

Editorial

This edition of The Signpost marks the start of a new year in 2012 and with it, a number of changes to the magazine. The cyclo cross has ended and many of you are starting to gear up for the Road racing and time trialling seasons. As many of you are aware, after a number of years as editor Dave Ellis is going to be taking a more of a back seat roll and I will be taking over the editorship. I would like to publicly state my appreciation for all the help Dave has been giving me in getting this magazine together as well as his offer of continued support to keep making the Signpost a great read and source of information for the club.

One of the main factors that helps with the magazine is obviously the articles that people take the time to put together to share their experiences in cycling. One of the biggest ways that people can help keep the magazine fresh and interesting is to get involved, if you'd like to submit an article or have an idea you'd like help with then don't be shy, give me a shout and we'll figure out the best way to help you, after all, The Signpost is the club magazine written by the members for the members so getting you to be part of it is key to it's success.

With the change in editor I'm planning on introducing some new features over the course of the next few issues. This issue sees the introduction of "I am Mercury" where we'll be asking club members a set of standard questions so that we can get to know a little bit more about the people that you see at races . Also we're going to start a letters section so that you can raise issues that matter to you and the club. The plan is where possible to get publish a response from the club to any issues raised.

So, without further ado, we'll get on with this edition and all that is required is a brief apolgy for the slight lateness of this issue due to me not realising quite how long it would take to lay it out. Finally a big thank you to everyone who has contributed to this issue.

News & Notices

Club Membership

Just a quick reminder to everyone,the annual membership is now due. If you have not yet paid your membership for the coming year, Avice is at the clubroom on Tuesdays waiting to take your money off you. Remember, if you don't re-join by the 1st of March it will cost you an extra £1 and if you don't re-join this will be the last magazine that you receive. That should be reason enough not to delay!

Club Clothing

Dear All,

First the bad news; when the next order arrives sometime around the beginning of March, I will be levying a 10% price increase on club clothing stock.

For the past few years we have sold the club kit at cost but this has left us in the situation where we have a bit of a cash flow issue and this will allow us to generate a small buffer to help.

The good news is that in order to encourage people to pre-order, I intend to keep selling pre-ordered kit at cost price.

Only buying from stock will incur this 10% increase in the price. I believe that the club clothing will still represent very good value for money given the quality of the product.

For the current delivery of clothing, due at the end of February, if you pre-pay for your clothing before the 1st of March then you get it at cost price (obviously it's not a problem to swap a size if something doesn't fit so don't worry about that). I hope that's clear and I hope people understand the need to do this.

Many thanks,

John Anglesea

Club Clothing Secretary

Roland Sutton

Derby Mercury Competitive Events 2012

Derby Mercury will be holding 3 open time trials and 2 road races during the 2012 road season.

Sunday 18th March -Pedalpowermeters.com Road Race

Originally to be raced on a circuit around Hulland Ward, this 40 mile race for 3rd and 4th category riders will now take place on the challenging Hanbury circuit just over the border into Staffordshire. For those that don't know the circuit, the race goes up Draycott Bank each lap with the finish up Hanbury Hill.

Contact Tom Butcher for further information on this event.

Sunday 22nd April - Open 10 mile TT

This event will be held on the A10/19 course which is on the A50 starting at Etwall and will include racing tandems.

Contact Mark Gray for further information on this event.

Saturday 16th June - Open 25 mile 2-up TTT

The A25/16 Griffydam sporting course will be used for this event.

Contact Mark Gray for further information on this event.

Saturday 18th August - Open 25 mile TT

This event will be held on the A25/11 course which is on the A50 starting at Etwall.

Contact Mark Gray for further information on this event.

Sunday 30th September -

Derby Mercury Road Race

This race will form part of the West Midlands Road Race League for 2nd, 3rd and 4th category riders and will take place on the Hanbury circuit.

Contact John Anglesea for further information on this event.

Derby Velodrome

We've got an update from Jim Crew on the recent launch of the Derby Velodrome plan.

" I Went to a briefing given by the council on the new velodrome plans . The design of the building is simply stunning-internally and externally. The architects selected designed Manchester and the more recent Appledorm, so they have real pedigree. British Cycling (BC) are on board, and have been heavily involved-which is obvious looking at even the fine detail. If the brief was regional facility rather than national-then that's a nod to Sport England, this facility could stage events at any level-no question.

Access to the track is similar to Manchesterthe riders D is a few feet lower that the run off area round the track. The inner sports courts area is lower than the run off area-unlike Manchester-but are easily usable for a bigger event-and maybe even better than as they won't obscure the view across the track. Tidying areas seem excellent- seating and standing area plus 2 tiers of possible hospitality boxes-good potential source of revenue.

On a detail note- the ramp for track access is roughly same as Manchester, but the finish line is at the top of the ramp- 180degree different to Manchester - on the advice of BC. This will work fine and puts the finish line close to the biggest bloc of seats

Overall, the design and attention to detail is superb. A credit to Derby City Council. We should get behind this 100% and after seeing the briefing I'm completely sold.

Readers Letters

Letter From Dave Orford

Dear Ed,

I'm obviously very pleased at the progress of the Merc, possibly due to the internet bringing in the new membership that has swelled the membership numbers.

One of the main faults of British cycling clubs is that they have never taken advantage of Public Relations. However, I was very surprised with regard to this year's National 25 Mile TT Championship when it started in the middle of a small Devonshire town with a ramp start and a band playing, creating a big interest among the locals.

A few years ago I nominated Andy Eagers for the City of Derby veterans award (which he won) in the annual sports competition held at Pride Park and I had hoped that Derby's premier cycling club would support this important event. Sadly, this has not happened as far as I'm aware. I would suggest that the club contacts Derby City Council at Friargate in order to obtain the necessary forms for 2012. Once the club is on their books the forms will be sent every year.

Best wishes,

Dave Orford

Ed.: To get a meaningful response, I passed the letter onto the club commitee. I've included a response from Jim Crew, the club chairman.

Dave

We have discussed this as a committee, and welcome the suggestion that we should nominate appropriate candidates for such awards. We'll endeavour to get and submit the relevant forms, unless you are able to send them to us - via the secretary or down at the clubroom maybe.

We as a committee always try to keep on top of relevant matters. Most of us are fortunate that, in the current climate, we still work although not working might give more time for

cycling and other things. We try to use the time and resources available within the committee to do what is best for the club.When time is short, it is inevitable that we miss some things. We do try to prioritise in the best interests of the club and the wider membership. Others within the club are welcome to fill in the gaps when we miss something - either bring it to the attention of the committee or start the ball rolling themselves. The club is currently involved in a number of community cycling initiatives such as he Go-Ride scheme for younger cyclists and supporting the Derby velodrome initiative but we always welcome suggestions for other areas where the club can get involved. So thanks for the letter and suggestion.

best regards

Jim Crew

Chairman

A year, a long time in cycling!

By lan Scales

On the cold damp morning in November 2010, the Scales family turned up at Sinfin Moor to attend a cycle Derby Go-Race. We had learnt of this event on the previous Thursday following a Go-Ride course at our son Joshuas' School. Josh turned up on his big sisters' hand-me-down bike, which we had recently sprayed black and silver complete with added skull stickers for that macho image. This was our initiation to the world of cycling.

An hour later clutching his 3rd place trophy our family life was changed. Two comments kept being repeated for the rest of the weekend and for weeks to come, "those Derby Mercury boys" (who we now know as James and Jacob) who were placed on the two steps of the podium above him, and "those Isla bikes". A month later we joined DMRC. That was just over a year ago and to say the change has been massive is an understatement. As a family of 4 active members I'm sure there will be an appreciation out there for the distant memory of garage space, a never ending stream of lycra either being worn, washed or dried and I've taking to wearing GT85 as deodorant to compliment the aroma that now naturally follows me everywhere.

During our first year, we've tried a lot of different things, from family rides, CX races, an Audax, marshalled at TT's and CX events, chain gangs, plus CTC rides, standing in Whitehall at the end of the Tour of Britain, trips to Manchester Velodrome and meeting celebrities of the cycling world. All of which demonstrate the fantastic options available to a cyclist if you join a club. A real benefit has been that most weekends now entail a family together as Team Scales, enjoying a common passion and cake!

Thinking back to the time when "clipless" meant without clips, a turbo was a car component, "steady" meant steady, a cassette played music and bed time reading never included the words carbon fibre, cadence or glycogen, we wonder what we did with our time and money. Although the lawn looked better and the DIY did get done. Our holiday in Skye this year even involved a detour to check out Applecross (in the car I need to clarify) driving on a road takes on a new life when you are constantly assessing the gradient.

Without being cheesy a big thanks to all for the support and friendship that we have received over our first year. This is very useful as our existing friends and family are all now bored of explanations of why you need more than one bike and gear ratios. The kids have great goals and ambitions and a real passion to achieve which is good to see in these times of negativity. I have goals of more Audax's and to not get dropped at Denby and not to be the broom wagon at the NDCXL meetings, but hey-ho. I have more confidence in my kids. Here's too many years in the saddle

Bearbones 200k – October 2011

By Kevin Cunniffe

Last October found me on the start line of a new event in Mid Wales. The Bearbones 200, actually 205km, was a 'bike-packing' style event in which you had to carry all you needed for the event and the minimum equipment included a sleeping bag plus a tent, tarp or bivy bag.

The organiser was providing coloured badges for anybody completing the course in under 24 hours, 28 hours or just finishing. We were sent a gpx track a couple of weeks before the event and a way to obtain a map and route through the OS get-a-map website although I had a GPS and Memory Map I was able to use for planning purposes.

Looking at the route it looked like there would be few re-supply options on the route. The first was at about 90k and then nothing else until 160km. In between there was an independent hostel at Tyn-y-Cornel at about 120km where I thought I may be able to get some water.

Although there were over 40 entries come start day 31 people were in the start field ready for off. I was carrying substantially what I took on the Tour Divide, a few less clothes and no waterproof trousers as the forecast was favourable. I was carrying a stove and a dinner and porridge containing 800 calories each that needed re-hydrating. I hoped this would mean I would save time in not stopping for hot food. I carried almost 4 litres of water in my frame bag. Some riders were travelling very light. I spoke to one rider, Ian Barrington, who had a little bag under his saddle, a small one over his bars and a bag running under his top tube. In addition he had about 1.25 litres in water bottles and he planned to get water out of streams, and add Puritabs and a Nuun tablet. I felt very over packed but I also wanted to enjoy what was likely to be my last weekend out in the hills until next year.

At 10.00 am we set off and I fell behind as we

started an initial climb and then I noticed my rear bag was not correctly fitted and lost a bit of time sorting this out and dropped back to almost last.

Within 10 minutes we hit a monster climb that was a struggle to push up it was so steep. Around me were 6 riders, 4 of which had missed a turning in the woods and had to backtrack. I noted that I could see no other riders despite being able to see some distance. I dropped further behind on the push and by the time I reached a gate I saw the last of the 6 disappearing over a summit and was now at the back but I knew once we were across this valley things would improve for me. Heading up the next valley I caught 4 riders and on the plummet to the A44 2 of us mover clear. The next section needed a lot of care but once I reached Nant Rhys bothy I knew where I was for a while and continued to make good progress catching 3 more riders. Heading in to the Elan Valley near Rhyader we caught two riders who had been slowed by a puncture and then rode along the Claerwen reservoirs as darkness fell. I turned on my lights at this stage and began to lose touch with the 5 riders I had been keeping



company with. Once back on tarmac I stopped to sort out rear lights, warmer gloves and a ailet for the plunge into the valley at Ffair Rhos and onto Pontrhydfendigai d. I knew a number of riders intended to stop here at a pub for food but I had been eating steadily all day so was ready to push on. I had been eating a few energy bars,

already 600 metres ahead. In just over 1 km we had climbed 200 metres but were now on top and wonderful views were emerging in all directions. For the next few kilometres I just concentrated on riding as best I could hoping to catch riders later in the day. Crossing a deep ravine I did see the back of the bunch but they were 5 minutes ahead but I also saw 2 people behind me. I knew this section as I did it 2 years ago with Nigel Bathurst on the IMBA Trans-Cambrian route in the opposite direction. We departed the IMBA route to drop into another deep valley and as I dithered over which track was the correct one into the valley the other two riders caught me up. Climbing out the valley I lost touch with these

fig rolls, jelly babies, jaffa cakes, salted peanuts and cereal bars. At about 8.20pm I was approaching Strata Florida which is the site of a former Cistercian Abbey with about 20km of forest tracks to negotiate before the next section of tarmac. I knew if I could get to the tarmac the next section to and past the former YHA hostel was fairly straight forward from previous experience.

My GPS got me through this section just fine and stopped me from messing up on the myriad of forest tracks that can all end up looking the same. Just before reaching tarmac I spotted two riders bivying in the wood in some long grass. They said it was warm and dry and pointed out, as I had already noticed, that the valleys were considerably colder. I pushed on and 5km later I was at the hostel. It was just before 11pm and I decided that if the lights were on I would go in and get some water. At the gate there was a sign offering passers-by a free cup of tea so with lights on I walked in and decided to use some hot water to re-hydrate my meal. It turned out that 2 riders were staying there and 5 others had pushed on to camp further along. I decided to stay the night and 'camp' outside in my bivy bag so that I had use of facilities including rehydrating my 800 calorie porridge the next morning. a lot of riding was being done, the GPS was a great help here. It was a relief to reach the Elan Valley again but barely a kilometre later I started another long, long climb out of the valley only to descend straight back down into Elan Village and onto Rhyader in beautiful Autumn sunshine.

I realised at this point that I was not likely to get back within 28 hours so decided that if I saw a café in Rhyader I would stop for some food but if not I would push on. We turned left just before the town using back lanes along NCR 8 into Llangurig and got passed again by the group of 7 who had stopped back in the Elan Valley.



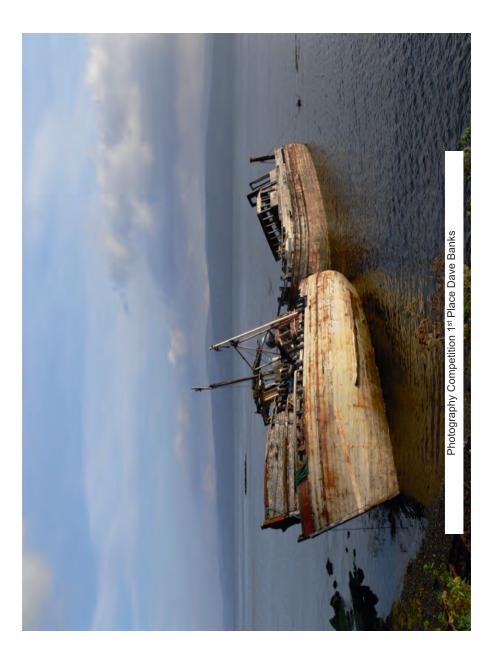
I had decided to stop to sort out some food a couple of miles after Llangurig when we left tarmac to head along some tracks into the Hafren Forest familiar to me from my ride with Nigel. I was again back with the 7 man group but lost contact as I dived into liquorice and more fig rolls. This ended up being a tactical error as I had forgotten that the next kilometre had something like

Two riders arrived as I was eating my shepherds pie and they had some tea and left after midnight. I left with the other two riders about 7pm, and still dark, next morning and soon found 5 riders further up the track. I cycled on alone as the other 7 re-grouped and was caught on the second of 2 big climbs before the descent of the Devils Staircase. This group and myself swapped places during day 2 as they were much quicker than me but did stop far more frequently.

After 2 hours riding we reached the Trallwm trail centre and a 3km climb onto a moor. It was only 6km across the moor into the next valley but it was a largely featureless and not

10 gates which I had to stop to open and close each one, moving in a big group would have been far quicker taking it turns to open and close gates.

I was feeling a bit tired now and continued to shovel down food and when I reached the summit let the bike roll down the other side. We were still following the IMBA route and had remembered that 700m from the summit there was a right turn and when we got there I took the turn and glanced down at my GPS to see that I was off track! I made my way back up to the junction and followed the correct route and soon as I was out of Hafren Forest and heading back to Pennant to the















1. Jim Hopper (special award for his 8 PBP rides)

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- 2. Matt Crouch (Cyclo-X Champ)
- 3. Rosie Blount (Performance of the Year)
- 4. John Manning (Vets RR Champ and HCP TT series)
- 5. Jim Crew (Clubman of the Year)
- 6. Ed Pickard (Senior Road Race Champ)
- 7. Harry Crew(Flat Cat, evening TT series U16 and Jun.)
- 8. Oliver Arnoux (evening TT series Handicap)















- 1. Clare Clewer (Ladies Hill Climb)
- 2.Andy Eagers (Club 25 Champ)
- 3. Stephen Price (Mens Hill Climb)
- 4. Hilary Johnson (Evening TT series and club 25)
- 5. Dave Banks (Photo competition)
- 6. Jon O'Brien (2nd evening TT series)
- 7. Nick Scott (Senior BAR, Vets BAR)
- 8. Tom Weeds (Junior road race champion)

finish reflecting in a wonderful weekend's riding and seeing very few people.

At the finish there was tea, soup, baguette's, apple crumble and bara brith for everyone and a badge for the finishers.

I finished 17th out of 20 finishers and 31 starters in a time of 29 hours and 15 minutes. The group of seven finished 25 minutes ahead of me and the quickest times were Ian Barrington and Kevin Roderick in 17 hours 23 minutes who rode through the night. The Iast three riders finished in almost 36 hours.

Next year the event will be on the 13/14th October over the same course, looking forward to it already.

Annual Prize Presentation and Buffet

Dave Ellis

The club's annual Prize Presentation was held on Friday 20th January at the Rugby Club on Haslams Lane and, once again the Rugby Club provided excellent facilities and a good selection of hot and cold food - the sweets were particularly good.

The event was well attended and it was good to see quite a few youngsters present as well as the usual crowd of good friends from Long Eaton. Prizes were presented by Tracey Fletcher, this year's guest of honour, who is well known to many club members and is currently a leading force behind Derby's Go-Ride activities. She explained her fondness for the Mercury by recalling the early days on the Saturday chain gang when, on being dropped by her Long Eaton clubmates, a Derby Mercury rider would usually fall back to give support.

The clubman of the year award this year went to our chairman, Jim Crew who certainly seems to be involved in almost everything. The Performance of the Year award was given to Rosie Blount for her ride in the National Track Championships where she took bronze in the Senior 500m Time Trial.

A special award was presented this year to Jim Hopper in recognition of his remarkable achievement of completing eight Paris-Brest-Paris rides, and all on a trike!

Photographic Competition

Dave Ellis

The annual photographic competition was held at the clubroom on 27th November. There was a good turn-out for the competition which, this year, was judged by John Jones, ARPS.

This year there were more digital entries than prints with just 6 prints in each category (cycling related and open) but 14 cycling related digital entries and 16 in the open category. As usual, it was not too hard for the judge to identify areas for improvement but his technical comments were well received and will, I'm sure, result in higher and higher standards being reached.

Winner in the cycling related category was an action shot by Rob Slater. In the open category, Dave Banks's picture of derelict boats on the Isle of Mull was the winner and Dave's photo was also judged to be best overall.

I am Mercury

Name: Olivier Arnoux

Age: 16

Hi Oliver can you describe yourself in 6 words

Young,enthusiastic,willing,hard-working,kind and happy.

.. and how long have you been a member of Derby Mercury?

2 years

So a fairly new member, why are you a member of Derby Mercury?

As me and my dad like cycling, and we found Derby mercury the nicest club around, and people were really helpful when we asked about the club.

What's your first memorable cycling experience.

Going cycling with my dad and sister, and my sister having a asthma attack.



I guess that would make it memorable, when was the last time you rode your bike and where did you go?

Saturday (7/1/12) and we went to Carsington reservoir with the chain gang from Burton and back it was 68 miles.

What's the longest you've gone in the last 12 months without riding your bike?

I had one week off the bike, when I had a bad chest.

One of the big questions for many cyclists is Is it really a proper bike ride without a café stop?

Yes.

Very controversial there, but where is your favourite café?

It isn't really a café, but they do really nice bacon and sausage sandwiches, it's called

the Cob Stop in Ashbourne.

What's the biggest cycling related thing you've done in the last 12 months?

Coming 2nd in a NDCXL race.

Since there's more to life than just cycling, if you can't get out for a bike ride, most likely we'll find you......

In the bike shed or on the turbo/rollers.

You've got me there, so you like to bikes, when did you last race? And what was the outcome?

The Notts & Derbys cyclo cross race on New Years eve at Thornbridge Hall. I was a complete swamp and I came 13th.

Food of choice for cycling, Flapjacks or Energy bars?

Flapjacks as they taste better.

And to drink, energy Drink or Cup of Tea?

Energy drinks, as i dont like tea or coffee.

Can you complete the following statement... "The Fastest bike is..."

Mark Cavendish's.

If you could choose would you go for an Olympic gold or win a stage of the tour?

Both if possible :)

Not sure that counts as choosing, but if you could be any rider in history, who would you be?

Eddy Mercx.

I wouldn't go on a bike ride without...

Puncture repair kit or phone.

What are you planning for the next 12 months

To race lots of road races/ circuit races and Time trials.

What's your most embarrassing

moment on a bike you'd like to share with the readers?

When i was climbing a hill, and a loose dog started chasing me,so i turned around and went as fast as i could down the hill,away from this dog.

Anything else you want to tell us about?

I just want to say thank you, to everyone who has helped me improve over the past 2 years :)

Thanks for being our first "victim" Oliver, good luck with the coming 12 months

A depressing day. ?

Jim Hopper

I awoke on the 15th at 0530 to find the bedroom bathed in brilliant moon glow. Looking out of the window the garden and the lane were frosted over and all was a light grey sparkle. The stars were glittering in the black sky and it was surely a natural wonder. I went back to bed and watched the moon glide across the window for an hour.

Putting the radio on while I sorted out the breakfast someone was cheerily telling the world that this Monday was officially the most depressing day of the year. Who works this rubbish out? Who decides upon these statements? Do I live in the same world as them? Looking out across the fields through the kitchen window the grass was sparkling and the sky was by then a pale blue decending through white to a brilliant orange at lower levels. I could not wait to get out for a ride.

On with all the winter gear and off. First along the Swarbourne valley to climb out onto the top of Needwood Forest. Across the Forest to drop down into Tutbury and the Dove valley. Now north easterly to join the Trent valley at Willington and along to Swarkestone. Across the Trent here, the spot where the Highlanders decided to turn back in 1745, and on to the small town of Melbourne. The countryside here is a bit more open and the views across the open fields were clear as I dropped down into Breedon-on-the-Hill. The old main road here is good to ride on as most of the traffic is now on the A42, and I took a detour to look over the valley towards Staunton Harold church. Always a good spot to stop.

A little hillier now I began to pass through former mining villages which have now been much improved to pass south of Ashby-de-la Zouch via Packington. A cyclist's bypass of the town. At Measham I stopped for a bite and a drink after 35 miles. Gosh. I still had half the day to use up. Continuing now south westerly. I crossed back into Derbyshire and looped through the pretty village of Netherseal and into narrow lanes to Lullington before cutting back to Coton-in-the-Elms and into the Trent valley again at Walton-on-Trent. Over the river and the A38 to Barton-under-Needwood I wandered through secluded Dunstall and onto the Forest and home. Just over 60 miles.

I then did an hour or so in the garden before getting my meal sorted out, whilst enjoying an absolutely wonderfull sunset. Next, the ironing and then lighting a fire and sitting rereading a book about the Staffordshire countryside. A look outside before I went to bed, and there was the moon again lighting up the countryside. Was I depressed? Not a bit. I had a glorious day, enjoying the countryside, the cold weather and the wellbeing that allowed me to do it. Making statement about it being depressing should not be allowed, it only encourages people to look at things in a negative fashion.

In the two very cold days preceding I had one on the Weaver Hills, between Leek and Ashbourne, and the other in the lanes around Market Bosworth. The day after was spent in the lanes between home, Lichfield, Tamworth and Burton-on-Trent. I thought that I was well off to be able to do these rides. It take a little effort to set off, but anyone can sit in front of the telly, but that is what make us different.

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Club Coach	Mark Gray		
Co-opted	Dave Luscombe, Rob Slater, Richard Hunt		

Diary

Date	What' Going On		Time
31st January	Natter Night		8.00pm
7th February	Pub - Trip to The Abbey		8.00pm
14th	Valentines Bangers Night - Sausages supplied by Andrew Coates Butchers, King Street, Duffield		8.00pm
21st	Pancake NIght		8.00pm
28th	Natter Night		8.00pm
6th March	Pub - Trip to The Abbey		8.00pm
13th	Bike Fit with Andy Brookes (provisonal)		8.00pm
20th	Puncture Repair Challen	ge	8.00pm
27th	Bring & Buy Sale		8.00pm
3rd April	Pub - Trip to The Abbey		8.00pm
10th	First Evening Time trial - Lane course.	The venue will be the Long	g 6:30pm
Club Rides		Training Rides: Tues	s./Thurs. 6:45 pm,
Club Runs: 60+ miles at a medium pace. Saturdays and Sundays at 9:00 am. Meet at the A38/A6 roundabout, Derby. Contacts:		Little Chef, Little Eaton. Contact Tom Butcher.	
		Mountain Bike Runs: A couple of hours thrashing around the trails in the Ticknall /	
Saturdays	- Kevin Cunniffe (01332 Sundays - Dave Banks	Ingleby area. Monday evenings, 6:30 pm. Meet at the John Thompson, Ingleby.	
Autumn Tints:50 miles or less, easy pace, with lunch stop.Contact: Dave Banks.pace, with lunch stop.Sundays at 9:45 am, meet at either Allenton (Arden News nr Spider Bridge) or Alvaston (Mercian Cycles) or Mickleover Nag's Head).Contact Derek Wilkins 01332 661613.			