

Your opinions

LETTERS

THIS MONTH DRIVERLESS CARS, INTERNAL CABLING, MUDGUARD FLAPS, BROKEN LEGS, BIKES-ON-TRAINS POLICIES, SCOTTISH MIDGES, AND MORE



'Sorry, mate, computer didn't see you'

Left: Alamy



Letter of the month

Transport

DRIVERLESS CARS ARE COMING

Driverless cars could usher in a new era of road safety for cyclists, with cars programmed to overtake cyclists safely and give adequate road space to cyclists, especially at junctions and roundabouts.

However, it could go the other way: driverless car manufacturers could lobby for more cycle-free roads, on the grounds that cyclists are difficult to spot and are 'unpredictable'. Additionally, features designed to improve energy efficiency and road utilisation such as platooning (whereby wirelessly networked vehicles drive very close to each other) and autonomous intersection management (whereby traffic lights are removed and vehicles drive directly between gaps in the traffic) could make roads unusable by cyclists. These measures combined could effectively force cyclists off the roads.

Is Cycling UK looking at the opportunities and threats posed by driverless cars, so that the former rather than the latter scenario comes to pass?

Martin Budden

We'll have an article on driverless cars in the not-too-distant future that I hope will answer your questions. It's something Cycling UK Policy Director Roger Geffen and I have been talking about for a while.

Write to Cycle

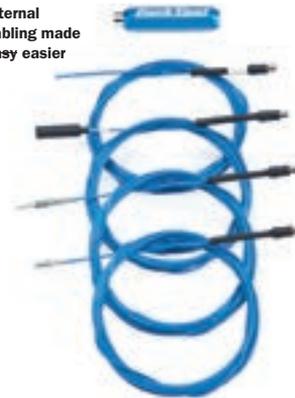
Cycle, PO Box 313, Scarborough, YO12 6WZ. Or email

cycle@jamespembrokemedia.co.uk

The star letter wins a pair of Compass tyres, courtesy of Sven Cycles, worth up to £116! These lightweight, supple tyres will transform the ride feel of your bike. They're available in a range of designs and widths in 700C, 650B and 26in diameters, and particularly suit touring bikes, gravel bikes, and road-plus bikes. For more information about these plush, easy-rolling tyres, or to purchase a set of your own, go online to svencycles.com



Internal cabling made easy easier



INFERNAL INTERNALS

I was surprised to read Richard Hallett's reply to Miriam Potter's enquiry about replacing internal cable routing with external routing. Richard not only went along with this, but even went as far as recommending 'zip ties' to secure the external cabling. This strikes me as an ugly and entirely unnecessary 'solution' to a non-problem.

All that is required to make an easy job of maintaining/replacing internal cabling is the appropriate routing tool. For example, Park Tool's IR-1 routing kit will do the job admirably. It costs a few pounds, but it's worth it. Of course, it's not the kind of thing you will have with you on the road, which is when Miriam felt the need to 'replace the gunked-up rusty

cable at the roadside'. But routine home maintenance of the internal cabling, aided by the correct routing kit, will avoid the necessity for this kind of emergency

Bob Damper

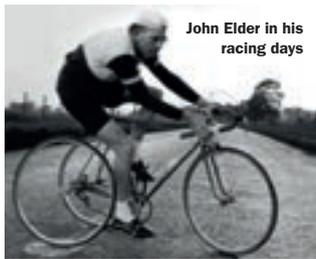
It's a good solution if you want your cables running internally, although note that Park Tool have discontinued their IR-1 kit. You'd need the Park Tool IR-1.2 Internal Cable Routing Kit, which is £60. If you'd prefer external cabling, clamp-on cable guides are available from the likes of Dia Compe and Genetic for a few pounds each.

MILK BOTTLE'S TOPS

Richard Hallett was asked about mudflaps for mudguards and suggested one or two off-the-shelf solutions. There is another: a flap cut from a standard plastic milk bottle, pop-riveted to the guard, does an excellent job. Mine is a decade old and still going strong.

James Palmer





▶ CENTURY RIDER

One of our Lifetime Members in Fife and Kinross CTC recently attained the age of 100. John Elder was a time triallist, and I think he started attending CTC group meets when his racing days were over, more than 50 years ago. He was also involved with the Dunfermline Cycling Club, the VTTA, and the SCU.

John still lives on his own and has only recently sold his last cycle, a trike he kept in his spare room. He helped the guy who bought it carry it downstairs. A mention would be good as he still reads *Cycle* as soon as it arrives.

Linda Body

BREAKING VIEWS

I read with interest the article on 'broken leg recovery' in Q&A in the June/July issue.

Whether or not the X-rays of a repaired tibial fracture were those of the inquirer or stock radiographs for illustration purposes, my eye was drawn immediately to the far right image, where there is a clear failure of the plate over the fracture site. I would also suggest that the plate is too narrow and too short, allowing the excessive bending forces that have caused it to fail.

If these radiographs do indeed belong to the person in question, the repair requires an immediate review. If, on the other hand, they are designed to illustrate the importance of not over-weight bearing too soon, they are a graphic demonstration of that, but also highlight a questionable technique by the surgeon, one I would be concerned about if it was one of my canine patients let alone my own leg.

Martin Atkinson, vet

BIKES OFF TRAINS

A few years ago, you would have seen a number of cyclists waiting for trains at Leicester station as they commuted to work. Since then many have been driven away by East Midlands Trains' rigorously enforced two-bikes-only rule. Now cyclists are largely restricted to those, like me, who use folding bicycles. With the introduction of the new timetable at the end May, the company have become even more cycle unfriendly, due to the introduction of some services using shortened HST sets with no space for bikes at all.

East Midlands Trains trumpet their cycle hubs at stations like Leicester, but these are of no use to those of us who cycle at both ends of our journeys. Surely we should be seeing more room for cycles on trains, not less? Without it, the benefits of combining train travel and cycling that East Midlands Trains list at the top of their cycle policy web page are unavailable to many.

Nicolas Sawyer



Bike policy: off the rails

Photo of the month



Photo: Jim Stronach

I shot this in Lucca, Italy. The bicycle is an incredibly useful machine. It's good for your health, emits no fumes, incurs no congestion charges, no parking fees, or vehicle taxes. You can even use it to showcase a menu outside your restaurant! **Jim Stronach**

Join the conversation

CYCLING UK FORUM

Get immediate feedback from other Cycling UK members on the Cycling UK forum: forum.cyclinguk.org. Here's an abridged extract from a recent thread: bit.ly/cycle-midges

MIDGES IN SCOTLAND

Barks: I know that the midges in Scotland build in numbers from spring into summer but could someone advise when they cease to be an issue? I am thinking of touring West Scotland from mid September or later.

feefee8: It can depend on the summer but they start tailing off in September, probably not much biting after mid-September.

gloomyandy: At the moment, it would seem that Glencoe is a good place to

avoid... smidgeup.com/midge-forecast/

In general, they seem to be well in decline by the end of September.

Greystoke: Awful! Pitch your tent in the wind away from water and you'll be ok. Take spray deodorant and spray inside the tent at night. That kills them.

mercalia:

Do the midges carry any diseases like Lymes?

feefee8: None that I'm aware of. Just the ferocious eating and spoiling of outdoor activities of an evening! You



won't see them much in direct sunlight but once that starts dipping in the west, and usually the breeze goes with it, that's when you become fodder. Clegs are pretty bad this year too. I'm not a fan of midges but I really, really don't like clegs and their bites.

pjclinch: Clegs aka horse flies. Big flies with a nasty bite that will go through a thin top quite easily. They don't come in clouds like midges do, but a bite is a clear 'ow!' rather than slowly building irritation.

OBITUARIES

Are now being published online at cyclinguk.org/obituaries. Send obituaries, with a digital photo if you wish, to publicity@cyclinguk.org.

How to contact Cycle



LETTERS are edited for space (especially 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 the relevant national office staff member. Letters & emails for the Oct/Nov issue must arrive by 31 August. Write to: cycle@jamespembroke-media.co.uk or **Cycle, PO Box 313, Scarborough, YO12 6WZ**



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