



BOB KYNASTON

A COMPETITION FOR TOURING CYCLISTS SOUNDS LIKE A CONTRADICTION IN TERMS. BUT IT'S NOT REALLY ABOUT THE WINNING, AS ORGANISER BOB KYNASTON EXPLAINS TO DAN JOYCE

In the back of every issue of *Cycle*, you'll find a list of events. From March to October, some of them are coloured blue and have a letter code in front of them. They're the CTC Tourist Competition events. Participants earn points.

'The idea of the Tourist Competition is to encourage people to ride their bicycle in other areas, to explore more of Britain, if you like – a bit like the British Cycle Quest,' says Bob Kynaston. 'The original concept was: there's all these CTC group rides across the country. Let's do something with them to increase participation levels.'

Taking part in the CTC Tourist Competition couldn't be simpler. You enter automatically by riding any Tourist Competition event. Bob gets the entry forms afterwards, checks off your name, CTC membership number, and CTC member group, and allocates points.

'There are six event categories,' Bob says, 'from A to E. A to D is distance, E is competitive events like hill climbs, and F is off-road. You get 10 points for riding an event, and 11 if it's an "away" event that isn't local. But if you duplicate an event – let's say you ride two (a) events in your area – the second is worth two points less. It encourages people to ride all the different events, in different places as well.'

Five or six hundred CTC members take part each year. At the end of the season, up to 12 events are counted for each member. Winners earn trophies (see page 14). 'Some people ride only two or three events,' Bob says, 'but when they discover they're in the competition, it does spark an interest. Some specialists set out to win.' Additionally, anyone riding big annual distances in the Tourist Competition can earn a bronze, silver or gold medallion: the Mille Miglia.

Bob took over the Tourist Competition

“It encourages people to ride different events in different places”

20 years ago from its founder, Peter Jackson. A touring cyclist and veteran time triallist who had held – and continues to hold – various jobs within the CTC-affiliated Westerley Cycling Club, Bob was then organising CTC's Best All-Rounder Competition for time triallists. Though it's now defunct, this ran for 40 years. CTC wanted something similar to it for tourers.

And so, in 1982, the Tourist Competition was born. It was initially known as the

District Association Tourist Competition. Until fairly recently, CTC member groups were split on an entirely geographical basis into District Associations, with smaller groups ('sections') underneath them.

These days, CTC member groups can also form around particular interests. Despite the manifold benefits of this approach, Bob says it has made things awkward for the Tourist Competition.

'To me, cycling is about meeting people – the camaraderie and the social aspect. A lot of the Tourist Competition is about interaction with other groups across the country. What I'm finding is that with this [geographical] break up, groups are becoming insular. We're getting fewer events. I'd like to see more.'

He's a strong advocate for all aspects of member group cycling. 'Groups bring people into CTC,' he says. 'Some people join CTC for the insurance and other things, and that's fine. But the 10% or whatever that do ride with groups need to be appreciated. It's not about big accolades. It's about someone saying "Thanks very much, really enjoyed what you've done."'

Whatever happens with the Tourist Competition going forward, it's clear that Bob will always be a cyclist and a CTC member. 'It's in your blood, isn't it?'

More details at ctc-competitions.org.uk