

NEWFORCE

Summer 2017 Issue 144





Two from the (eastern) Isle of Wight ride: Above - heading towards Sandown Bay from Culver Down. Below - freshening up before the pub lunch



Editorial

By Keith Whitten

Welcome to the summer edition of Newforce. The highlight of the year so far must be the barbecue we had to celebrate our club's 25th birthday. There was a good turnout, estimated at 50 or so people, plenty of food and fine weather. I didn't make it to the ride myself but did ride out to Wilverly in time for the food and socializing. A number of club members had brought their families along and I'm sure that everyone who was there would agree that it was a very pleasant afternoon in the spring sunshine. I've put a selection of photos from the day in the centre pages. Can we do another 25 years?

That barbecue was now over two months ago and I should probably apologise for the lateness of this newsletter. This is partly due to me taking a few days off to ride my motorbike to the far north of Scotland and back. My target was Durness, the most north-westerly village in mainland Britain. It proved to be a very fine destination and I have now resolved to return there equipped with bicycle, canoe (for exploring the many close islets with abandoned dwellings) and rather more time than the two hours I had before having to turn round and start heading for home. Whilst I was up in the north of Scotland I did manage to catch up with one of the organisers of the Singlespeed Euros and join him for a loop of one of his local trails on a loaned On-One Fatty. In 20 miles we rode up one hill. A rather big one!

And now, here is a piece of news, from Martin Wheat, our membership secretary:

At the last committee meeting we discussed changing the way membership reminders and cards are distributed, to make it work a bit better for you and your membership secretary, and to become marginally more paperless.

First, we plan to distribute membership cards quarterly, with the magazine.

Obviously, if you renew your subscription on the anniversary of joining the club, we don't want to leave you with an expired card between then and you receiving your magazine, so the expiry date on your new card will be for when we expect the magazine to be distributed.

Second, we aim to send subscription reminders by e-mail so that they reach you closer to your renewal date.

Please send a mail to **membership@newforce.org.uk** letting us know your preferred e-mail address. We already have e-mail addresses for those who pay using PayPal, so if that is the one you prefer for this purpose, you need do nothing. Either way, please be sure that mail from **membership@newforce.org.uk** will not be dumped in the spam box before you see it.

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	Nigel Aiken naiken@theiet.org	
Ride Leader	Susan Marsland susanm@newforce.org.uk	
Newsletter Editor	Keith Whitten keith@newforce.org.uk	
Website Editor	James Davenport jamesd@newforce.org.uk	
Other Committee Members	Ian Taylor John Hawkins Linda Hawkins Eleanor Rutter Dean Johnson Clive French	Steve Keith Malcolm (Max) Streeton Stu Rogers Karen Clark Nick Clark

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** 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:

Vindaloo.

A fast paced, strenuous Thursday night ride with no avoiding the more challenging terrain and obstacles, usually with a fairly lengthy pub stop and a late return.

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.

Summer and Autumn Rides List

Sunday 06 August 2017 Godshill (ref SU 170150)

Designated pub: The Fighting Cocks at Godshill

Directions to the start point are to get to the Fighting Cocks pub at Godshill just east of Fordingbridge, and then follow the road to the side of the pub. It goes downhill and through a ford before climbing up the other side of the valley. The road twists sharply at the top of the hill and the car park is right at this location.

From here sensible choices are southwards towards Pitts Wood and Hampton Ridge, Hasely, Holly Hatch and Linwood or northwards through Godshill Inclosure, Hale, Bohemia, Lover and maybe up towards the Pepperbox or looping back eastwards via Bramshaw Telegraph.

**Sunday 20 August 2017 Wilton near Salisbury; South Street car park
- Day Ride (ref SU 094 308)**

Designated pub: Lunch stop during the day-ride

The start point is the car park next to the Michael Herbert Hall, South Street, Wilton, SP2 0JS

The plan is to head up Grovely Hill to the Roman road that runs through the woods at the top. The Roman road continues for approximately 4 miles and has a number of offshoots that can be explored. Half day riders could drop down to Teffont Magna or Dinton whilst those wanting a longer ride will be required to cross the A303 (with care) at Chilmark Down. From there, there is some good woodland singletrack that leads through to the continuation of the roman road which can then be re-joined. There are several routes north out of these woods that offer great views from the ridge before dropping down to Upton Lovell in the Wylve Valley where the Prince Leopold pub, set on the riverbank would make a good refreshment stop. The return would be similar to the route out but with a few deviations, notably taking a route to the south of Grovely woods that on some maps is marked as the Monarch's Way. For those reluctant to go straight home after the ride, Cobbs tearooms in the Wilton shopping village and the Greyhound pub are both within five minutes' walk of the car park.

3 Sept: Club Ride, Exton. The Shoe Inn

Designated pub: The Shoe Inn

The village of Exton is approximately 7 miles south east of Winchester and 4 miles north east of Bishops Waltham. From there the South Downs Way can be accessed as well as the many trails to the east of Winchester.

17 Sept: Club Ride, Three Legged Cross pub, near Verwood, (SU 096 051)

Designated pub: Three Legged Cross Inn

This is a new-ish starting point for the club, in lieu of the cramped parking at Bakers Hanging on the road to Verwood from Ringwood. However there have been a few Jalfrezi outings starting from here. You will find the start location by taking the road to Three Legged Cross and the Woolsbridge Industrial Estate in close by the entrance to the Moors Valley Country Park. We will use the Woolsbridge Industrial Estate on-street kerbside parking. The turning into the industrial estate is at SU 096 051. Although the plan is to visit the Three Legged Cross Inn after the ride, please do not use the pub car park and abandon your car for 3 hours, it will be frowned upon by the pub management.

The intention is to ride the usual mix of tracks in the Ringwood Forest environs.

1 Oct: Club Ride, Surrey Hills, Day ride

In previous years there has been a group from the club head to the area on the Saturday and stay overnight for two days riding. Other club members have set off early to meet up with them for a single day. Please look on the club message board or website rides list for further details of where the start point will be.

15 Oct: Club Ride, Cheriton Flower Pots

Designated pub: The Flower Pots Pub

We have ridden from here a few times now. We usually make use of the field at the back of the pub for parking on the basis that we will spend lots of money at the bar upon our return. If we do not benefit from a BBQ, there is limited availability of Sunday Lunches (with a need to pre-book) but bar snacks are readily available. We could head north towards New Alresford and pick up on the Oxdrove network of tracks or we could stay southwards and take in parts of the South Downs Way and the tracks around Brockwood Park and Bramdean.

29 October: Fritham (ref SU 230 140)

Designated pub: The Royal Oak

From here you can ride along the RUPP leading northwards from Eyeworth Pond and from there, onto the track that leads towards Hale before turning back towards Fordingbridge and picking up on Hampton Ridge to get back to Fritham. Other options from this starting point are eastwards through Kings Garn Gutter and circle down through Minstead and Bolderwood for a ride with some ups and downs. Alternatively, Hampton Ridge itself can take you through to Hasley Inclosure and thence to the Red Shoot Inn and Milkham Inclosure before riding back through Sluifers and back across Stoney Cross to Minstead.

12 Nov: Club Ride, Swinley Forest

Designated pub: cake and coffee at the Visitor Centre

Swinley Forest is an area of Windsor Forest located between Bracknell and Bagshot to the west of the A322. Cycling is permitted on hard tracks and within a specific expert mountain bike area. It is a condition of cycling within Swinley Forest that you must hold a cycle permit if over 16 years of age and we must comply with the requirements of English Nature. The forest is open 24 hours a day 7 days a week with access available from a number of entrances. The car park is at The Look Out Discovery Centre which not only is the source of Day Permit purchase, but has toilets and cafe is open every day except Christmas and Boxing Day from 10am to 5pm. Whilst the Swinley Forest Map showing the boundaries of the areas available to ride is available to purchase from the Visitor Centre if you are not familiar with the land but whenever we ride there, we make our own way around usually guided expertly by Carolyn. There are purpose built singletrack trails within the Expert Mountain Bike Area but these are not marked on the Forest Map so it is a case of finding a likely looking track and riding it.

26 Oct: Club Ride, Watership Down

Watership Down is visible to the east of the A34, north of Whitchurch. It is a hilly area by Hampshire standards and I remember many years ago the challenge being to ride the path that goes straight up Beacon Hill to the hill fort at its summit. Full details of the start point for this ride are not available at the time of writing so please check the message board or current magazine issue if you intend joining this one.

10 Dec: Club Ride, James Hill car park, followed by Christmas lunch at the New Forest Inn Christmas ride and lunch, (ref SU 283 083)

Designated pub: The New Forest Inn, Emery Down – Christmas lunch.

The best start point is the car park just 1/4 mile along the road from the pub in the direction of the Portuguese Fireplace. It has worked alright for us each time we have ridden from here because parking is at a premium at the pub. We simply leave the cars where they are and walk along the road. Starting from here we have a choice of the Reptiliary, Rhinefield, Bolderwood, Burley, Minstead and so on; all good stuff and just right for working up an appetite.

26 Dec: Club Ride, The Drift Inn

Designated pub: The Drift Inn

The Drift Inn is located right next to the Beaulieu Road station so it's conceivable that anyone not wanting to drive to this one could arrive by train. If there are any running at that time on Boxing Day. The Boxing Day rides are usually a little less strenuous than most, something that will be aided by the largely flat nature of this area of the Forest, but undeniably good social occasions with a higher percentage of riders staying on for a drink or two afterwards than is normally seen.

Four Hot Ladies

(Ros Harper, Penni Harrison, Sue Marsland and Sheelagh Evans)

Following on from our recent trips to Wales with those splendid vistas and leg burning climbs, a few of us were keen to do more of the same on our own doorstep, so the Isle of Wight was an obvious choice. After a long period of dry weather, promising dry trails and fast descents, we set off from Yarmouth in cloudless blue skies, well coated in sun block. Sue had sorted the route and the rest of us were happy to follow mindlessly, chatting non stop until the gradient increased up over the golf course, and it went a bit quiet. Views of the Needles on the outbound route over Compton Down were indeed magnificent, although we had to remind each other to 'stand and stare' instead of the usual focus on grinding up each hill and flying down the other side. Heading west over a series of 'Downs' which felt more like 'Ups', we were lucky to find a section of sweet single track down through the trees in Brightstone Forest. This started with a simple bomb hole, easily seen from the bridlepath, and wound its way down through loamy corners, nicely bermed up in places, a few basic drop offs and some rather dodgy north shore. What looked like a straight boring chute on the map, turned out to be an absolute blast; this is what xc riding is all about. After wriggling around various chalky or gravelly trails between Shorewell and Carisbrooke, we came to rest at The Blacksmith's Arms on Bowcombe Down, a pub with fabulous views over the Solent, great local ale, chips and a plastic washing up bowl of water under each table in the garden. Thirsty dogs near us didn't stand a chance though, as one of us used it as a personal paddling pool and outdoor shower - very refreshing thank you! After eating we had plenty of energy to winch ourselves back up to Brightstone with the reward of a whizz down the grassy slope on Newbarn Down with fingers off the brakes. By now I was beginning to get a headache from the heat (absolutely nothing to do with the beer) and we were all thinking about ice cream as we crashed and scratched along the hard packed, cow churned, brambly trail below Compton Down. With perfect timing we rolled into Yarmouth, and Penni treated us to a proper old school vanilla cornet as our home bound ferry came alongside the dock. It had been the hottest day of the year, we had ridden hard, eaten well and had fun - life doesn't get any better than this - even in Wales!









Singlespeed European Championships 2017

By Keith Whitten

At the 2016 event in Slovenia last year the weather gods smiled on us. The Thursday before the event saw heavy rain but for the Friday, Saturday and Sunday the sun shone more or less continuously, the riding was good and spontaneous trips to the local river to cool off en masse added to the fun of the weekend. So when it was announced that the Scots had won the right to host the 2017 event there was a slight sense of deflation. Sure the scenery would be sweet but it was bound to be cold, grey and damp, wasn't it? Nevertheless the desire to catch up with good friends I'd made in Slovenia and the Midlands based SSUK events spurred me on to enter and in the weeks leading up to the trip I was getting out my winter kit both for riding and camping.

Oh how wrong I was. The Friday drive up saw warm sunshine throughout the country and while on the Saturday of the race the south and west of England were rudely woken at 5am by some of the most spectacular thunderstorms to hit the area for several years. Scotland retained the warm air of the previous few days and with clear skies the temperature quickly rose to the high twenties, accompanied by a stickiness more associated with Mediterranean locations. And the race venue was hilly. Very hilly, in dense forest that killed any hint of a cooling breeze.

The location for the event was the village of Evanton, 20 miles north of Inverness so it wasn't just that I had to drive to Scotland, I had to drive to Scotland and then nearly all the way through to the other side of it. The satnav reckoned on ten and a half hours driving time. Roadworks (mostly on the A9) and a short lunch stop slowed that to twelve and a half hours but I rolled up to the campsite at six on the Friday evening in plenty of time to set up, eat and then renew friendships over a beer or two. I'd missed the afternoon ride and distillery tour but short of setting off on the Thursday evening and driving overnight there wasn't a lot I could do about that. Maybe I should have?

Saturday morning was sunny and warmer than any of the locals could remember it being for a very long time. We dropped our bikes in a field close to the village and then were treated to a bagpipe and drum marching band leading us on a parade through the village centre and back. There was a speech by the mayor or whatever they call them in Scotland and local aerobics instructress led a warm up although with the strength of the sun most of us were pretty warm already.

Finally we were off with the traditional run back to the field we'd left the bikes in to find them equally traditionally moved and mixed up. As previously mentioned, the course was on a densely wooded hillside. All the climbs were on gravel tracks but so steep that everyone walked most of them, even the fast folks competing for the win. The downs were lots of fun. Not fast but technical, twisty, turny, steep woodland trails with log hops, off camber sections, sharp turns and step downs that took many folk to the limit of their riding skills. I may not have been in contention for the win but I was very pleased to ride all the descents without a single foot down.

After the race was done we had a bit of chill out time in the afternoon before the evening prize-giving and party. The trophies given to the winners (male and female) were particularly impressive. Five foot long engraved steel swords. It was noted that it was perhaps for the best that both the recipients were from the British Isles so there would be no need to explain them to customs officials on the way home. For the rest of the evening (and a large part of the night) the band played, the beer flowed and cabers were tossed. Yes, really. Aside from people just having a go it was the caber tossing that decided who gets to host next year's event and the winners of that were the Dutch guys from the mountain bike museum in Arnhem. Not too far from the Channel Tunnel then.

Sunday morning most people packed up and started what for some was a very long journey home. With some friends I hiked to the monument at the top of the hill overlooking Evanton, before driving with them to stay the night in Dumfries on the borders. The distinctive monument had been used plenty in the facebook build up to the event so it was good to see it close up before leaving.

We stayed the night in a bunkhouse in the trail centre in Dalbeattie forest, barbecueing our evening meal at elevenish and making good use of the hot tub and sauna until the best part of two am.

In the morning we rode the Dalbeattie red trail before saying our goodbyes and heading our separate ways home. The red trail was a nice seven miles of swoopy singletrack through the woods, thankfully without any particularly vicious hills. The weather had broken by then and was cool and lightly raining, which continued for most of my drive home.

The journey back took about seven hours with a bit of slow bank holiday traffic through the Midlands but was still manageable enough to reinforce my opinion that the Seven Stanes trails in southern Scotland really are a viable destination for a long weekend away from our area. With a clear run they can be reached in six hours driving which with three nights away, would allow two full days and two half days riding. A club trip for next summer?

Events Calendar

September 2017

SingleSpeed UK will be held up in the Lake District. This one's promised to be a 'back to basics' event with some riding, a party with plenty of beer and basic camping facilities ie, a tap in a field.

September 30th 2017

Tide to Tide. 6 Hour Endurance Race, Pembry Sands.

This race, running from 2pm to 8pm takes in plenty of singletrack in Pembry Country Park and a section of the Cefn Sidan beach. It's the same location that several of our members went to earlier this year for the 'Battle On The Beach'.

November 5th 2017

Gorrick 25th Anniversary Event, Crowthorne Wood

Newforce are not the only mountain Biking organisation to be celebrating their quarter century this year. At the time of writing there is no word on quite what this event is.

December 2nd 2017

Global Fatbike Day. Various locations.

This is the day when Fatbikers around the world get together in groups to ride their bikes and drink beer. Charlie the Bikemonger will likely be organising the closest gathering down in Swanage with an evening meal at American Mike's café. Charlie usually has demo bikes which can be booked in advance for those who don't own fatties but are keen to see what all the fuss is about.

December 10th 2017

Club Christmas ride and dinner.

Full details of this will appear in the next issue of Newforce and on the message board. Please remember that the earlier you can confirm your attendance the easier it is for the organisers.

The Isle of Wight Ride

By Keith Whitten

This year's Island ride was different from previous years in a couple of ways. Firstly we rode the eastern side of the Island whereas every previous time we've been there that I am aware of we've ridden the west. Secondly, the ride took place a couple of weeks before the school summer holidays rather than the usual couple of weeks afterwards. The change of location was my idea and having local knowledge from growing up in that area my offer to lead the ride was accepted. That local knowledge was a little patchy when it comes to trails as I moved off the Island in 1985 long before I owned a mountain bike. Getting to the start was a little different to the regular 'lets all meet in this car park' of most other rides with three different recommended ferry crossings allowing riders to converge at Ryde Esplanade for the 10:15 start. I accepted Steve Samways' offer of parking at his house and set off a little before seven. From there we rode to catch the Gosport ferry over to Portsmouth where we met with 'other' steve, Pete, Craig, Chris and Rob at the university car park and the Fast Ferry terminal. Wightlink had previously told me that there is a limit of 21 bikes on each crossing but with a large group of road cyclists also going over that limit was well and truly ignored. We'll give Wightlink a good mark for customer service.

Once on the Island we had a half hour to see who else would turn up. Two others did, Marco and Gary who travelled on the Southampton to Cowes and Portsmouth to Fishbourne routes respectively. Well done to both of them for making the commitment to cross the Solent and ride solo to the start.

I won't bore you with a blow by blow account of everywhere we rode but highlights were a very sweet half mile of singletrack descending from Brading Down and the views from Culver Down. To get up onto Culver Down we tackled the short but very steep and stony 'Impossible Climb' as someone has labelled it on Strava. Steve and Pete were the only two to make it up without footing. Congratulations to them. Also up on Culver Down was a snack hut selling some of the finest coffee and walnut cake I've ever had the pleasure of and a couple of hundred yards on, at the end of the Downs lane there was the old gun emplacement with both a history lesson from the information board and opportunities for a bit of trialsy play-riding. From there the mile and a bit

downhill roll along the cliff path to Yaverland was very pleasant in the warm sunshine. Yes, we were well and truly blessed with British summer weather at it's best. Strong, almost unbroken sunshine and warm but not oppressively hot temperatures. Shady and breezy spots made pleasant breaks from the heat of direct sun and it was with a measure of reluctance that we headed away from Sandown's fine beaches.

Our lunch stop was the White Lion at Arreton. A mile before that we'd found an irrigation pipeline with a small leak. Several of us took the opportunity to wash sweaty heads and faces in the fine spray there. The food was good and the pub wasn't too busy, probably because more people were down the beach than visiting the island's inland attractions.

After lunch an hour's riding mainly on bridleways and farm tracks got us to Wootton Bridge where we said goodbye to Marco who turned off back to Cowes. Shortly after that we dropped Gary at the Fishbourne ferry and the remainder of us returned to Ryde along the cycle track past the impressive Quarr Abbey. We missed the 3:47 ferry by seconds which left us an hour to fill before the next one. The Minghella's ice cream shop opposite the pier was a good start.

It was a cracking day out and hopefully the nine of us who went have proved that the east side of the Island has plenty to offer and is a destination worth revisiting. For the record we rode 31 miles as a group. Maybe next year we should do two Isle of Wight rides, one either end?



Club Trip to Ride The Trans Cambrian Way

By Sue Marsland

I happened to be looking at the Birds on Bikes facebook page when I spotted a ladies Trans Cambrian trip, having failed to complete this trip a few years ago due to dodgy a camel back water issue (I will not go into anymore detail) I thought I would go to the website and see when it was on. From the web site I realised that there was a trip every other weekend and that Polly and her partner Phill even did private trips. I decided to email round any in the club who I thought might be interested to see if 8 people were willing to come – the response was overwhelming with 15 people saying they wanted to come... After a few emails and telephone calls Phill and Polly agreed to run two groups on the first weekend in June.

After a few pull outs due to injuries and replacements 15 of us headed to Mid Wales on a sunny Thursday late afternoon. All meeting up for food and a pint or two at the Horse and Jockey Pub in Knighton.

There was a fast and medium group – here is some info on the ‘social’ medium. Riders - Susan, Penni, Sheelagh Eleanor, Sue, Paul, Chris and Mike Leader Polly.

Distance day 1 32mile 1216m, day 2 44miles 1652m and Day 3 36 miles 1277m.

Day one morning grey and overcast, with rain just before lunch. Most of the morning climbing on grass. Penni at the front as usual...





The afternoon was dry with some great trails and some fast downhill single track. After a long hard cycle along some muddy, grassy single track we had a short steep grass climb up to a village hall where we were promised afternoon tea. A poster advertising the cafe showed the reason why Sheelagh cycled up the hill... the only rider to do so...

We then cycled on to Rhayadar and our accommodation. All wondering why we had an energy gel on our pillow..



We were staying in different B&Bs and self catering accommodation. Meeting up in a local pub to start celebrating having completed day one! Followed by a large needed meal. (Phill and Polly in the foreground)



Day 2 and a better day weather wise – some sunshine. We started with a long road climb including puke hill! The views and riding after more than made up for it.

This was to be a day of splashing through puddles and stream crossings. Penni got the main river crossing a bit wrong! Fortunately she and her bike were OK to carry on.



After a long cycle around one of the reservoirs we stopped for an early lunch. A long way still to go so Eleanor and Chris take a quick nap. (Bet if Eleanor had gone with the fast group she would not have had time for a nap!)



A lovely dry afternoon for the medium group, the fast group an hour ahead got very wet in a heavy shower.

Towards the end of a long days ride we realised why we were given an energy gel – a couple of very long hard hills to be climbed before arriving at our overnight B&B.





Day 3 Again started overcast. Chris had to pull out at the start due to a bad cold and breathing difficulties. The rest of us headed up a lovely valley on some single track followed by gravel tracks until we got to the forest with the Mach trails and had a blast down a couple of them before heading to an Osprey lookout.



After a long grass climb and an interesting decent down the side of a gully and steep climb up to a moorland mountain top with great views we arrived at one of the main descents on the trip. After a long loose slate covered downhill section we met up with the fast group guys who were just finishing their lunch. We were only halfway down the hill with a long grass descent still to look forward to.

A lovely sunny afternoon to finish of a great three days of riding. Stream crossings, hot climbs great down hills and amazing views.

We made it!

112miles 4,145m of climbing, too many calories and pints to count....

Everyone had a great time, the camaraderie in the medium group and at the meals with the fast riders was great.

Thanks to Polly and Phill for their fantastic leading, organisation and company. If anyone is interested in doing this trip have a look at their website www.mtbwales.

££ Club Discounts ££

The following shops offer a discount on presentation
of your membership card:

Cycle Experience www.cyclex.co.uk

Brookley Road, Brockenhurst tel: 01590 624204

179 Barrack Road, Christchurch tel: 01202 486278

10-20 South Street, Hythe tel: 02380 840765

9 Westcroft Parade, Station Rd, New Milton BH25 6JG tel 01425 837071

Cycle World Wessex

36 Thornhill Park Road, Southampton. tel: 02380 471140

109a Winchester Road, Romsey. tel: 01794 513344

373 London Road, Portsmouth. tel: 02392 666551

Sandy Balls Cycle Centre

Godshill, Fordingbridge. tel: 01425 657707

Bournemouth Cycleworks, www.bournemouthcycleworks.co.uk

1143-1145 Christchurch Rd, Bournemouth, BH7 6BW tel 01202 424945

Primera www.primera-sports.com

183 Bournemouth Rd, Parkstone, 01202 775588

244 Charminster Rd, Charminster, 01202775588

Perfect Balance Cycles

87 Junction Road, Totton. tel: 02380 871777

Hargroves Cycles www.hargrovescycles.co.uk

150 Commercial Rd Totton. tel: 02380 862011,

Also in Winchester, Chichester & Fareham

Peter Hansford Cycles

91 Olivers Battery Road South, Winchester tel: 01962 877555

Southampton Road, Park Gate

32a Hursley Road, Chandlers Ford

Ride

111 Commercial Road, Parkstone. tel: 01202 741744

The Hub Cycleworks

105-107 Shirley Road, Southampton.

Hampshire Trailer and Roofrack Centre

Solent Business Centre, Millbrook Road, Southampton. tel: 02380 333111

The Woods Cyclery

56 High Street, Lyndhurst, SO43 7BG. tel 02380 282028



A couple more photos from the Trans-Cambrian Way trip



