44 and Chris made the Finish in 1.3.20. Chris Marshall was 10th, Gavin Sherlock 11th, and Steve Rickwood 12th in the Surrey League handicap.

The May Bank holiday was a busy racing weekend for most of the Paragon. Chris Marshall, Steve Rickwood and Ray Puttick rode the "Deux Jours en Mai" 2-day 4-stage road race. Stage 1 was a 4kms time trial that was not to our lads liking. Chris took 6.14, Steve 6.26 and Ray an undisclosed time last place. Stage 2 was a 130kms (81 miles) road race on the Crowhurst circuit. Steve punctured and had a hard chase to regain the bunch. Chris made the early break but was caught, missed the main break but got clear of the bunch on the last lap to finish 20th. Steve finished with the bunch but Ray Puttick dropped out. Stage 3 was Team Time Trial. It started at the lane to Woldingham at the north end of the Caterham by-pass went over the by-pass, turned at the roundabout on the other side, (no traffic lights in 1987), retraced back over the by-pass and then up the climb to Woldingham Church. Chris did most of the work and the pair finished in 33.21 some 4 minutes down. Stage 4 was 64 kms (40 miles) around the Woldingham circuit (i.e. 5 laps).

Steve was dropped on the first climb of Woldingham Hill but carried on to finish the race. Chris stayed with the front half of the race and managed a 23rd place at the line. Overall Chris was 27th and Steve 36th. On the following Thursday Steve Rickwood was 14th in the Surrey League handicap.

The time triallist rode the Balham '10' on a very wet Saturday morning. Times were Chris Marshall 25.03, Graham O'Sullivan 25.06, Allison Butler 26.40, Keith Butler 27.12, Gethin Butler 27.31 (he punctured), Graham Moore 27.51 and Marilyn Butler 28.41. Then on the Sunday a group went to the A12 to ride the Colchester Rovers '25'. Harry Featherstone came 11 with a 56.24, Gethin Butler finished in 58.38 and Allison Butler in 1.7.38. Keith and Marilyn Butler joined forces on a tandem and took 1.2.40 to get round. The fact that Marilyn had left her racing shoes behind and had to race in her trainers cannot improve that time by more than a second or two!

On the Monday morning Allison Butler partnered her mother Marilyn and Gethin took father Keith around the Gravesend 2-up 30kms where one of the pair had to be a veteran. The two ladies took 53.29 for the distance to be 22nd whilst Gethin "tore his father to shreds on the hills" and Keith took 49.51 for 15th place or 12th on Age Standard.

Harry Featherstone had the misfortune to puncture a few yards after the start in the Hainault '10'. Fortunately the Hainault had a friendly timekeeper and to save a wasted journey once Harry had changed a wheel he allowed Harry to ride a private time trial that would not count in the event. It was rather galling for Harry to find that he would have had 3rd fastest time! On the Sunday Harry came 4th in the Surrey RCC '25' that was fastest veteran and best on Age Standard. Jack Platts finished 10th with a 1.2.43 that earned him 3rd fastest veteran's prize. The longer distance people rode the SCCU '50'. Gethin Butler came equal 3rd with a 2.4.45 behind Chris Gibson (Wandsworth)'s 1.59.30. Chris Marshall punctured and lost an awful amount of time trying to change a tubular tyre that was stuck on too well. He finished with a 2.26.46. ray Puttick tried his hand at longer distance time-trialling and was not to impressed with his 2.24.39. Keith Butler trundled round in 2.26.36 and Marilyn did likewise for a 2.35.43. Allison Butler left her pump in the car and, needless to say, she punctured, as did Graham O'Sullivan both had to retire.

During the week Gavin Sherlock teamed up with Paul Price to ride the New Forest 2-up '25'. They took the prize for the best composite team with a 59.32. Chris Marshall and Graham O'Sullivan also rode and they finished with a 1.0.57. Steve Rickwood came 16th in the Surrey League handicap.

The Club '50' was held on the Worthing Road course and four competitors. Jack Platts was the fastest of them with a 2.16.55 followed by Glyn Durrant, 2.27.28, Allison Butler 2.32.54 and Graham Moore 2.50.09 for his first attempt at the distance. A team went down to ride the Wessex '50' at Ringwood. Harry Featherstone, who likes racing in this part of the country was our fastest in 4th place with a 2.0.49. He also took the prizes for the fastest veteran and fastest on Age Standard. Gethin Butler was 5th being timed in with a 2.1.07 and Graham O'Sullivan completed the winning team with a 2.14.23. Gethin

also picked up a £4 prize for the second best 'improvement'. Actually only one man improved that morning but Gethin was the next best as he was only 36 seconds away from his best time. Nearer home only two Paragon riders started the 29th Whs '25' Gavin Sherlock finishing 10th in 1.0.58 and Chris Marshall on a 1.4.50.

The first evening '10' was held on the 9th June when Gethin Butler returned the fastest time of 23.03. Terry Slattery was 2nd in 25.15, Graham Moore 27.23, Keith Butler 28.06 and Megan Butler 31.42. The following evening a quartet of Paragon riders went up to the North Bucks '25'. Graham O'Sullivan was the best of the bunch with a 59.37, Chris Marshall 1.0.11 and Allison Butler a 1.9.52 that includes a 1 minute late start. Gavin Sherlock punctured whilst on a 57-minute ride. In the Surrey League Thursday handicap Gavin Sherlock came 9th and Steve Rickwood was 15th.

On the Saturday 13th June Harry Featherstone won the KCA '10' with his fastest time of the season 21.33 and took the fastest vet on Age Standard prize as well. In the SCCU '10' Gethin Butler came 4th with a 22.53, Chris Marshall 23.51 for 11th place, Keith Butler 25.56 and Allison Butler 26.16. Allison also took the fastest lady prize. The next morning Harry Featherstone came 2nd in the South Eastern '25' with a 59.27 and complained that his legs ached as is two races were too close together. Allison Butler was timed in with her season's best of 1.6.47, Keith Butler had a similar success with his 1.8.38 and Graham Moore improved nearly 4 minutes with his 1.8.55. Gavin Sherlock came 9th in the SECA '10' with a 23.18. Chris Marshall went west to ride the Archer '25' and he too did a season's best of 1.0.06.

Gethin Butler and Gavin Sherlock rode the Bletchingley Grand Prix over 80 miles on the Bletchingley circuit. This was a really tough course and had a top class field to make the racing interesting. Gethin and Gavin bridged the gap between bunch and break and were up with the action. Unfortunately Gavin was brought down by a rider misjudging a corner leaving Gethin to finish 14th. As a sop Gavin came 5th in the Thursday evening Surrey League handicap.

The Tuesday evening '10' went to Gethin Butler with a 23.25. This was on the more difficult Red Barn course and it is believed that this time is the course record. Gavin Sherlock went round in 24.18 and Terry Slattery 26.22. Harry Featherstone went up for the St Neots '25' on Wednesday evening and in spite of torrential rain he did his best time for the season of 55.31.

With a fair bit of poor organisation the Club managed to promote its Champagne Track Meeting at Herne Hill over the weekend of the 20th/21st June as well as the Frank Southall '50'! The main events on the Saturday were the Grand Prix of London Sprint and the Champagne '10' then on Sunday was the Grand Prix of Southwark Sprint, a Kierin and a 100-lap International Madison. With the whole day at the promoters disposal the Grand Prix of London was a real grand prix and a feast of match sprinting. Match Sprints are two-man affairs with tactics, psychology, speed, bike handling and stamina all mixed up but required by the winner. To win the best

sprinter has to progress through at least 6 rounds. If he loses a Round he may requalify through a Repechage but that requires an extra race. Theoretically he could need 11 races to reach the Final but in practice the best rider usually goes straight through or may have just one extra ride. To say it was a feast of match sprinting was no idle statement. To find the Grand Prix of London winner required 50 races. Eventually the winner was Paul McHugh (Great Britain) who beat PUILIPE de Roche (France) in the Final. Other Results from the Saturday Meeting were Tony Doyle (Eveready) won the Devil-take-the-hindmost. Jon Munns (Highgate) took the 500m Handicap. Pascal Potie (France) won the 10 minutes Pursuit from Geoff Giddings (Stratos). Michael Borman (VC Nottingham) took the second 'Devil' and the Consolation 5-mile for those not in the Champagne '10'. Jon Walshaw (Great Britain) won the 20 laps scratch race. Lee Rowe (Southwark) took the Kierin. The Moet & Chandon Champagne '10' was ridden at a tremendous pace with Jon Walshaw taking the honours in the final sprint from Herve Dagonne (France) and Aart Van Der Kruisweg (Holland) in the record time of 20.30.1.

There is no record in the archives of any racing on the Sunday.

The Frank Southall '50' was held on the 21st June on the Worthing Road course and Harry Featherstone and Gethin Butler hoped to keep the silverware in Club hands. By 25 miles the main contenders were pulling ahead. Pete Hamilton (Wren Whs) was leading in 58.34, Chris Gibson (Wandsworth) was 23 seconds slower, Gethin Butler was a further 13 seconds adrift whilst Harry Featherstone was in 4th place 1.21 down on Hamilton. At the Finish Hamilton had pulled away from the rest to be timed in with a 1.58.17. Gibson held on to 2nd place with a 1.59.09. Gethin produced a personal best of 1.59.39 and Harry only lost 17 seconds on Hamilton in the second half of the race to also be under two hours with a 1.59.55. There was a 4-minute gap to the next rider. The Paragon won the John Carter Shield for fastest team with Gavin Sherlock coming in with a 2.7.18 for 7th place. Chris Marshall was 8th in 2.8.48 and Jack Platts 12th in 2.11.53. Graham Moore shook the handicapper by improving from a 2.50.00 to a 2.23.34. The handicap he had been given ensured that he took 1st prize in that department by over 4 minutes. Gavin Sherlock took 2nd handicap and Keith White (Epsom) the 3rd prize. The Surrey/Sussex Veterans awards were nearly all for the Paragon. Harry was fastest veteran and fastest on Age Standard. Jack Platts was 3rd on speed but 2nd on Age Standard. The two of them won both the 2-man Team prize for Fastest time and fastest on Age Standard.

On the evening of Saturday 27th June Gavin Sherlock rode the Century Middlemarkers '25' and took 3 minutes from his previous best with a 56.27. It was therefore a little galling to find that this year he only came 3rd when last year he won the race with a '59'! Keith & Marilyn Butler had also raced the previous evening. They had ridden the Oxford City Tandem '25' and finished well to the fore with a 58.57 for 6th place.

The Robin Buchan Silver Salver '25' was held the following week, 28th June, and promoted by Gethin Butler. The course used was different from the normal A24 based course due to there being extensive roadworks at the

Horsham end. It started from Dorking Station went along the A25 to Betchworth roundabout, retraced to Dorking, turned left over Deepdene to Beare Green, turned right down the A29 through Ockley to Northlands Corner, left to Kingsfold and then back to Dorking finishing at the usual '10' Finish. Times were expected to be slower than normal and they were. Pete Hamilton (Wren Whs) produced the goods and had the fastest time of 58.50 as expected. What wasn't expected was that Pete Danckwardt (Worthing Excelsior) equalled Hamilton time. Warwick Rowe (Poly) came in with the 3rd best time of 59.58. Of the Paragon riders Harry Featherstone was 8th in 1.1.18, Jack Platts 12th 1.3.20, Gavin Sherlock (weary from the Century event) 1.3.31, Graham O'Sullivan 1.4.13, Terry Slattery 1.7.41, Keith Butler 1.12.53, Graham Moore 1.13.42, Marilyn Butler 1.19.21, Steve Rickwood (sick) 1.20.00 and Megan Butler 1.23.17. fastest Junior prize went to Jim reeves (Croydon RC) with a 1.3.36, Fastest lady was K Johnston (Redmon) 1.14.06. The handicap was taken by N Hamlyn (Artists CC) with a nett 56.01 from Chris Weekly (Tooting) and C Plowman (Artists CC). The President's prize for the best rider not having beaten 1.10.00 before the event went to D Stanley (Brighton Excelsior) with a 1.11.05.

The Tuesday evening '10' had to be transferred from the Red Barn course to Holmwood due to roadworks. For once it was a calm warm evening and some fast times were noted for the handicappers. Gethin Butler was our fastest with a 22.02 from Gavin Sherlock 22.58 and Tim Collier 25.44. Megan Butler put up a personal best of 28.57.

Gethin Butler and Harry Featherstone took a Wednesday afternoon off to go up to the Vegetarian evening '25' on the North Road. It certainly paid off. Gethin broke his own Club Record by 5 seconds with a 53.59 but that time only gave him 15th position in the race! Harry also improved from 55.01 to 54.48.

It was back with a bump to the more difficult courses in Surrey at the weekend. In the Croydon & District Open '25' Pete Hamilton broke the course record with a 55.38 from Phil Headen (East Surrey) 57.50. Gethin Butler finished in 5th place with a 59.18. He did have the satisfaction of leading the Paragon to a Team win. Jack Platts was timed in with a 59.59 for 8th place and he won the Anerley Centenary Cup for the best veteran on Age Standard for the third consecutive year. Graham O'Sullivan clocked 1.1.02 and the Paragon won the Team race. Other times by Paragon riders were Terry Slattery 1.3.29, (his best this year), Keith Butler 1.6.37, Marilyn Butler 1.13.22 and Megan Butler a personal best of 1.21.16.

Gavin Sherlock and Chris Marshall went over to Essex for the Shaftesbury Middlemarkers '25'. Because of his improvement in the Century event Gavin was uncertain as to whether he would be allowed to ride as he had beaten the limit. He was allowed to race and had the satisfaction of making fastest time with 59.25. Chris was 5th fastest with a 1.1.13. Harry Featherstone rode the VTTA (Wessex) '50' and made 2nd fastest time and his best this season of 1.55.43.

The Inter-Club against the Addiscombe was held on the 7th July. Our best six riders were Gethin Butler 22.36, Harry Featherstone 22.39, Gavin Sherlock 23.48, Graham O'Sullivan 24.01, Chris Marshall 24.12 and Terry Slattery 25.17. Sufficient to say that we had the fastest 5 riders on the night and won the Team race by 8 minutes exactly.

On Thursday evening Gavin Sherlock came 3rd in the Surrey League handicap at Smallfields when he broke away with two other on the last lap and stayed clear to the Finish. Graham O'Sullivan rode the Addiscombe '10' and recorded a personal best of 23.12 for 11th place.

Five Paragon racing men left Croydon on the 12th July for the ECCA '50'. They were out to beat the Club 50-mile Team record that had been eluding them for the past few weeks due to punctures, illnesses and hard days. Gavin Sherlock laid the foundations with a 1.58.19 taking almost 9 minutes off his previous best. Then Graham O'Sullivan came in with a 1.59.11, a 1½ minutes improvement, Jack Platts crosses the line with a 1.59.20, an 8 minute improvement and the record has been broken by 2 minutes! This record lasts just 20 minutes, as Gethin sweeps in with a 1.53.04 taking another 6 minutes from the old record and 6 minutes from his personal best. The new record lasts just 5 minutes as Harry tears in with a 1.52.03 to take a further 7 minutes from the old record and two minutes from his previous best. The final team time was 5.43.26 a staggering 15.04 faster than the one on the books. These times gave Harry 2nd, Gethin 4th, Gavin 13th, Graham 18th and Jack 19th places. . Jack Platts won the Handicap with Harry 6th. The Norwood Paragon won the Team race. A great Team effort!

Elsewhere the Butler family were riding the Oxford '50'. Keith was the fastest with a 2.19.51, Allison 2.28.38 and Marilyn 2.52.00 after turning off at the wrong inter-section. Chris Marshall went down to the New Forest to beat the hour but got a hard day for the course so only managed a 1.0.56.

Tuesday 14th July on the Godstone course was a bit of an eye-opener for some of our new recruits. Gethin Butler made fastest time with a 23.22 followed by Gavin Sherlock 24.16, Tim Collier 27.01, Phil Smith 27.22, Allison Butler 28.23, Dean Butler 32.04 and Megan Butler 33.02. On the Thursday Gethin Butler won the Surrey League handicap, Steve Rickwood came 26th and Chris Marshall finished with the main bunch but unplaced.

Terry Slattery set a season's best in the 34th Nomads '10' on the 18th with a 24.29. Then on the Sunday it was time for the 100 milers to try their hand. Harry Featherstone went to Essex for the Goodmayed '100'. The weather was atrocious and to make matters worse he was No.10 on the card, caught everyone in front of him before 25 miles had been covered and spent the next 3 hours on his own in the pouring rain. In the circumstances he deserved a great deal of credit for continuing and finishing with a 4.04.04 for 11th place. On southern roads there were five names down for the SCCU '100'. Gavin Sherlock decided he was not going to start in the appalling conditions. Keith Butler called it a day after 20 miles as he was last on the road by some considerable distance and was cold wet and miserable. Graham O'Sullivan's

back started playing up, which is not surprising in the cold and wet conditions and he gave it best after 50 miles. Gethin Butler punctured after 6 miles but was lucky enough to get a quick wheel change. The only untroubled rider was Chris Marshall. Gethin passed through the 25 miles point in 3rd place in 1.11.06. This, in itself, gives one some idea of the wind and weather. Chris was just over a minute slower in 1.12.28. By 50 miles Gethin was leading with 2.13.30 with Chris taking 2.16.55. By 75 miles Gethin's time of 3.24.26 was surpassed by Steve Blackmore's 3.22.08 whilst Chris was still in 4th place with 3.27.58. At the Finish Steve Blackmore (East Grinstead) had made the fastest time of 4.24.47 an excellent ride in the conditions and on these roads. Gethin retained 2nd place with a 4.31.33 and Chris kept his 4th place with a 4.39.16. Both of our riders admitted to enjoying their first try at 100 miles "in a funny sort of way" – which goes to explain a lot of things! With Gethin finishing the 100 miles he won the SCCU BAR for 1987 as his main contender for that honour packed at 60 miles. Steve Rickwood came 15th and Ray Puttick 17th in a Surrey League road race.

On Thursday, 23rd July, the three Butler ladies rode the SWLLCA '10'. Allison was fastest of them with a 26.49, Megan beat Mum with a 29.40 to Marilyn's 30.14. Gavin Sherlock almost won the Surrey League handicap but was caught by the bunch in the last 100 yards and was, therefore, placed with the bunch, as was Steve Rickwood.

In the Surrey RCC '10' Gethin Butler was in 5th place with a 22.14. Our next rider was Gavin Sherlock, 23.31, followed by Chris Marshall with a season's best of 23.33. Allison Butler won 1st lady's prize with her 26.16 whilst Marilyn Butler finished with a 29.16. The following morning eight Paragon names appeared on the Start sheet for the Bec '25'. Gethin Butler finished 2nd with 57.39 to Pete Danckwardt (Worthing Excelsior)'s 57.24. Harry Featherstone came 4th. His 59.00 also enabled him to take 1st vet on Age Standard award and with Jack Platts finishing in 1.2.02 they took the Veterans Team award. Graham O'Sullivan actually beat Jack with a 1.1.57 and turned the tables from the CDCA '25'. Allison Butler had a 1.8.14 that took 2nd prize in the Ladies; Keith Butler did 1.9.22, Marilyn Butler 1.18.36 and Megan Butler 1.25.00. Ray Puttick was 9th in the Tooting road race.

The evening '10' on the Godstone course was blessed with a fine day and everyone did their best ride for the course. Gethin Butler was timed in with a 23.04, Tim Collier 25.40, Allison Butler 27.04, Phil Smith 27.28, and Megan Butler 30.50. On the Thursday Gethin came 3rd in the bunch sprint at the end of the Surrey League handicap at Ripley but unfortunately a group of seven riders had not been caught so he finished in 10th place.

The Club '10' on the 1st August was a win for Gethin Butler in n22.41 from Graham O'Sullivan, 23.48, and Steve Rickwood with a season's best of 24.27. Tim Collier won the handicap with a nett 21.03 from Phil Smith 21.44 and Steve Rickwood 21.57. Ray Puttick was 14th in a Surrey League road race.

Seven Paragon riders had entered the Fareham Whs '25' expecting to be run on the A27 between Chichester and Emsworth. A pan flat course that suited

those who are not extremely fit. Imagine their chagrin when they learnt that due to roadworks the course had been moved to "a traffic free undulating course passing through the picturesque Meon Valley". (i.e. it goes up and down rather violently, the road twists like a demented snake and its surface has stretches of speed killing granite chippings). Gethin Butler came 2nd with a 58.31 just 6 seconds slower than the winner Pete Danckwardt, Harry Featherstone had a 1.1.36 for 6th place and 1st veteran on Standard, Jack Platts a 1.5.17 for 2nd veteran on Standard and these three collected the Team award for the Paragon. The others were Keith Butler 1.9.06, Allison 1.11.01 (and 2nd fastest lady), Marilyn 1.18.53 and Megan 1.24.22. The change of course probably accounted for the thirty-four riders failing to start. The severity of the course can be judged by the Result sheet where Allison was only halfway down with a 1.11.

Fastest time in the Club evening '10' on the 4th August was again produced by Gethin Butler. This time he was only 7 seconds off his best with a 21.50. Keith and Marilyn went round on their tandem in 23.30 and personal bests were put up by Tim Collier, 23.41, Phil Smith 25.03 and Dean Butler 27.27. Jack Platts came 6th in the Unity veterans '25' with a 1.1.24 and came 4th on Age Standard. In Thursday's Surrey League handicap Allison Butler was 1st Lady.

On the Sunday 9th August we had riders in two 50-mile events. One group went to the Bournemouth Arrow where Gethin Butler finished 10th in 2.0.30 and Allison Butler rode her fastest 50 for three years with a 2.24.26. Harry Featherstone unfortunately punctured and failed to finish. The other group rode the Southend & County event. In this Gavin Sherlock punctured a brand new tubular just before the start and lost enthusiasm (and money). He started but desisted well before the turn. Graham O'Sullivan finished in 2.0.32 and Chris Marshall 2.1.57

In the last Club evening '10' of the season Gethin and Megan Butler rode the family tandem and romped round in 21.51. Gavin Sherlock did not quite hold them off being caught on the line for a minute to clock 22.51. Chris Marshall came in with a 24.07 and Keith Butler did his best ride for some time with a 25.08. On the Thursday Gavin Sherlock was 7th and Chris Marshall 8th in the Surrey League handicap.

Another Club Team record took a battering on the 16th August in the ECCA '100'. Harry Featherstone won the event in 3.59.43, Gethin came 3rd in 4.2.02 and Graham O'Sullivan completed the team with a 4.32.42. The total of 12.32.34 takes 32.43 off the old record established by Keith Butler, John Pocock and Robin Buchan in 1961.

At the halfway point Gethin was actually the fastest rider, 2.1.56, leading Harry by 9 seconds. Age and experience told in the second half. However Gethin had improved by 29.33 and with a generous 38 minutes allowance he took 2nd place award on handicap. The Paragon also took the Team award and due credit must be given to Graham who announced his intention to retire with back ache at the 45 feeding point but was 'persuaded' to continue and

did so to the effect that his second 50 miles time was 6 minutes faster than his first half! (2.19.40 to 2.13.02!)

The main effect of this fast 100 miles added to his 1.52.03 '50' encouraged Harry to go for a 12-hour distance in order to win the VTTA National BAR. Harry's time for the ECCA '10' was also a National VTTA Record for a 54 year old

The family Butler and Graham O'Sullivan went off to Bishops Stortford on the 19th August for the Spoco '25' based on the old 32nd course but now known as the E1. Gethin complained that he had heavy legs following his '100' at the weekend but he flew back from the turn once his muscles had eased out. Gethin finished 4th fastest in 58.06. Graham O'Sullivan came 13th with a 1.0.59 and he won his Group prize. Keith Butler finished in 1.7.36 just in front of Allison's 1.7.42 and Megan took 1.19.00. Ray Puttick came 18th in a Surrey League road race.

The Eastbourne Rovers held their double date over the weekend of the 22nd/23rd August. The '10' on Saturday afternoon had a Paragon presence. Gethin Butler came 3rd in 23.01, Graham O'Sullivan 15th in 24.52, Keith Butler 26.31, Allison Butler 27.06 and Graham Moore 27.30. The Sunday morning '25' saw Gethin move up to 2nd place with a 58.13. In both events Simon Barnes (Poly) was the man who beat Gethin. Tim Collier put in a personal best of 1.3.28 for 14th place. Graham O'Sullivan finished in 1.3.30 (14th) and Graham Moore also had a personal best of 1.7.52.

The Butler family went off to Essex for the Essex Roads '25'. Allison was inspired with a new Club Ladies record of 1.3.16. Megan also improved to a 1.14.37 that included a tyre change. Keith and Marilyn essayed the tandem event and produced a 56.36. They were very happy with this as they were riding a single fixed gear on a tandem that was made just about the same time as they were! Harry Featherstone and Jack Platts were engaged in the VTTA National Championship '25' held on the A27 near Arundel. Harry returned a 58.59 and Jack a 1.0.17. These times gave them 7th and 9th fastest on Age Standard. Ray Puttick came 2nd in the Sunday morning Surrey League race on the Lingfield circuit with Gavin Sherlock 10th, Steve Rickwood 11th and Chris Marshall 32nd back in the main bunch. Terry Slattery and Graham Moore rode the Belle Vue '25' finishing with a 1.4.39 and 1.10.45 respectively.

Gethin Butler came 6th in the Charlotteville '10' with a personal best time of 21.27. Also producing personal bests were Chris Marshall with a 22.35 and Graham O'Sullivan with a 22.55. Even with a team time of 1.6.57 they were still 1.43 slower than the Poly. The following morning Gethin Butler came 4th in the Victoria '25' in 56.40 and back up by Graham O'Sullivan in 14th place with a 1.0.32 and Gavin Sherlock in 16th with 1.0.42 the Paragon won the Team race. Graham Moore also rode and finished in 1.9.14. Jack Platts rode the Leo '30 and had the satisfaction of a personal best of 1.9.30. As this equates to a 57.55 for 25 miles that is faster than his present best he was

looking forward to the next race. Ray Puttick came 7th in the Surrey League 3rd category race.

Another Team race came our way in the Old Portlians '25' on the Bank Holiday Monday. Gethin Butler was 4th fastest with a 58.04, Chris Marshall took 1.1.29 and Graham O'Sullivan 1.1.52 to ensure our Team win.

Saturday 5th September saw a group going down to Lower Dicker for the East Sussex CA '10'. Gethin Butler was our fastest rider with a 23.13 to collect 3rd prize. Tim Collier returned a 25.59, Phil Smith a 26.53, Keith Butler 27.09 and graham Moore 27.57.

Sunday morning dawned with a red sky, which boded evil for Harry Featherstone riding the Poole Whs 12-hour event. So it proved. Harry went through 50 miles in 2.03 while it was still dry if windy. By 100 miles the rain had started and the wind had risen to gale force but Harry was still going well passing the checkpoint in 4.12.52. the afternoon's weather really fell apart with Harry taking 5 hours to cover the next 100 miles conditions were so bad. However he persevered and fighting not only the weather but the traffic through Ringwood he eventually ran out time with 254.236 miles to his credit. Not bad for a Novice of fifty-four!

His younger clubmates were sticking to the shorter distances and four of them went up to Biggleswade for the Beds Road '25' on the reputedly fast Great North Road. Well it can be if the wind is not too strong but the wind was strong. So it was Gethin in 5th place with a 56.57 leading Graham O'Sullivan 1.2.06, Gavin Sherlock 1.2.31 and Chris Marshall 1.2.57.

The rain on Saturday 11th September put pay to the Paragon track Championships with only 2 of the counting events completed. Steve Rickwood won the Bert Chapman Cup for the 4000m pursuit and the AEU Cuip for the 500m sprint. Phil Smith collected the Frank Burton Cup for the 500m handicap but it was too wet for the 5-mile. Gethin Butler rode the KCA '10' and came 2nd with a 22.41 to Shay Giles (Thanet). Allison Butler finished with a 27.26 and Marilyn Butler 30.58. Only 88 riders finished from an entry of 150! The weather was decidedly unkind! Similar condition prevailed the next morning for the ECCA (Clubs I-Z) '25'. 85 riders finished from an entry of 150. However this did not worry Gethin Butler who won by nearly a minute in 54.29. Chris Marshall was apprehensive about starting but was glad he did as he passed the Timekeeper in a personal best of 58.39.

In the Saturday afternoon '10' promoted by the Crawley Whs Gethin Butler came 2nd with a 21.43 missing first place by just 3 seconds. Graham O'Sullivan came 12th with a 243.24, personal bests came from Tim Collier (23.33 and 13th), Phil Smith (24.48) and Keith, Allison and Marilyn Butler returned times of 26.12, 26.50 and 29.04. The Paragon won the Team race.

Sunday the 20th September was a very good day for the Norwood Paragon although Gavin Sherlock would not agree as he crashed whilst riding the Redbridge '25' and was unable to finish or get into the action. Gethin Butler

passed the Timekeeper in 53.19 for a new Club record. A few minutes later Harry Featherstone was timed in with a 53.22 also inside the previous record. What would Jack do? Jack Platts rose to the occasion with a personal best of 56.53 and this took our Team aggregate to 2.43.34 and 4 minutes and 4 seconds had been lopped from the old Team record. It is sobering to report that even with these times our riders only just got into the prizes. Gethin was 8th, Harry was 9th but Jack was 60th! Sixtieth with a 56! With this ride Harry also established a new VTTA National Record for 54 year olds.

Harry Featherstone was still in good form for the De Laune '10' on Saturday 26th September when he finished 2nd to Steve Marchant (34th Nomads) with a 21.38 to Marchants 21.25. He also took the prize for the fastest veteran on Age Standard. Gethin Butler came 6th in 21.54 but we had no third rider for the team. On Sunday Harry had his last chance to improve his '50' time in the Viking event. It was a nice bright sunny morning but it was bitterly cold for the early starters – and Harry was No.10 and he suffered accordingly. His time of 1.55.15 is an exceptional ride for a man who is now 55 years of age. Sunday was also Mayne Cup day. The course used was the same as the Robin Buchan '25' which is not noted for its production of fast times. The morning was as cold south of the Thames as it was to the north. Nevertheless Gethin Butler won the Imperial Whs Cup for fastest time with a 1.0.45. Tim Collyer came 2nd with a 1.6.02 and Graham O'Sullivan 3rd with a 1.7.28. The Man of the Day was Tim Collyer whose 1.6.02 was subject to 6.30 handicap that brought it down to a nett 59.32. In 2nd place was Les Black who had not raced for 3 years but was sufficient fit to get round in 1.8.46. His 9 minutes allowance took him down to 59.46 so he just failed to collect the Mayne Cup. Chris Marshall went to the Great North Road with Jack Platts for a '25' and got near to his best with a 58.56 whilst Jack finished with a 59.15.

The Club Hill Climb had very poor field this year with only four riders chancing their arm. Gavin Sherlock made everything look extremely easy by winning in 3.59 with Graham O'Sullivan 2nd on 4.26. Harry Featherstone rode the Edgware '25' on the Great North Road but managed to arrange a wet and misty morning that was not conducive to excess speed. He did finish in 57.08. Chris Marshall made a gallant attempt to win the Surrey League race on the Rusper/Capel circuit but was overhauled by the bunch inside the last 100 yards.

Harry Featherstone and Chris Marshall kept trying to find that elusive calm, warm autumn morning that often produces amazingly fast times. This year was not to be one of them. In the Essex Roads event Harry finished in 56.09 and Chris 59.10 on a cold damp morning.

In the Hillingdon '25' only six riders of a top class field managed to break the hour so Harry Featherstone ought to have been pleased with his 5th place and veterans award and a 58.49 but he does so want that 25 mile-record. Aray Runham made a welcome reappearance on the racing scene when he partnered new member Dave Adams in the Maldon & District Tandem '10'. They finished 7th with a 24.02 on not the best of mornings. Megan Butler had

a lonely ride on the Lingfield '15' course as she qualified for the Junior Ben Davis Championship Plaque. Her time was 46.48 for the distance.

Harry Featherstone almost got the morning he was searching for when he rode the ECCA (Clubs G-N) '25'. Warmer and calmer conditions enabled him to produce a 54.19 but still too far away from the Club Record.

Vin Callanan promoted the Inter-Club Map Reading for the Paragon basing it in the Peshurst area. Ken Baker (Colchester) was fastest with a 1.9.24 beating Dave Giles (Century) by 4 seconds. Graham O'Sullivan came 3rd in 1.10.26. Our other times were by Keith Butler 1.14.16, Allison Butler 1.23.14 Glyn Durrant 1.41.15 and John Mcnee 1.41.25. We were 3rd team some 10 minutes slower than the Century and 6 minutes behind the Colchester Rovers.

Near the end of the year Chris Marshall and ray Puttick shared 7th place in the Surrey League road race at Capel. Over the season the Club rider won £193 in Surrey League races. Gethin Butler was the highest placed rider at 28th, Gavin Sherlock was 66th, Ray Puttick 75th and Chris Marshall 106th.

The November Blah gave the sad news that one of the Club's Vice-Presidents and long serving member George Saggars had died in New Zealand. George had been a member since 1924 and although never a great racing man rode most Club events and took part in all the Club activities and was Runs secretary in the 1920s. He was a keen tourist and arranged or spent much time on club weekends and tours to various parts of the British Isles and the Continent. He was Press Secretary and Time-trial Secretary from 1933-36 and was one of the instigators of the OPA being elected Chairman in 1958 prior to his emigration to NZ. After War he was treasurer from 1951/2 and was elected a Vice-President in 1950.

Harry Featherstone won the Newman-Godward Cup for the Club Open Time Trial Championship. He was also Runner-up in the VTTA National Best All-rounder Competition behind John Woodburn (Manchester Whs) with a plus of 6.444 against Woodburn's 6.522. The greatest difference between the two sets of times was at 12 hours where Woodburn had covered 19 miles more than Harry. What a shame that the Poole Whs day was so foul!