

# NEWFORCE

Autumn 2018 Issue 149







# Editorial

By Keith Whitten

I'd better start with apologies that this newsletter is a little late. It's been a rather busy time for me as you will see if you read on.

Wow, what a great summer that was, and barring a handful of wet weekends, at the time of writing it's fading only very slowly. Most of the trails are still dry and fast and so far I've not felt the need to refit mudguards - touches wood, crosses fingers etc etc. For me the good weather has meant that for many of my solo rides the obvious destination has been the beach at Milford on Sea for a swim, a ride I persuaded the Jalfrezis to do one Thursday evening. Early in the summer I found what Strava shows to be the most direct route from my house to the beach and is 75% off road with opportunities to include various 'interesting' bits of trail without adding too much distance. Happy days.

In this issue you can read about a couple of local events with strong club connections. In August there was Steve Samways charity South Downs ride which was undertaken mostly by club members and in September there was the Singlespeed UK Championship on the Isle of Wight which I organised and which couldn't have taken place without a huge amount of help from friends I've made through being a member of this club.

Now, dare I use the 'C' word in this publication? Okay, I suppose I'd better. Despite the temperature still knocking on the door of 20 degrees (at the time of writing) it really is autumn and plans are being made for Christmas celebrations. Most of the evening ride groups will be having their own get-togethers in December and on Sunday 9th December the official club Christmas dinner will be taking place at the Swan Inn, Lyndhurst. As usual, numbers for that will need to be confirmed in advance so keep an eye on the notice board for more information.

**Photos Opposite** Jalfrezis at the beach and a club ride atop the Surrey Hills

**Front cover:** The South Downs

**Back Cover:** The Marlborough downs

# Your Committee

Committee meetings are held on the second Tuesday of every third month at the New Forest Inn at Emery Down. All club members are welcome to attend and raise any points or questions.

Chairman	Roger Shephard roger.shephard@newforce.org.uk 02380 392696	
Secretary	Allan Knight allan@newforce.org.uk	
Membership Secretary	Martin Wheat membership@newforce.org.uk	
Treasurer	Ian Taylor	
Ride Leader	Susan Marsland susanm@newforce.org.uk	
Newsletter Editor	Keith Whitten keith@newforce.org.uk	
Website Editor	Jack Lawry jack.lawry@newforce.org.uk	
Other Committee Members	John Hawkins Linda Hawkins Eleanor Rutter Dean Johnson Clive French Sue Marsland Steve Samways	Steve Keith Malcolm (Max) Streeton Stu Rogers Karen Clark Nick Clark Mike Tomlinson

The next committee meeting will be **Tuesday 11th December.**

## **Club Policy & Ride Aims**

As a club we want to encourage people to share our passion for mountain biking.

We welcome new members to participate and contribute to the club.

We organise regular rides, fortnightly on Sundays and weekly on weekday evenings.

We organise multi day trips to other areas to experience some of the best riding this country has to offer.

Full conditions of membership and how to join are published on the club website under the 'The Club' tab.

## **Membership Fees**

Individual	1 year	£17.00	2 years	£32.00	5 years	£75.00
Family	1 year	£25.00	2 years	£45.00	5 years	£100.00

## **Riding With Us**

Anyone who is competent on a bike is welcome to ride with us although we would politely request that you become a member if you ride with us more than twice.

Cycle helmets are compulsory on all club rides.

Please dress appropriately for the likely weather conditions.

You are advised to bring a drink, particularly on warm days

Ensure you are equipped to deal with punctures, preferably by carrying a spare inner tube or two. Mud and patches aren't a great combination.

Check that your bike is in good working order before the start of a ride eg no cracks in the frame, splits in the tyres, worn out brakes etc.

Finally, please carry emergency contact details — just in case something a little unplanned happens.

## Our Organised Sunday Rides

Planned Sunday ride venues are published on the club website and in the newsletter. They generally follow the pattern of two in the New Forest area and one outside, anywhere within an hour's drive from Southampton. A short description of the likely route will be included along with the designated pub or cafe for post ride socialising.

Rides will aim to leave at 10am unless otherwise stated. Most are planned to finish by 1pm but a few will be designated 'all day rides' with a stop for refreshments part way round.

The ride locations are set at committee meetings and if you know anywhere good to ride in the local area that you think we have neglected please tell us.

To aid finding the start location we recommend using **[www.streetmap.co.uk](http://www.streetmap.co.uk)** along with the grid reference supplied.

The Sunday rides usually attract enough riders to split into two or three groups dependent on ability and enthusiasm.

## The Club Newsletter

The club newsletter is published quarterly, usually a few weeks after each committee meeting. All contributions written or photographic are very welcome, indeed essential for it to keep going. If any ride has stood out for you in terms of enjoyment, triumph over adversity or something unexpected that has happened, please write a little about it and send it to the editor. If you participate in any other sports or hobbies please tell us all about them via the newsletter. In short, anything that might be a topic of conversation in the pub or café is worth putting into print and telling the rest of the club. The club is as much about socialising with like-minded people as it is about riding bikes so the newsletter content is most certainly not restricted to just biking stories.

# The Evening Ride Groups

The evening rides are generally smaller, typically 4 to 10 persons and at some point long, long ago we adopted the 'curry scale' to grade the various groups:

## **Madras.**

This name has been recently revived by a group basing themselves to the north of the New Forest and typically riding on occasional Wednesday evenings for 2 to 3 hours at an enthusiastic pace. Details can be found on the bulletin board.

## **Jalfrezi.**

This group rides on Thursdays from various locations in the southern and mid Hampshire area usually with a brief mid-ride stop for cake consumption and a social in the pub afterwards. Pub stops mid-ride have been banned from this group by decree. Ride lengths are from 2 to 4 hours dependent on weather, ground conditions and how lost they get. Start locations are usually published on the bulletin board on the Monday before.

## **Tikka Masala**

A shorter, tamer version of the Jalfrezi. See the bulletin board for the start location each week.

## **Korma.**

Usually Tuesday nights. A shorter steadier ride with more emphasis on enjoying the scenery and company than breaking records or shredding the gnarr. Start locations will be posted on the bulletin board.

# Autumn Rides List

Ride notes provided by Roger Shephard

**Sunday 28 October 2018**

**Whiteparish (the doctor's surgery car park)  
(ref SU 246 236)**

***Designated pub: TBA***

The map reference given is the centre of the village. The doctor's surgery is close by and can be found about 50 metres along from the main junction in the middle, on the road leading back towards Landford. The general plan is probably to head northwards to the area bounded by West Tytherley, Pitton and the Winterslow villages and discover the bridleways and woodland tracks. Volunteer leaders for a particular route will be most welcome.

Another option from this start point is to head west along the top of the ridge past the Pepperbox and cross the A36 for a circuit on the (mostly) well drained trails between Alderbury and Downton.

**Sunday 11 November 2018**

**Four Marks (halfway between Alresford and Alton) (ref SU 672 361)**

***Designated pub: TBA***

This ride starts at Chawton Park Woods which is on the back road from Four Marks to Medstead (if you can remember the Windmill pub (long gone) it is just behind there. From here the usual suspects are likely to be Medstead, Bentworth and the Upper Wield areas, joined up with Moundsmere and the Candovers. All good stuff.



**Sunday 25 November 2018**

**Deerleap, near Colbury (ref SU 353 095)**

***Designated pub: The Happy Cheese, Ashurst***

Believe it or not, the last time we started from here was in 2009. This place on the eastern boundary of the forest can link up via Ashurst into Ironhill Inclosure and thence to Lyndhurst before circling down through Denny Wood and then finding a return route. It is quite often used as a starting point by the groups that ride out on Thursday evenings, so we will be retracing some tracks that have passed into club folklore.

**Sunday 09 December 2018**

**Christmas ride and lunch (ref SU 275 079)**

***Designated pub: The Swan Inn, Swan Green, Emery Down –  
Christmas lunch. (Pub @ SU291 082)***

The start point is the James Hill car park just 1/4 mile along the road from the Emery Down Inn in the direction of the Portuguese Fireplace. We have traditionally eaten at the Emery Down Inn but were victims of its popularity and at Christmas 2017 we were obliged to dine at the Swan Inn where we were well received so we have chosen to go there again in 2018 for our Christmas meal.

Starting from James Hill car park, we have a choice of the Reptilliary, Rhinefield, Bolderwood, Burley, Minstead and so on; all good stuff and just right for working up an appetite.

**Sunday 26 December 2018**

**Beaulieu Road Station (ref SU 349 063)**

***Designated pub: Drift Inn***

Same as Boxing Day 2017, we are visiting the car park opposite the Drift Inn at Beaulieu Road Station for a chance to shake off the excesses of the festive season. Obvious choices are Denny Wood, and the triangle between Lyndhurst, Brockenhurst and Beaulieu. Less obvious choices are back towards Longdown, Deerleap or down towards Holbury, Hythe and Dibden Purlieu which was where the 2017 ride went.

**2019 Rides. Notes to be published in future issues.**

06 Jan	Garnier Road Park and Ride, Winchester
20 Jan	Longslade Bottom, New Forest
03 Feb	Ringwood Forest, Three legged Cross
17 Feb	Fritham, New Forest
03 Mar	Swinley Forest, North East Hampshire
17 Mar	Standing Hat, New Forest
31 Mar	Hindhead
14 Apr	Martin
28 Apr	Hatchet Pond, near Beaulieu
12 May	Stansted Forest
26 May	Wooton Bridge, New Forest
09 June	Danebury
23 June	Purbecks
07 July	Ashurst, New Forest
21 July	Bishops Waltham
04 Aug	Isle of Wight, from Lymington ferry
18 Aug	Moyles Court, New Forest
01 Sept	QE Park
15 Sept	Blandford
29 Sept	Boltons Bench, Lyndhurst, New Forest
13 Oct	Farley Mount, Winchester
27 Oct	Emery Down, James Hill car park, New Forest
10 Nov	Swinley Forest
24 Nov	Wilverley Plain, New Forest
08 Dec	Christmas Dinner, Shawford
22 Dec	Moors Valley
26 Dec	Beaulieu Road, The Drift Inn, New Forest

# Committee Meeting Minutes

(Selected points)

## Matters arising from the June 2018 committee meeting:

Summer BBQ – many thanks to Sue for organising

Website contacts reduced to two – Membership & Sue Marsland.

Thanks to Jack for his considerable behind-the-scenes work on the website.

GDPR information has been added to the website and covered in the magazine.

## September 2018 Meeting Minutes:

### Club Rides 2019

The rides list for 2019 has been compiled. Any final adjustments to be discussed at the AGM so the list can be finalised for the 2019 calendar.

### Membership

Membership is still declining.

Currently stands at 97 memberships including 8 which have expired.

Steve Samways has produced an info handout for new members at rides.

Steve / Roger / Sue to have a few copies to pass out. Action **Steve Samways**

### Magazine

**Steve Samways** to write up South Downs Way trip

**Keith Whitten & Jack Lawry** to get alternative printing costs. Consider allowing printers to advertise in the magazine to reduce rates.

## **Website**

GDPR and the payment page – Ian Taylor suggests the current wording on the 'How to Join' page is changed from 'By clicking on the Buy Now button you acknowledge you have read and accepted the terms and conditions shown below' to 'By clicking on the Buy Now button you accept our privacy policy and acknowledge you have read and accepted the terms and conditions shown below' with a link to the privacy policy as shown. Action **Jack Lawry**

Facebook is working well. Monitor specific members posts and review as it seems to be dominated by one member in particular.

Gallery page to be updated **Sue Marsland**

## **AOB**

Treasurers AOB – Ian Taylor proposes to move our account to Lloyds which has an online banking facility that needs two people to authorise transactions. This saves on postage costs and avoids delays in cheques being banked by the printers. Interest rates from both banks are similar. Approved by the committee. Action **Ian Taylor**

May trip to the Peak District – **Sue Marsland** to investigate

Steve Samways proposed a Trailbreaks organised trip. **Steve Samways** to put on the website to gauge interest. Possibly June.

Ride leaders to be reviewed. Add Penni & Steve. **Sue Marsland** to advise who leads rides currently. Action **Allan Knight**

Christmas Lunch 2018: **Sue Marsland** to make arrangements – Swan Inn again as ride is from James Hill?

## **Next Meeting**

Tuesday 11 December 2018, 8pm, New Forest Inn.

# The Village Randonnée

By Martin Wheat

The bike club at the village with which Lyndhurst is twinned has a mountain-bike section, which is pretty surprising given how flat it is round there. Nevertheless, their calendar shows events within reasonable reach most weekends through the year. Passing through to visit our friends there at the end of September, I carelessly juxtaposed that one of those events would be just 30km away that weekend, and that I'd my bike with me. The bait was taken and plans laid to get me there. Light rain was forecast for all morning, but warm, and this was an opportunity not to be missed.

The event village is some 30km from Nantes on the Sèvres river and its name, Gorges, suggested that it might not be flat.

Lots of villages put on a randonnée sometime during the year, and people come from all around to take part. This one was unusual in that there were no routes marked for roadies, but they'd laid out three lengths of circuit plus a shorter family-oriented "gravel" route.

So, as well as marking out the routes, the organisers take over the "Salle des Sports" to be found by the playing fields so many villages seem to have. There, we register our entry and pay our €6 fee (€4 for FFCT members!) and then start any time we like. It's not a race. No race numbers. No timing. No checkpoints. Just ride around with your mates, or without if that makes you feel better. So we make our way to the bar and have a cup of coffee first.

The circuit itself was tortuous, making the most of the terrain. There were sections of off-camber traverse; sharp twisty climbs and drops; some stairs; a tour through what I'm told was a disused uranium mine, but looked more like gravel extraction; some really tight turns through the woods, that would have been tricky on the fat tandem I saw at the finish; sections across private land for which special leave had been negotiated; and various trails and short tarmac sections to tie it all together. It was all very varied and quite hard work, with enough riders always to be able to see some without it becoming crowded.

Back at the Salle des Sports was a warm welcome, a proper sausage in baguette and a glass of wine (or two, or more – nobody seemed to care: well, they grow it) all included in the entry fee.

Remarkably, on a wet Sunday in September there are upwards of 300 riders, and this sort of thing goes on throughout the year and all over France – all comers welcome and such good value: brilliant!



# British Heart Foundation South Downs Way Event

By Pete Dobson

My interest in this was sparked by the western end of the SDW becoming one of my commuting routes home - the only off-road one as long as I didn't mind 9 miles of actual-road to get to it from where I work, at Waterloo (generally ending with a train home from Winchester). Despite this section not being totally representative of the other 80%, I decided to enter BHF event - the famous one - to do the whole thing in one day (I have done it over a weekend twice in the past but they were both a long time ago). After months of training - including racing, big rides, more (and both-ways) SDW commutes, as well as getting lost in the Pennines - the big day arrived. If you're not staying in Winchester, or being dropped off, the first train from Southampton will get you there to be just comfortably before the cut-off, and I think 5:45 is quite early enough for me anyway. It was even quite foggy at that time. I was a bit surprised to be the only BHF rider on the train though and starting your Garmin at the station, as I found out, also makes feel like you're two extra miles into it than you really are (which matters near the end...). Leaving Winchester, I was relieved to see the BHF had signed-posted their start point (in an adjacent field near the A31) along the first part of the SDW and cut a path through the hedge to get to it (previous concern - I didn't want to get lost finding the start!). After putting my number on, I joined the second last wave to leave, and what felt like a race... but a very slow one. Thinking I'd never get to Eastbourne at that speed I upped the pace overtaking previous waves and blasting along the now extremely familiar first part of the route. All types of mountain biker were there, even a guy in a full face, another in full body armour, and a guy blasting out Guns N' Roses from a speaker in his Camelbak. Making pretty good progress and with Amberley approaching, I thought I knew a big descent was coming, but there was a "road-block" - this was the diversion to Whiteways café for a big checkpoint, and at 10 o'clock it felt like lunchtime anyway. I also made the classic mistake of thinking I'd be in Eastbourne early afternoon on this basis (my wife had better get on a train soon!). Needless to say it got hillier given the nature of the SDW, and much hotter given our summer, when I set off again about half an hour later, so that wasn't quite the case (checkpoints are pretty useful when you need to keep an eye on your Camelbak level!). And speaking of the summer, the "green smooth-swelling unending downs" were in fact almost entirely gold.

At the start they warned the last 35 miles are the worst. I'd only got to the Lewes area on my training so most of that was going to be new to me (or rather too long ago to remember very well). There are certainly a few concentrated hills towards the end. Itford Hill (I think) was the shocker, in terms of it being so big and long and that I was effortlessly blasted past by a local lady in casual gear and no helmet, not (she assured me) taking part in the "race". Eventually I was on a hill where I could see Eastbourne and the sea and the mileage looked about right. And yes, from there it was downhill to Western Gardens and Eastbourne's grandly built sea front. I met my wife for some nice beers in the sun (and a few more in town later), and free massage and bike wash courtesy of the BHF, at about 18:15. A great day out for a good cause!



# In Search of the Perfect Singletrack

By Phil Hotston

Interlaken - literally between the Lakes - has been visited by intrepid Brits since the Victorian era. The expanse of clear blue water heading off to left and right is brought into sharp relief by the wall of mountains to the North and most especially to the South. Arthur Conan Doyle saw fit to kill off his great detective Sherlock Holmes at the Reichenbach Falls and it was not long after we pedalled past these most tenuous of tourist attractions before we thought the the Grosse Scheidegg might do for us too. But two hours of steady turning of the lowest gear got us to the saddle below the Wetterhorn, from where it took a mere 30 minutes to descend along sketchy gravelly footpaths interspersed with frequent gates and road crossings. Exhilarating and frustrating in equal measure as top speeds were reached and scrubbed ad infinitum.

It should be said that many parts of Switzerland have not yet fully embraced our sport and hobby. This is both a blessing and a curse in the spectacular town of Grindelwald. Most footpaths are open to Mountain Bikers as long as hikers have right of way, and MTBers are rare enough not to have already annoyed all the walkers you meet. Plus there is that rare feeling of pioneering - being the first to ride your wheels over the trails. The downside to this is that flowing single track ends abruptly at 6 foot high rocky steps, or more likely you follow arrows onto double track leading 3 mile descents on tarmac.

Adelboden had some good trails, all footpaths, requiring cautious cornering and deference to hikers, but the top tip I can give is to always take the last lift up each afternoon. The walkers have left the hills by then and the trails are empty. Strava records fell like nine pins despite the heaviest Alpine rain I have seen turning trails to rivers in seconds. Exciting and reckless but never forgotten.

Kandersteg has a gravity trail to remember. 700 meters of descent. Steeper than I'm happy with so I only did it twice, but from the cable car station at the top, the XC exploration was second to none. High amongst huge mountains, circumnavigating the Daubensee to the foot of the glacier, with views to the Weisshorn, Dent Blanche and Matterhorn.

On the last day, short of Swiss Francs, we cycled up to the Kleine Scheidegg, two hours of steady pedalling with the North Wall of the Eiger brooding menacingly above all the way, to arrive in a sort of modern Wild West town on the mountainside populated with thousands of tourists taking the scenic train to the top of the Jungfrau and stopping for fries on the way. The views are astounding

in themselves and probably worth the 200 euro train fare, but so definitely worth the effort of getting there under my own steam. But life has its way of providing its own rewards.

First we took the Panoramic Way around the side of the hill, giving way to the walkers if not the signs. The oncoming traffic thinned as it was now late in the day. After a short run across a ski route we found an empty footpath running directly towards the Eiger. It swooped and flowed and hopped and dropped but always within our capabilities and always bringing the North Face closer with every pedal. All great things come to an end, this being the last day of our trip, these two perfect miles of single track in astoundingly beautiful surroundings could not be ridden again. But there is always next year.







The South Downs Way riders' triumphant return





triumphant arrival in Eastbourne

# **Charlie's South Downs Charity Challenge**

By Steve Samways

On the weekend of August 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> 2018 a group of 14 of us took on the South Downs in support of Charlie's Beach Hut, a charity local to us.

Back in September 2017 my wife Lisa and I attended Charlie's Charity Ball and we heard about the various things people had done for the charity - from running marathons across deserts to football tournaments, cake sales, and dinner parties.

Out of something as sad as losing their Charlie to a brain tumour, Karen & Steve Codling are able to run this charity to do something amazing for families that are going through some really tough times with their children. It was during this evening that I thought I would really like to do something. Having an idea is one thing and there are plenty of people with good ideas but to follow them through is another matter. I asked myself what I could do, what do I enjoy doing and what would be a challenge?

The obvious choice was a ride on the mountain bike. I had ridden some of the South Downs and had read a lot about it. A couple of things stood out for me - it had great scenery, great hills, and is rideable in a day so it would be possible to do it over a weekend. A few websites and maps later I realised it's a bloody long way!

At this point it was still only an idea as I had not asked anyone along yet. So after a few discussions with Lisa, we thought yes this would be manageable with maybe eight riders so the natural course of action would be to ask within our club. Having had the nod of approval at a committee meeting it was time to see if anyone else would be interested.

In January 2018 we took a risk and paid the deposit on ten beds at the South Downs Bunkhouse in Amberley for the weekend of 11<sup>th</sup> August hoping to fill most of them. The bunk house was already booked for the remainder of August so a quick decision had to be made. The response from the forum was incredible and in a very short time we had filled the ten places. Over the next few months the excitement mounted as we had sixteen riders who had paid deposits and we realised we needed the whole of the bunkhouse! August still seemed a long way off with plenty of time to get things sorted.

With my best 'micro- management' hat on I set about creating one or two spreadsheets to keep track of riders and a 'to do' list. Those on my rider list were harassed frequently by my emails!

The hot weather we enjoyed this summer surprised us and by July we were starting to worry about how exposed the South Downs can be and it was just too hot! I did plenty of riding most weekends enjoying the lovely weather and testing my wife's patience!

By August we had fourteen riders confirmed and a support crew sorted. With maps organised, parts of the route ridden, bike serviced and food and snacks bought we are ready (I hoped).

Thankfully the weather forecast for the weekend was looking cooler than the high temperatures we had leading up to the ride but rain had been mentioned for the Sunday.

The King Alfred Statue was our starting point at 9am. It was a beautiful sunny morning and I was feeling excited and nervous to get going after all the months of planning. There was time for a few photos and last minute 'faffing' with bikes.

It felt like once the wheels were turning the ride took on its own momentum and things would just fall into place along the way. Planning is needed but the enthusiasm of all the group and general willingness to get stuck in to the ride was just what we needed.

The next time we would see the support van for the first snack stop would be at Beacon Hill. This wasn't that far away but we thought regular food stops would work well.

There was a bit of navigating around the Boomtown music festival which had taken over what seemed like the whole of Cheesefoot Head.

The plan was to have quick five minute snack stops and carry on - it wasn't a race but we were all very aware that we had to keep moving. We were all really enjoying the riding and were feeling great with a fast descent off Beacon Hill followed by the steady climb up Old Winchester Hill. A few rode up and a few walked, either way all riders were still moving. This would be the way the rest of the hills were approached some would try and ride everyone and some would opt to conserve energy and take a steady walk. There was no medals for riding every hill and the view is the same.

The plan was to stop approximately every one to one and half hours depending on how the car parks worked out. It didn't seem long before we were approach-

ing Buster Hill with the fast grass descent to look forward to. At this point we were mostly still as one group.

with some fast riding down the slope and into Queen Elizabeth Country Park.

The support van was here to meet us and although this wasn't meant to be a snack stop as the lunch was only forty five minutes further on, riders were getting the idea that seeing the van meant food and treats so most people stopped for something.

This caused us to have the first communication failure and some riders went on, some stopped and some went to use the facilities and the group split.

The route coming out of QE has an official South Downs marker going up a tough hill which the first group took. I admit I did know about that route and opted for the gentler ride next to the car park and the gravel path leading to the same place at the top of the hill.

We had our lunch stop at Harting Down. This is one of my favourite parts on the west side of the South Downs. The baguettes with various fillings, plenty of fruit, energy bars and cakes and some lovely homemade biscuits and flapjacks went down very well.

We spent a very pleasant half hour sitting around but time was now getting on and we had to get moving again. We progressed onwards towards Cocking where the support crew took the chance to have a well-earned cuppa at the small farm shop.

Bignor Hill was our next target which you could see in the distance. Following more steady climbing we arrived at another small carpark with great views in all directions. By this time riders were getting to know what they wanted from the support van and would happily help themselves to the selection of goodies.

By this point a faster group had taken the lead and were making good progress with the medium steady group not far behind.

From Bignor Hill it's not long before you can see Amberley Mount in the distance and the valley with the river Arun running through it. There were a couple more climbs and then the final descent towards the river. Fortunately the sun was still shining and under wheel was dry as these descents with the chalk and flints can be tricky if not dangerous in the wet.

Turning before the river led us straight to the South Downs Bunkhouse which was our overnight stop. Approximately forty eight miles had been completed to here.

The bunkhouse was very comfortable and modern and can sleep up to twenty people.

With bike storage sorted and the kettle on, the club tradition of serving home-made cakes was enjoyed by all. There is something about tea and cake after riding all day. There was then a short time to relax before we were off to the local pub for our evening meal at the George & Dragon, a short walk along the road. Following a good meal and a short speech by myself most people were ready for an early night!

Unfortunately rain was forecast for our second day so support plans were discussed in case it turned really nasty. A breakfast of sausage and bacon rolls followed by a continental breakfast supplied by the bunkhouse was enjoyed nice and early. These riders certainly like their food!

Bikes were retrieved from storage under grey skies with no rain and thankfully no mud from the previous day to clean off. The lead group were off and in a quick flurry of activity the bunkhouse was quiet again leaving our great support crew to tidy and re load the vehicles for the day to come.

This half of the South Downs is known to be the tougher section with bigger hills and I had not personally ridden some of it before so I was hoping that the support van would work as well as it had on the first day and we would not get lost

We enjoyed the amazing views going up Amberley Mount and I found we sometimes just needed to stop and take it all in and look behind occasionally to really appreciate the view. We realised that good steady riding was all that was needed and didn't think too much about the next hill.

We progressed on towards Truleigh Hill and had a quick stop in a small car park before grinding up the hill past the YHA. The South Downs does tend to reward the uphill with a nice fast downhill and this gravel fast section is really good as long as you watch out for the walkers and dogs!

Next was the climb up towards Ditchling Beacon with more great views and amazingly still no rain yet. Very light misty rain meant jackets were on and off a few times but it never came to anything.

We enjoyed another longer lunch stop at the car park at Ditchling Beacon and all riders were going well. The six riders in the lead group were now about one hour ahead of the remaining seven in the second group.

The weather was still a worry with light drizzle but we stayed positive and seemed to stay just stay ahead of the rain clouds the whole time.

The riding was amazing and the miles soon went by. The terrain changed here being much more open grass.



We went over Swanborough Hill and on towards Southease with a river crossing, railway crossing and we even had a few jelly babies from a crew supporting a BHF ride going on in the area.

A small navigational error here meant our group was split up for a while and reminded us to keep our wits about us. We re-grouped further up the trail and pedalled up yet another climb followed by a ride along the ridge heading towards Firle Beacon for our last planned feed station stop. This was an exposed carpark and with the wind blowing and again light drizzle starting our sprits were high and the end was now in sight.

Arriving in Alfriston after being on the Downs for so long felt like being back in civilisation if only for a short while. The route signs are easily missed here and a quick ride in the wrong direction soon had us turning around and re-joining the correct path.

At Windover Hill we came along the ridge, on the side along here is the Long Man but you can't see it from the trail.

We were now starting to get the first glimpses of the sea with the Seven Sisters in the distance. Obviously our legs are feeling tired but the sense of nearly achieving our goal was spurring us on.

We could soon see Eastbourne coming into view wow and it's still not raining!!

Finally we were within sight of the finish which was Eastbourne Pier, we were high up on the cliff side so were expecting to descend down towards sea level very soon. A few calls were made to our support crew to get ready with cameras as we were coming. The lead group who were a good hour and half in front of us were relaxing in the pub by the time we arrived.

As we came off the South Downs we passed the sign post that says Winchester 100 miles and cycled along the last bit of road before arriving at the Pier. We had made it - I was unusually emotional and felt happy, relieved and tired.

A quick dip in the sea and some well-earned fish and chips were enjoyed and it was a dry evening in Eastbourne.

We loaded our bikes into another support van provided by a kind customer of mine and headed off to find our coach for the journey back to Winchester.

I'm very grateful to have had the chance to complete this weekend with a great bunch of people and I'm sure it will always stay in my memory as an epic weekend.

There is barely a week goes by that someone you know will be doing something for charity

so we were aware that asking for sponsorship can be a daunting task. Each rider donated percentage of the ride fee to the charity and I was amazed at the generosity of my family, friends and customers. If you did the ride or helped with support crew or just asked about the ride and supported us from afar we really do thank you and appreciate your support in being able to carry this out so successfully and raising almost **£2500.00** for this charity.

Steve & Lisa

Info about the charity

<http://charliecoding.co.uk/>

Not too late to donate

<https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/Samways>



# Singlespeed UK 2018

By Keith Whitten

In the last few years I've been to a number of Singlespeed Championships, both European and UK. The formats are always pretty similar, some guided riding Friday and Sunday, a race on the Saturday that not too many people take very seriously and a meal and party Saturday night with live music. There's usually plenty of alcohol involved and the opportunity to meet and bond with likeminded people and talk bikes and bollocks well into the night. If you can avoid being too hung over then the chance to be guided round the trails and sights of a new area is also well worth turning up for.

Back in 2016 at the UK event in Nuneaton I thought to myself 'how hard can it be' to take on the organisation of one of these events? I mentioned to one of the organisers that I was interested in offering to host the 2017 event but was told that they already had a firm bid. So rather than get myself into some kind of drinking competition (which I would surely lose) to compete for the hosting rights I agreed to wait a year and make my offer at the 2017 event in the Lake District. When I did it was unopposed, something my liver was quite grateful for, and I took possession of the porcelain unicorn, the organiser's baton.

The venue I chose was my home town of Sandown on the Isle of Wight. I'd done a bit of research prior to accepting the task and had established a campsite willing to be the event base and that the local council would give us permission to hold the racing on Yaverland beach. The weekend of 15th-16th September was nominated as the tides would then be most suitable and I had a year to fill in the rest of the details.

My plan was to get as much arranged and booked as I could through the autumn as that was when I would be least busy at work and by the end of the year I had entertainment and catering booked and had established contacts with a number of local businesses who were very keen to be on board, particularly one of the local breweries, Goddards and the Garlic Farm, the MD of which is also a keen mountain biker. As the weather perked up through the spring I took a few more day trips over to the Island and established routes for the guided rides and connected with more local businesses. It all seemed quite easy, there was the odd polite refusal of sponsorship or prize donation but by and large everyone I spoke to was very positive about the event coming to the Island. I'd put together a Facebook page and website and paid entries were looking healthy.

Then at the beginning of the summer the caterers (the garden centre café across the road from the campsite) cancelled. And then the evening band cancelled.

Thankfully the local fish and chip shop were able to step in for the catering, supplying 150 portions of fish and chips, in batches of 50 at half hourly intervals. I'm also now of the opinion that I got quite lucky with the replacement band. Good covers band appear to get booked up well in advance over the summer months and after letting a friend who's big in the Hampshire music scene know that I had the slot to fill I received four offers. One of the stronger contenders were playing at the pub opposite my shop the following night so off I went to see them. They put on a good show and got the job. Problems solved.

A month or so before the event I took Ashley Denham and Allan Knight over to the Island to show them the intended routes that they'd be responsible for guiding. That turned out to be a rather good day out in itself, great riding and a swim in the warm sea included. Entries had passed the break-even level so all that was left to worry about was how the weather would be on the day.



It was great, really great. After a year of paranoia that it could all be a washed out ordeal the weather gods gave us almost continual warm sunshine. The only weather related downside was that so many people went on the Friday night ride to the Culver Haven pub that the campsite bar was nearly empty and I didn't sell as much beer as I expected. They were all quite thirsty when they got back though.

My plan for the Saturday was that there would be a big group 'prologue' ride out to the race venue, taking in St Boniface Down, the highest point on the Island where there would be a refreshment stop (keg of beer) with views of near enough the whole Island. Up there the riders would be issued with little beach



windmills to attach to their bikes to prove they had been there so they would not be penalised at the start for taking the 'slacker' route out.

I have heard that organising a large group of cyclists is a bit like trying to herd cats but amazingly it all went to plan. Phil Hotston and I took the small 'slackers' group out to meet the main group coming down off the Downs and from there they all rode down to Shanklin seafront and along to Yaverland, keeping almost exactly to the timings I had estimated. Down at the beach I had booked Derek Sandy, a locally renowned reggae singer as background which seemed to go down well. There was another keg of beer and after a bit of faffing we got the racing under way on the short course which had both a water splash and comedy soft sand chicane. This was where it got a bit chaotic. I'd come up with a multi round format to whittle the field down to 10 finalists who



would then race it out for the trophy but unfortunately, with the course being being rather short it quickly became difficult to tell who was leading and who had been lapped. Eventually the ten finalists were identified and sent to the back of the car park out of sight of their bikes. This where my big idea for making the winners earn their prizes came into play. I'd found a beach operator with ten man 'Supertanker' paddle boards for hire, so while the finalists were out of sight that's where their bikes were taken. In waist deep water. I was very glad it was a calm day. Even the small wavelets coming in made it quite a challenge to keep the bikes upright. Between half a dozen of us we did and I was reliably told that the rider's reactions when they saw where their bikes had

been put was all I had hoped for. A little later we had a winner. Well done Grzegorz Krywon. Then I remembered that we didn't yet have a ladies winner so the interested ladies were gathered and all six set off on two laps of the beach course. This proved to be maybe the best spectacle of the racing. All six were very evenly matched with the lead changing many times before Clare Curtis took the win.

For the evening we had the aforementioned fish and chip supper followed by prize-giving and the band, Drunk Education, who were fantastic. And plenty of beer was sold. Eventually it had to come to an end although six of us did stay in the barn a little later. OK, quite a lot later. Apparently our late night singalong to Duran Duran's 'Rio' was highly memorable - for all the wrong reasons.



Sunday morning was a slow start. Some were nursing hangovers, some were packing up to go home and about twenty of us went for a ride, back up to Culver Down where some headed for the pub again and others enjoyed the rather excellent cake from the small café opposite. For me it was the first proper ride of the weekend. Being the organiser I unfortunately had far more important things to do than go ride bikes!

Sunday afternoon there was more packing up to be done and by evening the campsite was largely empty, everyone had been very good at taking their rubbish with them and there was hardly any evidence left of what had gone on

over the preceding couple of days. Likewise down at the beach, when I returned there on the Monday morning I found just one tyre track in the sand.

Feedback on the event's Facebook page was overwhelmingly positive and I really do feel a sense of achievement that I did a good job, a job I could not possibly have done without a huge amount of help from a number of friends, all of whom are present or past members of this club and who I may never have met had I not joined the club.

Would I do it again? Quite possibly yes, if I can come up with a plan for something different enough to attract the required number of people, but not for a year or two. Previous organisers had warned me that doing something like this takes over your whole life and they were right. Many nights I was awake and getting up to write down stuff I really didn't want to have forgotten by the morning, so that first post event sleep on the Sunday night was particularly sweet.

The bonus to it all was that after the final count up of costs and expenses there was just over £1000 left over to split between the Mountbatten Hospice on the Isle of Wight and Macmillan Cancer Care.



# Events Calendar

These are events that are either connected with the club or that members will be participating in.

## **Sunday 9th December. Club Christmas Dinner**

This will be held at the Swan Inn, Lyndhurst and will follow the ride out from the James Hill car park.

## **Sunday 9th December**

## **Sunday 6th January 2019**

## **Sunday 27th January 2019. Merida Brass Monkeys Winter XC Enduro**

These popular winter endures staged in north east Hampshire have often been attended by Newforce members in the past. There are 2, 3 and 4 hour categories you can enter depending on age and fitness levels.

## **Singlespeed European Championship 2019**

Not a lot of information about this one yet except that it will be held in Italy, probably somewhere near Termoli which is about half way down the east coast. It'll probably be some time in May as that's when this event usually takes place but beyond that the Italian organisers are keeping us guessing, if indeed they even know themselves yet.

## **25th to 28th July 2019, Twentyfour12**

This annual 12 and 24 hour event near Plymouth will incorporate the UK Fatbike Championship which will be a six hour race.

## **1st September 2019, Singlespeed UK**

For 2019 the event is going up to the other end of the country and will be held somewhere near Glasgow. Maybe a good opportunity to take in some of the Scottish borders trail centres in an extended trip?

## **October 2019, Singlespeed World Championships**

The Slovenians have got the worlds in 2019. There's no exact date yet but they did such a good job of hosting the European Champs in 2016 that an entry for the 2019 worlds is highly recommended.



## ££ Club Discounts ££

The following shops offer a discount with your membership card:

### **3C Cycles**

3ccycles.co.uk

179 Barrack Rd., Christchurch, BH23 2AP.

Unit 4a, 16-20 South Street, Hythe, SO45 6EB

01202 486278

02380 840765

### **Boost Bike Hub**

boostbikehub.co.uk

2-4 Brookley Rd., Brockenhurst, SO42 7RR

01590 624204

### **Bournemouth Cycleworks**

bournemouthcycleworks.co.uk

1143-1145 Christchurch Rd., Bournemouth, BH7 6BW

01202 424945

### **Cycle World Wessex**

cycleworld.co.uk

36, Thornhill Park Rd., Southampton, SO18 5TQ

373 London Rd., Portsmouth, PO2 9HJ

02380 471140

02392 666500

### **The Forge Cycleworks**

forgecycles.co.uk

Unit 12D The Furlong, Ringwood, BH24 1AT

01425 482797

### **Hampshire Trailer and Roofrack Centre**

hampshireroofracks.com

Solent Business Centre, 343 Millbrook Rd., Southampton,  
SO15 0HW

02380 333111

### **Hargroves Cycles**

hargrovescycles.co.uk

150 Commercial Rd., Totton, SO40 3AA

Also in Chichester, Fareham, Swindon and Winchester.

02380 862011

<b>The Hub Cycleworks</b> thehubcycleworks.co.uk 105-107 Shirley Rd., Southampton, SO15 3FF	02380 226969
<b>Owens Cycles</b> owenscycles.co.uk Stoner Hill, Steep, Petersfield, Hampshire, GU32 1AG Winchester Road, Four Marks, Alton, Hampshire, GU34 5HQ	01730 260 446 01420 563 922
<b>Perfect Balance Cycles</b> keith@perfectbalancecycles.co.uk 87 Junction Rd., Totton, SO40 3BU	02380 871777
<b>Peter Hansford Cycles</b> peterhansford.co.uk 23a Hursley Rd., Chandlers Ford, SO53 2FS Bridge Rd., Park Gate, Fareham, SO31 6BX 91 Olivers Battery Rd., Winchester, SO22 4JQ	02380 266212 01489 573249 01962 877555
<b>Primera</b> Primera-sports.com 183 Bournemouth Rd., Parkstone, BH14 9HT 244 Charminster Rd., Bournemouth, BH8 9RR	01202 749674 01202 775588
<b>Sinclair Cycles</b> sinclaircycles.co.uk 9 Westcroft Parade, Station Rd., New Milton, BH25 6JG	01425 837071
<b>The Woods Cyclery</b> thewoodscyclery.co.uk 56 High St., Lyndhurst, SO43 7BG	02380282028

# **MEET THE CLUB MEMBER – ISSUE No 2 – ALLAN KNIGHT, THE CLUB SECRETARY.**

By Keith Whitten

Pictured opposite is Allan Knight, the club secretary, lending a helping hand as a ride marshal at Singlespeed UK.

In his day to day life Allan leads a very busy life as a quantity surveyor. In fact he's so busy that he didn't have time to write this himself before the copy deadline hence some details might not be one hundred percent accurate, but I'll try not to leave him too embarrassed by anything I write here.

Allan has been a club member for at least 15 years, maybe longer and in that time served as membership secretary for a number of years before swapping to his current role in the hope that it might be a little less time consuming whilst still giving him the opportunity to play his part in keeping the club's wheels turning.

Allan embraced mountain biking virtually from it's earliest days and in the early nineties earned himself a place in the GA Cycles race team, which he kept for several years. In that time he competed regularly at the Matchams races, as it seems did a number of us older club members long before we all actually knew each other. From 2004 to 2013 Allan attended all the Mountain Mayhem 24 hour races in that period and in the latter of those years rode with Team Sumo, a Newforce offshoot that quickly gained notoriety at UK endurance events for their riding in sumo suits and enthusiastic partying.

In more recent times he has stepped back from serious competition and has wholeheartedly embraced fatbikes for his off roading, currently owning two of them. He is also a bivy enthusiast, quite happily swapping a warm cosy bed at home for quiet patch of ground somewhere in the woods. At any time of year.

Among his other interests is kayaking, which he approaches with a more relaxed attitude than his riding, owning enough of them for his wife and two daughters to join him on the water.

I'm not aware of any burning ambitions currently coursing through Allan's veins but some years ago he fulfilled one by taking part in a mountain biking holiday in the Himalayas. I can only guess that reining in his professional life is quite high on the agenda.





