

Pedal Power

The newsletter of Greenwich Cyclists

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Dec 2004

Tim and Liz raise almost £6000

The highlight of the Greenwich Cyclists Dec meeting was Liz and Tim Delap's talk about their epic 4000 mile circuit of the North Sea, following the North Sea Coast trail. A packed Armada Centre were treated to an inspiring description of Liz and Tim's adventures, illustrated with a selection of their marvellous photographs. Highlights of the tour were the picturesque Norwegian countryside, the 30 or so ferries they used, and how well cyclists are treated on the continent

Some of the things Tim and Liz learned were:

- you need less than you think you do
- It's friendlier up North
- Camping is fun
- ThermoRest mats are very comfortable
- Waterproof socks work better than waterproof overshoes

Last month, we reported that Liz and Tim had raised £5000 for the charity Water Aid: that figure has now risen to over £5975, which is fantastic news. So, well done both of you, and the only question we have now is, when is the next trip.

GC Ceilidh

1 more week to go! Get your tickets!

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



7pm - Midnight (dancing starts at 8pm)
West Greenwich Arts Centre. 141 Greenwich High Road.
Greenwich SE10.
Advance tickets £15 (£10 concessions).
£20 on the night.
Pay online on our website, or pay at the door.

Ken opposes bike removal clause

Ken Livingstone has written to *The Times* and *The Evening Standard* to say that he opposes the clause on Bike Removal in the London Local Authority and TfL Bill. The clause would give local authorities the power to seize any cycles they deem to be a "nuisance" even if they are not causing an obstruction. The bill states that councils will have the power to remove locks, presumably by damaging them, and some councils are even considering imposing a charge on cyclists to retrieve their impounded bikes.

The letter states that Ken is against the clause because of the shortage of good cycle parking facilities in London. This is a great result for the LCC, which launched a swift campaign against the clause, and for Jenny Jones, Green Party member of the London Assembly, who Ken appointed as his "cycling ambassador" only a few weeks ago.

However, "the battle is not over" said Tom Bogdanovicz, LCC Campaigns Manager, "and we may still have to petition in parliament if the main sponsors of the Bill (the London Boroughs) try to retain the offending parts of the legislation"

If you feel strongly about this, please write to your council representative.

School cycling boost

The Department for Transport and the Department for Education have announced a £10m grant to Sustrans to create links between schools and the National Cycle Network. CTC's Campaigns and Policy Manager, Roger Geffen, said: "CTC supports the National Cycle Network, and the aim of increasing the number of children who walk and cycle to school. Whilst £10m of funding for links to schools is very welcome, it shouldn't distract from the wider issue of making our streets safe for children to walk or cycle to school from all directions. They also need quality cycle training to give the confidence and skills to ride in real traffic."

This supports one of Greenwich Cyclists' success stories: the cycle training projects in Greenwich schools. We are in the early stages of a new project at Thomas Thallis school, Greenwich. These rewarding projects rely on volunteers: if anybody would like to be involved in this or future projects, please contact myself: julian@jadobson.demon.co.uk; or Derek Mark: derekkmark@hotmail.com

Rides & Events:

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

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

December

Sat 12th: 2004 Ruff-Stuff Reliability Ride: Knockholt Village Hall, Kent, nr Polhill off the Old London Road (A224). A 22 mile timed ride around the Charts of Kent, organised by GS Avanti. The route of gentle lanes and bridle paths passes through Biggin Hill, Tatsfield Chart, Limpsfield, Hosey Common and Halstead.

£8.00 for adults pre-entry and £4 for under 16's in advance

£10:00 to enter on the day.

Hot food, hot showers and car park

10:00 am start from Knockholt.

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



Bicycle Maintenance

Julian@jadobson.demen.co.uk.



Breaking Spokes

If you are suffering broken spokes, then it's probably time to get your wheel tuned up, or in the worse case it may need a total re-build. Breaking spokes are usually caused, not by hitting a pot-hole, but by metal fatigue. Metal fatigue happens when a metal is repeatedly stressed (pulled) and then relaxed. It doesn't have to be a high stress, but if it happens enough times, almost any metal object will fail. (Metal fatigue was the cause of the Comet airliners crashing in the 1950's: the repeated pressurising of the cabin fatigued the metal skin of the plane.)

A relatively cheap, poorly built, or old wheel will have spokes which are not highly tensioned (tightened up). During every revolution of the wheel, the spoke tightens, and then relaxes. If the spokes are not sufficiently tensioned, then the spoke can actually lose tension altogether and will eventually fatigue and break. A heavier rider, or carrying loaded panniers, will exacerbate this.

A well built wheel has spokes that have been highly tensioned. This tension will be reduced as the wheel revolves under you, but never totally removed i.e. the spoke is always under tension, so it does not fatigue. Ironically, the tighter the spoke, the less likely it is to break (the spoke will start to pull out of the rim or the hub before it itself breaks).

So, a broken spoke is a warning: get your wheel tuned. If you are interested in learning how to true/tune wheels, email the group, or myself. If enough people are interested, we can run a short course.

The Bike Shop on Lee High Rd has two experienced wheel builders, who can do it for you, and www.sheldonbrown.com tells you how to do it yourself.

Greenwich Cyclists plan to run the next bike maintenance course in Jan/Feb: email me for details and places.

Bus Campaign

The London Cycling Campaign (LCC) and the Cycle Touring Club (CTC) are working with TfL to make bus drivers more aware of cyclists. As part of this programme, TfL want to know from you:

1. What are the top 5 bike/ bus safety issues that cyclists would like bus drivers to be aware of (for consideration in their video)?
2. Do you know of a cycle/bus hotspot in Greenwich?

Email the group, or me at julian@jadobson.demon.co.uk: Greenwich Cyclists will collate the list and forward them to the LCC.

Complaint Numbers

Buses: the TfL bus complaints line is: 020 7918 4300; textphone 020 7918 4435 Fax 020 7918 3999; email: customerservices@tfl-buses.co.uk. When sending a complaint please record the bus registration, the route number, the location and the date and time. TfL says this enables them to establish if particular drivers are repeatedly mentioned in complaints.

Pot-holes: <http://streetfaults.tfl.gov.uk>; 0845 305 1234