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Founded in 1878

Cover photo:
Heading east from
Kilnoughtree
Forest on the
Gallovidian
Gravel route. By
Mick Kirkman



From the editor

Gliding through the countryside, with scenery rolling by like a drone-shot video, long summer rides feel like a great escape. The realities of everyday life recede. Push the pedals. Feel the breeze. Nothing to think about except whether the coffee and cake will be nice at the next café.

Whatever your definition of a long ride – whether it's 100 miles or 20 – now is the best time of the year to head out on one. Daylight will last for more than 16 hours. It will be warm (hopefully) and dry (fingers crossed).

Long distances can seem daunting but are only as hard as you and your bike make them. You don't have to ride out of your comfort zone. Sportives aren't races. Audaxes definitely aren't. Solo or club rides? Relax. Turn off Strava. Stick your Garmin in your pocket.

I've done century rides that were certainly hard in parts. At the CTC North Yorkshire dinner earlier this year, president Anne Benton reminded me that we'd met 25 years ago, halfway up White Horse Bank on the CTC Ron Kitching Ride. She was sensibly spinning her smallest gear. I was grinding up on fixed. But for more recent centuries, I've had an 11–48 cassette and a mellower mindset. Unsurprisingly, it's totally transformed the feel of the rides.

Non-cyclists or new cyclists may be agog when you mention big mileages. Yet you absolutely do not need to be some kind of cycling superhero to ride long distances. It's mostly about comfort, gearing and a pace that suits you. That and some fuel for your ride. Coffee and cake, anyone?

DAN JOYCE
Editor




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