

Pedal Power

The newsletter of Greenwich Cyclists

Issue 42
Nov 2004

Liz & Tim's Big Adventure



Liz and Tim Delap, both local cyclists, have recently completed a four month, 4000 mile, circuit of the North Sea. This is the longest signposted route in the world, passing through Holland, Germany, Denmark, Sweden,

Norway, Shetland, Orkney, Scotland and England. They have raised over £5000 for the charity WaterAid. Tim and Liz completed the trip on road touring bikes. They rode on a variety of small roads, paths and tracks. Generally the surfaces were good although in Scandinavia there were sections of sandy gravel which were a bit mushy for their road tyres and heavy loads. There were no major problems with bicycle maintenance: neither of them even had a puncture for nearly 3000 miles! The ride includes some very flat parts as well as significant climbs in Norway and parts of Britain. There was some spectacular scenery in Norway and miles of sandy beaches with dunes and wild flowers further south.

Tim and Liz camped for much of the time, and rode between 35 and 60 miles a day. They found excellent camping facilities in

Europe and usually cooked their own food. They fitted in quite a bit of sightseeing as well as visiting many friend and family along the way. The weather was a bit mixed, with a lot of wind and rain in the first six weeks. "Hearing the rain when you wake up in your tent can be a bit de-motivating" said Liz, "but we had wonderful sun and swimming in Norway, and that made up for the earlier rain"

Liz and Tim will be giving an illustrated talk about their ride to Greenwich Cyclists on Wednesday 1st December at 7:30 pm, Armada Centre

If you are inspired by Liz and Tim's journey, visit the route web-site at www.northsea-cycle.com. For something a little less ambitious, visit Whitstable with us: see Rides and Events for details. Or, see the MAG ride on the next page.

"Hearing the rain when you wake up in your tent can be a bit de-motivating"

Lightning can strike twice

How lucky can you be? Greenwich Cyclists member Paul Cunningham was the winner of a cycling helmet, one of the prizes in the GC Car Free Day raffle. He needed a new one: his old one was destroyed when Paul was knocked off his bike by a car, breaking his collar-bone. There are arguments for and against wearing cycle helmets, but Paul for one is convinced that the helmet saved him from a crushed skull: "... after being knocked up and over the back of a car and seeing the state of my helmet, i.e.. destroyed, I'm glad it was the helmet and not my skull!"

And where did Paul get the old helmet? He won it in the GC raffle two years ago.

GC Ceilidh Saturday 11 December

Greenwich Cyclists' Ceilidh. Tickets for this exciting annual south-of-the-river shindig are now on sale. We've booked the same great band: The Muckers (we're their favourite night of the year). Their energetic caller will guide you through the steps and try to prevent pile-ups.



- Buffet.
- Pay-bar.
- Indoor bike park.

7pm - Midnight (dancing starts at 8pm) West Greenwich Arts Centre. 141 Greenwich High Road. Greenwich SE10. Map.

Advance tickets £15 (£10 concessions). £20 on the night.

Pay online on our website, or make a cheque payable to Greenwich Cyclists and send it to: Karen Marks, Greenwich Cyclists Ceilidh, 21 Common Lane, Wilmington, Kent, DA2 7DE.

Please include address and phone on back of cheque and indicate whether you want tickets mailed to you or held at the door.

Rides & Events:

See www.greenwichcyclists.org.uk for up-to-date information.

All rides leave Cutty Sark Gardens (CSG) unless otherwise noted.

November

Sunday 7th: Locks, Docks and One Smoking Ferry.

The slow all-day explore over the Woolwich Ferry and round the ever changing docks. Meet Cutty Sark Gardens at 10am. Barry 07905 889005.

Saturday 13th: Greenwich to Whitstable. Meet Cutty Sark Gardens at 8:30am for a prompt start to Whitstable to arrive at 6:00pm. Heavy duty roads to Dartford crossing then lots of variety. Book your own B&B.

Sunday 14th: Whitstable to Dover. Meet at Whitstable Harbour 10:00 am for a 55 mile coastal trip through 13 different resorts to Dover.

Monday 15 November: Dover and more sea to Hastings.

Please ensure you take lights as these will be needed on all three days.

December

Wednesday 1st: GC meeting at Armada centre, 21 McMillan Street, Deptford, SE12 3EZ (where Evelyn Rd meets Creek Rd: see web-site for map.)

Note: we no longer meet at the Forum

Saturday 25 December: Deserted London. A slow all day meander. West out to Putney along the South Bank then back north, through the parks and up to good value late lunch in Edgware Road that caters for all diets. Pub later. Meet Cutty Sark Gardens 10 am or Southwark Needle, South end of London Bridge 11am. Barry 07905 889 005

Maintenance Class



One of the most popular maintenance class topics is adjusting gears. Modern bicycle gears are easy to use, but they are also very sensitive. Once they go out of adjustment, gears don't select cleanly, some gears you can't select at all, and often you get those annoying clicking and rubbing noises. Adjusting the gear cables to fix this is a simple process, but the problem is not always due to the cable. Rear gear mechanisms can be easily damaged in a fall or crash, and sometimes they may not even have been fitted correctly.

Commonly, it's not the gear mechanism (the derailleurs) that bends, but the part of the frame it attaches to (the rear hanger). If your gears are bent, no amount of adjustment will make them work smoothly throughout all the gears. How do you know whether your gears are bent? Look at them from behind the bike, with the bike upright. The "cage" of the derailleurs should be vertical whatever gear it is in. If it is angled towards the wheel spokes, then it indicates a bent hanger (and you do not want the cage to get caught in the spokes!). Don't try and straighten the frame yourself: it's a skilled job. A good bike shop will straighten a steel frame using a special jig: aluminium or fibre frames have a replaceable hanger.

Lastly, don't just assume that your gears are bent. We thought that this was the case during the recent maintenance class. In fact, the bolt that fixed the derailleurs to the hanger hadn't been properly tightened (let down by a bike shop), so the derailleurs was flopping around, and would have dropped off.

If you want how to keep your gears in order, come along to our maintenance course: the next one is scheduled for next January or February. For details, and to book a place, email: julian@jadobson.demon.co.uk.

MAG's London to Paris Bike Ride 13-16 May 2005

MAG, a landmine clearance charity, contacted GC last week about their sponsored charity ride between London and Paris.

Experienced cyclists and beginners alike are invited to join MAG on a long-weekend cycle ride from London to Paris next May. The one-way, 300km ride even includes time for relaxing in Paris on the final day before returning to London on Eurostar. The event will raise money for MAG's mine clearance programmes, helping communities affected by conflict.

How to get involved in this event

MAG needs participants of all ages and levels of fitness to join this fantastic event. You will need to raise at least £1000 in sponsorship, over half of which will go directly to support MAG's field operations. You will also need to pay a £100 registration fee.

What is included in the trip?

Just about everything you need:

- All accommodation
- Ferry crossing
- Meals (except breakfast on day one and lunch on day four) and refreshments
- Ground and luggage transfers
- Travel on Eurostar
- Medical and mechanical support staff
- Support vehicles

For registration details, go the MAG site:

<http://www.mag.org.uk>