



LETTER OF THE MONTH

## LOCH NESS MYSTERY

Like all the other cyclists I know in the Highlands, I am surprised by the article suggesting riding the Etape Loch Ness route other than when the A82 trunk road is closed to traffic for the purpose. The road is usually very busy, is not very wide and has poor sighting distances.

It's an unpleasant ride and it is necessary to get off the road frequently to allow coaches and lorries to pass. I've ridden it during the Etape and I've also done it as part of long-distance cycle tours, but I'd not ride it 'just for fun'; it isn't fun.

What this highlights is the more general problem of the A82 corridor, which is the obvious route linking Glasgow, Fort William and Inverness. Provision for touring cyclists is at best mixed. Cycle tracks may be far from ideal for a touring bike, and in some places there is no cycle track at all. This contrasts badly with the Edinburgh-Inverness route.

Dr John Heathcote, *Treasurer, Cycling UK Highland*



### WIN THREE HIPLOK JAW+ RACKS WORTH £113.97

**THE LETTER OF THE MONTH** wins three Jaw+ bike racks, worth £37.99 each, courtesy of Hiplok. These wall-mounted racks are adjustable to fit tyres from 20-75mm wide, and can be used in or outdoors. Each is supplied with fittings plus a lightweight ZLok Combo, which can double as your café lock. For more about Hiplok storage and security, visit [hiplok.com](http://hiplok.com).



### In dark on lights ↑

I bought an Oxford Ultratorch R75 light and, unable to find any mention of British Standards, wrote to the manufacturer asking whether my new light was BS compliant. Oxford wrote back to say that it's not BS compliant but it is CE marked.

This doesn't seem satisfactory because I understand that: no matter how effective a light is, in the event of an accident, partial culpability may be assigned to the cyclist using lights that aren't BS compliant; and CE isn't a performance standard but a quality-management standard. But Oxford says its light isn't compliant with BS and very few (if any) are! I would be interested in your thoughts.

*Chris Johnson*

Oxford Products is correct: cycle lights on sale today do indeed fail to meet BS6102/3. The UK's cycle lighting regulations are out of date. They push cyclists into being scofflaws – as former Technical Officer Chris Juden noted in a Cycle article 11 years ago!

You can adhere to the regulations by using lights that meet 'an equivalent European standard', such as Germany's StVZO. But the police take a pragmatic approach and only require bright enough lights that are the right colours and don't dazzle. Fortunately, the issue of partial culpability seems to be only a theoretical problem.

More on lights at: [cyclinguk.org/lighting-regulations](http://cyclinguk.org/lighting-regulations).



Left: Getty Images. Top: Joelle Dymond

### Uphill struggle

There is a well-known adage that the night is darkest just before dawn. I have long felt that the same principle applies to pedalling my cycle up a hill. Has anyone else noticed that a hill is (or seems) to be steepest just before it starts to flatten out for the summit? Assuming the reason is not merely that I am nearing a state of exhaustion by that point, does anyone know of a rational explanation for this phenomenon?

*Robert Behrman*

### Drive-by tooting

Well done Kathy McFarlane for having the courage and frankness to express disappointment over the anti-cycling mentality amongst some motorists. I lead a U3A cycling group in and around Bognor Regis. We may have up to 20 cyclists, women and men aged between 65 and 83.

May I suggest that riding in a group is a huge help and support? We too suffer abuse from motorists, very often because the dissemination of the Highway Code