

LETTERS

This month Bikes for teenagers, cycling on footpaths and footways, helmet camera risks, chain replacement, and touring shorts

Near right: Darby Edwards. Far right: © Geoff Smith / Alamy



TEENAGE PICKS

IT WAS great to hear the story of Emily Edwards' first own bike (Aug-Sep issue). I'm a teenager as well and came to this point last year when I outgrew my old Islabikes Luath 26 (originally my big brother's bike). I got a 52cm Raleigh RX Elite in a sale, choosing this over the disc-braked Comp because I wanted to be able to fit my B&M Lumotec IQ2 Luxos B headlight and mudguards.

I am very happy with the bike. I can change it between a racer, tourer and cyclocross by adding mudguards, luggage rack, road tyres, etc. As Emily mentioned, toe overlap does cause some problems for a 52cm frame with 700C wheels. I also would like to change the two front rings for something smaller and bigger, to help on the hills and get a higher speed. I now have SPD pedals, which I am really looking forward to using.

— Douglas Morrison

I'm glad to hear that, like Emily, you've found a suitable bike because the number of smaller adult-sized bikes seems to be diminishing. Fewer bikes are being built with 26in (559) wheels, which are easily accommodated by smaller frame sizes. Thanks a bunch, bike industry!



CYCLING ON FOOTPATHS...

I was dismayed to read in your legal column that 'there is no blanket ban on cyclists using footpaths that are not by the roadside'. It may be misinterpreted by members as a carte blanche to cycle on footpaths. A footpath may, under common law, only be used by walkers and their 'natural accompaniments'. A cyclist who rides on a footpath is most certainly committing a trespass against the landowner (unless he or she has that landowner's permission), and even a cyclist who pushes their bike along a footpath may be doing so. It is of course a civil wrong, not a criminal offence, but I don't think that CTC should be misinforming members like this. I hope you will publish a correction.

— Ann Kennedy

Not so much a correction as an elaboration. See page 42 for an article that looks in more detail about cycling on footpaths.

...AND ON PAVEMENTS

I do it and lots more do too. It is all relative to the prevailing situation. Providing no pedestrian is placed in danger and the cyclist is courteous, then there is no harm done. But I live on a very busy and narrow A-road. The



WRITE TO CYCLE

Email editor@ctc.org.uk or write to Cycle, PO Box 313, Scarborough, YO12 6WZ. The writer of the letter of the month wins a personalised SplashMap worth £28.99. For more about SplashMaps' weatherproof, washable, wearable maps, visit splash-maps.com

traffic situation is so bad that it is almost reckless behaviour not to.

Why is there often such concern over cyclists on pavements when thousands of motorists obstruct (and damage) the pavements every day? Why pick on the everyday cyclist? They may be frail and elderly (like me!) and no longer able to drive, or young and vulnerable? If only in the interest of the nation's health, we should be providing a safe cycling environment for cyclists, covering many thousands of miles. Also, if cycles are seen as such a threat to pedestrians, then why do most pedestrians insist on walking on cycleways?

— Ted Prangnell

CERTIFICATE OF MERIT

For his work in setting up the CTC Salisbury Section in 1979 and acting as its Secretary ever since, Alan Clarke was awarded a justly-deserved CTC Certificate of





Merit earlier this year. The award was presented by Jimmy Walker and Rob Jacobs, both CTC members and chair and treasurer respectively of the affiliated campaign group COGS.

— **Keith Matthews**

HANDLEBAR NOT HELMET

Regarding your articles on helmet cameras (Oct-Nov issue): helmets are designed to crumple and take the impact in a fall. If you put a camera on your helmet, you are effectively negating the point of wearing one to protect your head, because a camera (and any other solid object for that matter) is not designed to collapse. It can also act as a pivot, thereby increasing the chance of serious head or neck injury. Note the speculation last year regarding poor Michael Schumacher's skiing accident. I attach my camera to the handlebar and would never advise attaching anything to a cycle helmet.

— **Dr Mobeen Bhatti**

Most (all?) cameras will alternatively fix to the bike. Note, however, that some helmet camera mounts are designed to snap free in an accident.



CHAIN LETTER

Richard Hallett's advice on chain life and replacement (Aug-Sep issue) describes my own approach, with one exception. I have never found it possible to re-use a set of sprockets with a

new chain, without unacceptable slippage, once the original chain has lengthened by 0.7% or so. The limit I use is 0.5%.

It's very easy to check the wear in a chain, particularly as the quick-links used for most chains now allow easy removal. I have a nail in my workshop door frame. I hang the worn chain up next to a new one, and can then see exactly how much wear there is without the need for any measuring device. It probably would not be popular to use the kitchen door frame for this! When the used chain has lengthened by half a link over its length, it's heading for the scrap bin.

— **Ted Gameson**



SHORT CHANGED

I can't be the only touring cyclist to discover an apparent world shortage of baggy shorts with sewn-in pad and pockets. I've searched everywhere – shops and online, and from Aberdeen to London – without success. Plenty of offers of Lycra shorts, or shorts with fancy liners. But no: all I'm looking for are baggy shorts with pockets and a padded seat... rather like the Altura shorts bought in 2002 that I'm wearing right now (though judging by the eroding state of them, not for much longer). Where might I find replacements?

— **Gordon Casely**

There are lots of baggy shorts, ostensibly for mountain biking, that have a reinforced, seamless gusset, but in these any seat pad is typically part of a separate liner. As Cycle was going to press, the only baggy shorts I found with a seat pad sewn to the outer were Oslo's Shift shorts, pictured (\$123.25, osloh.com). Any others?

Obituaries

▶ **Geoffrey Bolwell**

Died 4/6/15, aged 91. A life member of CTC, he rode with the Buckshee Wheelers when in Italy with the Royal Artillery in WWII. After the war, he toured through mountain passes with friends. He worked for Brown Brothers cycle wholesalers and belonged to several clubs, including Thanet Road Club and FCOT. He was still cycling aged 80. — *Elaine Cramp*

▶ **Jean Nicholson**

Died 6/6/15, aged 86, following deteriorating health. A formidable time triallist, she was a keen cycle tourist with husband Jim, first with the Middlesbrough Co-op Cycling Club, then the Cleveland Wheelers, but with a loyalty to CTC. She and Jim had a lifetime friendship with Beryl Burton; Jean often shared TT start sheets with Beryl. — *Edward Grainger*

▶ **Ray Head: 10/5/23-29/5/15**

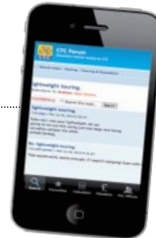
A cyclist from an early age, Ray joined the Buckshee Wheelers when he was stationed in Egypt in WWII. They raced in the desert on whatever bikes they could find. (Do contact us via Cycle if you were in the Buckshee Wheelers.) Ray and wife Hilda had two children, whom they took cycling on seats and a junior-back or tag-along. — *Tony Williams*

▶ **Alan Rapsey: 1929-2015**

A lifelong cyclist, Alan was President of CTC's West London DA in the '60s. He rode a penny-farthing, and a fall from that affected him in later life. He worked for the Home Office. After moving to Wimbourne with wife Carol, he became President of the Bournemouth Section. Failing health stopped him joining the weekly Dawdlers' rides. — *Jeanette King*

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/ctc-uk-v-france-for-cycling)



UK VERSUS FRANCE FOR CYCLING

ANTONISH: A Belgian cycling magazine I read refers to a study that ranks European countries for cycling. Denmark comes first, followed by Holland, followed by Sweden, Finland, Germany and Belgium. What surprised me was that the UK (11th) was above France (12th).

bigjim: I've never noticed the French being a big cycling nation. I think they see cycling as a sport rather than a means of transport. It's noticeable when touring in France

how few bike shops there are.

al_ylrpal: Cyclists are regarded as heroes in France, unlike here where we are seen as a nuisance. You don't see French cycle tourists but on weekends plenty of clubs are out just like here. It's a big country, double the size of the UK with a similar population. The cyclists are less densely distributed.

Samuel D: Vélocio's spirit lives on, but mostly not in France. It's a nice place to ride a bicycle, though. In the Paris region,

there are cyclists of all types and ages. In the Alps, I mostly see older cyclists on high-end road bikes. That seems to be what cycling means there.

Gearoidmuar: Different countries have different characteristics. The worst drivers I've met are in crowded parts of Britain and Portugal. Best cycling routes? Germany. (I've only been to Denmark once.) Best value? Spain, Germany. Best cycling food? Ireland, Britain, Germany. Worst breakfast? France.



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 & emails for the Feb/Mar issue must arrive by 23 December. Write to: editor@ctc.org.uk or Cycle Letters, PO Box 313, Scarborough, YO12 6WZ



Facebook
Tell us what you think on the CTC Facebook pages:
facebook.com/CTCCyclists



Tweet us
Read the latest updates and get in touch on
[Twitter@CTC_Cyclists](https://twitter.com/CTC_Cyclists)