

HDW Quarter Wheeler

Newsletter January 2011



A note from the Editor

Well this my last edition as editor of the Quarter Wheeler. I have very much enjoyed the task but changes have work meant it will be difficult for me to continue. I am very happy to pass over the reins to Simon George, I am sure that you will continue to support Simon as you have done myself with content, feedback and new ideas.

In this edition we pay our respects to Alex Benn and Ethel Brambleby two of our Hounslow and District Wheeler Members. Thanks to Jeff Marshall and Chris Lovibond for the lovely tributes

Sorry I can't make it but I hope you all have a fabulous evening at the Club Dinner, I am sure that you will all be looking amazing.

See you all soon
Clare

Semaine Federale 2011

Booking for Semaine Federale opens on 1st Feb 2011. Anyone interested should give Dave George a shout.

Club Runs

13th February Mytchett Canal Centre, Mytchett (01252 370073) *(and Pirbright Golf Club)*. Meet Staines Bridge 10.00.

20th February Deep Mill Diner, Missenden (01494 890405) *(and shorter ride to Odd's Farm)*

27th February The Henley Tea Rooms, Henley (01491 411412) *(and shorter ride to Jenners Riverside Café)*

Hounslow Wheelers Carry on Camping!! By Dave George

"Having spent a week away in France during school holidays, guilt and a new tent purchase made me decide I should spend some quality time with the boy.

So we loaded up the Toyota Hercules and set off to Devizes to make use of the club camping week(s). I'd never been before, and had really decided to go on the spur of the moment, so only had a overnight stop to make use of.

Bill Carnaby gave me last minute directions via the forum, and we got there in no time. Enjoying the back-roads as much as possible, and taking in a drive past Silbury Hill.

Martyn welcomed us, and directed me to a pitch - the best spot on camp he said, with great neighbours, and stuck us between the Carnabys and the Sprakes. I greased his palm with coin of the realm (a massive £7 if I recall) and set about putting up the accommodation. Shortly, the lad and I were riding out looking for lunch.

Potterne Wick has two areas of specific interest. One being the Post Office, the other being the George and Dragon. It was the latter that we settled down in, with a beef sandwich and a beverage. After lunch, we drove the bikes in the car the short way into Devizes, and set off along the Kennet and Avon canal to see what Sustrans had made all the fuss about. We had a fair ride, a bit damp towards the end, and made the most of the path not really being suitable for road bikes. Again, we made use of canal side hostelry for refreshments, before heading back in the rain.

Back at camp, Nathan went off with children of the Richardson and "Trapper" Cunnington clans, making use of rope swings, streams and plenty of mud. This seemed to be a recurring theme of our short time there.

The following morning, we upped and took time to visit Bath - Nathan having a particular interest in Roman Britain at that time - and so I killed two birds with one stone.

After breaking camp, a short chat with Trevor, and a chance to say goodbye to folks, we were back on the road home. Nathan is very adamant that we do longer next year, so I'm booking a long weekend with the intention of exploring a little more.

The thing about it all, is that I wish I'd done it before! The facilities are excellent, and there is no pressure to do anything except enjoy yourself. As well as being a great part of the world, the site has excellent facilities, and we will certainly be back. The camping weeks do not get the publicity they rightly deserve, and as everyone points out, it would be a crying shame to lose them through lack of support.



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New Years Day Club Ride – Welcome to 2011

It was nice to see so many of the wheelers out enjoying a New Years Day Ride.



The London Sightseer by Bill Carnaby

What cycle ride in the world takes you to two cities, eight parks, thirteen bridges, five palaces, two cathedrals, three markets, three historic ships, four art galleries, two concert halls, world class architecture, docks, canals, a tunnel and countless other attractions – all in 60 miles??

It's the London Sightseer of course and the two Hounslow Wheelers London Sightseer events are well established and have become significant money raisers for the Club with over £700 being raised in 2010.

The midweek event on Wednesday 29th June attracted 58 riders and the Sunday 5th September event 140 thanks to publicity in the CTC magazine *Cycle*. Both were ridden in fine weather and much enjoyed by the participants.

I was quite apprehensive about starting them from my house in Hampton Hill because of the numbers involved, firstly because of the queue for the toilet in my house and secondly because the initial stretch is along the Thames towpath at Twickenham which, for obvious reasons,cont



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London sightseer continued....

is not suitable for a large number of riders all together.

I solved both problems by not waiting until 9.30 to start everyone off but by letting people start as soon as they arrived. The midweek ride went off very smoothly with everyone back within the time limit of 10 hours but the September Sunday ride had a few complications – it clashed with the London Windsor charity ride, the Adidas 5K Women's challenge fun run in Hyde park and the Sky Ride in central London, so a little bit of additional planning was required!

To avoid the London Windsor I diverted the route to use the South side of the Thames between Teddington and Richmond and apart from the rather rough surface this worked pretty well. The Adidas Fun Run I hadn't anticipated at all but cycling is a pretty flexible pursuit and the only effect it had on the riders was a bit of a wait in Hyde Park. The Sky ride was a different matter as roads are closed and there are tens of thousands of inexperienced cyclists along the route. I managed to get a detailed map of the route in advance and by doing a small diversion from my original route slotted my riders into the Sky Ride after St Pauls and then took them off the route at Bank. This all went without a hitch and added tremendously to the atmosphere. So, two really worthwhile and successful events, with people coming from all over the country to ride them; the only disappointment for me being the few members of Hounslow Wheelers who ride.

So come along you Hounslow riders give it a go next year and join in the fun. Remember the dates - Wednesday 29th June and Sunday 11th September. If you are afraid of getting lost I will even be able to give you a route for your GPS!

Bill

OBITUARY

Alex Benn 1928 – 2010

A member of our club for almost 60 years, Alex, aged 82, died suddenly and unexpectedly on 4th November 2010, whilst out raking leaves in the garden of the large house in Alnmers Road, Lyne, which he and June shared with their son Eric, Rita and his five year old twin grandchildren, Alex and Louis.

Alex was born in Hounslow in May 1928, after which his parents moved into a farm near what is now Hatton Cross. The farm was soon compulsorily purchased for the new Airport apron. Undaunted, the Benns moved onto another farm on what is now the cargo area of Heathrow. Bizarrely, this farm was also compulsorily purchased so the Benns were kicked out once more. Naturally enough, his attitude to the authorities [well, any authorities really] was quite Bolshy!

His early years living on farms probably accounted for his love of the outdoors and his fondness for animals. Ejected once again, the Benn family moved on to homes in Hounslow [where they lived next door to the legendary one armed Ron Brown] and Whitton, then Hanworth.

After attending Isleworth Polytechnic for several years, Alex became a real craftsman in wood, employed first as a shop-fitter before he became involved in the refurbishment and fitting out of theatre interiors in central London. Many of the last years of his career were at Teddington Studios, making props and special devices for ABC TV, then Thames TV, until he retired in 1968.

He met June, who lived in Stratford, East London, in the mid-fifties at a Warners' Holiday Camp.

He joined the Hounslow in 1951. By 1953, he had become our club champion and Best All Rounder, at a record average speed [of 21.7 mph]. Between 1952 and 1955 he significantly improved our club records at 25, 30 and 50 miles and became 'the man to beat', our leading light, lowering the 50 mile record to 2.2.40 a nine minute improvement.

In 1953, he improved Arthur Ramsey's 100 mile record by 16 seconds, to 4 31 13 but lost it when Arthur shaved another 26 seconds soon afterwards.

Unfortunately, in 1953, shortly after his wedding, he was badly injured by a car when cycling home from work, sustaining a fractured skull which ended his first cycle racing career.

In 1959, his son Eric was born and ten years later, as a veteran at 40 years, Alex made a time trialling comeback and became a 'born again racer'. He was very successful, by 1978 Alex had established veterans' records at all distances up to 100 miles, recording times faster than in his youth, including a 25 mile time trial in 58 54, a 100 in 4 20 and established record age standard plus times for all distances up to 100 miles. He continued to cycle all his life, even after he stopped driving following an accident about five years ago. He would take his bike on the train to Basingstoke to ride the Hampshire lanes with his old tandem racing partner Arthur Ramsey, now a member of the North Hampshire RC. Recently, after relocating from Ashford to Lyne, he would cycle down to our evening ten mile time trials for a chat.

His funeral and service of celebration for his life took place at Hanworth Crematorium, attended by a large gathering of family and friends from his Philately and Cycling circles. Unusually, his coffin was decorated with colourful cycling scenes. Eric gave a moving thanksgiving tribute to Alex. After Eric's tribute, on behalf of our club, Alan Chamberlain, one of his contemporaries also spoke of his fond memories of the intrepid Alex as a young man, highlighting his self-sufficiency and determination. Remembering an occasion when Alex crashed and broke his front fork blade. Unphased, he found an ash tree and whittled a splint to get himself home. Then, following a crash landing in a bank of nettles, how he had nonchalantly dismissed the massive nettle rash he had sustained. When asked afterwards, he replied 'oh yeah, I had a bath and rubbed in some embrocation, mate'. At the end of the service, the Rev. Laura Smith, reminded us all of Alex's craftsmanship and joinery skills. How, in his prime many years ago, he had made and fitted the beautiful solid oak doors to the chapel we were in.

A real one-off character Alex - craftsman in wood, philatelist, cyclist and good family man, will be missed by all.

Kindly written by Jeff Marshall

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A Life in Cycling. Ethel Brambleby 1917-2010

Ethel's first time trial was a club 30 in November 1933 and her final appearance was in August 2000 in the Rosslyn Ladies 12 mile event. In the intervening two thirds of a century it seems that cycle sport and cycling generally were rarely far from her mind.

That 30 was ridden just a few days after joining her first club, The Aldershot C.C. As is so often the case in our sport there had been at least one cyclist in the family before her, in this instance it was her dad who had ridden for the Charlotteville before the Great War. He had suggested that his young daughter should join his old club, but here perhaps we first see a feature of Ethel's personality – a determination to be her own woman and fully in charge of her own destiny. It was she who decided which club to join.

Determination is an invaluable quality for any athlete and Ethel was never short of it. Apart from the difficulties we are all familiar with she had to overcome the strong prejudice which still existed in the 1930's against women riding competitively. The start of her time trial career was in men's events with the Border C.A. The Road Racing Council (forerunner of CTT) quickly stepped in and banned this practice. Women were only to ride against women.

Perhaps this opposition was the spur to her undying enthusiasm, and it was probably the cause of her early involvement with the Women's Road Record Association: it is believed that she was present at the inaugural meeting in October 1934. This youthful entry into sports politics arose because the Road Records Association, which had its origins in a rebellion against the NCU, refused to acknowledge women's records and consequently spawned its own rebel organisation – The WRRRA.

Ethel's connection here led to one of the high points in her career when she took the London – Birmingham record with a time of 6 hours 17 minutes. She also took the tandem London – Birmingham (5hours 23mins.) and London – Bath and back (11 hours 51 mins.), both partnered by Flossie Wren. All these took place 1937.

Ethel's talents were not restricted to the saddle: she wrote lucidly and often amusingly,

publishing a number of articles in Cycling (the weekly) and elsewhere. Here is a quotation from the Hounslow club magazine.

"I have ridden every distance, massed start, track and tandem, I have held four national records and currently hold 28 VTTA group records. I have ridden about forty 12 hour events and three 24's. I was at my best from 1936 at the age of nineteen, to the outbreak of war and again at 60 to 65, but my best year ever was when I was 68. I then rode a 25 faster than Eileen Sheridan as an amateur, and did a better 50 than



Marguerite Wilson, so why didn't I do it when I was young? Girls seldom realise their potential; I didn't know how to try then, and now I'm too old. Don't make the same mistake – make the most of every ride"

Although she identified the years of her age from sixty to sixty five as her best, it's worth mentioning here that she won the Merseyside Ladies CA 24 in 1973, '74 and '75, her best mileage being in the third year – 354.85, which is still the Hounslow's ladies record. The 'fast' 25 she refers to having ridden at the age of 68 was 1.6.08, slow by modern standards but she records elsewhere that her first ever 25 in 1934 was won with a 1 hour 9 minute ride. The winner, still wearing the plus fours in which he had ridden, crossed the road to congratulate for her 1 hour 19 minute debut saying "one day you too will do a nine." She says she "went home in seventh heaven." The year of this short six was 1985 and this was her final appearance in the 3 distance BBAR table. The CTT website only goes back to 1965, but in the annual record of those two decades Ethel's name appears fourteen times.

Apart from racing Ethel organised events, including national championships, held many committee positions and was chair of the VTTA from 1970-75. With her husband Les she donated the trophy for the CTT Ladies BAR. In her own words she toured, with Les, "from Norway to Israel, and from Eastern Turkey to California." Ethel Rolph, as she then was, met her husband Les through her tandem partner Flossie



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Wren and they married in 1939. From then on her profession would have been described as 'housewife', although Ken Ryall jokingly suggested it should have been 'professional cyclist'. They had two sons, Richard and Paul; sadly Paul predeceased his parents in 1996, and Les followed in 1998, Richard survives.

It is evident that a full appreciation of Ethel's life would almost amount to a history of cycling, particularly as reflected by women's time trialling. As a branch of cycle sport time trialling is remarkable for its persistence – it currently has little publicity and virtually no external finance, yet it is still with us and shows little sign of going away. The sport only continues because of the devotion of individuals like Ethel and Les who, without any incentive in terms of fame or money, carried on with their support year in, year out.

Ethel's departure is a great loss to the club and to cycling generally.

Ethel Brambleby 1917-2010

Kindly written by Chris Lovibond,
January 2011.

Racing Review 2010 by Trevor Gilbert

Wroxley Brothers

It is pleasing to be able to report that two of our youngest members, the brothers Simon and Ted Wroxley are starting to show promise. Simon the eldest, has won Most Improved Roadman Trophy, moving up to third category. He was 2nd Midsummer '25' with 1-08-01 and 1st Handicap Autumn '25' with 51-59. Ted has won the Peter Young Memorial Shield for the most points 42 in the Evening 10's. Hopefully in the passage of time they will develop into top class riders to match those of past generations.

Mr Paul Holdsworth

Top of the ladder for the 10th time in succession is Paul Holdsworth. While a bit below his normal very high standard, Paul is Club BAR at 25.541mph and Road Race Champion with 30 points, with a ride of 260.91 miles for 3rd place in the Kent CA '12hr' Paul was awarded the Alban Trophy for the Most Meritorious Long Distance Ride of the year. Paul has either won outright or as part of the team been awarded this trophy ten times. He has ridden twenty '12' hour events, with two at 277 miles, so perhaps we should give him the trophy! He finished 22nd in the BBAR and 2nd in the Club Veterans BAR with plus 6.028mph. Winning the West London CA BAR for the 8th time (as Paul said one more than Armstrong and no suggestion of any skulduggery). All this speed has won Paul all the major awards for 2010.

Jo Wells

Joanna Wells has walked off with the Ladies BAR for the 13th time at 23.760mph, plus the Ladies Plate as Ladies Club Event Champion for the 10th time at 21.544mph. Thus winning the all the ladies major awards, plus fastest lady midsummer '25' 1-10-22, the Autumn '25' 1-10-50 and Fastest Lady Evening 10's 27-21.

Rob Gilmour

For a rider who shrugged the season off as not much to shout about, Robert Gilmour still won the Veterans BAR with plus 6.378mph for the 6th time in succession! He also won the Club Events Championship at 22.33mph for the 4th time. Along the way Robert also won the Arthur Hodges '100' on standard width plus 18m 55s. Consistent performances won Robert the London & HC VTTA BAR and with Paul Holdsworth they won the team prize.

Jill Bartlett

Although not her speediest year Jill Bartlett kept her wheels spinning along the tarmac. On several occasions she managed the top six of the ladies in various Open Events, unfortunately I do not have the details.

Wouter Sybrandy

Although he rides for Sigma Sport, Wouter Sybrandy likes to ride the occasional Club Event. His winning ride in the Autumn '25' was a very

impressive 53-54, a record for the sporting Fifield course, plus winning the Hill Climb in 1m 38.9s. Along with his Sigma Sport team mates, they finished 2nd in the National Team Time Trial, word has it that when Wouter went to the front the speed went up so much his mates legs ached even more and lot of very deep breathing was heard. Wouter's winning ride in the Open '10' in 20-05 was only 3 seconds short of the event record.

Jeff Marshall

I won't say too much about Jeff Marshall's Good Friday '25'! As usual you can not keep a good man down. He bounced back to be the Fastest Veteran on Standard in the Evening 10's with a plus 6-31, 2nd Handicap and Fastest Veteran in the Autumn '25'. However a rush of speed in October showed Jeff's true ability, in the London & HC VTTA '25' a time of 1-03-07, gave him a plus of 18-44 for 2nd place, along with Rob Gilmour and Paul Holdsworth they won the overall Team (3 riders) and the group (2 riders) prizes. Then came the Johnny Helms Memorial 2up Grand Prix de Gents over 24 miles in Cheshire. Paced by Paul Holdsworth they finished in a speedy 54-14, with a plus of 23-24 they were 3rd on standard and 5th on actual time. This flourish of speed was carried over to Jeff's last event, the Redmon GP des Gents, when he paid (!) Wouter Sybrandy to pace him this time over 15.4miles, a time of 37-31, 3rd fastest and 1st on Standard with a plus of 9-31. What a finish to the season, we all look forward to the Good Friday '25' 2011!

Best of the Rest

A Rider with a quiet approach but a fair amount of speed is Damien Poulter, with rides of 23-28 at 10 miles and 59-51 at 25 miles.

Henrik Funch won the Novices '25' Cup with 1hr-12min and 52seconds. Mark Silver won the summer '10' in 24-33. Gavin Kitchen won 1st Handicap in the Good Friday '25' with 56-50. Simon George won 1st Handicap in the Midsummer '25' with 56-13. Alan Butler achieved a seasons best 24-20 at '10' miles and 1-06-20 at '25' miles, both done on the Bentley-bypass courses.

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Club Run Trophies

Q, Who is Club Captain? A, Norman Howson

Q, Who collects the points for Club Runs? A, Norman Howson

Q, So who won the Clubman Trophy for the 11th time with 50points? A, That's right Normal Howson!

First Lady Clubman Trophy is Patsy Howe with 30 points.

Roger Sewell

Last but no means least is our representative north of the border, Roger McSewell (Ross-Shire Whs), guess-what? Their colours are red, white and black! He confessed to me that he wasted 23 years before beathing the 'Hour', beat you to that one, it only took me 18 Trevor G!

Finally...

Two extra events were added during the year. A '10' on the Maidenhead Thicket course, unfortunately I picked the wrong Saturday, the same day as the Tour De France final Time Trial, which was the reason for only 8 entries. Mark Silver winning in 24-33. For 2011 the event is on Saturday 30th July, a week after the tour has finished.

The other event suggested and run by Chris Lovibond was a Sporting '27' held on 3 laps of the Chobham Common circuit. It was organised as a small replacement for the cancelled '100'. Being a big fixed wheel supporter Chris organised it so the prize he had offered for fastest on a fixed wheel in the 100 could be competed for. The event was held on Saturday 30th September, which turned out as possibly the wettest day ever for a bike race. Chris got several of his fixed wheel enthusiastic friends to ride. First on fixed was Matt Theobald's Grupotto RT in 1-06-03. Despite the weather several liked the course so much, the event will be repeated on Saturday 9th April 2011. Riders on gears are allowed but the first prize will be the fastest rider on fixed.

If you did an outstanding ride or a PB and have not been mentioned in these dispatches, sorry but you did not tell me.

Wishing you all the best for the coming season, may it be fast with many PB's or points on your racing licence.

Cheers
Trevor

Chain Gang. An interpretation of pain!

By Paul Innes

Chain gang.....What is that, I hear some people say, especially those who are not too clued up on the terminology of the cycling fraternity.

To some it conjures up images of hard faced individuals with stripy PJ's and large hammers breaking rocks at the roadside. To others, the well-educated people in this world, it is an image of Lycra clad warriors tearing along the road at breakneck speeds.

Fortunately for us, it is the later, that we all understand the terminology of, CHAIN GANG.....Not rock breaking, but leg breaking.

Spring.... That time of year when the crud from the bikes is finally cleaned away and the thoughts and anticipations of racing start to enter your enthusiastic but cloudy minds. But wait I hear you cry, have I trained hard enough, have I put enough of those winter



little harder. The doubts flood over you like a tsunami on heat. But alas, these doubts are soon put to rest when you realise..."TUESDAY NIGHT" Chain gangs have started....HOORAH!!!!!!

So here we go on an explanation of how a chain gang, better known as a training ride is (or should I say, should be executed).

It all starts at that magic hour of 6.30pm on a bright and sunny Tuesday evening (fingers crossed) where enthusiastic members slowly but surely appear at the training Mecca called Bishops gate, where the first person arriving hopes and prays that they will not be the only individual braving the session to come. As riders arrive (on time), the banter at the gate finally elapses and the brave souls put cleat to pedal and make their way to the far end of the park. This part of the session is ideal to warm those cold and lifeless muscles into action. This is also a good opportunity to see if you are feeling your best, or if the days grind at work has put paid to any thoughts of out-riding your fellow companions in the style of Fabian Cancellara. (dream on!).

Exiting the gate at Cranbourne, the gang then proceeds along the main road in an orderly manner, only to play dodgems with the frustrated motorists. I can only imagine that they are all trying to get home to jump on their bikes to join in the fun.

Once at the junction with the drift road, everyone checks to make sure all are present, and get into order...this is where the fun begins.

Two lines are formed, one line that works, and one line that rests. The working line is always on the outside, as this creates a safer turnover to the resting line by preventing a rider from swinging too far into the road. (health and safety, don't you just love it). When order has been achieved, the pace begins to quicken. Not too fast at first, but just enough to raise the heart rate and get used to pushing that bigger gear. Now comes the explanation of how these two lines of riders actually work together, which is no mean task as some riders still cant get it right after several years of trying, so here we go...

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The line of riders on the outside, better known as the working line, is always kept at a constant pace. There should be no acceleration or decrease in speed. The decrease in speed only occurs when the rider on the front moves over to the left to attach him or herself to the front of the resting line. This is when the rider decreases their speed. Not too much, but just enough to allow the working riders to move ahead of the slower riders. This process is called through and of, or bit and bit... the choice is yours.

This process is repeated time and time again with the quicker rider pushing through and moving over to allow the next rider to take his turn at driving hard.

The actions explained are very efficient at keeping a very high and steady pace, which as we know has resulted in many a pro rider taking the spoils at the end of many a road race. But like anything efficient...it can become very inefficient, very quickly, with dramatic results.

And so to the rear of the group to which my statement in the previous paragraph is about to be explained. This is where it can all go quite wrong. As with the actions that are being performed at the front of the group, riders basically do the opposite at the rear. By moving back along the line at the slower pace the last rider in the resting line waits for the last rider in the working line to pass, this is when he makes his move and joins the faster riders. This is quite difficult, because a slight lapse in concentration can mean missing the wheel in front resulting in extra effort to gain the wheel, or worse, clip the wheel by misjudging the speed. It's something that takes practice, but once you get it right, is very rewarding.

As I explained earlier with problems that can occur at the rear of the gang, riders who accelerate too quickly can also cause mayhem along the line with wheels being lost, and riders putting more effort in than is required, which basically results in a disorganised group that

will inevitably slow down, causing all sorts of expletives being vented upsetting my gracious nature.

Now that I have explained how a well oiled group can perform, the session proceeds quickly around a small five mile circuit, slowly gaining pace, but not too much so that individuals get left behind too early in the session.....

This however doesn't mean that the session will not get too heated, and usually by the end of the third or fourth lap ego's are heightened and pace can be quite intense, which often results in a burst of acceleration from a few nutters with thoughts of Cavendish, on the final lap sprint...

Session over I hear you ask...oh no, not by a long shot. The journey home should be a warm down from the twenty miles of race pace riding, but unfortunately with the adrenalin still pumping the pace home can be just as quick.

Once home, the thoughts of the training session still going through your mind, you start to think,

- was it worth it?
- will it make any difference?
- are my times now going to be any quicker?

YEAH, of course it is.....

Now where is my 'BURGER KING'!!



A message from Roger Sewell

The following is Rogers own missive:-

As requested a little review of my racing (!) year 2010, not one of my best but still enjoy it and I'm not ready for golf or darts yet!

Started the year on 99 ½ rides 'under the hour' as you may be aware I was at times 59-59.2 (rules state that times must be rounded up to the nearest whole second so it is officially 1-00-00T.G) for my penultimate race of 2009 and as I have been trying to do the magic 100 since 1964 and achieved the first 59 in 1987 I felt I deserved it!

First race was on the H25/8 (Bentley 17th April) and did 58-46, so a good start. Next morning 59-34 on thef1 (Great North Rd/Camb), next weekend 1-1's so going downhill! Back to Scotland and 1-03-41 two weeks running – ah, reality!

Never beat the hour up here this year, 1-00-29 was the best, 2-08-30 for the '50' and punctured in the only '100' so not a roaring success. As you know I finished the season back south with two 59's and the 1-3 in the last club '25'.

Still room for improvement but I have now beaten John Woodburn a couple of times on speed, which is something even if he is 90 years old. Well, he seems to have been around that long.

Anyway that is it, hope you all had a good Christmas and New Year, we will be back in April and I hope to see you all then. Man from Scottie Land (Roger Sewell)

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An Outlaw (thanks to the in-laws and others)

"Keep your feet up and keep well hydrated, trust your race plan and training, tomorrow you will be an Outlaw" bellowed out the race director at fractured intervals from 12 speakers around the lake that was the back drop to the Outlaw long distance triathlon. That's OK for you to say I said (possibly a bit too loudly and with colourful language added for effect) as I cursed my untried bike, untried shoes and failed to locate a single useful bit of kit in the back of my father in laws capacious 4x4. A plastic paratrooper fell on my big toe and tears were not far away.

Looking back it probably was not the best idea to holiday in Weymouth the week before (that's Weymouth, 8 hours of traffic jams away from Nottingham) and rely on packing for both the holiday and triathlon at the last minute. It was also not a good idea to let the packing get quite so mingled as I spied Daniel eagerly throwing a 57 tooth chainring at a nearby swan.

Thinking more on the matter I should probably not have trapped a nerve in my neck the previous Sunday as the pain and partial paralysis may have had a slightly negative impact on my performance. Mind you I have always had a slightly lopsided stroke. Happily Doctor at a Distance, the ever helpful Mr Alden, advised a course of action that saw me floating on a diazepam and codeine cloud away from Dorset's most overcrowded A and E. Although not quite pain-free by Friday I had made my mind up to just rest up and see what race morning would bring.

With such perfect preparation I should have anticipated losing my race chip the night before race day but only discovering this when we had returned to our B and B in a pub 10 miles away and at 10pm when the race organising team had sensibly gone home to rest. Still,

I did not need to worry about that keeping me awake – the wedding party could do this. And boy did they do a good job. When they finally retired to bed at 3am I was left with 40 minutes to sleep before the alarm went off and the business of stuffing my face began in earnest.

Maybe it was the food (peanut butter and banana sandwiches) or the complete physical and mental exhaustion. Maybe it was the realisation that if all went well Alice, Daniel and I would not have to put up with a grumpy old man who complained of not doing enough training and got very tetchy if anyone asked about his injuries or race preparation. Whatever it was, I did not feel at all nervous as I drove through the sleepy darkness of Nottingham. Maybe it was that my thoughts were focussed on how I could find Tracy and her fellow wedding guests and put something not very nice through their letterboxes!!!



Arriving at the National Rowing Centre dawn was creeping over the horizon and a hive of activity could be heard (and smelt) before it could be seen. Nearly a thousand athletes, friends, supporters and their families were busy getting ready or wishing each other luck. The lake looked very loooong but at the same time beautiful.

My luck began to change as I quickly located another chip and no one seemed at all bothered about my carelessness. I put my final bits and bobs in transition and started to grease up. A quick visit to one of the plentiful loos (no queuing!) and we were suddenly being herded to one of 4 start bays. I chose 60-80 minutes and thought I would start at the back in case my neck or arm gave up.



The Swim

A few nervous looks from some and witty chit chat from others filled in the minutes as 6am approached. Oggy Oggy Oggy and then some inspirational words from the organiser "Get set to be the first Outlaws" and then the claxon. From the back I could see the "sharks" from bay 1 zoom into the distance. Several minutes later I managed to get into the water and soon realised most of the people in front of me had blatantly overestimated their swim ability. To get round them I had to swim through the weeds surprising more than one goose! It was so crowded I never got a rhythm but was pleasantly amazed to find the turn buoy in what seemed like a short time. The return journey was a little less crowded and weedy but punctuated with the cramps that I thought I had conquered. A few breaststrokes (sorry to the swimmers behind) helped ease things up. Then the grandstand appeared and you could hear the crowds even that early. Onto the exit ramp and POW. 2 exquisitely painful quad spasms and I was back into the water again. Hands came from somewhere and got me upright. They were probably concerned about holding other athletes up rather than stopping me from drowning.

Hobbling towards transition the cramps attacked again felling me to the ground where I cried like a baby only louder. Two paramedics sent by Gabriel or maybe the Red Cross were soon descending onto my legs rubbing and spraying heaven knows what onto my paralysed pins. I am not quite sure what happened next but I found myself back into more familiar territory and onto the bike.

HDW Quarter Wheeler

Newsletter January 2011



The Cycle

My legs were much more accustomed to this kind of movement and I was swiftly into a tuck and passing quite a few potential Outlaws (who I am sure were cursing the cry baby from transition). One lap of the lake and then out onto well marshalled and some semi closed roads. What a difference from time trialling! First there were spectators cheering. A pleasant change from the usual emptiness or ribald comment from dog walkers. Then there were right hand turns. Don't they realise TT bikes cannot turn right? Happily I was able to master this new skill quite quickly. Then some strange undulations called hills. Now I know this is not Lanzarote but I had not expected to be using my small chainring so soon. BUGGER – I haven't got a small chainring. So I was reduced to a snails pace in my smallest sprocket more times than I would like to admit. Then past our B and B where Daniel and Alice slept soundly (unless Tracy and her mates had rallied again during the early hours) and onto some minor and uphill roads. All this was then rewarded with a huge downhill for 8 miles or so.

On the second lap I was rewarded with a smiling Alice and Daniel at B and B corner. Perhaps they had located Tracy's letterbox. Whatever the reason for their early morning joy it lifted my spirits and I was soon reeling in more triathletes. I reckon that by the third lap I had passed over 200 people and no one had caught me. That was until I had an uncomfortable feeling that my hydration strategy was rather overcompensatory. After blowing in the 100 mile TT I had done 2 weeks ago. Finding a portaloos was easy thanks to the organisers obsession with having enough (and in that respect he had done an amazing job). Stopping the flow was another matter - 2 mins 20 seconds! Must remember to ask if this is a club record. Back on the bike and time to recatch those who had dared come past and had not drowned in the unexpected man-made lake.

A 10 mile off road section involving speed humps, gravel and cattle grids gave us an opportunity to gear down a bit ready for the run. I was very pleased to note the time on the giant scoreboard that overlooks the lake. Quick mental calculation revealed it was still possible to realise my 1:20 + 5:20 + 4:20 = 11 hours plan.

Transition was a reasonably quick affair once I had given over my bike to the marshal following a comedy tug of war where I eventually realised that they took your bike and racked it for you. I retrieved my transition bag from a mountain of 746 similar looking bags and I was soon out onto the run and was relieved to see that the shoes I had put on were indeed mine and more usefully on the correct feet..

The Run

It was at this point I remembered I had not studied a run map (I left it out of my packing in favour of Daniel's Action Man) and did not know where I was going. A very friendly Barracuda Tri Club chap told me it was a lap of the lake, a lap of the River Trent repeated 3 times and then a lap of the lake.

Not knowing what kind of pace I might be running I asked the self same Barracuda man (name Sean, 2 kids, 5 previous ironmen finishes) what pace he was hoping for and he said 4 hours. Perfect, said I, "mind if I jog along with you?".

Sean was very good company and gave me some useful advice on what to eat and drink (red wine and red meat generally but probably fruit and gels today). Several very pleasant miles passed as we meandered around the lake, across some fields and along the River Trent.



The 2 potty trips (there were portaloos everywhere – well done the organisers) gave me a chance to practice some fartlek as I had to make up 3:20 and 1:40 on Sean. Otherwise my pace was pretty even. By 13 miles I was struggling to eat any energy gels so I reached into my back pocket to find I had been carrying 7 energy bars (Cliffe Bars and SIS). I wasn't sure if I was pleased at some dietary diversity or upset that I had been lugging a pound of extra weight around for the last 125 miles. What I do know is that I will never ever eat another raspberry High 5 gel again in my life. I also know that, thanks to a little confusion at the feed station, High 5 does not a good shampoo make!

By mile 20 Sean was noticeably slowing up so I asked if he wouldn't mind me pressing on a bit? Not that 9¼ minute miles is in any way pressing.

Not having a watch (ditched for a Power Ranger I believe) it wasn't until I reached the lake for a final time that I knew 11 hours was licked. Heeding the stories about people who collapsed in the last mile or so I plodded in a merry world of my own toward the finish chute. It was heart warmingly, tear jerkingly fantastic to see Alice and an old school friend in the Grandstand. (I should add that Jon Webster also appeared in the same spot on my first lap but had to go home as his friend was under orders to get back home early). With 200 metres to go Daniel appeared like an angel beside me and suddenly we were high 5-ing (not the energy gels) and crossing the line together.

10 hours 34 minutes and you know what? I think I enjoyed almost everyone of them. Apart from the cramp and bloated bladder I was never in discomfort and was able to talk to fellow competitors whenever our paths crossed – though not many wanted to talk to me.

There are so many people who made up my iron team but Jon Webster and his wife Christine, Alice's family, Steve Mac, Steve A and those who wrote such inspiring iron race reports deserve a special mention.

Most special of all though were Alice, Daniel and our bump. We have all been through a lot together during the time I was training for Ironman and for everything to turn out so brilliantly on the day is the reward they deserve (though Daniel would much rather have a scuba diving action man)

Loz the Outlaw
AKA Lawrence Wintergold

Weekend TT Events 2011

- Sporting 27 Sat April 2:00pm
- Good Friday 25 Friday 22nd April 10:00am
- Inter-club 25 Sunday 8th May 9:00am
- Midsummer 25 – Sunday 26th June 9:00am
- Summer 10 – Saturday 30th July 3:00pm
- Autumn 25 – Sunday 25th September 10:00am
- Hill Climb – Sunday 30th October 10:45am

Open Events

- Road Race Sun 20th March
- Open 10 TT Sat 14th May
- Open 100 TT Sunday 29th May
- Open 25 TT Sunday 18th Sept

If you are planning on racing lots of events in 2011 please speak to Martyn Roach about purchasing a Race season ticket.

Wishing all of Hounslow and District Wheelers a very successful cycling season in 2011

