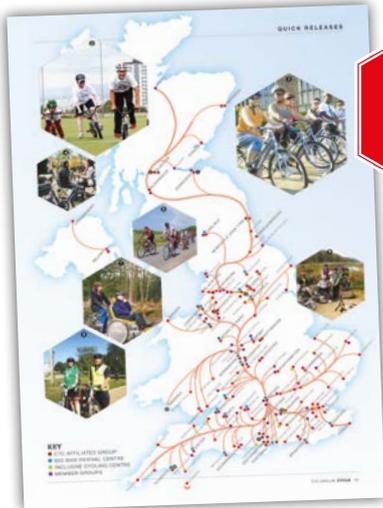


LETTERS

This month A map reference, dark clothing, pre-war track racing, octogenarian cyclists, and the pros and cons of bespoke bikes



LETTER OF THE MONTH



● If cyclists 'shouldn't wear black', what about pedestrians? Or dark-coloured cars?

MISSING MEMBER GROUPS

THE MAP of CTC groups on page 15 of the Feb/Mar issue of *Cycle* was unhelpful in that it suggested there were no CTC Member Groups in large swathes of the countryside where they do exist.

I appreciate the map is schematic and it would not be possible to show all the affiliated groups. However, it would have been much better if the designer could have tried to show as many Member Groups as possible, and then filled in any gaps with affiliated groups. In the area I know best (Hertfordshire and Essex), the only possible Member Group shown is a blob west of Gravesend, which I suspect might be the West Kent group, which is south of the Thames and not in Essex.

According to the CTC database, there are eight member groups in Hertfordshire and Essex – though the South East Essex group is not on there, which would bring the count to nine. A reader of this article would assume there were no CTC Member Groups in this densely populated part of the country.

— **Judy Allfrey**

While the article does say that it was 'only a snapshot of our network', the map turned out to be less useful than we'd imagined. Apologies to anyone who was confused or thought their group had disappeared. To find a group in your area, see cyclinguk.org/local-groups. Note: informal groups, which South East Essex now is, are not shown.

VISIBLY ANNOYED

I was shocked to read the response from Cherry Allan in the Feb/Mar issue about the wisdom of wearing dark clothes when cycling.

Like the correspondent, I too am concerned about the growing trend for cyclists wearing black, particularly on the most visible area – above the waist! Cherry suggests that there is a lack of evidence for the benefits of being as visible as possible, by wearing bright clothing, and even suggests that it is counter-intuitive. I quote Rule 59 of the Highway Code: 'Clothing... You should wear... light coloured or fluorescent clothing which helps other road users to see you.'

Come on, CTC. As a responsible organisation, we deserve better than this, particularly regarding safety issues.

— **Julian Millerchip**

Cherry Allan's avoidance (Q&A, Feb/Mar) of advising on clothing colour is very wise. If we are to have any hope of making cycling a normal, everyday activity, it must be possible to cycle in everyday clothes. It must remain absolutely the responsibility of all road users to maintain an adequate look-out



WRITE TO CYCLE

Email editor@cyclinguk.org or write to Cycle, PO Box 313, Scarborough, YO12 6WZ. The

letter of the month wins a Gorilla Cage or a Monkii Cage plus extra Monkii cleats – your choice. Each is worth £20.

Visit cyclemiles.co.uk for more about these innovative bottle/bikepacking cages – and many other products.

for other road users irrespective of their clothing.

— **Bill Henderson**

A PETROL-DRIVEN PAST

'Motorcyclette' (Letters, Feb/Mar) is the French term for motorcycles and it also embraces scooters and mopeds, but in this instance the CTC card is an export customs pass for a track-pacing machine similar to the one in this photograph (below). The CTC member in question was a pacer and was going abroad with his licence.

— **Mick Butler**

AGE UNCONCERNED

Your excellent photograph in the Feb/Mar issue featuring a club-run by Torbay CTC prompts me to write about our section. The East Sussex CTC Wednesday Rides is probably the



● The CTC card shown last issue was an export pass for a track-pacing motorcycle

Bibliothèque nationale de France



● CTC Torbay's Tuesday ride: very popular with retired riders

Photo: Graham Brodie

largest group in the UK, and its octogenarians probably have the highest average age.

Section Treasurer and medium-pace ride leader Ron is 89. Joyce is 88 and recently cycled from London to Paris with Les (84), who has never stopped cycling since his time trialling days. George, who recycles discarded objects he finds on rides, is 84, as is Ann, who produces the bi-monthly runs list and bi-annual magazine. Marie is 84. Geoff (83) maintains club members' bikes in his garden shed. Membership Secretary Ken is 83. John (82) regularly rides with his dog in a front basket. Other members are Charles, Ron and Bruce (all 82), Pat (81) and Ray (80).

— **John Regan**

BESPOKE BIKES

Custom-built bicycles are great. A word to the uninitiated: when you specify your custom build, you can't try it out until it's built – and usually paid for. Then you discover that what you designed is only 99% right, which can irritate, so be warned. Chas Roberts was quite upset when I told him (before we took delivery) that I was bound to be disappointed with our tandem! As long as you are aware of this, it is not a problem. As it happens, our tandem, despite its imperfections, is absolutely brilliant.

— **Martin Staines**

After writing a great article on bespoke bikes, Dan Joyce inexplicably concludes by suggesting that we order one online to be delivered from

China? For me, a bespoke bike is something personal, involving a relationship with the supplier, or better still, the builder. It's also something expensive enough to want to get right first time.

I think a lot of people, myself included, have come to realise that part of what you are paying for is the tailored advice of an expert who has listened carefully to your needs and requirements. Rather than repeating my previous mistakes of saving a few pounds by buying something online that doesn't fit the bill, I will certainly do that next time. Dan's conclusion seems to indicate that he has misunderstood this movement, but it would be great to hear him come back on that.

— **Mark Poingestre**

Ordering direct from China is simply another option, not 'better' or 'worse'. You do need to have a very clear idea of what you want to order in that way, and to be comfortable signing off CAD drawings. You'll still get some feedback too, although it will be a different experience from visiting a builder in the UK. You pays your money...



● Lovely brazing from Demon Frameworks. See more handbuilt bikes at bespoked.cc

Obituaries

▶ Alan Douglas Jones: 1929-2015

Died 17/4/2015. Alan rode with the Saxon Road Club and CTC's Nuneaton section. Often seen and heard at the velodromes of Manchester and Ghent, Alan loved track racing, Manchester City football club, and cycle road racing as well as cycle-touring. I remember his smile on reaching the top of Mt Ventoux, aged 67. He will be missed. — *Ian Bonner*

▶ Bryan Jefferys: 1924-2015

Died 11/1/16, aged 90. After war service in the Met Office, Bryan became a teacher and joined the South Bucks. In 1951, he married DA Secretary Enid Sherman. They spent many happy years riding with South Bucks, touring abroad with their children on two tandems, and attending the Birthday Rides in their campervan. — *Karen Jefferys*

▶ Shirley Burrage: 1937-2015

Rode with CTC in Norfolk from 1960 until her health declined a few years ago. At times secretary, treasurer and president, generations will recall her welcome on their first experience of the Norfolk DA. Her bright personality lit up everything she did. Local and national CTC awards followed, culminating in a National Volunteer Award in 2006. — *Fergus Muir*

▶ John Graham Wanless: 1942-2015

Died 30/12/15 aged 73. Known as Fatty because he weighed the same at 20 as at 13, Graham was a strong road racer. His Ferryhill Wheelers team was one of the best in the NE, and he was Teesside Divisional Road Race Champion. He hiked all the Scottish Munros. He later took up audax cycling, riding PBP twice. He rode half a million miles. — *Miff Anderson*

Join the conversation

Get immediate feedback from other Cycling UK members on the Cycling UK forum: forum.cyclinguk.org. Here's an abridged extract from one popular thread (see bit.ly/cyclinguk-quicklinks)



DIFFICULT-TO-REMOVE CHAIN LINK

AlastairS: I have a KMC 10-speed chain on my bike. It has a link which looks like it can be separated, but I can't. I clean it with degreaser, then try to push the outside links towards the special link... which doesn't budge. **KimBowers:** Try squeezing the side-plates of the link together first, then push the pins in towards each other. It shouldn't need any tools to undo, just your fingers.

Vetus Ossa: Some power links are

very easy to push together to separate, and some are not.

Pliers designed for the job make it a doddle. I use Park Tool Master Link Pliers.

pete75: 12 quid for some Master Link pliers – what an extravagance! Get some snipe-nosed pliers from the pound-shop and grind a curved indent on the inside of the tips.

rfrayer: One technique is to feed the chain onto the outer chainring with one tooth of slack where the quick link is, so that the link is

almost perpendicular to the chainring. You can then use any tool, or a handy rock, on the end of the link to push it apart.

cycleruk: We presume you have a quicklink style. There are various makes but if it's a KMC then I use pliers on the diagonal edges.

Vantage: I lost my patience with one of those stupid things. After an hour I gave up and cut it off with a dremel.

MikeF: Here's a link on how to remove it as described by rfrayer: bit.ly/cyclinguk-quicklink-removal



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 Cycling UK policy, you should address it to your Cycling UK Councillor or relevant national office staff member. Letters & emails for the June/July issue must arrive by 29 April. Write to: editor@cyclinguk.org or Cycle Letters, PO Box 313, Scarborough, YO12 6WZ



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