

Letters

WRITE TO US AT:
CYCLE LETTERS,
CTC, PARKLANDS,
RAILTON ROAD,
GUILDFORD GU2 9JX,
OR EMAIL:
CYCLELETTERS@CTC.ORG.UK

This month: Tidworth Freeride Bike Park, **family touring**, the thriftiness of cyclists, **cycling aged 100**, shopping by bike, **one-handed cycling**, and flying with a bike

Letter
OF
THE
MONTH



I JUMPED AT THE CHANCE

Congratulations, CTC, on your involvement at Tidworth Freeride Bike Park. I visited this venue whilst staying in Bath (I live in Cornwall). It is very forward thinking for the club to widen its appeal in this way. If we are to attract younger members, this is exactly what we should be doing, whilst continuing the more traditional roles of supporting touring and campaigning for road cyclists' safety etc. Please can we have more like this around the country, especially the West Country! I found the warden most helpful, giving great advice to a non-expert. I am a 65-year-old retired GP and have been a member for about 35 years. I had a great time.

Tim Pardoe



TOUR BEGINNINGS

This year marked the debut of sharing my love of cycle touring with my husband and our nine-year-old daughter. We have ridden many day rides – her legs, like pistons, powering along in conjunction with her continuous chatter – but this summer we embarked on a weekend ride from Newbury to Savernake Forest in Wiltshire, camping overnight. They were delighted by it and wanted to do more.

This is where Cycle continues to inspire me to venture further. The Bristol Sightseer article was re-read, maps were scrutinised, train tickets purchased and we headed off to Bristol for a completely different experience – city riding. We now plan to explore the Isle of Wight and the Gower Peninsula over half-term holidays, which will hopefully prepare us well for adventures beyond our shores. Please keep the articles flowing to inspire our adventurous spirits.

Mary-Ann Ferneley

THE PENNIES DROPPED

On my commute to and from work, I occasionally stop and pick up coins off the road. This set me musing on what value of coin is worth stopping and getting off your bike for. I decided to carry out a small but clearly unscientific survey to find out, and questioned friends and acquaintances whilst out on rides. My questions were: What is the lowest denomination coin you would pick up: (a) going down hill; (b) going up hill; (c) on the flat; and (d) would it make any difference if anyone was watching?

I was surprised how reluctant people were to stop and collect the money. It seemed that the younger the person was, the less they could be bothered to stop. My answers

were: (a) 20p; (b) 5p; (c) 5p; (d) yes. One CTC Tour Leader's answers were: (a) 1p; (b) 1p; (c) 1p; and (d) no!

Joanna Rees

CENTURY RIDING

I'm emailing to let you know about the ride that I organised for Les Brown, who had his 100th birthday this year (see Letters, Aug-Sep 13). We had a celebratory ride to mark the occasion, riding from Lochmaben to Dalton Pottery. Tom and I, both life members of CTC, rode a tandem trike. We were joined by a further 25 cyclists and friends.

Les's family, neighbours and friends cheered us all off. There were so many well-wishers. Les' nephew and great nephew, David and Matthew Brown, drove up from Leeds earlier that morning to be part of the celebration. West Galloway was represented by Bob, Jim, Ted, Sandy and Bill.

It was a great day, with coffee and cake and plenty of chatting with friends. Happy Birthday, Les – and here's to many more of them!

Tom Hanley



SHOPPING BY BIKE

To switch more car trips to cycling trips, I wonder if there's a way to motivate supermarkets to deliver shopping, either free or with a subsidised delivery cost, to cyclists who visit supermarkets by bike and purchase goods to a certain value? I imagine that most family weekly shopping is in excess of £100 and could definitely NOT be carried by a cyclist in one trip. At present, some supermarkets deliver free if the cost exceeds £100, so this would be a 'variation on a theme'.

Perhaps a scheme could operate whereby cyclists could cycle to their local supermarket and pick their own shopping. Then the supermarket could deliver the shopping to their home, combining

several deliveries in one run. Obviously the logistics would need to be thought through, but I just thought I'd raise it as a possibility for consideration.

Morag Leslie-Smith



A week's grocery shopping for a family can be done by a cyclist in one trip. The simplest way to do it is with a cycle-trailer – using either a child trailer (possibly with toddler too, if you pack carefully) or a cargo trailer, such as those we reviewed in the June-July 13 issue. Maybe we need more supermarkets to lend or hire cycle trailers or cargo cycles to customers arriving by bike? If it's too far or too hilly, you can, as you say, already order online and get the groceries delivered. **Editor**

ONE-HANDED CYCLING

It was great reading your article on Helen Hancox's Trike. I am also disabled and cannot use my left arm so I have the gears and brakes on the right hand side of my trike. I attach a photo of it, in case this solution might inspire someone else and enable them to cycle again.

Doug Claxton



FLYING WITH A BIKE

I am trying to plan a cycling trip to the US but on my own bike. I am puzzled about the requirements to put the bike into a 'bike bag' on the plane. What happens to the bike bag whilst one is actually cycling? Does one have to carry this (I presume) quite hefty object in one's bike panniers? This has exercised

my mind for some time and I would be grateful for clarification on this question.

Ann Spencer



You can take a bulky, padded bike bag (or box or hard case) and leave it at a hotel or left luggage facility. Or you can take a bag that's small enough to fit in a pannier or strap onto a rack, such as the CTC bike bag (wiggle.co.uk/ctc-plastic-bike-bag). You'll need to check the bike booking and packing requirements with the airline; some disassembly is normally required. For guidelines, see tinyurl.com/nwrjj57. Some folding bikes, such as the Airnimal Joey Explore (p64) in its optional hard case, can usually travel as standard luggage. **Editor**

CHECK-IN TROUBLE

We have just returned from cycling in France. We flew into Bordeaux from John Lennon airport with EasyJet. We have used our CTC plastic cycle bags for many years now, with all the major low-cost airlines across Europe. On this latest trip, we were stopped at the check-in desk.

To pack the bikes, we turn the handlebars, remove pedals, deflate the tyres, and insert each bike into a CTC bag, which is taped up. We were told that the bikes could not travel in this state as they did not conform with the airline's packaging requirements for bikes. We weren't told why and the staff would not get a printed copy of the terms and conditions.

Luckily, I mentioned my membership of CTC and my belief that the bags had been CTC approved. This seemed to offer the airline staff the opportunity to resolve the position and they agreed to let the bikes travel. But I would like to know if other CTC members have experienced similar problems.

D Gray

Obituaries

Des H Reed

Died in July aged 91. A life member of CTC, he cofounded the successful York Wednesday Wheelers section. Des was the last survivor of a trio of veterans, including Arthur Beecroft and Peter Wordingham, dubbed 'The Last of the Summer Wine' as they behaved like the TV characters. Des was a local information officer and, being a proficient cycle mechanic, often helped cycle tourists with breakdowns. Though he claimed to know North Yorkshire 'like the back of his hand' and didn't carry a map, he didn't mind when his leg was pulled for becoming lost – such as in 1994, when he arrived late to deliver a sermon at the annual Cyclists' Service in Coxwold. *Michael Haseltine*

Brian Foster

Brian joined CTC at 15 and never stopped cycling. Born in Sheffield, he cut his teeth in the Peak District on the hilly roads of Derbyshire. Military service in 1954 took him to Hong Kong, with his bike. He competed in cycle races there, once crashing and suffering a coma and partial loss of hearing. After a spell in industry, Brian lectured in Mechanical Engineering at Shrewsbury Technical College. In his holidays, he cycled through Europe. In 1977, he married Nicole and shared his love of cycling with sons Oliver and Dominic. Until the last year of his life, Brian joined the Saturday casuals on the Shropshire lanes. *Nicole Foster*

Phil Fisher: 30/12/1925-23/8/2013

Well known for his distinctive loud laugh, Phil was a popular, principled, but highly tolerant member of the former West Dorset Section. He enjoyed time-trials in his youth, and became a keen UK and European tourer and Rambler. From his huge library he loved researching the routes, languages, and astronomy of his journeys. An expert photographer, he recorded many quality scenes. As an engineer, he had served in WW2 in REME in Palestine, but most of his working life was at UK AEA, Winfrith. Sadly died at home, aged 87, of inoperable stomach cancer on 23 August 2013. *Malcolm Howell*

Send obituaries, preferably 100 words or fewer, to the Editor (see p80).

JOIN THE CONVERSATION

Get immediate feedback from other CTC members on the CTC Forum: forum.ctc.org.uk. Here's an abridged extract from one popular thread before Cycle went to press (see tinyurl.com/q8mzx9h).



ROAD BIKE WITH MUDGUARDS?

AlastairS: I don't have a road bike, but am thinking about owning one. Is it true that most road bikes don't have holes bored in frame to allow mudguards?

sreten: Full-on road bikes don't. They don't have the brake clearance for mudguards. Cheaper sensible ones, more in a road bike style for mere mortals, often do.

Vorpal: You can put strap-on mudguards like Raceblades on. They aren't quite as good as full mudguards, but

they're much better than a skunk stripe of road cr*p.

andrew_s: It's one of the things to check for when deciding what to buy. Many road bikes don't have mudguard fittings at the dropouts, which requires bodgees such as P-clips or inadequate mudguards (raceblades etc). Others have the holes, but are otherwise the same, using standard drop (49mm) brakes that mean that you are limited to 23mm + mudguard. Some use 'long drop' (57mm) brakes that give room for 28mm + mudguard.

CREPELLO:

CJ has pointed out that you can assess clearances on a bike just by looking at a decent photo and by knowing the brake model, by looking at where the brake pads are positioned in the calliper slots. For better clearance, the pad should obviously be positioned further down the slots.

Ayesha: In the old days, they were called 'sports tourers' or 'winter trainers'. Now they are branded as 'audax'. My 'sports tourer' is the same weight as a full-on race bike I rode in the 70s.