

WHEELER'S DIGEST

Events | Guidance | Club Updates

Welcome...

Welcome to the February edition of the Wheeler's Digest.

Without your stories and news this would be a very brief newsletter so please send me anything cycling related, preferably with some photos as well, to webmaster@wellesbourne-wheelers.org.uk

Next issue at the end of March 2024

Steve Kirk - Editor

Diary Dates

24 March - Mad March Hare sportive

24 March - [Evesham Wheelers Reliability Ride](#)

27 April - ~~Netherlands Club Trip~~
CANCELLED

28 April - [Ride the Reservoir](#)

3-6 May - WOWW IoW Club Trip

12 May - ~~Majorca Club Trip~~
CANCELLED

18 May - Bards Ride

26 May - Ride London

22 June - CFC Coast to Coast

7 July - [Broughton Castle sportive](#)

New Members

Emma Tompkins

On The Front

As we move into March, we have had the benefit of some unseasonably warm weather which has allowed us to get out riding without having to think about the hazard of ice on the roads. However, this has come with frequently wet and windy weather resulting in some ride cancellations. When rides have gone ahead, the sodden roads have led to some eventful situations. A group of Sunday Club riders took part in the Stratford CC Reliability Ride earlier in the month where the route had to be diverted away from the flooded Walton Lane.

The Sunday Club Run the following week was even more eventful with us having to ride through some standing water which covered bottom brackets, along with Mike Massey unseating a tubeless rear tyre as we tried to negotiate the gravel strewn descent of Lady Elizabeth Hill.



Since the last Bulletin, we have had the first meeting of the new committee and have shared our initial recommendations with the Group Organisers. You will have seen the decisions which have resulted in the note I sent to all members recently. I am looking forward to the first 10.00 a.m. start for all groups on 7th March where we can share information on all the rides taking place that day, allowing members to decide which group to go with. I hope this will provide a means by which riders can challenge themselves to take their riding to new levels.

For those of you wanting to take part in the challenge of riding the furthest or climbing the most, perhaps I could persuade you to join the club's Strava group. This will allow us to track progress and I hope to be able to give details of the leaders in each future Bulletin. I am also looking forward to receiving records of individual achievements on the club time trial circuit and on Foxcote Hill. By way of encouragement, I rode up Foxcote recently in a time of 7.21. I know this was prior to the start of the competition, but I thought it might give you something to aim at. I don't think it should be too difficult a target in that it was nearly a minute slower than my best time and I am usually the last one to the top of climbs on Hastings rides!

I realise that these awards will favour the fitter and faster riders, but I hope they can be an incentive for all and a source of individual challenge. It would be great for individual groups to hold their own distance and climbing competitions among their own members. Similarly, a day on the time trial circuit or on the hill climb could be an alternative to a standard club run.

Last month, I told you a bit about my cycling background. This month I thought I would share something with you which can only add to my credibility as a serious cyclist – my cycling proficiency certificate from September 1963! Maybe you have some pictures or memorabilia from cycling in days gone by. I'd be really interested to see it.

I'm looking forward to lengthening days, improving weather and seeing you out on the roads.

Peter Dewis - Chair



Broughton Castle and Mad March Hare Sportive Update

I'm pleased to say that we now have the minimum number of four required for our attempt to make it five wins in a row at **Broughton Castle Sportive** this summer; myself, Paul Meade, Gordon Matthew and Andrew Marcroft.

Ideally, we'd like another two riders to make up our full squad; this to maximise our chances so, if you're up for the challenge, then please [let me know](#).

Full details can be found on the event [website](#).

Also, the **Mad/Midi March Hare Sportive** takes place on Sunday 24th March.

This early season sportive will see a couple of Hastings riders (myself and Peter Cooate) taking part in the 70 mile event which starts and finishes in Wythall, Birmingham. The route will take us out in a westerly direction, before heading south and then back eastwards via the picturesque Stourport on Severn.

For the first time, they have this year introduced a Midi Hare event with a shorter distance of 40 miles. There are four identified climbs on the standard route and two of these are included on the new Midi route

Entry to the longer event is £35, whilst the shorter one costs £25. For further details, please take a look at their [website](#).

Gary Gristwood - Hastings GO

WW Rajasthan branch!



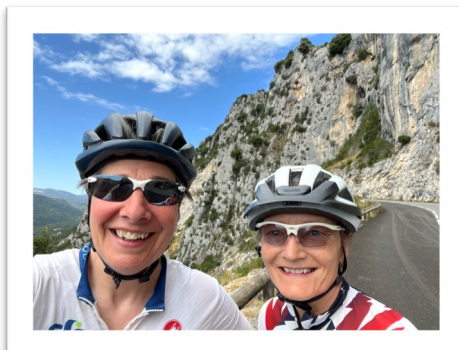
Four cars across two lanes, tuk tuks, cars and the occasional lorry coming towards me down the wrong side of the road. Still safer than Warwick though!

Shauna Kelham-Gardner - Dene

France En Velo 2023

Our trip was inspired by the book 'France en Velo' and we used the sketch maps in the book to plot our own route from St Malo to Nice. Alison (Speechly)'s husband Andrew kindly drove us to Portsmouth where we took the overnight ferry to St Malo. My start could have been better; I slipped when disembarking, and it rained!

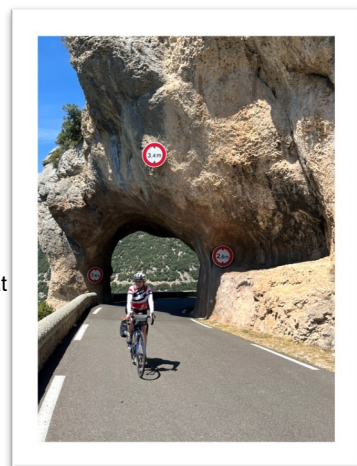
Our first day was spent admiring blue skies and sparkling sea, with distant views of Mont St Michel in the bay. The route was mainly flat for the first few days, often with straight roads and the spire of the next church visible on the far horizon, never seeming to get closer. Within three days, after just one wet and windy morning, we reached the Loire river. Staying at Fontevraud Abbey and exploring it was extraordinary; Eleanor of Aquitaine, Henry II and Richard the Lionheart are buried there.



Every day was novel, bringing changes of terrain and unexpected views. We glimpsed prehistoric cave dwellings in the cliffs near Les Eyzies de Tayac. The town of Rocamadour which clings to the cliffside in the Dordogne, was a memorable ice cream stop. Saddle soreness went away. We enjoyed several days of gentle incline up the Lot valley with beautiful wooded steep sides, lovely villages, and idyllic

riverside picnic stops accessible to cyclists. Most evenings, our hotels were in ancient town centres, so we enjoyed many post-dinner strolls to explore picturesque backstreets such as in Gramat, Sarlat and Figeac.

Further south and east, the weather got hotter. Alison's route plotting was impeccable, with long climbs timed for mornings wherever possible. The descents were awesome, often long and shallow, great fun to ride and with amazing views. The Ardeche was our first experience of riding in very hot weather, and nearly running out of water; we didn't make that mistake again, being sure to top up bottles at cafes. Crossing the Rhone and seeing Mont Ventoux far ahead was a significant milestone. Going through Chateaufort on our way to spend a night with friends, I spotted an opportunity to buy wine; sorry Alison, it was essential to turn up with a gift! We spent the evening with Cindy and Philippe, enjoying company, the washing machine, a swimming pool, and nice wine.



Moving on through Provence we travelled some other spectacular French gorges: Verdon, Nesque and Loup. The gorge roads tended to climb for many km up to the rim, but then dive up and down with sharp bends curving around mountain sides, frequently passing through cliff-edge tunnels. We had a few tiring descents with steep gradients and hairpin bends which required absolute focus and careful braking to avoid death by sailing off a cliff edge. No looking at views unless stopped on these sections! The final day from Castellane to Nice was memorable, downhill for over 90 km taking in a couple of spectacular gorges and a picnic by the beautiful River Loup, before the sudden shock of fast traffic and airport noise by the coast. After 10 km of cycle path we reached old Nice and took celebratory photos by the

Mediterranean, before heading to our air-conditioned hotel.

Our journey was not quite over, as 'we' (me) had timed our trip to join friends from student days, plus an assortment of other scientists, to cycle from Avignon to a conference in Lyon. Over the next three days we met many new friends, enjoyed some great cafe lunches and evening dinners. We also attended a two hour evening lecture session in French on non-pesticide crop disease control! I had wondered if we'd find the Via Rhona a little dull and easy, but it was beautiful and the 70-90 km distances challenging in the heat. By the time we reached Lyon, it was 37C. After Lyon, our day of return travel was a transit from French to English culture: 299 km/hr on a TGV, coffee in Paris, baguettes on a train, afternoon tea in Caen (milk supplied without having to ask), fish and chips in Oustreham and beer on the ferry. We were glad to be home but very sorry our journey was over.



Caroline Young - WOWW co-GO

Large Framed Individual Seeks New Home



My name is Van Nicholas Yukon, and I'm a big chap with a 60cm frame to be exact, and made of shiny titanium.

Although I've not been working out recently, I'm in wonderful condition with various new parts, including tyres and gear cables. I used to be the trusty and regular companion of my owner Tony who joined Wellesbourne Wheelers to help his recovery from serious illness. We'd like nothing more than heading out into the sunshine and fresh air for an exhilarating ride in the Warwickshire countryside, but sadly Tony succumbed to the illness, and is no longer with us, but has gone to the great velodrome in the sky.

I've been languishing gathering dust in the darkness of a garage for about the last four years, but at long last the other love of Tony's life has decided it's time for me to find a new owner who will cherish me in the same way that Tony did.

I'm desperate to get out on the road again. I was purpose built and the full specification is available from the [WW Secretary](#). I'm sure that no reasonable offer will be refused, so hey, please get in touch and come to see me as I'm only just down the road in Ettington.

Ashley Sherren - Secretary

Rapha Festive 500 Experience

What's this, I hear you ask?



It's a challenge during the holiday season to ride 500km (310.6 miles) indoor or outdoor from December 24th to 31st December. This is the 14th year of the event and has become a rite of passage for cyclists around the world. I had thought about trying to undertake this challenge a few years ago but never got round to it.

In the run up to Christmas 2023, it seemed a good idea to challenge myself to do it and after reading many articles online, I thought why not? It seemed a reasonable challenge when you think about it spread out over 8 days, so 62.5 km (38.8 miles) a day was all doable. However, you have to factor in the weather & family commitments especially over the holiday season.

So, I thought let's crack on:

Christmas Eve (24th December) I spotted there were some group rides on Zwift (for those who haven't heard of it, it's an indoor cycling app). I joined a group ride on the app which seemed like a good idea but this, as many Zwift users will know, ended up as a race. But it all counted towards the goal. So warm-up plus ride (or should I say race) plus cool off ride; 56.3 km (35 miles) done.

Christmas Day (25th December) No riding (Partner said it's family time and I love eating Christmas dinner!)

Boxing Day 26th Feeling stuffed after all the Christmas festivities, I managed to get outside and enjoy some fresh air. I was also thinking I needed to make up for the day off yesterday so I rode 103.9km (64 miles). This was hard work as my gear cable snapped after the first two miles meaning I rode the rest of the way on the small ring. The only positive was to over-indulge again on the Christmas chocolates.

December 27th Family stuff during the day meant a late start at 4pm onto Zwift for a two hour group ride where I managed to get another 82.3km (51.2) miles completed.

December 28th Again, busy day doing varied things meant another late start at 4.50pm where I was able to join another group ride on Zwift for 90min to complete 61.6 km (38.2 miles). This left me with 200km (124.2 miles to go) in three days.

December 29th Felt like I needed to go outside, but this turned out to be very wet, muddy and windy so was a real challenge battling the weather and the fatigue that was building. The thing I could do was to stop and have a Chelsea bun at the MOR café to lift my spirits. I think the lady at MOR took pity on me, as she gave me the biggest bun I've ever seen. 77.4km (48.1 miles) completed which left me 120km (74.5 miles) to go in two days.

December 30th Another busy day so another indoor Zwift session as I was short on time. 48km (30 miles) completed.

December 31st Final day to complete the challenge. Luckily for me it was a Sunday and there was a Sunday club ride to help with the last leg of my challenge. It was great to be joined by Andrew Marcroft who helped me over the finish line completing the challenge with a ride of 74.5km (46.3 miles).

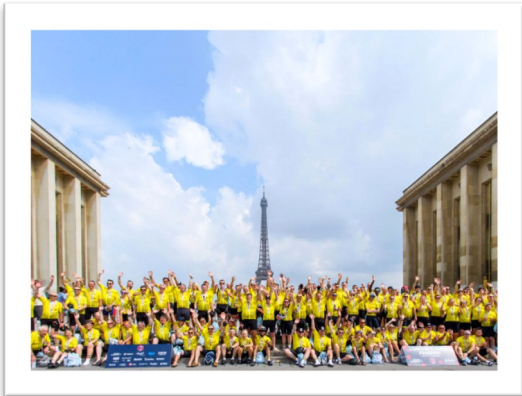
Total: Distance 503.8 km (313.1 miles), Time 16hours 16mins, Average speed 19.2mph, Elevation 9,596ft climbing

I have to say it was an enjoyable experience and it was great having the option to ride some of the miles indoors. I would highly recommend this to other club members to try especially if you like a personal challenge.

Nick Hawtin - Sunday Club

London 2 Paris - CureLeukaemia

I'm cycling 500km from London 2 Paris in 4 days Thursday 6th - Sunday 10th June 2024 to raise funds for the blood cancer charity [Cure Leukaemia](#) because every 14 minutes, someone in the UK is diagnosed with a form of blood cancer.



In January 2020, Cure Leukaemia began a 3-year, £3,000,000 commitment to funding the national Trials Acceleration Programme (TAP). The TAP Network allows patients to be connected with world-class and potentially lifesaving treatment that would otherwise not be available to them through standard care.

I am aiming to raise a minimum of £1500 to support the charity. Every penny I raise will go towards funding specialist research nurses at 15 blood cancer centres across the UK who connect patients with the latest treatments through clinical trials. I will be setting up a JustGiving page and launching that 3 months before the ride

Over each of the 4 days, I will be cycling over 100km and climbing around 1000m. My training is well underway, concentrating on building my stamina and increasing my core strength to keep those pedals turning!

Gordon Matthew - Hastings

(Ed - Click [here](#) to see a BBC Midlands Today feature about the charity ride and try to spot Gordon!)

Club Kit Update

The kit samples have now been returned to Endura. Interest was minimal, so unfortunately there are not enough orders to purchase the minimum number of the short sleeved summer jersey.

However, there are still a few items in stock, both new and used as follows:

<i>Item</i>	<i>Size(s)</i>	<i>Condition</i>	<i>Price</i>
All items are in the original red/black/yellow club colours.			
New			
Endura S/S summer "Road" jersey	XXXL	New	£45.60
Endura S/S summer "Road" jersey	M	New	£62.40
Endura Compact (summer) gilet	M	New	£58.80
Endura Multitube (buff) x2	One size	New	£12.00
Used			
Owayo Arm Warmers	One size	Very Good	Donation
Owayo Bib shorts	M	Good	Donation
Owayo Bib shorts	L	Good	Donation
Owayo Cycling cap	One size	Good	Donation

For any enquiries, suggestions or comments about kit please email kit@wellesbourne-wheelers.org.uk

Ashley - Kit Secretary