

NEWFORCE

Summer 2018 Issue 148





Editorial

By Keith Whitten

Welcome to the Summer 2018 issue of Newforce. It appears to be the season or maybe the year for club members to be riding the South Downs way, a number of them attempting to do it in a single day. Bruce Pringle and Phil Hotston did it in a very creditable 13 hours, the former Vindaloo riders including myself, Allan Knight and Martin Wheat very nearly did it but ran out of daylight at Alfriston, just 7 miles short. Pete Dobson has entered the British Heart Foundation South Downs Way in a Day on the 14th July and will be riding it with a broken toe after Thursday 5th's Jalfrezi ride, and finally there will be the two day charity ride that Steve Samways has organised and 16 club members will be taking part in.

Any more that I don't know about?

The weather has certainly smiled on all the attempts so far undertaken at the time of writing, with blue skies, stupendous views and bone dry trails. My favourite memory of my own attempt is of following two pairs of riders downhill at about half distance with a strong cross wind blowing huge plumes of dust across the open ground as we all sped along.

The Isle of Wight (east) club ride on 10th June was also blessed with good weather, sunny but not as hot as last year. We rode a similar route to the previous year's ride but ate at the Hare and Hounds pub at Downend, above Arreton so as to get all the biggest hills out of the way before lunch. This proved to be a popular decision, with the Hare and Hounds getting the thumbs up from all who ate there.

So how long will this good weather last? At the time of writing there's no end forecast to the dry sunny weather. Will we start getting bored of having no puddles to dodge or mud to feel for traction whilst riding through?

This summer is certainly shaping up to be one to remember. A good run of weather and the England football team having their best run at a world cup for many years. How long will it last?

Photos: Opposite are a couple from the former Viindy's South Downs Ride

The cover photos are all from the club Exmoor trip.

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 September.**

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:

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 Rides List

Ride notes provided by Roger Shephard

Sunday 08 July 2018

James Hill car park, followed by Beer Festival and BBQ at the New Forest Inn – (Ride at ref SU 283 083 – Pub @ SU286 084)

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 Reptilliary, Rhinefield, Bolderwood, Burley, Minstead and so on; all good stuff and just right for working up an appetite.

Please note that if you have previously taken advantage of parking roadside on the verge, you are now denied that opportunity because a series of protection stakes have been set along the road edge to prevent people clogging up the road and causing a hazard. The choice is now either the pub car park or the official forest gravel car parks.

Sunday 22 July 2018

Corfe Castle, Purbecks (all day ride) (ref SY 955 827)

Designated pub: Lunch stop

This ride can be reached either by driving all the way the Corfe, or in the past some members have parked in Poole and taken the Sandbanks ferry and riding the short distance to the start point. Whatever your point of origin, the ride will start officially from the Norden Park and Ride facility just near Corfe Castle and that is the map reference given above. Please note that there is a car parking charge payable at meters in the Park and Ride facility. The start time will be the usual 10.00am roll out of the car park. Please allow a bit of extra time to get to the start as it is summertime and the tourists will be out in force.

Sunday 05 August 2018

Peaslake, Surrey Hills (ref TQ083 445)

Designated pub: TBA

Lovely starting point this, in striking distance of so much good riding; Holmbury Hill, Leith Hill, North Downs, just too much to list. Well worth the extra effort to get there.

Sunday 19 August 2018

Fritham (ref SU 230 140)

Designated pub: The Royal Oak at Fritham

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 Slufers and back across Stoney Cross to Minstead.

Sunday 02 September 2018 Farley Mount, Westwood (ref SU 420 292)

Designated pub: The Dolphin, Hursley

Sometimes we meet at Crab Wood picnic area and sometimes we meet at the Monument car park. This venue is halfway between Crab Wood and the Monument at the junction with the road coming from Hursley and Standon on the A3090.

There are some terrific tracks in this area. Parnholt Wood has a great downhill run which leads to Kings Somborne. From here it is possible to take the Test Way up to Stockbridge and circle out round Crawley almost reaching Wherwell not far from Andover before heading back via Sparsholt and West Wood. For anyone looking for a shorter trip, you could do worse than ride around the many trails in West Wood itself perhaps linking up with some sections of the Clarendon Way.

At this time of year hopefully there will not be mud to contend with but there is a possibility that with some late summer rain some of the tracks might be a bit slippery. There will be some deep ruts to negotiate but don't let that put you off; count it as a valuable lesson in staying upright.

Sunday 16 September 2018
689)

Marlborough – all day (ref SU 188

Suggested pub for lunch stop: The Inn With The Well, Ogbourne St George.

The map reference is the public car park behind the shops on the main road but you get to it by taking the B3052 local residential road that runs south of and parallel to the High Street which is the main A4 road. There is never a guarantee that car park charges will not apply on Sundays, so it's best to take some coins for the parking meters, just in case. Last time we rode from here four years ago the weather was awful, but it was good two years prior to that and another two years prior to that as it happens. We could cycle up onto Barton Down and then head east towards the western end of the Ridgeway near Avebury. After this, we could follow the Ridgeway to Barbury Castle and then take a variety of loops to Ogbourne St George for the lunch stop at the Inn with the Well (www.theinnwiththewell.com) which welcomes riders and walkers. This is good riding country so we don't have to stick to that route suggestion.

Sunday 30 September 2018 Appleslade Inclosure
092)

(ref SU 183

Designated pub: The Red Shoot Inn - for the Beer and Cider Festival

Yes, we are back again at Appleslade Inclosure and the added attraction this time is that it is a short way from the Red Shoot Inn and the ride has been timed to coincide with a beer and cider festival. After the ride you will be greeted by a bewildering array of barrels on stillage racks together with a hog roast, so refuelling after the ride could be quite comprehensive.

For the ride itself, we could start with a sharp rise, but on cold muscles this is not recommended so we might make our way across Ibsley Common (soft, gritty sand and a little bit of a slog) towards Abbot's Well and Hampton Ridge and then circle around Anderwood and Sloden Inclosures, Splash Bridge and Broomy Inclosure, then Milkham Inclosure and back via Red Shoot Wood and finally come down the hill we didn't start with.

<p>If you know of anywhere with good riding up to an hour and a half's drive from Southampton that we appear not to have been to please contact the committee to suggest it.</p>
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Sunday 14 October 2018

Isle of Wight – the western end - all day from Lymington

(ref SZ 333 955)

Designated pub: Pub lunch on the ride followed by the Bar on the Ferry

This will be a day ride starting from the Lymington ferry terminal and starting on the Island at Yarmouth and it will be a fun day out. Whatever happens, the choice of riding is excellent, the views from the ridges are stunning and the pubs are friendly and welcoming. Remember to bring loads of money for the ferry, the pub, the catering facilities on the ferry and most importantly, a selection of coinage to feed the meter at the car park.

TIMINGS AND OTHER DETAILS TO BE ANNOUNCED

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.

<p>If you would like details of all rides to the end of the year, contact Martin Wheat, membership secretary as he will likely still have spare copies of the club 2018 calendar</p>
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Committee Meeting Minutes

The New Forest Inn, Emery Down,

Date: 12 June 2018

Present: Roger Shephard; Ian Taylor; Mike Tomlinson; Steve Samways; Sue Marsland; Martin Wheat; Allan Knight

Apologies: Dean Johnson; Clive French; Eleanor Rutter; Karen & Nick Clark; Keith Whitten

Matters arising from the March 2018 committee meeting:

The May Exmoor trip was a huge success – many thanks to Steve Samways for arranging.

Forest of Dean September trip – omit from list as difficult to plan routes in FoD without guide / local knowledge.

Ongoing note - For large / popular club ride meeting places (ie Swinley), we need to be clear exactly where to meet so we don't miss people.

Rides list - List to be compiled in September for following year – bring ideas to next committee meeting! Members to be canvassed for new routes – via magazine (**Keith Whitten**) and website (**Allan Knight**)

June 2018 Meeting Minutes:

Club Rides 2018

Ride leaders required for upcoming rides. Longslade Bottom – Penni to lead Medium group.

8th July (Emery Down) to be ride only as the New Forest Inn Beer Festival / BBQ is the following week. Can offer an option to stop for food after.

Summer BBQ

2nd September Farley Mount to be BBQ ride. **Sue Marsland** to contact the Dolphin pub to arrange.

Membership

Membership is still declining.

Currently stands at 99 memberships including 6 which have expired.

Website contact emails to be cut down to two to make membership

enquiries easier (**Sue Marsland / Jack Lawrie**):

Membership Sue Marsland

Finance

Ian Taylor to review expenditure / income with **Keith Whitten & Martin Wheat**.

Currently circa 20 members short to balance costs.

Consider reducing number of magazine issues? To be reviewed at next committee meeting.

Cheque signatories:

Nigel Aiken to submit form for change to Santander.

Two signatories deemed sufficient – Ian & Linda Hawkins.

Magazine

Steve Samways to write up Exmoor trip

Member interviews suggested – ‘meet the chairman’.

GDPR

Ian Taylor proposed a Data Protection Policy for the club.

This was accepted by all present committee members.

To be added to website (**Jack Lawrie / Sue Marsland**) and included in next magazine (**Keith Whitten**)

Cookies policy to be added to website (**Jack Lawrie**)

Ian Taylor to review content of Payment page

Website

Change of host to be notified to Committee before committing (**Jack Lawrie**)

AOB

Posters have been sent to bike shops to promote the club by Martin Wheat.

SSUK (SingleSpeed UK champs) volunteers required – use forum (**Keith Whitten**).

List of ride leaders to be updated (**Allan Knight / Sue Marsland**)

Next Meeting

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

The Mary Townley Loop

By Pete Dobson

The Mary Townley Loop is a loop off, and re-joining, the Pennine Bridleway in the South Pennines of Lancashire and Yorkshire for horses and mountain bikers. It's about half the length and climbing of the South Downs Way, and despite sounding like an achievable ride in a day and the obvious advantages of it being a loop, a search of online message boards just tended to talk in terms of how many gates there are and how tough or bleak it was up there – Northerners eh?

I am/was (depending when you read this) training for the South Downs Way in a day so this sounded like good training. So whereas I normally go to Gisburn Forest when I'm in the North I decided I would have a go at this for once instead (it's certainly been around long enough now). I'd even bought new (used) short travel full suspension bike for these challenges only to realise the new bike was virtually impossible to attach to the outside of a car for a reasonable price (due to its design), and despite advice that you really do need a full suspension bike for it I ended up taking my (old, and now defunct) 100mm 29er hardtail instead.

There is also debate over where to start and what direction to do it in, and all things considered I started at the town of Waterfoot (on the West) and went clockwise. It's pretty well signposted and I was making good progress, only needing the map a few times. I did begin to take the point about the high gate count, although it turns out they are mostly concentrated around farms and towns and a lot looked held-open already anyway, maybe this was an exaggeration after-all. So it went on... lots of moors, lots of reservoirs, gates, old mill towns, a monument to the Lady Townley herself... The Pennines isn't a National Park or AONB, it can be bleak or industrial so you can see why. Having said that, it's good riding, there are a lot of nice long bumpy downhills, manageable climbs, stretches of man-made steps, and it's all perfectly doable on a 100mm hardtail after all.

I said it was well signposted and it is... but you do need to be aware of the MTL/PBW split rather than blindly following any-old PBW signs... which was my downfall (but taking the wrong turn on these long distance trials can happen to anyone!). To cut a long story short I discovered some interesting switchbacks, went past a loads of old abandoned (crashed) cars down a hillside on a very steep road hill just as it started raining, and I also clocked up an extra 12 miles in the process of taking the "wrong" PBW and then getting back on track. It was

only in the south eastern part of the loop mid to late afternoon I realised I might have a daylight problem I'd never considered when leaving at about 8:30 in the morning (it was 1st of April one week after the clocks changed). However, looking the map when I crossed the road through the town of Whitworth in the far south, I realised the only road route was actually quite long and it was busy looking too, so there was basically no escape route after all! A bit more through the woods and then I was setting off over a moor as it felt like it was actually going dark, with dwindling water and food supplies. That took some determination, and this turned out to be the biggest climb of the day too (Rooley Moor Road, not actually a road but still miles of cobbles!). Fortunately I already knew some of this as it turns into the final bit that links Lee and Crag Quarries (another Northern MTB hotspot) and I'd been waiting for it. I wasn't so tempted by the berms and tables of Crag Quarry this time, and the next PBW/MTL sign was "Waterfoot 3 miles", some relief, and it was all going to be downhill too! Hitting the road at Waterfoot with still a reasonable amount of light and the car park just round the corner I was quite pleased to have survived that one with nothing more embarrassing than one wrong turn. And with 60 miles ridden including over 6000 feet of climbing it made quite a good early SDW training outing after all.





MEET THE CLUB MEMBER – ISSUE No 1 – ROGER SHEPHARD, THE CHAIRMAN.

By Roger Shephard

While I was researching how to frame up this article and create a template for others to feature in future editions, I came across an article that I wrote about four years ago, and I thought that it might bear repeating just to set the tone of what we are trying to achieve with this series of articles.

I was lying in hospital with electrodes attached to various parts of my upper body and my little daughter ran into the ward squealing with the delight of seeing her Daddy. I had suffered a bit of an episode of heart irregularities and the suspicion was that I had had a mild heart attack and I was a thirty seven year old wreck. I realised in that moment that if I wanted see my daughter grow into a woman, I would need to change my lifestyle.

When I was eventually discharged from hospital with firm instructions to consult closely with my doctor about how to improve my chances of living into old age, I took the decision to follow that advice and on the recommendation of my doctor, I took up jogging but all that did for me was to shake my leg joints to pieces.

After a hasty re-consultation, my doctor declared that I should try body weight-supported exercise and in that regard his recommendation was to try swimming. I apologise to any enthusiastic swimmers in the Club but there is only so much tile counting that a sane man can take when doing interminable lengths of the swimming pool.

After a hasty re-consultation, my doctor suggested that my quest for an enjoyable weight supported exercise would be satisfied by cycling. I salvaged my boyhood bike from the depths of my father's shed and re-furbished it, then having enjoyed riding it immensely, bought my first "starter" road bike and didn't look back from there. When my daughter reached mini-adulthood (ie bigger than a child, smaller than a "yoof") I bought her a look-alike mountain bike and seeing the smile it brought to her face, I gave it a thrash around the local woods. I was hooked so I needed to find one that fitted me. Even at that time, I knew that you only got what you paid for, and I couldn't afford a proper bike at new prices,

so I looked through the small ads and eventually came across a Specialized Stumpjumper which all the magazines said was the bees-knees. It was priced at £250.00 secondhand, which was a lot of money back then, but I had to have it. I parted with the cash and took it home with me, cleaned it up, changed the brake pads and tyres and I was in heaven.

I loved that bike. It was fully rigid, front and back and it rode like a dream. It had bar ends, a 7 speed cassette and big chain rings pre-dating the compact drive. Remember, this was in the days when suspension was a pad of elastomer between the handle bars and the steerer tube and we called it a Flexstem. My Stumpy didn't have this technological bit of wizardry so any bumpy downhills taken with enthusiasm resulted in arms like Popeye, but oh boy, was it fun? It took me everywhere and even when I graduated to something more plush, by-passing front suspension forks and going straight to full suspension, I loved my first mountain bike so much that I couldn't bear to see it go, so it stayed with me in storage in my garage until quite recently when I simply needed the space and had to move it on.

So, who is the Chairman, and what makes him tick?

Name: Roger Shephard

Age: Qualified for a pension a few years ago.

Club member: My membership number is 79 so I am not too far behind the founding fathers. Also, I have been Chairman for 20 years I think, but nobody has given me a long service medal so I can't be sure. No doubt the exact date is in the Minutes archive somewhere and I expect Martin Wheat may well have come across it when he was researching for his series of articles charting the history of the club.

Bikes: Just the two: a Trek 9.7 carbon full suss mountain bike with 26 inch mountain bike sized wheels, and a Trek carbon Domane road bike with 650mm (27") road bike sized wheels.

Riding preferences: When I was younger, I liked nothing better than a good extended ride around the trails of Hampshire, Wiltshire, Dorset, Sussex and Surrey, and for years I would always take a day off work on my birthday to ride my bike a distance equal to my age (yes, each year it was longer than the previous year until I reached 60 after which I converted from miles to kilometres) but as aches and pains resulting from injuries have increased year-on-year I have had to cut back on duration and distance, so the Club rides of 2 to 3 hours or so are perfectly suited to the unwelcome health restrictions. Also

on the road bike, where a 100 mile ride was always eagerly anticipated, distance is now less of an essential, having given way to the need to be mindful of getting back to where I started before the knees lock up or the calves go into cramp or the shoulders start to burn.

Competition riding: Yes, I have done this too. I used to love taking part in the races that were staged at Matcham's Park around the woods and dusty heaths situated beyond Ringwood on the north eastern margins of Bournemouth (Hurn) Airport. Also the X-Lite race series some of which took place around Houghton Forest from a starting grid near the motor bikers' café at the top end of Fairmile Bottom at Whiteways Lodge, north of Arundel. Not forgetting the Test Valley Tours, not a competition except with yourself unless you wanted to make it so with your riding partners. Then there were the charity rides including the 100 mile tour from Salisbury towards Swindon and on to Bath, up Brassknocker Hill and back via the Wylie Valley; and the memorable 3 day 500 mile tour of Ireland starting from Cork having first of all kissed the Blarney Stone in Blarney Castle, riding out and around the Ring of Kerry then striking north to Killarney and Tralee before taking the Tarbert ferry to ride onwards to Galway, finally turning eastwards and heading for a finish in Dublin. Irish stew and pub lock-ins; all great fun and memories to cherish.

Favourite piece of kit: Several really. Always a helmet, having hit a tree branch on a ride one time and leaving an egg sized dent in the helmet I was wearing at the time and being grateful that I was so doing. Clipless pedals and cleated shoes, so much better for control and power transfer whether on or off road. Proper gloves suited to the riding conditions.

Dream bike: One that is self-cleaning.

Most embarrassing moment: I had just bought my first set of Look clipless pedals for my shiny new road bike, a delightful Reynolds 653 steel framed custom spec'd road bike from Ribble, and I arrived at the first road junction stop line. I went to put my foot down but of course it was clipped in. Me, the bike and everything attached to it went in slow motion from vertical to horizontal. My feet stayed clipped in, and I lay on my side with the bike centred between my legs, still pointing in the direction of travel. Passing motorists gazed in wonder at the cyclist lying on the ground laughing his head off. It was at this point that I discovered how difficult it is to disengage your feet whilst lying down.

Ambition: There is a Frenchman who held the world record for the longest distance ridden by somebody aged 100 years or more. When he reached 105 years old, a new category was devised especially for him; he now holds the world record for the longest distance ridden by somebody aged 105 years or more. My ambition is to take the record away from him.



Breamore Ride - 13th May

By Ian Taylor

Having finally assembled a ride from folk scattered around Breamore and environs we set off. There can't be many more pleasant starts to a ride than cycling by Breamore House on a sunny, Sunday morning prior to a mildly heart starting and lung opening climb up through Breamore Woods to the Miz-Maze, even if the maze itself is a little underwhelming and overgrown. According to Wikipedia it is one of eight surviving turf mazes in England...not many people know that.

Rolling down from the maze the route continues north over Gallow Hill before meeting the east-west BOAT over quick Down. This chalky track was nice and dry until we encountered the small, smelly lake at its western end where it crosses Whitsbury Down Gallops; this particular muddy pool only seems to dry out in the height of summer, or not, depending on the kind of summer we have.

Turning right and heading northwest-ish took us up to the Salisbury-Blandford road along easy rolling tracks to be taken at whatever pace suited. The section just before the road used to be virtually unrideable until it was graded and re-surfaced a few years ago, so now the only thing to offend are the fly-tippers.

A 700m section of tarmac and the left turn at Jervoise Farm is the start of a long stony track with a slight downhill gradient. It's excellent fun with just enough rut and flints under wheel not to take anything for granted whilst the gentle incline allows going for it if you so wish. A short break, then a dog leg at Little Toyd Down took us along a grassy way into East Martin, on to Tidpit and north east to (Big?) Toyd Down.

Going right at Knap Barrow we encountered a lamb that was trying to get back into the field containing its mother. This allowed the group to deploy its extensive ovine skills and knowledge. The result of which was, despite having an Australian on the ride Gary, the lamb remained separated from its mother as, following a futile ten minutes of trying to re-unite them but with no shortage of advice, we rode off.

Another neat grassy downhill and we crossed the Rockbourne road, another up and speedy down then a right towards Rockbourne with some confusion ensuing about the route. Eventually heading north east, we were chastised by some 'posh folk' for riding on a footpath (it was signed at the beginning, middle and end as a bridlepath). We politely corrected their misconception and continued on our way.

Threading our way through the security at Manor Park Farm stud we completed the ride on the dog leg of horse-mangled track to the west of Upper Street before rolling back down into Breamore village. You couldn't call it a demanding ride in such fine, dry weather but you could call it very enjoyable. Thanks to Clive for the lead.

Battle On The Beach

By Keith Whitten

This was an event that the former Vindaloo riders had entered and ridden on their fatbikes last year. Their accounts of pre-race parties the night before and force 12 hangovers for race day were a little intimidating but nonetheless I thought I'd give it a go this year.

The event was held at Pembry in south west Wales over the weekend of April 14th and 15th and, leaving after work I arrived somewhere around 8ish, just in time to join the Vindys in heckling the riders in the one lap night race.

The course started with a four mile ride down the beach followed by a return on trails through the sand dunes above. The sand on the beach was very compact and smooth below the high tide line and the trails through the dunes were largely sandy soil, so all quite rideable on a regular bike except for the entry and exit from the beach, which only the fatbikes were capable of traversing with much in the way of control. There were all types of bikes present; fatbikes, regular cross country bikes and a good many cyclo-crossers. Watching the CX riders trying to get across the soft sand without getting off and running was certainly entertaining.

Sunday morning dawned without a hangover for me thankfully and after a light breakfast I headed to the start line for the three lap main race. Overnight a strong south-easterly wind had got up which was blowing straight along the beach. This meant that on my fatbike I was cruising effortlessly at 20 to 25mph in top gear for the whole of the four mile straight. Sat bolt upright, hands off the bars for a lot of it I could look round and take in the spectacle of 700 or so riders all heading down the beach. After the race there was talk of the quick boys on 'cross bikes hitting 40mph along there! The folks on singlespeeds weren't having such a good time.

The rest of the course, through the dunes was largely sheltered from the wind so overall there were some very fast times posted. Towards the end of the race and for most of my last lap the rain came down and the dunes trails got rather slippery for those on smoother tyres. I was fine on my fatbike.

Performance wise, I didn't have my best race ever but it was well worth the trip to soak up the atmosphere and enjoy that thumping tail-wind with so many other people.

Gorrick Gravity Trail Enduro – 22nd April 2018

By Keith Whitten

Gravity Trail Enduro? Well that's a bit of a mouthful isn't it? What's it all about then? Well it turned out that it was pretty much like other Enduro events in that the competitive bits were a number of timed, largely downhill sections, but in this case they were less steep, less gnarly and more pedally than most full on Enduro events. The sort of sections that would be seen as a highlight of any good cross country ride.

The event took place up at Gorrick's 'Area 51' venue up near Farnborough with six timed sections that you had to ride three times each. In any order. The electronic timing took care of all the rest. The time allowed to complete this was very generous and most people finished with plenty to spare.

At the suggestion of a friend who was also entered (but had to bale out a couple of days beforehand due to family commitments) I took my fatbike rather than my full suspension. As it turned out that really suited the woodland course where grip on the loose, pine needly soil made a bigger difference than shock absorption. It was a fun morning of riding. The climbs to the top of the sections weren't too severe and people were chatting whilst waiting in line for their turn to ride. The sun shone warmly which was very much appreciated after such a gloomy winter and the atmosphere very relaxed.

Total mileage for the morning was nothing to shout about at well under ten but with maybe a third of that being flat out sprints I certainly felt like I'd got some exercise. Riding times for each of the sections were usually between one and two minutes. I finished 11th in the 'Grand Veteran Men' out of twenty one. I did drop my chain on one run down section one and estimate I lost a minute and a half faffing to get it back on. If that's correct I could have had fifth!

There was only one other fatbike there. All the others were a mix of full sussers of varying travel and cross country hardtails, although I did see one very retro fully rigid going for it. That must have been a bumpy ride! It was the other fatbiker, a team rider for Four Fourths Lights who won the event outright.

Exmoor Trip Day 1

By Pete Dobson

(Here's Pete's view of the first day of the club trip to Exmoor that took place over the weekend of May 18th to 20th.)

The first big ride was actually not in Exmoor, but the Quantocks which is famed for its big range of great trails in a quite a small area. I've been there before, many times in fact, with the famous cider swilling "Vindy" boys so I had the advantage of actually knowing the area names and what to expect.

We met after lunch at Staple Plantation. It was a sunny day, which characterised the whole weekend, and we did the ride (mostly) as one big group. We set off downhill, given the car park's location half way up a hill and set off on an 11-ish mile figure of 8 loop of the Western side of the area taking in at least two of the well-known descents. After that first stretch going downwards and through some woodland skirting the far western perimeter we had the first big climb. I had to wait on top a bit here, I thought it was my climbing prowess but it turned out I had lost Sue by closing a gate too early at the bottom! After that confusion and regrouping we rolled on along the top and into first big descent of Somerton combe, a fast easy descent into some woods and featuring a small drop half way down and an (optional) much bigger jump later on. The single-track trails (there are several through the valley) towards the bottom lead to the edge-of-Quantocks town of Holford, and soon we were going back up the main hill again. I wasn't really expecting the next downhill, Smiths Combe, on a New Force ride (it suddenly gets very steep with big loose stones and you may be hanging on for life!), but we did and well done to everyone who survived it, the only other problem being the equally steep climb out at the other end - some pushing was required. Then back onto the ridge where we had come from and back down to the car park. All in all a good warm up for the weekend ahead.

Charlie's Beach Hut Charity South Downs Mountain Bike Challenge

Stubbington based bathroom installer, Steve Samways is organising an off road mountain bike challenge and plans to ride the whole of the South Downs Way from Winchester to Eastbourne covering 100 miles with 15 fellow cyclists from Newforce mountain biking club based in the New Forest. They are departing at 8.30am on Saturday 11th August 2018 from the King Alfred Statue in Winchester, having an overnight stay at a bunk house in Amberley and continuing on to Eastbourne Pier on the Sunday. This is 50 miles per day which is mostly off road and includes a lot of very testing hills so plenty of training and a good level of fitness will be required.

He is raising money for Charlie's Beach Hut, a Hill Head based charity run by an inspirational family. Steve's wife, Lisa was lucky enough to know Charlie Codling through the Scout Hall Pre School, Stubbington and they would like to do this in memory of Charlie.

They have the support of some kind friends who will be driving along the route as support crew, baking flapjacks to keep them all fuelled and transporting the bikes back from Eastbourne on the Sunday evening.

In March 2012 Charlie Codling was suddenly diagnosed with an incurable brain tumour. Devastatingly after only 5 months, Charlie passed away on 6 September 2012, just 2 weeks before his 5th birthday.

As a memorial to Charlie his parents, Karen and Steve Codling, decided to start the charity: Charlie's Beach Hut which uses the motto – 'Find the Wonderful in Today'.

Charlie's, is a beach hut style caravan at Perran Sands in Perranporth, Cornwall which aims to provide families of children with life limiting illnesses and families of fire-fighters that have suffered bereavement, or life changing injury

whilst in the line of duty, a relaxing environment so they can forge some forever memories, in a hope that they too can 'Find the Wonderful in Today'.

Further info

www.charliecodling.co.uk

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



Events Calendar

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

August 11th and 12th 2018

Steve Samways is organising a charity ride along the full length of the South Downs Way. All offers of sponsorship or support will be very welcome.

August 25th to 27th 2018

The Big Bike Bash, Avon Tyrell Activity Centre

This will be the 11th year of this local event that has gained a reputation as a fantastic, feel-good celebration of bikes, beer and live music.

September 14th to 16th 2018

Singlespeed UK, Apse Heath, Isle of Wight.

This event is being organised by the esteemed editor of this magazine. If you would like to help him make it a weekend to remember for all those iron legged entrants please let him know.

££ Club Discounts ££

The following shops offer a discount with your membership card:

Boost Bike Hub www.boostbikehub.co.uk

Brookley Road, Brockenhurst tel: 01590 624204

Cycle Experience

179 Barrack Road, Christchurch tel: 01202 486278

10-20 South Street, Hythe tel: 02380 840765

Sinclair Cycles

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

~~Reader's~~ Some Complete Stranger's Bike

Whilst at the Singlespeed European Championship in May I got to fulfil a minor ambition and ride a 36er. For those that aren't aware, 36ers are bikes with 36 inch wheels. Quite obvious really. 36 inch wheels have been available for unicycles for some years in order to give their riders high enough gearing to go a little faster than the normal walking speed manoeuvres. In fact if you search on Youtube there's a video clip of a 36er mounted unicycle rider going through a speed trap at 29mph. Over the years a few keen individuals have built mountain bikes around these rims, but all are custom builds with no manufacturer yet having taken the plunge and offering a production model. There is one production 36er built by Coker, the company that developed the 36er rims and tyres, but it is a cruiser. I know of two 36er mountain bikes in the UK, one in the Birmingham area and another in York. The owners of both have agreed to let me ride them but due to the distance involved I have yet to take up their kind offers.

At SSEC some guy from Germany (I think) turned up with one. I had to ask. It was only the briefest of rides and as the owner was well over 6ft and there was no time to drop the saddle I couldn't sit on the saddle and reach the pedals but nonetheless it was a chance to satisfy my curiosity.

So, how did it ride? Pushing on the pedals resulted in a good degree of forward motion with no great feeling of bulk or inertia of the larger wheels and riding over some soft, leafy 'between the trees' woodland ground there was far less drag and loss of speed than I'd expect to feel from smaller wheels. Other than that it was just like riding a bike albeit a very large one. If you see some young kid riding their older brother's or Dad's bike you'll get the idea. The people gathered round thought I looked ridiculous on it, and didn't hesitate to tell me so. It was only after I got off it and lifted it I realised how much it weighed. I'm sure there are electric bikes that weigh less. Obviously with more careful choice of materials and the R&D budget of a large manufacturer a far lighter bike could be built. In fact Focus Bikes did build one which they named the Big Bird and produced a video of one of their factory riders on which you can also find on Youtube. Unfortunately it turned out to be an April fool, so will anyone ever make one for the mass market?

If your bike is a little unusual or has a bit of history to it please let the editor know and it too could be featured in a future issue of this magazine.
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