

Pedal Power

Newsletter of Greenwich Cyclists

Issue 33
Dec 2003

Greenwich Cyclists' Christmas Ceilidh

Saturday 13th Dec: 8pm – midnight



Music by The Muckers

Pay bar

Up-market buffet

Inside bike park.

**Tickets limited to 180.
West Greenwich Arts
Centre, 141 Greenwich
High Rd, London SE10.**

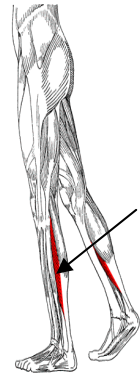
Tickets: £20/£10 unwaged. Buy 9, and get 1 ticket free.

Tickets from GC members; or send cheque to Karen Marks, 117 Vanbrugh Hill, London SE10 9HB; or Funds transfer to Co-op Bank, Greenwich Cyclists, 089299 - 65116418. For funds transfers, please mark as "C-yourName" and send e-mail to: krsmarks@yahoo.com

Lets stretch those legs

Soleus (muscle at the back of the ankle)

Stand with both legs on a kerb (or step) and with your head facing towards the pavement (next step up). Take a small step back with your right foot, leaving only the ball of your right foot on the kerb and the rest of your foot hanging over the pavement. The left foot should stay fully on the kerb, while bending the knee of your left leg. Slowly lower the heel of your right foot below the level of the kerb until you can feel slight tension in the muscle at the back of your right ankle. Your left leg should be slightly bent and your right leg should be straight. Hold this position for 20-30 seconds and then put both feet fully back onto the pavement. Repeat the whole process with the opposite foot.



Rides & Events

See www.greenwichcyclists.org.uk for up-to-date information.
All rides leave Cutty Sark Gardens (CSG) unless otherwise listed.



December 2003

Wed 3 Dec: Greenwich Cyclists monthly meeting 7:30pm - 9:00pm The Forum, 177 Trafalgar Rd. Meet in Crown pub opp. afterwards.

Fri 5 Dec: Hoo / Isle of Grain peninsular, including visit to Dickens (Great Expectation) churchyard at Cooling. About 30 miles. Meet Greenwich station at 9.45 for 10.07 train to Gravesend. Liz 020 8691 2065

Sa 6 Dec: Easy Going Ride. Christmas Shopping Trip to Borough Market. Ride along the Thames to Borough Market, for shopping, eating and drinking. Ride or train back 10am CSG. Kate 020 8858 1594

Sun 7 Dec: Yule Tide Shop. Easy canal ride to Camden Market to fill y'panniers up then mainly canals down to Greenwich Market, and maybe a meal after somewhere. Meet on top of the Green Bridge, Mile End Park at 9.00am.

Tower Hamlets Ride.

Contact **Steve** or 07974 051766

Fri 19 Dec: River path ride from Greenwich to Tate Modern for Eliasson's atmospheric Installation exhibition. Across river by Milenium bridge and back to Greenwich via Isle of Dogs. About 12-15 miles. Meet CSG at 10.00 am. Liz 020 8691 2065

Thu 25 Dec: Deserted London. Meet 11am Cutty Sark Gardens for a gentle ride to central London and its parks. Late lunch with veggie/vegan options. Pubs will be visited. Join/leave whenever you like. Barry. 07905 889 005

Sun 28 Dec: Ride up through Greenwich Park, across Blackheath, to Charlton Park via suburban roads and Maryon Wilson Park to the Thames Barrier. Return to Greenwich via the Thames path. About 12 miles, and the only significant hill is through Greenwich Park CSG 10.a.m. Anthony 07740 434078

January 2004

Fri 2 Jan: Pluckley (Kent) Catch a train from London Bridge to Pluckley (near Ashford) then ride west through the Kent countryside, following a circuit via Headcorn, Tenterden and Bethersden, then back to Pluckley. About 35 miles, fairly flat but some gentle hills. Meet London Bridge 09:50 for 10:07 train to Pluckley arrive 11:12. Details from Liz 020 8691 20654

Sat 3rd Jan: Easy Going Ride. Easy going ride to the Bethnal Green Museum of Childhood. Meet 10am CSG. This ride is designed for beginners and families, but all are welcome. Hilary 07929 722973

Wed 7 Jan: Greenwich Cyclists monthly meeting 7:30pm - 9:00pm The Forum, 177 Trafalgar Rd.

Contact Greenwich Cyclists via Hilary Samuels (co-ordinator) at hilary_samuels@yahoo.co.uk or on 07929 722 973 or write to us at :The Forum @ Greenwich (177 Trafalgar Road)

Winter Clothing

John Hearn continues his series on what to wear when cycling



It is possible to be comfortable cycling in the worst of the British weather. The secret to keeping warm when doing sports outdoors is layering. Several layers will keep you warmer than one hugely thick jumper, and will be more flexible as you can put layers on as the conditions change.

Bottom Layer

The base layer should be a 'wicking' fabric which transports moisture away from the skin, and should be quite close-fitting. We've all heard of string vests of course, and how they work by trapping pockets of air. Me, I'd rather not look like Stan Ogden. Don't use cotton for a base layer in winter conditions. It simply holds sweat against the skin, and you will end up feeling cold and clammy. (I learnt this the hard way one day on a Scottish hill-walking trip).

The mid layer traps air and keeps you toasty warm. A fleece or something similar is ideal here. Choose windproof clothes over clothes which offer a lot of insulation. A fleece may be toasty warm in shelter, but out on the bike it will be cold if you don't have a windproof layer on top. (An alternative is to choose Gore Windstopper fleece, which as it says will cut the wind). Many light cycling jackets have a windproof layer on the front.

Top Layer

For the top waterproof layer, look for breathable fabrics, a couple of brand names being Goretex and Sympatex. These fabrics work by having an inner membrane which allows water vapour to pass - so sweat isn't trapped inside a garment. If you used (say) a plastic raincoat you might get just as wet inside as out!

Another good fabric is Pertex. This is a nylon fabric which is windproof, breathable, not totally waterproof but dries out quickly. Pertex teamed with a fleece is a good combination. Many mountaineers depend on their Buffalo brand clothes, which are Pertex with a fleece lining. When cycling in the rain, don't just think waterproof clothes, think also of how quickly things dry-out afterwards.

Lower Half

On the lower half, many people wear waterproof trousers. If you do, get a good quality pair in a breathable fabric, which don't flap round the ankles, and have long zips so you can get them on over your shoes. Wear light leggings - Ron Hill Bikesters are a popular choice, and the DXB model has a water-repellent coating. These will dry out more quickly than ordinary trousers, and are cut for cycling: Well worth it. Serious cyclists wear 'bib longs' which are tight fitting warm leggings with bib fastenings. However, these carry

the risk of making you look like a refugee from a Mr. Muscle advert.

On a cold day don't wear too much. You generate a lot of heat whilst cycling, so you need much less insulation than someone standing still. If you are wearing a heavy parka you'll just end up overheating on the ride. Take along some warm layers for after the ride though.

Extremities

When cycling in cold weather, it is important to keep the extremities warm. When the body senses that it is losing heat, it shuts down circulation to the peripheral areas - so you'll have cold hands and feet if you don't look after your temperature. Cold hands are slower on the controls, so to keep safe wear a nice warm pair of winter gloves. Few gloves are totally waterproof, so again look for something which will dry off easily. The body loses up to 30% of heat from the head - so wear a hat. Cycle helmets can be covered with a simple cover to keep the wind out, or you can wear a hat underneath. Windproof skullcaps are also available to go under cycle helmets. Or if you like, a ski-style ear-warmer might suit you better.

Another good tip is to use a scarf - it covers up the gaps around the neck area and warms the blood in the carotid arteries. I use a fleece neck-warmer from Parrot, which has a toggle to close it up for use as a hat. It really does keep you warmer. A fleece scarf would do just as good a job.

The feet are another area to pay attention to. Many cyclists use overshoes or gaiters, which wrap around the feet yet leave the soles uncovered for the pedals. Warm socks are important, but don't make your shoes too tight: they stop the blood circulation to your feet. There are waterproof socks on the market, such as SealSkinz, but I haven't tried these.

Be seen

Last, but not least, think about visibility during the winter. Choose clothing which has 'Scotchlite' patches or trim, which is extremely effective at reflecting in the headlights of a car. Consider wearing a reflective vest and ankle bands. Reflective strips on trousers or ankles going up and down spell 'bike' to a following driver.

Late in December, on a cold night-time ride the only way to keep warm is to use natural materials, rather than man-made fibres. On the feet, wear stout black leather boots. The body should have a well fitting suit made of warm fur. A red colour will make you visible, and white fur edging will also help you stand out. A fur hat will keep you warm. A red nose is entirely optional.