

LETTERS

This month Lighting regulations, pedal reflectors, cycle training, the Rolling Recovery article, and lighter-weight touring

GET IN TOUCH

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STUCK AT THE LIGHTS

LETTER
OF THE
MONTH

REGARDING THE comment about whether or not the Road Vehicle Lighting Regulations will ever be amended: after reading a piece on lighting from Chris Juden (bit.ly/ctclightlegality), last year I wrote to my MP (Chris White, Conservative, Leamington and Warwick). I asked him to pass my question on to one of the MPs who was responsible for the Department for Transport. I received a reply, dated 16 April 2015, from Robert Goodwill MP.

The reply said I would be 'interested to learn that following the Red Tape Challenge, the Department for Transport commissioned a review of bicycle regulations with TRL Ltd. The review highlighted a number of areas to simplify legislative controls on bicycles, including bicycle lighting. Consideration of the current rules will be undertaken once the current legislative programme updating the regulations for electrically-assisted bicycles has been finalised.'

So something might happen one day!
— *Alastair Galloway*

We live in hope. There are lots of non-approved lights, like the CatEye LD610 pictured, that are very effective. Meanwhile, the pedal reflector issue (see also 'Pedal reflections', overleaf) is troublesome for anyone who rides clipless and irrelevant for recumbent cyclists, whose pedal reflectors will point upwards and downwards.



A ROLLING RECOVERY

I usually peruse the pages of Cycle magazine, glancing through any articles that catch my eye, but until now they've never moved me to tears. My partner found me welling up over my breakfast coffee as I read Simon Smith's moving account of his physical and emotional journey across France with his two young daughters. Well done to Simon for taking such a bold journey and for writing about it with such honesty and poise. I'm sure that I'll be with many CTC members who wish him, Tilly, and Betsy warm wishes and happy cycling for the future.

— *Louise Leigh*

UNTRAINED & DANGEROUS

In the Bike to Work Tactics article (June/July) I was not surprised to see this typically overconfident comment 'we don't think training should be a prerequisite for cycling for business purposes. (Employers can't impose training on cycle-commuters anyway).'

Bearing in mind the tragic deaths that regularly occur while cyclists are travelling to work, training can only be helpful. I have cycled in London for over 30 years and the rising number of new cyclists is by far the greatest danger I have faced. Riding

too fast for traffic conditions, overtaking with millimetres to spare, jumping red lights, riding on non-shared pavements, texting, listening to headphones, these selfish riders have given cycling a bad reputation with other road users and the public. They never have a bell or give verbal warning of their approach. If all riders received proper training and followed it, they would probably avoid accidents, whatever the traffic or riding conditions.

— *Roger Morsley-Smith*

Cycle training is fantastically useful for new and returning cyclists. What the article says is that employers ought not be able to demand it for employees who cycle at work. If they offer training – great!

As for the 'danger' of new cyclists: I've been crashed into in London by another cyclist. No real harm was done. The greatest danger is from motor vehicles carelessly driven. All road users should behave appropriately, of course, but if you substituted 'driver' for 'rider' in your critique, many more tragic deaths would be avoided.

LIGHTEN THE LOAD

There seems to be a similar request to Robin Alcock's (Q&A, April/May) about panniers every



» year. There is an iron law about essential equipment: it will always be 50% more than can be put in the panniers, regardless of the pannier size. Why would anyone wish to haul 40 litres around Europe? You don't need most of it. Use the smallest, lightest possible panniers and a handlebar bag.

Peter Duker's 1973 book 'Sting in the Tail... By racing bike around the World' is a good guide. His book is still available from Amazon, ISBN 978-0720706581, though it isn't cheap. Duker completed his trip with just handlebar bag and a musette.

— **Bob Pike**

See also the blog of Igor Kovse – <http://ultralightcycling.blogspot.co.uk> – whose bike is pictured. We featured his 100 Cols Tour, with just 3kg of luggage, in the Feb/Mar 2012 issue. Have a look too at Mark Beaumont's luggage in this issue. He had 35 litres in total for a 6,750-mile journey, and he didn't actually need the camping gear he took.



PEDAL REFLECTIONS

As reported in the June/July 2015 edition of Cycle, Rebecca Lack keeps breaking the reflectors on her pedals. My wife has a similar problem. My solution was to acquire some scrap wheel reflectors and modify them to fit as shown in the attached photograph. The advantage of this fix is that the feet do not keep catching and damaging the reflectors and the new surface is bigger than the old.

— **Roderick Douglas**

Rebecca Lack complains quite justifiably about the poor longevity of pedal reflector fixings. I have secured mine with ordinary cable

ties, which work well and are tough enough to stand up to my feet. Best to do it before they fall off, though!

— **David Cooper**

IN THE DARK

As an ex-cyclist and wife of a keen cyclist, I really am concerned how many cyclists still ride in predominantly black clothing. Please help yourselves to be seen by all the motorised traffic by wearing orange, yellow or red jackets as I feel sure this is contributing to the accident figures. Every time I hear of another collision in our area, I look to see what was being worn and am dismayed to see that many riders are not helping themselves to be seen.

— **Maddie Allen**

This blog post on the CTC website by Victoria Hazael provides some food for thought bit.ly/canyouseemenow

THAT'S NOT WIGHT

In the latest edition of Cycle, I was surprised to see a photo of the famous Pink Ferry, which crosses the Hamble River, south-east of Southampton, used to illustrate the article Doing It Wight. The report by Janet Rogers made no mention of cycling on the mainland so it seemed odd to include this unrelated picture. Incidentally, I recently guided 102 charity cyclists from Paris to Yeovil and we used the Pink Ferry, 12 at a time. It's a really good facility and very cycle friendly.

— **Martin Wills**



Obituaries

▶ **John Fairbrother: 1937-2014**

Died 17 Dec from a brain tumour. John grew up in Yorkshire and became a Government Scientific Officer where he was involved in the development of hovercraft and mobile telephones. A CTC member for over 50 years, John enjoyed repairing bikes almost as much as riding them. His particular expertise was in Sturmey Archer hub gears. — *WJ Spiers*

▶ **Derek Houghton**

Died 20 Jan, aged 82. A stalwart of Northumbria DA, Derek used to race and tour in Middlesex. Work brought him to Newcastle, where he and wife Daphne continued cycling with their son John using a tandem with kiddy-cranks. He went into the cycle trade with Norman Fay and then ran his own shop. He wrote a history of the DA. — *David Jeffery*

▶ **Rev Peter Price: 1927-2015**

Died at home on 20 Feb from a brain tumour. After an engineering apprenticeship and National Service, he travelled to Canada and became an Anglican priest. One of his later parishes included the island of Santa Helena in the South Atlantic. He rode with CTC Ledbury. He was an active member of the VCC who did his last century ride in 2010.

▶ **Bob Oakley: 1930-2015**

Son of Bill Oakley, Bob was a CTC member for 76 years. He was Walsall Section Runs Sec from 1952-59, Renewal Sec and Treasurer 1959-74, and Chairman 1974-2001. He also spent a long time as South Staffs DA Treasurer and Chairman. He was awarded the CTC Certificate of Merit, and he won BCTC final on fixed-wheel in Somerset. — *Alan Oakley*

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/ctccampingfood)



SIMPLE CAMPING RECIPES

Kernal Corn: What do you cook to fuel your motor at the end of a long day? I'm talking about simple, realistic recipes. One pot and few ingredients. Ideas?

bikepacker: Backpacker's Cookbook by Dave Coustick and the cookbook sold through the Backpackers Club both have some great camp meals.

keithg: Chorizo and couscous. Fry up the chorizo (it keeps without refrigeration),

remove, decant the oil, and then boil water for the couscous. Soak and then add the chorizo

mercalia: Curries can be easy – boiled rice and heat up a tin of curry. Spaghetti bolognese? Porridge?

NATURAL ANKLING: Lidl do instant noodles for 18p. Same as super noodles but dirt cheap.

RickH: If there is a suitable shop near the campsite, I've sometimes bought heat-in-the-packet filled pasta. Heat the pasta and then

use the hot water to make a drink.

whoof: Omelettes. Dice a potato, boil it in water for a few minutes. Fry some red pepper, mushroom and onion. Throw in the potato and egg, seasoning and a bit of cheese.

fluffybunnyuk: Veggie burger mix. Add cold water, wait 10 mins – voila, burgers. Heat on stove for 6-8 minutes. Add to bun with ketchup and salad. If I ever take packet noodles, that's when I know it's time to stop touring.



Letters are edited for space (if above 150 words), clarity and, if necessary, legality. Please 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 Oct/Nov issue must arrive by 28 August. Write to: cycleletters@ctc.org.uk or Cycle Letters, PO Box 313, Scarborough, YO12 6WZ



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