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CRANKS

Volume 47

The Magazine of
Deeside Thistle Cycling Club
Sponsored by:



Tierney Strachan
PROCESS CONTROL ENGINEERING

Current Membership 596 (646)
SCU Membership 312 (339)
Scottish Cycling's Largest Club

Editorial:

Once again a world famous name has agreed to visit our club. This time it's an on-line interview with Pippa York.

Back in February Alan Campbell met Pippa at the ill-fated launch in Aberdeen of the 2020 Tour of Britain. It was there that she said she'd be pleased to take part.

Ideas of a weekend of talks and training rides were put in place but the advent of Covid-19 placed everything on hold. Then only a few weeks ago a suggestion to conduct an interview on-line was made. In a flurry of action our IT expert, Peter Smart, set up Zoom Webinar and members may now register their interest. Further details and links are provided in this issue of your magazine.

Alan has masterminded the visit of a number of top-flight professional cyclists to our club and Pippa is well ranked among these. Recognised as one of the world's best climbing specialists, as Robert Millar, in 1984 she won the Polka Dot jersey in the Tour de France.

Appearing on our Facebook page from the end of Spring and into Summer have been dozens of photographs of members past and present.

Andy Kerr is behind the idea. He wanted to show everyone what they could look forward to once this dreadful period of lockdown is over.

It has worked. There's been time-trialling, road-racing and mountain biking among others. Perhaps the most successful has been the section devoted to vintage photographs.

In this period of serious restrictions on our activities it is gratifying to see that there are still avenues where we can maintain an interest.

PHILOSOPHER'S CORNER

If you didn't stand on the podium, you didn't do anything worth remembering – Robert Millar

Do you have a view on life? Why not submit your favourite few words of wisdom for public consumption in this exclusive corner of your magazine. Send now to Sandy Lindsay, Rowan Cottage, Inveramsay, Inverurie, AB51 5DQ or email Knockies@aol.com

Coronavirus Update

Conditions may be easing in many areas but there is still concern that things may go backwards. It is important that the guidance given by the Scottish Government and Scottish Cycling continues to be followed.

If you go out cycling with others please remember that if adults make up all or part of the group, you can ride outdoors with those you live with or with four other households at any one time up to a maximum of five households of 15 people in total. Physical distancing must be maintained of at least two metres at all times from those in the other households.

Therefore we reach the conclusion that if this is the current guidance that Scottish Cycling and the Scottish Government have issued, then we have no objection to club members going out in these numbers. It was with the understanding that members should make themselves familiar with the guidance and act in a responsible manner.

No club organised runs will be taking place until such time as the guidance changes.

Current guidance:

<https://www.britishcycling.org.uk/scotland/article/20200313-Scottish-Cycling-Coronavirus-COVID19-Guidance-0>

Cycling Themes

Andy Kerr continues to run themes on the DTCC [Facebook](#) and Instagram accounts. The hope is that this publicises all the aspects of cycling that the club are involved in when things are back up and running. Another dose of Vintage photos will soon appear. Cycling pictures on any subject (good to have them in Deeside kit) should be sent to kintore.sunday@gmail.com

Updating Information

Due to the current situation with the Covid-19 pandemic it may be a requirement for NHS to contact members. Though the club does have a fairly comprehensive record of club member details this is only guaranteed correct at the time it was submitted to me.

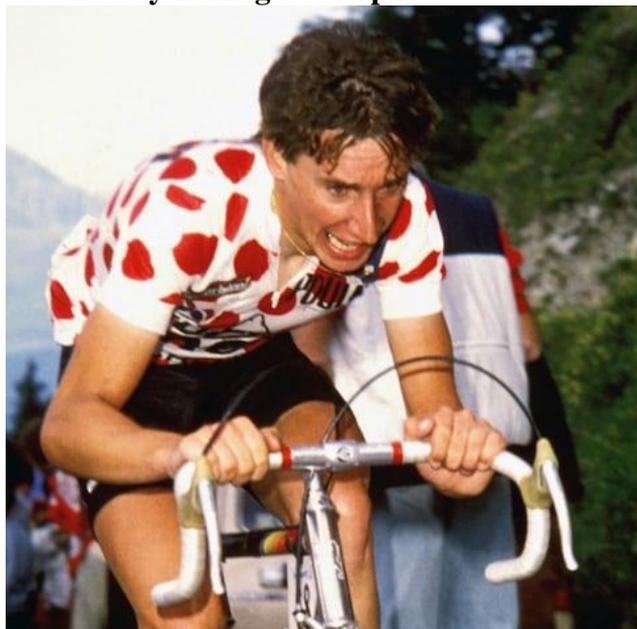
To meet our commitment if you've not already been in contact to update your details please send them to info@deeside.org - this should include other members of your family who are also members:

Name
Address
Post Code
Home Phone
Mobile Phone
Emergency Contact Name
Emergency Contact Relationship
Emergency Contact Phone(s)

Ride Etiquette Document

You are reminded that a paper detailing the etiquette to follow when on club/training runs has been prepared and is here for your interest. The document is posted on the club's website and links will start to appear on club publications so that you can make reference to it. It will also be highlighted to new members.

Pippa York at Deeside Thistle CC Wednesday 19 August at 7pm



Pippa York (Pro Cyclist)

Register now

https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_GlkgeFOYSQCux7nZRCUqTg

Pippa, who was formerly Robert Millar, is the most successful Scottish Road Racing Pro cyclist of all time and was the first Briton to take a podium place at the Tour de France when he took the King of the Mountains award in the 1984 Tour. Fourth in the Tour de France, second in Giro d'Italia and twice second in the Vuelta this was no ordinary career.

Born and brought up in Glasgow, Robert was Scottish Junior Road Race Champion in 1976 and single-mindedly secured a pro contract before the days of lottery funding by building up some very impressive results over a short time. It is quite a story!

Pippa who announced the gender change in 2017 is now a journalist and commentator on the current professional scene and having competed against the likes of Bernard Hinault, Greg Lemond and Stephen Roche is in a unique position to give us a perceptive insight with characteristic humour.

Alan Campbell, Club President and chair from 1979 to 2010, has interviewed a number of high profile riders who have visited the club over the years.

He has once again struck gold and secured an interview with Pippa. This will happen on-line via a Zoom Webinar on Wednesday 19 August at 7.00pm.

Bradley Wiggins in his book, *'Icons'*, said "Philippa York is one of the UK's most important riders of all time - the first Brit to win a major Tour classification and someone who massively raised the bar for British cycling."

And in the book *'Break Away - the heroes and hell raisers that made road cycling'*, the former professional is described as "one of the most gifted climbers the sport has ever known. In relation to her more recent presence in cycling columns the following attribute is ascribed to her

'putting everything in perspective when it gets out of focus, bringing the brutal yet brilliant honesty of someone who has not given one thought to others' opinions since first setting off in a pro race in 1980."

Here, to whet your appetite, are two articles penned by Pippa:

<https://journal.rouleur.cc/tour-de-france/>

<https://journal.rouleur.cc/one-armed-bandits/>

Alan will discuss with Pippa, her career as a top flight professional cyclist and as a cycling journalist. Questions from the audience are welcome.

There is no charge and Deeside Thistle members get priority over others until Monday 10 August. Thereafter non-members will be invited to register.

Register in advance for this webinar:

https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_GlkgeFOYSQCux7nZRCUqTg

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

New Café

Sometime ago, just before lockdown, word came through from George Ritchie about a new café opening in Newtonhill.

This wasn't highlighted at the time since there was so little activity and the café would not have been able to operate. Now that things are easing why not pop by and have a look.

It's in Skateraw Store, the old shop just over the railway bridge and opposite the pharmacy. They're on Facebook and seem to have a good going concern during these difficult times.

Car Clinic Offer

A special offer has been made to companies who want to set up staff discount schemes for their employees which allows them to register their own details and get discount automatically when they visit Car Clinic. It has been a roaring success and I thought that maybe I should extend to include members of the Deeside Thistle. Please follow this link for register detail <https://www.car-clinic.co.uk/employee-discount/> **Sandy Wilson**

Integration of New Cyclists, Post Lockdown

A few weeks ago it was decided that some effort needed to be made to integrate some of the new faces that are being seen out riding bikes. Requested from members was a willingness to support social / introductory rides in and around Aberdeen.

There has been a very good response and once we are able to these rides will give those "new" cyclists the opportunity to learn what club cycling can offer.

They'd be run over a period of a few weeks in an effort to create established groups with a view to those riders joining organised clubs. If you're keen to be involved and have not yet been in contact, please reply to info@deeside.org. Those who put their names forward will be kept informed of the developments.

Ride the South for Charlie House

Calling All Zwift Users

Charlie House - Ride The South - 16th of August - Zwift.
12:55 (HERD Endurance Ride)

As you all know, The Ride of the North was cancelled. As a consequence charities like Charlie House are missing out on much-needed sponsorship. So we have come up with the Ride of the South. This ride takes place on the same weekend as the cancelled Prudential Ride London.

Ride up to 174 km on the Zwift Prudential Ride London. 11 laps with 11 ascents of Box Hill (PRL Full). You can do 1 lap, you can do 5 laps you can join me for the full 174km 11 laps. This is incorporated into the Herd Sunday endurance ride, so there will be a big group. The ride leader will ride at 1.5 w/kg on the flats and 2.0 watts/kg on the hills. So easy pace. We also have red-beacon sweeps to keep those who want to ride at a gentler pace company.

[Charlie House Virtual Ride the South Info Sheet](#)

Please consider donating £5.00 to Charlie House.
Text CHARLIECYCLE to 70085 to donate £5

<https://justgiving.com/campaign/ridethesouth>

[See more](#)

Use of Public Facilities

A complaint has been received from a member of the public in Banchory. It concerns cyclists (some of whom are wearing Deeside Thistle tops). They arrive by car at a carpark in the town where there are public toilets. These toilets are currently closed.

On more than one occasion the complainant, whose house overlooks the area, has seen cyclists going behind the building to relieve themselves!

We've all got to go but we should show prudence when selecting where. To some folk it is offensive to see others in the act.

If you happen to be one of the cyclists who goes behind this building please think ahead. Maybe it would be a better idea to find a quiet rural spot on the way to your meeting point.

If it's not you but you know who it is please be kind enough to pass the word on. *Sandy L*

Post Grad Research

As part of my Masters I am studying at Queen Margaret University I am exploring the eating habits and dietary regimes of cyclists who compete in 10-mile time trials. This will be assessed through 4 online questionnaires (mainly tick boxes). Questionnaires will be staggered over 3 weeks and will take no more than an hour and 45 minutes in total to complete them all (no more than 30 minutes each time). There is also an online interview asking questions on your commitment to racing and dietary regime pre and post racing. The interview will last no more than 20 minutes. Each cyclist needs to have competed in 10 mile time trials at least once over the past 2 years and be 18 years or over. If you are interested and/or would like further information, please contact me: 97245367@qmu.ac.uk *Elaine Lowden*

Club Kit Order

The most recent Pactimo kit order is now available to collect from Tierney Strachan, 12 Greenbank Place, East Tullos, Aberdeen, AB12 3BT. We are not receiving persons at our reception though.

Please ring the bell at our Goods-In door, and announce that you are here to collect Deeside Kit with your name. Wait outside the door and your kit will be brought to you.

If the small roller shutter door is closed - please telephone the office number, 01224 295000.

If the main gates are closed, we are closed, simples

Our policy is that non-essential personnel may NOT enter the building – so we have no facility for you to try on. If you are in any doubt about the sizes you have ordered, let me know and possibly we can do a swap or refund.

Still a few of you to collect from the last order too.

I can post out to those that want it. Let me know and I can arrange. You can easily buy postage online and send it to me; I'd need to give you weights and dimensions if you want to do this. *Jon Strachan* (clubkit@deeside.org)

Countesswells Road

Countesswells Road will be closed to all traffic from Ben Reid's Garden Centre to Kirk Brae from 3-14 August for resurfacing works. Keep Cycling and Keep Safe

Cindy Blackmore

Carefree

Pamela Ann Frances Crane

'Tis a lovely Sunday mornin' makes me glad to be alive,
'Tis the kind of misty mornin' when the scents o' summer thrive!
O the fish is up an' the milk is up, an' the rest they lie abed,
While I'm ridin' down the seaside with a singin' in my head!

There's a little bit o' cloud about; the sun is peerin' through,
An' the lupins an' the roses are bespeckled with the dew...
O the fish is up an' the milk is up, an' the rest they lie abed,
While I'm ridin' down the seaside with a singin' in my head!

An' the swallows are a-flyin', an' the seagulls overhead
Are a-wheelin' and a-cryin', will I give them bits o' bread?
O the fish is up an' the milk is up, an' the rest they lie abed,
While I'm ridin' down the seaside with a singin' in my head!

An' the sun is all for makin' golden ribbons in the sea,
An' the silver fish are swimmin' up the shingle just for me!
O the fish is up an' the milk is up, an' the rest they lie abed,
While I'm ridin' down the seaside with a singin' in my head!

New Members

The following new or returning members have joined in recent weeks

1895	Greg Whyman	Worksop	29
1896	Angus Whyman	Edinburgh	21

Any friend, family member, work colleague, who is interested in cycling but not involved with a club, should be dropped the hint to look at www.deeside.org or to email members@deeside.org asking for information

Linksfield Stadium

The notes from Alan Campbell (June Cranks) about the early sixties were of interest to this old guy and I can confirm to him that brakes were definitely removed for all track competition, although they may have been left on during solo training at Linksfield in the evenings.

I can recall racing at Linksfield one Saturday in 1958 at the Corporation of Aberdeen Sports when I travelled up from Dundee with George Fraser and his father Jim in the car of the legendary T R McRobbie who was for many years the SCU Track Secretary and a member of Dundee Roads CC.

T.R. worked on a Saturday morning at the Gas Works on Dock Street in Dundee and we did not leave until well after 12 noon. Plenty of time he assured us. Cars barely did 60mph in the fifties and the brakes were rather dodgy. The roads were single carriageway and T.R. drove like a maniac.

Descending into Stonehaven the car skidded on one of the many corners and the passengers hung on for dear life. T.R. calmly said it was a controlled skid and why were we all sweating.

The games had started when we arrived and we went straight to the line-up for the heats already warmed up from the terror of the journey. I managed two third places in the finals and George, being a better track rider, fared a bit better.

I do not recall either Frankie Caie or Eddie Brown being at these sports but do remember Dougie Gray and a lot of riders with what we considered to be pre-war crash helmets of the type used by Jef Scherens while we had the more modern Reg Harris version.

The track at Linksfield was pretty good for a cinder track and the surface was fairly firm, unlike Ibrox Stadium and the Rangers Sports where on the corners you seemed to travel faster sideways than forwards.

My final memory of Linksfield Sports was of the official in charge, the late I Y I Porter – very enthusiastic, but surely the most fussy in regards to rules and regulations.

Stewart Mitchell

THE FACE OF SCOTLAND

I was born in Aberdeen and as a small child I had once been taken to Edinburgh. But I was little at the time and do not remember much about it. My Mum had returned to the city of her birth to meet her family members. Aunts, uncles, cousins. None of whom I was ever to meet again.

It was not until the age of nine years that we travelled any distance again as a family to the town of Elgin on holiday. It was the furthest I had travelled from my home in Aberdeen since the Edinburgh trip and it seemed very far from home.

And so it happened that shortly after our return from Elgin an elderly aunt died in Edinburgh and left me a book The book that was to change my life forever. THE FACE OF SCOTLAND. I still have it. It gave birth to the adventure cyclist that was to grow within me. The cyclist who travelled to the heights of Everest. To the Lost Kingdom

of Lo, the African plains of Zimbabwe, the high passes of India and the forests of Malawi.

When I first read it The Face of Scotland left me spellbound. There was a Scotland that existed beyond my imagination. A land of great mountains.

I was aged a mere thirteen years when I waved goodbye to my Mum and with Robert my friend set off on my bike in search of the mountains of Scotland. My heart was full. I was having second thoughts. “Bye Mum”. A tear was in my eye. But we were fully provisioned. A Carradice bag strapped to my old second hand bike contained all my travel necessities. Tins of beans, packets of Mash potatoes, bread, butter, jam, eggs, billycan for cooking, methylated spirits, £10 cash, Cremola foam and of course, my Youth Hostel Card.

The first stage to Fochabers was to be the worst. A howling head on wind forced us to walk the old road through The Glens of Foudland. But we made it to Fochabers before the hostel closed for the night. Onwards next day to Inverness and then down to Fort William. Glencoe, Crianlarich, Glen Lyon and Perth.

The mountains of Scotland had become real to me and not just photos in a book.

Thank you to all the bicycles in my life. You have taken me on journeys I could never have imagined. To places I never knew existed. To the ends of the Earth and back. And thank you Mum (long gone) for letting me go on that first journey!
Alastair Brodie aged 76

25 Years Ago

100kms TEAM TIME TRIAL CHAMPIONSHIP

We fielded our strongest possible team in the 100km TTT Championship on 23 July overcoming a determined challenge from V.C. Olympia to become the 1995 SCU Team Time Trial Champions.

The championship was held over an undulating dual carriageway course with a strong headwind to the turn at Stracathro and the powerful Deeside Thistle team of Rowland Jolly, Neil Brown, John O'Donovan and Robert Brown came home with a winning time of 2.19.14. V.C. Olympia were just 36 seconds adrift in second place and Inverclyde Velo, who were a further eight and a half minutes behind V.C Olympia, took the bronze medal. Our victory was not without incident as Robert Brown punctured at the ten kilometres mark. Despite a quick wheel change, Brown was unable to rejoin his team and was left to watch as his team mates completed the remaining 90 kilometres as a three man team.

Well done to all concerned in one of the toughest events on the calendar. Probably this will be the last Championship at this distance as the event has been dropped from the World and Commonwealth Games programmes in favour of an individual time-trial.

VOLUNTEERS

Please consider helping your club. You can register your interest in volunteering here:
http://deeside.org/?page_id=721

Zwift and Strava Participants

Many folk are continuing their involvement with cycling on Zwift, Strava and other media platforms. Some of these events are being promoted by your club.

Many of the participants will be non-club members. Perhaps if they were given the nudge they might realise that clubs are able to offer a broadening of their involvement.

If you are a virtual cyclist and are in contact with any of those non-members you should feel free to pass on club details. This is the page to go to: http://deeside.org/?page_id=29 or tell them to drop a note to info@deeside.org

DTCC Instagram and Facebook

I am having some success in getting people looking at the above. The club's [Facebook](#) page reached 8500 people this last week and had 1700 people "engaging" with it. Instagram account now has nearly 200 following in just a week.

My idea is to get the pages "visible" by regular posts (this week's quiz for example). Then, when the time is right, we can start to mention what we are doing and when.

To do this, I need photos, lots of them - preferably with folk in DTCC kit, but not essential.

- touring photos
- TT photos
- gravel photos
- CX photos
- MTB photos
- road race photos
- youth photos
- vintage photos
- anything I've missed photos???

Note that sending these in is agreeing to allow them to be used on DTCC Facebook and Instagram pages. Please send yours to: me on ajkerr2014@gmail.com *Andy Kerr*

KNOCKBURN LOCH MANAGEMENT

John Huston Knockburn Site Manager, Knockburn Loch, Strachan, AB31 6LL

info@knockburn.co.uk, 01330 822234 / 07741314999
www.knockburn.co.uk. You can like us on [FaceBook](#) and follow us on [Twitter](#)

Proposed Local Calendar for 2020

Links will be added to this list when events appear on the National Calendar

Provisional date	Description	Organising Club
12/09/2020	Falling Leaves	Deeside Thistle

Youth Free Membership

Deeside Thistle Cycling Club is delighted to offer free membership to new youth riders for their first year. If you would like to take advantage of this offer please see: <http://www.deeside.org/membership.html>

Synopsis of F & M Meeting 03/08/20

A Finance and Management Committee meeting took place on-line, on Monday 03 August 2020. In attendance were Andrew Harrington, Sandy Lindsay, Laurent Schirrer, Peter Smart, Neil Stables, Jonathan Strachan, Simon Stromberg, David Walton and Steve Walton.

Apologies - David Eastwood, Sam Long, Laura Sarkis and Mark Walker

1 Minutes of Previous Meeting – Accepted as correct record

2 Business Arising from Minute

a) **Covid Co-ordinator** – Ian Wilson and Anna Liversidge have agreed to be Covid Co-ordinators for the club

b) **Planning for Post Lockdown** – Catherine Riddoch, wife of Gary Hughes, has offered to revamp the club's website through her business, Nanoweb. The work is quoted at £2960 but with a 50% discount would cost the club £1480. It was agreed to follow this through

c) **Adoption of Microsoft (Office) 365** – This is progressing

3 New Business

a) **Pippa York Interview** – Alan Campbell has secured the services of Pippa York for an on-line interview on Wednesday 19 August. A fee of £500 had been agreed. A Zoom meeting is to be organised with club members invited to register first of all with extra spaces offered to non-members

b) **Post Lockdown Progress** - The reintroduction of formal clubruns was discussed. The general opinion was that any runs being organised should adhere to the guidelines issued by Scottish Cycling. The club Covid Co-ordinators are to be asked to issue advice on how to proceed

4 Any Other Business – None

5 Next Meeting – 31 August 2020 at 7.00pm

Welfare Officer

Club Welfare Officers are Ian Wilson and Anna Liversidge. They can be contacted by telephone on 07919 280656. The email address to use is welfare@deeside.org

SVTTA

Membership of the SVTTA: Solo £20.00 and £25.00 for couples. Standards: multiple attempts at all distances - £10. Details: <http://www.svttta.org.uk/downloads.html>

Club Clothing

A sizing facility is available for members who wish to order new club clothing. There is also a small stock of garments available for emergency needs. Contact clubkit@deeside.org. There is also a small stock of clothing with outdated logos at discounted prices.

Historical Reminiscences

(Part 23)

Stories about fantastic times being returned on drag strips in England lured me on occasion. The first sortie to a 50 near Birmingham showed me how those seemingly elite riders achieved air resistance defying performances.

The three lane dual carriageway had a continual stream of curtain sided articulated lorries, pentacnicons and low-loaders laden with JCBs. Along with them they dragged this chunk of atmosphere at 60mph.

Those riders, foolhardy, but brave enough, sat on the white line edging the middle lane. Their major efforts came from pedalling fast enough to stay in the pocket of gale force air pulled along by each passing truck.

Too timid to follow suit I, too, sat on a white line. Mine was 60mm from the gutter.

Graeme Obree didn't need the slip-streams. Instead, he pursued aerodynamics and developed bikes which he rode to world records.

One of these bikes landed at the Grampian Transport Museum in Alford.

Old Faithful created for the world hour record in 1993 looks a bit battered, looks more like that old winter hack bike. But it is different.

Fortunate enough to be involved with GTM and on occasion given the honour of demonstrating for them, Mike Ward, the curator, invited me to ride Graeme's bike on the track at the museum.

The original tuck position had gone, instead this machine had evolved the superman position which Graeme used to win the World Pursuit Championship in 1995.

Repositioning the chopped off saddle to suit my leg length I mounted and gingerly set off round the track. The narrow bottom bracket, eschewing the perfection of Campag bearings, was fitted with salvaged ball races from a redundant washing machine. At only 40mm wide it took a while to accept that my feet weren't going to clash with the metal work of the down-tube.

Graeme had carefully profiled the frame tubes to aid aerodynamics and once the fear had subsided of my ankles bashing together I gradually built up speed.

The superman bars looked a long way away but nothing daunted I slowly began to work my hands forward. Eventually stretched out in the superman position I could appreciate the advantages. Graeme's earlier tuck position saw him resting his chest on the handlebars. Extended as I was on this model, had there been a top-tube that's where I'd have rested my belly.

Closer now to Namche the condition of lodges is improving. Tonight's example is reasonable. Set a little way back from the through road there is more privacy.

Behind the lodge is a toilet. Many lodges do not have a toilet and those that do, have very variable facilities going

from very bad to worse still. This lodge had a flush loo. A wooden shed straddled a stream. Two flat stones with a space between them formed the floor. Fresh smelling, it was only because any waste was immediately swept away by the fast flowing water.

Khari Khola is low and climbing continues tomorrow when the Khari La has to be crossed at over 3000 metres.

This morning I felt fine though when the urge came on me to find the proverbial bush I still had to move quickly. Alastair had headed out of Khari Khola a little earlier and I had to tolerate the inevitable crowd of youngsters haring after me. Luckily, initially at least, the track was cycleable and when the pressure went on they were tailed off the back.

Soon, very soon, the climbing restarted. Sometimes steep, at other times it was steeper. The early climb took us through forests where the langur monkey is occasionally seen. Catching Alastair the slopes towards Khari La soared above. Reaching the pass and looking south, hillside above hillside of terraced fields stretched away down the Dudh Kosi valley.

Indicated on the map as precipitous we had not appreciated what we would have to traverse before reaching our intended mid-way stop at Poyang. Travelling on stony paths had become commonplace and we'd come to accept that cycling most of the time would be impossible. But this stretch was frightening. Not frightening because of the surface but because of where it was. A few feet wide the slabbed rock had no protection on the valley side. Shrubbery growing from the cliff face gave a false sense of security, hiding the near vertical drop into the gorge below. Sometimes only a few branches covered holes where the path had slipped away and plunged the mile drop to the white waters of the Dudh Kosi. With apparent nonchalance but with hearts in mouths, these even more dangerous bits were crossed.

Along this cliff face we met another officer returning from duty, this time at Namche. In the conversation we were given further confirmation of the problems ahead. The policeman told us that we were wasting our time and energy, even contemplating taking the bikes any further. It would have been wiser to have abandoned them at Jiri and enjoyed the walk in.

When travelling in Nepal there is no way that great speed can be maintained. It always takes a long time to travel any distance. True, folk have ran out from Base Camp in four days but to ordinary mortals not accustomed to the altitude, rough terrain or carrying heavy loads, pace has got to be slow. Our problem rests mainly with the huge encumbrance of a clumsy bike. A bike is a thing of beauty, of grace and elegance. Believing that is easy when the machine is clean and light or speeding downhill with a following wind. Here, in Nepal, when lacking strength, the machines have grown heavy; they have lost their sparkle; we have lost a lot of our enthusiasm.

Alastair wheels his mount everywhere. I admire his efforts but cannot understand why he doesn't carry more.

I lift my mount and place it on my right shoulder. Once there I let it turn and rest across my back. This, too, is

unnatural and soon the 15-kilo load on one shoulder causes pain. The pain leads to so much discomfort that the position has to be constantly changed. Over the days I've taught myself to place my forearm across the top of my head and hold onto the saddle. This helps to distribute the weight and shows me the benefit of a tumpi. Maybe I'll give one a try.

At the top of the climb the view north across the valley showed Lukla to be not far distant but it involved a major descent and another steep climb before reaching there. I put the bike on my shoulder and started to jog.

Surprise, surprise. It proved a much easier way to descend than walking down the interminable steps when every stumble was an effort. With the gentle trotting, body weight could be used to good effect. No longer did the heavy bulk have to be lifted and pushed over each boulder. Instead it was allowed to fall and the speed of the descent controlled only by footwork. The experience exhilarated me. It was an exhausting hour and fifty minutes and I don't think I will do it too often, too many chances of catching my foot on a stone or a root presented themselves. It was a long way down.

During the trot down the never-ending steps I overtook a chap carrying two large tins of paint. Once again it fascinated me to remember that every item that these folk need and which cannot be grown or manufactured locally, has to be transported in, carried by someone for many days.

With darkness quickly falling we returned to our lodge and ordered food. The girl who has taken our meal order seems very severe. She must only be in her early twenties and is tall and elegant. Carrying herself with a grace, not usually seen, it seems to be natural to her. Clad typically Nepalese in a heavy, dark blue, ankle length dress, over it she wore an apron of similar material. As the evening cooled with the setting of the sun she put on a grey cardigan. Her hair added to the severity of her appearance. Pulled straight back it hung shoulder length behind her. When she speaks it is a whisper and it is a worry that she has not responded to our order.

While sitting waiting on our food Alastair struck up a conversation with a Sherpa guide we'd met over a number of days from as far back as Shivalaya. It turned out that he is an ex-policeman and his offer to bring some of the local police to the lodge to discuss the difficulties of getting the bikes through Jorsale was accepted. His attitude seemed to be, that, if you can get hold of the right person an awful lot of the problems will be bypassed. Perhaps so, but the right person had not yet turned up. I may not be the shrewdest judge of character but this chap smacked of being a fast talker. He'd also had a little too much to drink.

I'd ordered Tibetan bread hoping that it would be easily eaten when washed over with a glass of tea. Made from wholemeal flour with a little salt it had a raising agent added. Rolled out very thin and repeatedly folded before being rolled out again, it was then fried in a little hot fat until golden brown. Topped with honey it was delicious. A second and then a third had to be ordered.

While supping Chang, the second time the local beer has been tried, the ex-policeman, turned guide, returned. He did not bring along his policeman contacts and seemed to be further under the influence of Rakshi or Kukri Rum. He told us that police jurisdiction in Lukla did not extend to the National Park. Instead it is a direct responsibility of the Royal Nepalese Army. This was not more nor less than expected. It leaves us with the same quandary: what to do if we are refused entry?

Out in the street, at a tea-house, I'd seen Nepalis slurping their tea, mixing the liquid with air as they drank. Trying the method gave me a whole new experience. The tea tasted remarkably different and better.

On each day, except day one, the weather has been brilliant. Wind, when it has blown, has been light and invariably from behind. A very hot sun has burned us. Alastair is beginning to colour nicely while I'm still peeling and looking like a lobster.

My ankles, which got badly burned on a day I'd decided not to wear socks, are healing. The blistered area had been just where errant pedals could scrape and thump. A Melolin plaster had managed to pad the wound and prevent too much further damage. Our sole tube of high factor sunscreen has been sparingly used but is now nearly empty.

A huge cycling festival took place in Yorkshire each year. There were dozens of events and you didn't get a choice. With thousands of entries the organisers made the choice for you. Prizes were good.

My 25 finished outside the gates to Thirsk race course. The winner won a top quality frame. Third place also got a frame. This as a set of tubes and a box of lugs.

Taking the prize home I asked John Landragon if he was prepared to braze things together for me.

With my new bike I'd occasion to catch the train in Aberdeen. For safety my treasured possession came into the booking office and leaning it against the wall I joined the queue at the booking desk. Seconds later, clutching my travel pass, I turned, only to find that someone had moved my velo! It was nowhere to be found, probably already heading off to some recycling depot.

A 25 took place on the road from Garstang to Blackpool in Lancashire. Though never at any great elevation the road is nonetheless lumpy. It is not a drag strip. This route could rival any of the hard courses in Scotland.

Phil Boden and I rode it away back in 1973. I'd been holidaying with him at his home in Knowsley, near Liverpool and he'd give me a lift to the event. I'd ride back to Aberdeen afterwards.

We both struggled round, no personals, indeed memory tells me no one got near the hour. My efforts were good enough for third place and after breakfast at the Greenman I headed north on the old A6 with a fiver in my pocket.

Roughstuffer



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Youth Awards Scheme

Clubs with youth cyclists have put together an awards scheme for the riders. This is a North East wide scheme so all the riders who take part will be able to work towards a series of certificates and badges as their cycling develops.

Colin Allanach

CORONAVIRUS

Stay Safe Stay Home

Follow the rule on social distancing

Wash your hands often

Some situations may be relaxing but the virus is still out there

Do your bit to help keep it at bay

For Sale

Items will appear here for three consecutive issues. If the item sells before the final appearance please contact knockies@aol.com so that the details can be removed

- 1 Cervelo R3 - New bike build – 56cm – new components (excl. wheels & cassette are used). Delightfully light and nimble machine. £2,200 without, £2,450 with wheels & cassette. Contact Jon Strachan on jas@tierney-strachan.co.uk (1)
- 2 a) Sadly underused 51 cm Felt F3 carbon framed road bike. Sram Red groupset-34/50 CR 11-28 cassette. Sram s27 alloy wheel set (Sram owns ZIPP). Michelin pro 4 comp tyres. Bike is in excellent condition. Photos available. £1000 ono.
b) Genesis Croix de Fer 20 size S .A “gravel/ tough touring” bike. Reynolds 725 tubing. Shimano Tiagra 2x10 gears, compact 34/50 chainset. Tough 700c wheelset. Clement Explor tyres. TRP cable operated hydraulic disc brakes. This bike was purchased for some off-road touring ideas which will not now take place. It has been ridden about 20 miles since new and is essentially in showroom condition. Photos available. £800 ono

Contact Jim Morrison on jim37morrison@gmail.com

Coronavirus Stop Press

I haven't had any specific information or guidance from Scottish Cycling following The First Minister's announcement of the Aberdeen lockdown.

It is clear that folk from Shire shouldn't go into Aberdeen City and folk from City shouldn't go into Shire.

From a cycling point of view that's fairly clear.

To help prevent any of us becoming ill or passing it on to our friends and families the following is only my suggestion for the next week or so, without rules or guidance from higher authorities.

As Shire borders the city, we have to be very careful that as cyclists we don't spread the virus unintentionally. We can act as a buffer for the virus spreading.

It is clear that some of the people who were in the pubs and clubs affected were from the Shire and so the virus may be amongst us already.

I would therefore recommend that if you are thinking of group rides this week you consider if it is really necessary. Even within the guidance of five folk bubbles. My thoughts just now are, I wouldn't bother.

I would also like to reiterate if you are out with others the physical distancing requirements, 2 metres and watch out for following behind someone else.

The city folk have also been requested not to travel more than five miles for exercise. I think that for this week, unless we get better guidance we should consider that for Shire as well. Again, I'm not demanding this I just think it's the sensible short term thing to do. Hopefully it will only be a week or so.

If you find yourself somewhere busy (trail centre or cafe or park, etc) then protect yourself and others and move on to somewhere that isn't so busy.

Stay safe, protect yourself and others. Hopefully this spike will pass quickly.

Colin Allanach

COACHED TURBO SESSIONS

Wednesday – Stonehaven Community Centre
11.15am to 12.15 (doors open at 11am)
31 Oct 2018 – 27 Mar 2019

Thursday – Knockburn Sports Academy
10.00am to 11.00am (doors open at 9.45am)
01 Nov 2018 – 28 Mar 2019

Weekly Progression – All Abilities Catered For

The sessions will be structured and progressive throughout the winter months. This is the ideal way to get fitter over the winter and to be ready to enjoy the spring and summer.

****NOTE** YOU NEED TO BRING A BIKE AND TURBO TRAINER!!**

Cost (Blocks are payable in advance):

BLOCK 1: 8 sessions in Nov/Dec - £48 (£6 per session) when paid in advance or £7.50 per drop in session

BLOCK 2: 12 sessions in Jan/Feb/Mar - £72 (£6 per session) when paid in advance) or £7.50 per drop in session.

For more information please contact:
SARAH ROWE (ABCC Level 3 and BC Level 3 coach) srowe2020@btinternet.com or 07970919453

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This small area has been reserved to persuade each member who has read this far, to invite anyone showing an interest in cycling to apply for membership of Britain's biggest cycling club

Membership Application

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