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CRANKS

Volume 47

The Magazine of
Deeside Thistle Cycling Club
Sponsored by:




Current Membership 591 (625)
SCU Membership 321 (344)
Scottish Cycling's Largest Club

Editorial:

When last month's Cranks appeared, truncated and lacking a lot of the usual calendar stuff, it drew a succinct comment from Mark Heady - *Thanks for the war-time like Cranks edition.*

It's even further curtailed this month. Little is happening out and about and that's the way it has got to be. We have got to share in the world wide efforts to combat the spread of Coronavirus.

Our Evening League due to start the first Tuesday in May didn't. Steve Walton has a calendar prepared and on hold. My own feeling is that there won't be enough of the season left once the lockdown is lifted for any racing to take place.

Saying that, there is the Tour de France, a fixture in July. The UCI President, David Lappartient, says it would be a disaster if the 2020 event doesn't take place. The race has been rescheduled for September but will depend on restrictions on sporting events at that time.

Captain Tom Moore, that erstwhile soldier, now a 100 year old who we can't help but have noticed and have a huge respect for, says that *'tomorrow will be a good day'*.

Aberdeen Wheeler, Bob Stewart, father of Wheelers, Robert and Kenny, died suddenly at the end of April. His funeral took place on Wednesday 06 May in Inverurie. Because of the lockdown few people were able to attend though some were able to pay their respects as the cortege passed along the High Street.

PHILOSOPHER'S CORNER

"Do not judge me by my successes, judge me by how many times I fell down and got back up again"

Nelson Mandela

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

From British Cycling

While the devastating impacts of the coronavirus continue to be felt by families, communities and frontline services across the country, our thoughts of course remain with those most affected.

At times like this, sport pales into insignificance given the horrendous situations that many have found themselves in as a result of this pandemic.

However, the uplifting projects organised by clubs, communities banded together by a love of a particular sport, and the fundraising contributions of hundreds of thousands of people who used sport and exercise as a way to contribute to the 2.6 challenge to raise much-needed cash for charities, shows just how big a part sport and physical activity does play in our society.

Today would have seen the start of the 2020 Tour de Yorkshire – fast becoming one of the most iconic sights in British sport, and a wonderful advert for cycling. That would have been followed by rides and races across the country throughout the summer – on roads, trails, BMX tracks and indoor and outdoor velodromes.

Children and adults, amateur and elite would have been creating their own new memories, ticking off personal achievements and strengthening friendships formed by cycling, as the world built up to the biggest sporting showcase of them all later on this year.

As we know, all of that now has to wait – for hugely important reasons. On his 100th birthday, it seems appropriate to quote Captain Tom Moore, a voice of experience if ever there was one, who has reiterated his message to the British public that *'tomorrow will be a good day'*.

We all want that *'tomorrow'* to come as soon as possible, and we'd like to reiterate our thanks to all those in the cycling community who are continuing to adhere to Government advice, working on the frontline, volunteering and using their bikes for good – all of which will help us come through this together.

Please continue to ride responsibly, and stay safe and well.

Suspension of Events

All events are suspended until the end of June. <https://www.britishcycling.org.uk/about/article/20200323-British-Cycling-extends-suspension-on-sanctioned-cycling-activities-to-30-June-0>

Colin Allanach SCNEG Chairman

Club-kit Shop - Pactimo Order

The recent kit order from Pactimo has now arrived at our offices. However, given the lockdown situation we are not in a position to distribute as normal so please DO NOT come to collect. If you have an urgent requirement for your order please let me know (by email only on clubkit@deeside.org) and we can maybe arrange postage or something - but, please, this needs to be absolutely essential items only. Once again - please DO NOT come to collect these items. Our offices are NOT open to visitors at this time.

Jon Strachan

Prudential RideLondon 2020 Event Update

A message from Hugh Brasher, Event Director, Prudential RideLondon:

"We are in an unprecedented situation as the world grapples with the global pandemic of COVID-19. Public health and the resources to support our medical services are everyone's priority right now.

"We are still hoping to be able to stage Prudential RideLondon on 15-16 August and we will keep you updated should the situation change.

"In the meantime, please follow the Government advice - particularly on self-isolation and exercise - and take care."

The RideLondon British Cycling Club Challenge 100

We are delighted to announce that we have been allocated:

2 Male teams & 2 Mixed teams

into the 2020 Prudential RideLondon-Surrey 100 Club Challenge on Sunday 16 August

Please be advised that the deadline has now changed for when each rider must complete and make payment (£79) for their entry— it is now **17:00 on Friday 26 June**. Entry links will be issued after **Friday 1 May**

Important: if all four members in a team do not complete their entry, they will not receive a team time. However, they will still receive an individual time

If you've failed to get an individual entry or have not yet replied to this advert and would like to be part of London's greatest closed road sportive scheduled for Sunday 16 August please contact info@deeside.org

Midsummer Beer Happening

It is intended that the beer festival does take place in 2020. Watch this space for the date.

Entries for the Midsummer Beer Happening 2020 Sportive are now open!

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/msbh-2020-dinnaedo-100m-redo-70m-undo-52m-tickets-86409879275>

Our Commitment

Our role is simple; continue to show responsibility. As said before the crisis hyped is not a joke. You and those around you might not contract the virus but it does affect everyone. Responsible cycling is important. Show respect and remember you are not above the law. When you go out on your bike go alone and stay alone or only with those from your household. Follow the rules; avoid social contact, stay at home except for daily exercise, wash your hands often

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

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*

VOLUNTEERS

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

Handbook

Incorporating changes agreed at our recent AGM an updated version of your club Handbook will soon be online. It will be accessible [here](#). In addition to all the Rules and Regulations it will contains contact details for your club officials for this year, details of 2019 Club Champions and a complete list of club records.

We're still on Lockdown so continue to follow the rules - exercise alone or with members of your household - do not meet up with others - wash your hands often

Sarah Phillips Scottish and British Champion in the 90's

VeloVeritas recently conducted an interview with our own Sarah Rowe (nee Phillips). You can read it here:
<https://www.veloveritas.co.uk/2020/03/23/sarah-phillips-mar20/>

Vice-Chairman

Your Club's Finance and Management Committee recently invited David Walton to take on the post of Club Vice-Chairman.

David has been a member for 10 years a number of which he has also served on our F&M Committee. He has been a prime mover in the organisation of our Evening League and is one of the Club's principal time-keepers.

His cycling history does go back many years to as long ago as 1972 when as a member of Hemsworth he took part in short distance time-trials.

Park Bridge

It has just been highlighted that two nasty accidents have happened on the road from Drumoak to Park Bridge. This road is currently closed to traffic as the bridge is unsafe.

Pedestrians and cyclists still have access across the river.

In front of the toll cottage on the north side of the bridge a traffic calming bump has been placed across the road. It is this which brought riders off. One rider needed hospital treatment for a broken collar bone and ribs. Please be careful when out on the road. Avoiding accidents means NHS staff don't have to look after you!

Recent New Members

The following new or returning members have joined in recent weeks

343	Kenny McIntosh	Aberdeen	82
2234	Stuart Black	Aberdeen	44

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

New Members

Many folk riding bikes today are not members of our club, indeed any club. For many there won't be an interest in getting involved but I bet that there are equally as many who just need that wee push to join up. I imagine you'll be acquaint with some of those who are needing that nudge.

How about, the next time you are in contact with any of your friends, acquaintances, colleagues, who ride bikes, and you know aren't already members of our club, or any other club, making the suggestion that they enrol in our organisation? All you need do is ask them to go to http://deeside.org/?page_id=29 to get an Application Form and details of Fees. Alternatively they can drop me a text on 07867 857221, or email members@deeside.org.

MULGA BILL'S BICYCLE

A.B. "Banjo" Paterson

'Twas Mulga Bill, from Eaglehawk, that caught the cycling craze;
He turned away the good old horse that served him many days;
He dressed himself in cycling clothes, resplendent to be seen;
He hurried off to town and bought a shining new machine;
And as he wheeled it through the door, with air of lordly pride,
The grinning shop assistant said, "Excuse me, can you ride?"

"See here, young man," said Mulga Bill, "from Walgett to the sea,
From Conroy's Gap to Castlereagh, there's none can ride like me.
I'm good all round at everything as everybody knows,
Although I'm not the one to talk - I hate a man that blows.
But riding is my special gift, my chiefest, sole delight;
Just ask a wild duck can it swim, a wildcat can it fight.
There's nothing clothed in hair or hide, or built of flesh or steel,
There's nothing walks or jumps, or runs, on axle, hoof, or wheel,
But what I'll sit, while hide will hold and girths and straps are tight:
I'll ride this here two-wheeled concern right straight away at sight."

'Twas Mulga Bill, from Eaglehawk, that sought his own abode,
That perched above Dead Man's Creek, beside the mountain road.
He turned the cycle down the hill and mounted for the fray,
But 'ere he'd gone a dozen yards it bolted clean away.
It left the track, and through the trees, just like a silver steak,
It whistled down the awful slope towards the Dead Man's Creek.
It shaved a stump by half an inch, it dodged a big white-box:
The very wallaroos in fright went scrambling up the rocks,
The wombats hiding in their caves dug deeper underground,

As Mulga Bill, as white as chalk, sat tight to every bound.
It struck a stone and gave a spring that cleared a fallen tree,
It raced beside a precipice as close as close could be;
And then as Mulga Bill let out one last despairing shriek
It made a leap of twenty feet into the Dean Man's Creek.

'Twas Mulga Bill, from Eaglehawk, that slowly swam ashore:
He said, "I've had some narrer shaves and lively rides before;
I've rode a wild bull round a yard to win a five-pound bet,
But this was the most awful ride that I've encountered yet.
I'll give that two-wheeled outlaw best; it's shaken all my nerve
To feel it whistle through the air and plunge and buck and swerve.
It's safe at rest in Dead Man's Creek, we'll leave it lying still;
A horse's back is good enough henceforth for Mulga Bill."

Proposed Local Calendar for 2020

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

Provisional date	Description	Organising Club
12/07/2020	Methlick Challenge	Bike Ride
23/07/2020	Evening series 6	Aberdeen Uni CC
09/08/2020	Classy 10 (10 mile TT)	Aberdeen Wheelers
13/08/2020	Evening series 7	Aberdeen Uni CC
22/08/2020	National Youth Time Trial	Deeside Thistle
23/08/2020	Ellon Youth Crit	Ythan CC
12/09/2020	Falling Leaves	Deeside Thistle

Dates yet to be confirmed:

Coffee Pot 50	Deeside Thistle
District TT Champs	No Organiser

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.

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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>

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

Wild Cycle Pit Stop

Ever had a problem with or on your bike out Lumsden way? Here's how to rescue yourself. Contact the Wild Cycle Pit Stop on alexis.zafiropoulos@gmail.com or phone 07977 4666889

25 Years Ago

ABERDEEN UNIVERSITY QUINCENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

Cycling Randonee, a Touring event under Audax UK rules

Route Description:

King's to Marischal College - via Corgarff and Balmoral - 200kms

Start in High Street outside Kings College, then by cobbles to St Machar Drive and over to the Chanonry and then to Don Street and by Hillhead to Auld Brig of Balgownie to head north across the Parkway onto minor roads on the north side of the River Don through Garthy and Hatton of Fintray, turning off right onto the straightest road in the north-east(?) to Inverurie - 1st control.

From Inverurie again on minor roads north of the Don by Burnherve and Blairdaff to the first climb through My Lords throat to Keig and then to Montgarrie and Bridge of Alford - 2nd control at the Forbes Arms (Brevet Populaire turn south for Aboyne - see note).

Main event heads west to Mossat, then south to Kildrummy, Glenkindie, and the detour to make up the 200km distance and to avoid crossing the Don, by turning off to explore Glenbuchat and return to Strathdon, again heading west to Corgarff - 3rd control at Goodbrand Knitwear Tearoom.

Turning back down to Corgarff Bridge and turning right over the Glaschoile to Gairnshiel and then over to Crathie (caution on the descent - cattle grid and sudden junction with the main road), then to cross the Dee at Balmoral onto South Deeside Road, turning right to the Lochnagar Distillery* head east to rejoin South Deeside Road at Abergeldie to follow back to Aberdeen via Ballater, Aboyne and Ballogie - 4th control.

Continue over the Corsedarder to Finzean, Feughside and via Strachan, over the Brig of Feugh and the by Durris to Maryculter, into Aberdeen and King George V Bridge onto Riverside Drive to continue to the Docks and the short climb of Market Street to join Union Street and the turning off to Marischal College - finish in the Quad.

Entry forms available from Andrew Manwell.

Historical Reminiscences

(Part 20)

The chosen route through Aberdeen to my workplace on St Machar Drive took me along Union Street where left at Marks and Sparks and along George Street. One morning the sweat had hardly stopped dripping as I turned down Bedford Road.

This road had been followed a thousand times, the Tillydrone roundabout negotiated with ease. Freewheel to the give way line, brake gently, a couple of pedal revs onto the circle, right knee out and lean the bike over to its limits of tyre adhesion.

Only on this occasion the back tyre adhered too well. It stuck to the road and inadequate application of rim cement meant it rolled. Morris Minors laughed as I went slithering along Tillydrone Avenue.

As soon as we started the Russian police, Militsiya, moved in as an escort. Ilya worried and forced the pace a little. That first 40km passed uneventfully while I took up the rear pushing folk to keep them in contact.

This continued until lunchtime when we thought the police had given up but they were waiting patiently. Ilya asked them to move but they told him our freedom was over. The escort continued through the afternoon until we reached that day's destination.

Every junction had marshals and at one point as many as eight police cars controlled the traffic.

When one of the riders punctured I bundled her into a support vehicle and set off in pursuit of the bunch. In the distance I could see the vehicles and coming up behind the queue it was tailed by a big black police car. This car led me through the column of lorries, a baton wielding arm out of the passenger window ushering the vehicles into the side.

After our meal and entertainment from Russian dancers everyone headed off to bed save for Alex. He joined me and I said he could sleep on the floor in my room but he declined as I'd no whisky and he staggered off. A clatter told the worst. He'd fallen down the stairs.

In Malawi a dream that the country could become a world centre for paper making foundered. Fifty years on, pine clad slopes dominate the skyline. They are beyond harvesting age. Costs involved in cutting and transport surpassed the value of the manufactured paper.

Red clay roads become churned to a potter's slip consistency during the rainy season. Flash floods scour deep gullies on the steep slopes leading from the Nyika plateau. With nightfall, thunder rumbles faintly around a heavy black cloud. Darkness is repeatedly broken by myriad flashes of light from the cloud and jagged streaks of lightning flash to earth. Rivers go from gentle streams to raging torrents in minutes.

With dawn, on Nyika plateau mist clings to the trees. It glistened on our arms and legs. Rolling bracken covered slopes fade into the distance. A grazing group of dots

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could be mistaken for red deer. The atmosphere that morning belies it is Africa.

As we pedalled over the wet clay the sun quickly burned off the mist.

Suddenly, just above the bracken, emerged a headdress of ears and horn atop a masked head. Then across the track strutted a roan antelope buck. Others lifted their heads from grazing and stared at us. One trotted up to the limit of its comfort zone and stood watching curiously. It snorted, kicked its heels and trotted back to the herd. Striped faces contrasted starkly with uniform body colour.

Zebra cantered to and fro across the track. These are Birchall's Zebra, a unique sub species. They always stayed at a hundred yard distance but were obviously not frightened. To counter that, a large group of eland, Africa's largest antelope, spooked and stampeded up a hillside.

The track tilted downwards. Green algae covered the track. Though much had dried in the intense sunshine, in sheltered areas our wheels were never far from sliding. Great care had to be taken for round the next corner the track could have been swept away by storm water. As we descended, the temperature increased and before long we'd left the little Scotland entering the indigenous Brachystygia forest of true Africa.

Stopping briefly to examine a burrowed insect trail across the track, pad marks two inches across were spotted in some dust. A leopard! Spreading acacia trees had bark scraped by climbing claws. With more careful inspection of overhanging branches we continued downwards.

Reaching the flood plain, gliding over our heads came a giant, black and white, almost pterodactyl like, creature. Its long beak and craggy head cranked round to look at us. Banking, the Wattled Crane, an endangered species, swept round in a great arc to return and inspect these stranger creatures passing through its domain. Regaining its original flight path the crane continued gliding slowly earthwards to alight hundreds of yards away.

On the return to the Immigration Office we found chaos. Dozens of trekkers were trying to get their permits. No longer allowed inside the building, to be served in some sort of queue at the glass fronted counter, they crushed up to a window, the bottom of which stood at shoulder height. Two or three of the youngest and more adventurous had stepped onto the cement shelf, which ran round the bottom of the wall and hung onto the metal grill covering the window. They blocked the view of the other waiting visitors.

Officials inside pressed passports against the glass and folk had to try and identify the faces. Those hanging to the window grill called out countries of origin but that did not satisfy me. Losing patience, fed up after an hour of waiting, I suggested that everyone should be allowed a chance at the window to try and identify his or her own passport and permit. There were a few murmurs of agreement but it took a long time for space to be cleared.

Darkness clamped down very fast. At only 6.30pm things became very confused with photographs on passports now

invisible. Gradually the turmoil eased. Trekkers drifted away, either satisfied or having decided to try again tomorrow. We had waited a long time and not prepared to give in, satisfaction was eventually ours at around 7.00pm. Ours were virtually the last documents to be processed, one and half-hours after the office officially closed.

Back in the hotel I could sense that not everything appeared right with my bodily systems. In the restaurant a substantial meal ordered from an extensive menu did not get the credit it deserved – Mulligatawny soup, Chicken and Buffalo strips with shredded vegetables and rice, Apple-strudel and ice-cream. A Namaskar cocktail and tea washed it down. This cocktail had also greeted us as we arrived at the hotel in the morning - rum, cherry brandy and wine. It gave me more enjoyment than the meal. Everything had taken on a peculiar taste and my stomach rebelled. Excusing myself in a hurry I headed to our room hoping to get some sort of relief.

Seeing the stairs in front and a lift on the right my concerns grew that I'd not make it. Guessing, I turned sharp left and fortunately, almost immediately found a toilet. Shaking, headachy and sweating I eventually returned to Alastair at the table.

Mark Blunt soon appeared. We owed him a lot already as he'd managed to secure us the complimentary accommodation in this hotel, reputed to be one of the top hotels in the world and certainly must rank as one of the best in Kathmandu. Mark offered to buy us a drink but finding it difficult forming words as the ague gripped deeper I could only glance at the array of bottles and inarticulately asked for a Chigas Reval.

The good Scotch flowed freely and in the conviviality Mark offered to introduce us to the hotel manager, help us with flights back to Delhi and provide us with a contact in the National Park. After more Chigas Reval it was agreed to meet at breakfast when plans could be finalised.

It had been an exhausting day. Though, at home, folk would still have some 8 hours left before going to bed I couldn't stay awake. Tiredness swept over. Maybe it was the strain of this stomach upset or perhaps the Chivas Regal affected me more than the others.

Crossing River Bagmati, which flows westward through the south side of the city, a story we'd been told was confirmed. Because of the lack of sanitation and the stomach problems which visitors have to suffer, one of the prime topics of conversation is bowel movement and here again is a point of proof. Umpteen men were crouched along the banks and the river islets. This is the traditional time, the hour after sunrise, for the men to clear their bodily systems. Women have already been out, before daylight.

On the way to Banepa we'd climbed a short steep hill near the top of which is a school. Here the smell of human excrement was overpowering. The edge of road lay thick with it. The schoolchildren have to go somewhere but why the roadside.

In Kathmandu I'd failed to adjust to the air, the food, and the living conditions. Here in Banepa, a country town, more adjustments had to be attempted. The only street,

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surfaced but bordered with dirt, which must be abominable in wet weather, was lined with small shops. Not sure how to go about buying food we each settled for a bottle of Coke. At only Rs4 it sounded cheap and almost tasted like the real thing. My stomach continued to rebel and the sight and smell of food still appalled me.

In Banepa buses stop. Passengers get off and on. More freight is piled onto the roof. Sheep and goats join this freight. The dozen or so passengers still sitting move a little to make room for more. As one bus roars off, belching black diesel fumes to billow behind, a passenger without a seat is perched on a window ledge and holds himself in place by gripping the roof rack. Another stands on the step at the back door holding the handle with one hand and with the other hangs onto a rope emerging from inside the bus. A bare arm pokes out of the slightly ajar door of the bus, grasping the frame, trying to maintain balance. Inside it must be absolutely jam-packed and stifling.

Reaching Dolalghat Bridge, courage in both hands, we stopped at the first tea-house. It was as well to do it now for eventually hunger would drive us to be desperate.

Kathmandu to Jiri is about 125 miles and all along we knew in our hearts it would not be possible to make it in a day. Rain came on and we could see the likelihood of us getting more depressed and slower.

The tea-house sheltered us from the rain for a few minutes. The rain fell heavily, flooding the road through the small town. It cascaded off the roof over our bikes, reminiscent of highland tours at home. Only, here, the rain fell warmly, almost pleasantly. A bottle of Coke wet our insides and our first sample of roadside food was a sort of dumpling, a ball of dough, fried. Still, my stomach did not like the idea. The sick feeling continued and it weakened me more by the hour.

From Dolalghat Bridge the road climbed a little. Once over the ridge the road descended into the Sun Kosi valley. It was a dirty descent. The road, covered in potholes and narrow did not give much room for the regular large lorries to squeeze past. They only travelled a little over our speed and showered us with muck when passing.

The pack on my back became heavier by the minute and I'm not ashamed to admit that I really began to feel the effort becoming too great. Alastair, obviously in better shape, seemed to be able to tolerate the burden of his pack with far less difficulty. Proud of my reputation as a survivor, this was a blow.

Luckily the Sun Kosi valley rises gradually. But even then, I had little energy to get over even the smallest undulation. The rain continued to depress me.

Eventually the rain eased off. Never cold it had still wet us through and I hoped not too many days would be like this.

When only a few kilometres from Lamosangu, I gave up. The rucksack had beaten me. Perhaps if I'd been able to rest up a couple of days and recover from the abdominal strictures things would have been easier. In an effort to make things better for myself I tied the rucksack to the bike carrier. Thank goodness we'd decided to fit these and

not rely solely on the rucksacks to carry things. It did lessen my burden.

The Arithro Highway, which we had followed from Kathmandu to this point, continues northwards to a border crossing into Tibet. This is the main road from the capital of Nepal to Lhasa, the capital of Tibet. A turning eastwards from Lamosangu takes the traveller on tarred road to Jiri, the route to Everest.

The road to Jiri crossed the bridge and immediately climbed. It zig-zagged steeply to 1700 metres in about 12 kilometres. Leaving Lamosangu at about 2.30pm we decided to stop for the night once the ridge top had been reached. On the climb kids tried our patience. Absolutely shattered, our efforts to maintain progress were constantly thwarted by these children. Not that at first they were malicious, more the constant shouting, chasing, touching, wore us down.

The chasing kids became too much and as darkness descended around us we had to chase them away. Losing tempers didn't work; the children played on it. They'd sense we were losing control and like kids everywhere, taunted at a distance. I wished we'd some of their language and could tell them in their own tongue where to get off. Alastair was stoned on one occasion though this was an isolated instance.

Not wishing to continue in darkness and assuming that we were close to the top, a place to stop for the night had to be looked for. This would be our first stop on the trail with no placard carrying bus driver from the Soaltee Oberoi to guide us. We were lucky to meet a well-dressed Nepali with a good grasp of English. Delighted to help he directed us to the Swiss Government Project, only a kilometre away in a small nameless village where a Mr Millar was in charge.

The project buildings stand on the steep slopes below the road. To reach them a steep staircase of stones had to be climbed down. There we found Mr Mueller, not Millar as we'd translated from the Nepali. He told us that they did not normally rent out beds. With a sinking heart I pointed out my plight. My legs were sore, my head ached, my stomach rebelled; I needed to wash, change and get some food down. Desperately we told Mr Mueller how poorly I felt; a roof only would be fine; we had our own sleeping bags. In the end he agreed to let us sleep in one of the unused buildings for a nominal fee but he could not provide food. In the village, he said, a restaurant could be found.

Alastair seemed in fine heart and I could not understand how he, admitting to being very much less fit than I at the outset, survived so well. In order to eat we had received directions from Mr Mueller to go into the village where a variety of meals would be available. They stopped serving around 8.00pm. Cleaning up quickly we climbed back up the multitude of stone steps to the road. In my physical state it continued to be a struggle and worse, too, because the steps were now in darkness.

On the short walk to the village a well-lit building could be seen and this turned out to be the tea-room. A few male Nepalis sat at a rough wooden table. A female Nepali sat by the stove, which looked to be out. Some pans sat on the

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stove. On request she served dal, bhat and vegetables. Our request for "no spice" appeared at first to be honoured but if the dal and vegetables were condiment free, heaven help us when we have to eat food, which is spiced. Only eating the bhat, it was unpleasantly cold. Forcing down large quantities of the matted, over cooked, boiled rice, I hoped it would settle my stomach. Three cups of tea were drunk.

A young girl had brought the food to the table. The daughter of the woman by the stove, she looked about 10 years old but when quizzed it turned out that she was 15 years old and just about to leave school. I have noticed all along that young Nepalis look younger than they really are while at the other end of the scale; generally, the older woman appears to have aged beyond her years.

With only one day in we are both claiming to be down. It has been a very difficult day for me and I've not been understanding about any bother with Alastair, more pre-occupied with my own lot. My bother is the digestive one, warned about often and hoped it would not occur. Alastair's may be similar but he does not say so. I'd been concerned he'd have suffered through lack of fitness and not been able to tolerate the slog of day after day riding, carrying and pushing. Now I have to ask myself, will I, after today's efforts when I failed miserably even before the first real uphill drag had started? Alastair had coped admirably well managing to carry his pack throughout.

The room we are staying in is quite large. There is a wardrobe with a jacket in it; a platform about 2 metres square is in one corner. It has a thin mattress covering it. A pair of trainers sits against the wall. Downstairs is a table with many maps of the area laid in a pile on the top. A cold water tap drips into a metal sink. The bikes are taken inside and stacked next to the sink.

Tomorrow will be easier; conditions will improve. I know today has been tough; I'm feeling really down.

At 1675 metres it is a clear starry night and quite warm. Far below, deep in the valley, bluish clouds drift lazily across the treetops.

Roughstuffer

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

Kintore Beginners - Sunday

Confidence and mile building for the less experienced every Sunday throughout the year. Target pace is 14mph, but can vary according to group make up. This is a social, no drop ride, building distance up to 60 miles. Currently at 40 miles, average speed of 14 - 15mph.

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>

KNOCKBURN LOCH MANAGEMENT

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

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Social Secretary	Heather	01224 699399
Treasurer	John C	
Membership	John T	01224 639012

Right to Ride Representatives

South Aberdeenshire	Vacant	
Central Aberdeenshire	Vacant	
North Aberdeenshire	Rod	01467 623317
Aberdeen City	Jean	01224 315222

Runs Co-ordinators

Try Cycling Rides	Moirra D	
Morning Runs	Cindy	01224 310719
Slower Full Day Runs	Heather	01224 699399
Medium Full Day Runs	Sheila	01224 639012
Faster Full Day Runs	John S	01224 790269

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 Giant TCR Advanced 0 Large. See [here](#) for details (2)
- 2 One of my work colleagues bought this [bike](#) for commuting and has found it not suitable for his needs. He is offering it up for free to a good home where condition is as new and will fit someone between 5'9" and 6 feet. Subject to self-distancing, viewing and or collection can be held at our office, JAS, Unit 7, Abercrombie Court, Arnhall Business Park, Westhill, AB32 6FE. Tel: 01224 766770 / 07590 010080, Email neil.howarth@jas.com

CORONAVIRUS

Stay Safe Stay Home

Follow the rule on social distancing

When you go out on your bike go on your own or only with members of your household

Wash your hands often

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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For more information contact Ken Bryson -
Email ken.bryson@talk21.com
Tel 01224 877533

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

Name:

Address:

Phone Number:.....

Email:

Date of Birth:

Please complete and return to Sandy Lindsay, Rowan Cottage, Inveramsay, Inverurie, AB51 5DQ Telephone (01467) 681330 or email: Knockies@aol.com



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