

LETTERS

This month Talking Cycle; bikes on trains (or not); reporting potholes; a farewell to CJ; cycling with one leg; and long-lasting panniers

GET IN TOUCH

WRITE TO US: Cycle Letters, CTC, Parklands, Railton Road, Guildford GU2 9JX

EMAIL US: cycleletters@ctc.org.uk

JOIN IN ONLINE: forum.ctc.org.uk

HEAR, HEAR!



FOR OVER 25 years, David and Wynn Slater have produced audio versions of CTC's well-regarded members' magazine, Cycle.

This was a wonderful service for blind and partially-sighted cycling enthusiasts, and enabled them to keep abreast of everything going on in the cycling world. Sighted members can take this bi-monthly treat for granted, but without audio versions a significant minority would miss out.

The Slaters' audio versions brought the articles to life, and, by alternating voices and adopting a friendly and varied tone, these readings were given an additional quality and zest, which was much appreciated by listeners.

This voluntary service and hard work over such a long period is fully worthy of a Certificate of Merit. CTC wishes to express its admiration and thanks to David and Wynn for helping us to achieve our ambition of being an inclusive cycling club, where everyone is welcome to enjoy the freedom and camaraderie of cycling and cycle touring at home and abroad.

— *David Cox*

This was the citation for David and Wynn's Certificate of Merit, which David Cox wrote. Note that Talking Cycle still exists. Andrew Rowland is the coordinator. 01477 544 027, cycle@rowlandsoftware.com



TRAINS OF THOUGHT

There was a lot of useful information and inspiration in the Riding the Rails article, but it presented an unfairly negative impression of the bike-friendliness of the British rail system. We can travel from one end of the country to the other with no charge for the bike. That isn't the case in Germany, France, Spain, or Italy. Most long-distance services in these countries have been replaced by high-speed trains, and for long-distance journeys you're faced with the choice of either taking your bike in a bag, or travelling on slower regional services.

Provision for cyclists on UK trains is certainly not as good as it could be. In particular, the number of local and short-distance trains that have only two bike spaces must be a deterrent for families. But when it comes to long-distance rail travel with a bike, in my experience, Britain wins hands down for convenience.

— *Andy Miller*

I live in Cornwall and want to take the train with four friends from Truro to Bristol this March. We plan to stay in Youth Hostels in Bath and Street before cycling to Taunton and taking the train back to Truro. Booking Youth Hostels

was easy. Trains? Impossible!

Local trains will carry a maximum of two bikes per train on the outward journey, so we would need three separate trains, each roughly an hour apart, to get five bikes to Bristol. I know that the HST locomotives that operate on these routes can accommodate at least six bikes, but try and book any of them and 'computer says no'. Any suggestions appreciated.

— *Tim Sargent*

For computer to say 'yes', use the East Coast website: eastcoast.co.uk. You can book non-East Coast journeys using this site, and more importantly you can book bikes too.



HOLE KIT & CABOODLE

It was interesting to read Roads Were Not Built For Cars in the Dec/Jan issue. But why is CTC not more vocal on the need for better road maintenance? Provision of good road surfaces must play as important a role in safety as schemes at junctions or cycle lanes. My commute is fraught with danger, either from wheel-damaging craters or the following traffic, especially after dark in winter.

Cannot CTC become



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» more proactive in the call for improvements to road surfaces?
— *W Wylde*

CTC is reactive and proactive on potholes: reactive because CTC members have access to Slater and Gordon Lawyers to fight their corner in a civil claim, via the CTC Incident Line (0844 736 8452); and proactive thanks to FillThatHole. See fillthathole.co.uk for details and for links to smartphone apps (iOS and now Android), which enable you to report potholes and get them fixed.

FAREWELL, CHRIS JUDEN

Thank you, Chris Juden, for all your 31 years of service to cycling in your time at CTC. Your CTC family will miss you and what you have done for all cyclists. Thanks for your work to improve cycle safety; your relentless, quality, in-depth technical reviews; your help getting bikes to work with low enough gears; the help you gave other individuals to overcome their issues; and the fantastic tours you led, encapsulating bike touring at its best. But most of all, thanks for generously sharing your time and knowledge, helping us with things like getting GPX files accurate and loadable! You have made cycling possible and pleasurable for so many of us over the years. We, and the whole cycle industry with whom you are held in great esteem, will miss you.
— *Angela Byrne & David Wood*

Chris is gone but very much not forgotten. I'll miss him too, having learned a lot from him over the past 14 years (or 26 if you count when



I joined CTC as a member. But we're still in touch, and articles and photos from Chris may appear in Cycle in future. There's a CTC & Me article to sort out too!

CYCLING WITH ONE LEG

Following up on some of the articles and letters in the Dec/Jan issue: I had to work out how to cycle again after my right leg was amputated in 2013. A bike was unlikely to serve; my balance was not brilliant even before the amputation (at age 73).

The answer was a Pashley Tri-1 tricycle. I lowered the gearing by changing from a 44 to a 36 tooth chainwheel, to cope with reduced power from the prosthetic leg. After an interesting week or two learning to ride the trike, I am now happily riding around the local countryside. The roads around here have relatively gentle slopes but I can tackle 7-8% gradients now that fitness has returned. Longest ride so far is 16 miles.

— *Charles Catt*

BAGS FOR LIFE?

Back in 1985, I purchased a set of pannier bags from Karrimor, paying twice the normal price for bags manufactured in what they called 'Ks100e'. These came with a guarantee that Karrimor would maintain the product in working condition for the lifetime of the purchaser. Well, here I am, 29 years and 94,000 miles later, and I find that they are worn out. The zip has broken and the bags have developed holes.

I wrote to Karrimor but received no response. This is a shame since the bags themselves have been marvellous. Have I lived too long? I suppose longevity is a healthy side effect of cycling!

— *Martin Lloyd*

Obituaries

▶ ADRIAN WALKER: 1954-2014

Adrian died on 17 August, having been diagnosed with a brain tumour in December 2013. He was a keen road cyclist who'd completed LEJOG, toured, and was out in the lanes of Hertfordshire every weekend. A native of Stoke, he followed the Potters, attending matches when possible. He was a chemist and one of his hobbies was wine-making; his elderflower was special. He was a good friend with a dry wit, who defined himself as a husband, a father, a cyclist. — *Jane Haycock*

▶ RHODRI HUGHES JONES: 1945-2014

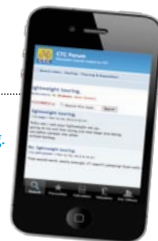
Rhodri died on 9 September after a tragic accident while riding home from watching a stage of the Tour of Britain. He rode regularly with the local CTC Eryri Thursday group. He was a 'gentle giant', always enjoying a chat and ready to help and encourage a slower rider. Rhodri leaves a widow Madge and daughter Nia and will be greatly missed by them and all his friends. — *Doreen Lindsey*

▶ BRIAN COOKE

Died in September, aged 79, after a long illness. Born in south London, he was introduced to cycling by his father Arthur, a member of Anerley Bicycle Club. Brian returned to club cycling when his son Joff showed an interest, and for many years was a mainstay of Southampton DA's Sunday morning 'coffee mob'. He was a great traditionalist, instantly recognisable in his plusses, Greenspot jacket and flat cap, on his favourite Allin. Brian loved to tour in the South West (having been evacuated to Devon in the war) and Scotland; he was a member of the Cape Wrath Fellowship. He was a skilled rifle shooter and an avid boat builder and sailor. — *Bob Dampier*

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 bit.ly/14pYb5r)



SELF-SEALING INNERTUBES?

WrightsW5: I have seen them in Halfords, own brand and Slime brand. Both say they seal punctures up to 3mm. Are they any good? Do they work?

puncture but don't know if I got any. I did notice that I had to pump up the tyres less frequently, which made me wonder if the slime makes the innertube less permeable.

[XAP]Bob: I last used slime tyres over a decade ago. Rode over a pile of drawing pins and, yes, the slime worked really well.

Si: My experience of putting it into a pair of tyres that got frequent p'nct'ures on the local gravel-and-glass cycle paths is that, once in there, I didn't have another p'nct're. However, this was a case of putting slime into my tubes rather than buying tubes with it already in.

Elizabethsdad: I had Slime innertubes on a bike a few years back, combined with Marathon Plus tyres. Never had to fix a

mjr: Cycles have had puncture-repair aerosols for years, too. I carry one for use as a quick fix if I puncture on my way to a timed appointment. It's not as good as a patch but it'll get me there.

townbikemark: Got one on the front tyre of one of my bikes. Can recall wheeling the bike around a car boot sale when someone pointed out that I had a tack stuck in the tyre. There was no puncture, so it's effective in my experience.



Letters are edited for space (if above 150 words), clarity and, if necessary, legality. Note that if you have specific complaint or query about CTC policy, you should address it to your CTC Councillor or relevant national office staff member. Letters and emails for the April/May issue must arrive by 27 February. **Write to us at:** Cycle Letters, CTC, Parklands, Railton Road, Guildford GU2 9JX, or cycleletters@ctc.org.uk



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