

Issue 559

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CRANKS

Volume 47

The Magazine of

Deeside Thistle Cycling Club

Sponsored by:



Tierney Strachan
PROCESS CONTROL ENGINEERING

Current Membership 604 (655)
SCU Membership 314 (341)
Scottish Cycling's Largest Club

Editorial:

Returning to normality was a forlorn hope. Stricter measures have been put in place to try and control the situation. It means that only 6 folk from two households are now allowed to meet out of doors. This, except when it's a sporting activity, when up to 30 folk are allowed to exercise together. However, this involves strict recording of those taking part and has to be overseen by a Covid-19 Co-ordinator.

To avoid criticism and possible challenges from members of the public who don't know the rules (or might disagree with the rules) it has been decided that your club will not organise official runs and other activities in the short term. An on-line recording system has been put in place for members taking part in our activities. Used for a couple of weeks with the Donside Bunch it proved successful and will continue to be available once the situation eases.

Meantime, exercise alone or with one other household; don't share transport, food or tools; wash your hands regularly.

Competitions are restarting elsewhere in the country and our Youth riders, striving at the traces, have been celebrating success. It's going to be a pleasure putting a few results into the next column – the first time this year.

Who knows what the future holds. With a view to slowing the current spread stricter controls have been put in place over the tattie holidays. But will this work?

In my opinion measures will only work if we all pull together. It's important to follow the rules and we will get through it.

PHILOSOPHER'S CORNER

Our grandparents were called to war. We're being asked to practice social distancing and stop hoarding toilet paper

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

Racing

It's been a funny old year. The last Sunday in September used to be the official end of the Championship season with only Hill Climbs and an occasional cyclo-cross event to come. Now there's a whole gamut of mountain bike events, Enduro and Downhill. And the emergence in great numbers of Cyclo-cross events.

2020 looked as if it had been written off and in many respects this is the case with no local or National Championships being awarded. Now that we're into the "close" season and some of the Covid-19 restrictions being relaxed to allow properly organised events under current guidance to take place there's been a flurry of competition.

The first weekend of October saw a number of our Youth members – and others - racing and getting on the podium.

On Saturday 03 October in the National CX Trophy Series, Westmorland, Cumbria. Arabella Blackburn took a convincing win in the U14 girls while Millie Thomson rode to 10th in the U16 Girls.

Sunday 04 October saw a 3 stage Hill climb around Stow in the Borders. Ben Butler, one of our newer members, rode convincingly in all three stages, 4th fastest in 1st and 3rd and 2nd fastest in number 2. He took 4th place overall. Finally, the Youth B category - although extremely tough to call with so many great rides over the course of the day the organiser says that the ride of the day goes to the Youth B winner and 10th overall, Elliot Rowe (Deeside Thistle). Elliott was fastest in his category in each of the three stages and finished only 2 mins behind the overall winner.

Also on Sunday Doon the Brae Events put on the Pitfichie Enduro. New club member Neil Pritchett won the Junior Boys with Joe Davidson (18th) and Kian Rokstad Daly (19th). In the Women's event Eliza Barrie won the overall title as well as the Junior Girls. The Under 12s event saw 1st place go to Fraser Paterson with Finn Watts a close 2nd, 5th Aaron Considine, 7th Harrison Speak, 9th Torquil McIntosh and 11th Jay Anderson.

Riding on Our Roads

There are always bad feelings between motorists and cyclists and the situation is exacerbated with the upsurge in numbers of riders on our roads and restrictions imposed on the streets of our towns.

We should learn to live with each other but I do understand the chagrin when a motorist has to take a convoluted route through a town because the streets have been narrowed to accommodate the pedestrian and cyclist. I understand the frustration (though I do refrain from commenting) when driving and stuck behind a group of riders for lengthy periods.

As Bert McIntosh points out, there are faults on both sides with motorists not giving safe space and cyclists not giving way. The situation is likely to worsen if a mutual understanding can't be reached.

The Highway Code now tells us to ride two abreast to reduce the length of overtaking time but it also makes sense to allow the overtaking to happen by moving into a field entrance or road junction.

AJL

Coronavirus Update

We have had it confirmed from **sportscotland** that **there is NO impact on organised sport** after recent announcements.

However, the importance of organised sport complying with the SGB guidance has been reinforced, particularly with the regards to the following:

- The wider societal rules apply before and after club activity. Clubs must reinforce to members that this means a maximum of 6 people from 2 households, indoors and outdoors. This also applies to cafe stops, so please consider this when planning club activities. Please continue to reinforce to club members the importance of adhering to this, considering the image that we portray if large groups are seen without physical distancing before and after activities
- Encouraging all club members to download the Protect Scotland app - www.protect.scot
- Ensure that all clubs have in place at least one Covid-19 Coordinator, a Risk Assessment is in place, and a record of all attendees is kept for at least 21 days after an activity has taken place.

Please encourage all club members to ensure they have knowledge of what the guidance is, and ensure that they know who their club Covid-19 Coordinator is for the purposes of Test & Protect.

If you have any specific questions please do not hesitate in getting in touch with our team by emailing ClubDevelopment@scottishcycling.org.uk

Fraser Johnston SC Club Development Manager

Notes: The updated Routemap [here](#), clearly states - the changes to meeting socially do not apply to services or activities that are already exempt from these restrictions and have been permitted to open subject to their own guidance such as organised sport. Clubs can continue to run their activities in line with the previous guidance published on the 24th August. The key points now which will be reinforced are:

- The Covid-19 Coordinator should have completed the mandatory sportscotland e-learning (find this [here](#)) and evidenced completion of this
- The club should have risk assessed its activities and made members aware of any mitigating measures in place (template RA can be found [here](#))
- We have emphasised to sportscotland that this exemption to organised sport needs to be more clearly communicated by Government, to ensure that clubs are not confronted by members of the public, who may rightly think, that we are not complying with the government guidance
- Continue to ride responsibly – ride within your ability level. High risk exercise (that may result in injury and require medical care or emergency services support) should be avoided. Be prepared - consider what tools and spares you need to carry

with you so that you are self-sufficient - including maintaining good personal hygiene at all times.

[Updated statement from Scottish Cycling regarding physical activity during COVID-19](#). Additional information is here:

https://www.britishcycling.org.uk/scotland/regions/article/SC_Club_Resource_Hub

Re-establishment of Club Activities

Now that we are in position to have club activities re-established it is important that the guidance issued by the Government and Scottish Cycling is seen to be followed.

For example we are not allowed to ride in groups outside the limit of 6 from 2 households unless the group has a Covid Co-ordinator in place, and that details of all participants have been collected.

Your club has ensured that these facilities are in place. A number of members have undergone the e-learning to be recognised as Covid Co-ordinators, Return to Sport Officers or similar, there is a Risk Assessment template available and we have Spod for registration of participants.

Once we feel the situation has again eased what we need is a return from members who are willing to be the contacts for our runs, from Banchory, Kintore, Peterculter and elsewhere. The task is not onerous and the Donside Bunch have already successfully used the new format.

Those willing and able should contact knockies@deeside.org.

Updating Information

Many members have already replied with requested details but others are still waited on. If you've not replied please let me have the below - **this, even if you think the information I have is correct**. By submitting this information it also allows me to collect Emergency Contact details. These details were not part of enrolling in the club until only a few years ago.

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 (**sometimes years ago when you may not have had a mobile phone, and addresses and mobile numbers do change**).

In order to meet our responsibilities please reply to info@deeside.org with your up to date details - 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)

Sandy L

Thoughts of Chairman Col

I thought I would put together a brief update on cycling in the area and strategic developments, and thought “not much going on”, but as I started writing more and more came to mind. So a, not so brief, run down.

Covid 19 pretty much wrote off the 2020 cycle sport season in our area. The only race to survive was a youth race at Haddo way back in March the week prior to lockdown.

With this in mind there will be no regional championships or local BAR awards for 2020. Year is void in championship records. This hasn't happened since the Second World War.

Hopefully next season we can get up and cycle racing again, I've missed it.

Covid also meant club rides and friends rides were severely restricted and only recently have we managed to get runs up and going again with Covid organisers in each club and strict rules in place.

There have been two youth training sessions in the area where the locals have been able to meet with their cycling chums even if parents and coaches have to keep their distance.

Chatting with coaches there is no doubt that racers are really missing the chance to race and meet up with each other.

The guys in the region organising the Zwift races and runs have done a great job and I can see that being even more popular over the winter when IRL cycling becomes less alluring.

Deeside organised a couple of online chats with Pippa York and Allan Pieper which were very interesting and a good insight to pro racing. The rumour is Allan was given tips to beat Roglic at the TDF, which he promptly put into action.

Local figures to be released soon, showed an upsurge of cycling across our region during the summer lockdown but dropping off a bit after relaxation. With all these new cyclists out and about Grampian Cycle Partnership are soon to release a local ‘friendly cycling’ document. This is basically a run through what we all do anyway as considerate cyclists but hopefully it will encourage some of the new folk on our roads and paths to cycle responsibly. Look out for its release soon.

Both city and shire councils used the ‘spaces for people’ funding to carry out a number of temporary measures throughout the region. It's clear some of these initiatives seem to be working well, and some not so much. There has been a bit of hysteria on social media over some of the cycle lanes (bordering on hostility towards cyclists) but it's good that the councils are looking at these and working out what permanent measures could look like (hopefully not involving red/white bollards). The best thing we, as cyclists, can do is to try the bike lanes out and give feedback for improvements through the proper channels and consultations.

Other developments over the summer included the launch of the Scottish Cycling club development strategy. I'm still to be convinced this is helpful for development of cycle sport in the area. SC know my concerns and the concerns

of others. It's early days so I'm trying to keep an open mind.

There's been no information from SC regarding the new local SC position. You may remember that Grampian was to get a temporary SC rep (ten hours a week) as a replacement for our RDO (Martin) who retired in May 2019. I seem to remember there were applications sought but Covid has put that back.

We had two brief looks at a velodrome development in the area. The first was working with Aberdeen Sports Village as part of their phase three development. Unfortunately this has been knocked back and some rugby development is going in its place. There were also some discussions with a local businessman who is very supportive of cycling in the area. Again unfortunately after a feasibility study, the numbers didn't work out and that proposal is dead.

Local tourism departments in the councils have begun to look at road cycling tourism as well as our developing mtb attractions. Our area has some great cycling and destinations such as coastal villages, great mountain scenery, castles, distilleries and pretty villages. North East Adventure Tourism (NEAT) have been looking at sign posting our local iconic climbs and are looking to promote the area as a cycle tourism destination (thanks to everyone who voted for your favourite climb). Routes like the NE250 cycle route and a gravel equivalent will feature strongly.

Nestrans have also been busy as well on some of our routes. There've been repairs to bridges on the F&B way and just announced yesterday £250,000 is going to be spent on Deeside way to widen the path and improve the surface on some sections. The new regional transport strategy to 2040 has also been put out for consultation with more emphasis on active travel. Hopefully the funding will follow.

Stay safe at home and on the roads.

Colin Allanach (SCNEG Chairman)

Quarter-Million-Pound Boost for Improvements to Deeside Way

Nestrans has been successful in applying for funding which will allow substantial improvements to be made to one of the region's favourite walking and cycling routes.

£250,000 of support from Sustrans Scotland will fund work that will increase the width of the path along The Deeside Way, supporting safe physical distancing for those using the route. The shared-use path, which is part of National Cycle Network Route 195, connects several communities along its 41 mile length, and serves as a popular active travel route for locals and visitors alike.

The improvements will involve clearing overgrown vegetation, fixing long-standing drainage problems, resurfacing, and removing obstacles and barriers. The work will be carried out by Aberdeenshire Council from Crathes to Banchory and from Dinnet to Ballater. Contractors will begin the work in October.

Following on from the rebuild of the Cambus O'May Bridge, this is good news for a well-used path.

Mark Hagger

The Allan Peiper Webinar 16 Sep

We had about 80 or so register and 65 join this evening. A few folk didn't join for whatever reason that had registered. The event is recorded and available here: <https://smart19tech.sharepoint.com/:v:/s/Smart19TechShar ing/ER6xoE5NeR9MnqdoOighwsEBA3ldBpxscB9jPffxBpsV2A?e=bXuGU3>

This was a resounding success and even more so given what has happened since. Time-trialling may well be back on the agenda for many of you sceptics! Special thanks to Alan Campbell for having the contact and conducting the interview, to Peter Smart and Neil Stables for doing the techie stuff behind the scenes and to Allan Peiper for making the time to spend with us.

Andrew Brailsford - It was a real rollercoaster this year and the tonic I'm sure we all needed after the bleak season! I rode Col de la Loze last year as part of the Haute Route Alps and knew it would be a fierce stage, but so many of the stages this year were relentless! Awesome edition. Exchanged a few messages with Dave to commend Pogacar's ride, what a talent! On Jumbo he said, 'Ain't so easy after all eh', be interesting to see what next year brings, the field has opened up a lot! I have to say I'm looking forward to the Giro more than ever! Fingers crossed it goes ahead

Jonathan D'Arcy - Thank you so much for organising and hosting the Zoom's events, Pippa York (Robert Miller to me) and Allan Peiper, over this summer. Despite the situation with COVID19, you have no idea how **important and enjoyable** it was to be involved with the broadcasts. Whilst not an active member of Deeside Thistle over the past couple of years (despite being a very active cyclist for most of my life) in May 2018, I was in the Tour of Highlands 3 day sportive and on the last afternoon fell off my bike, hit the deck at speed, then my head (with helmet) hit some rocks on the side of the road, resulting in a traumatic brain injury (TBI). I was in a coma for 2 days then hospital for 2 months. The helmet saved my life and whilst not yet back on my bike, cycling is in my blood! My rehabilitation is going well because of support from you (and people like you) and the 'new' world of Zoom being more inclusive!

Tour de France 2020

This was the year when it looked like even Le Tour could not take place because of Covid 19. But it did - all the way to Paris - and it was one of the very best!

I enjoyed the lone breaks which succeeded, the discovery of new climbs and the new talent which emerged. The time trial on the last day of real racing was dramatic in the extreme.

Having had Allan Peiper as our guest a few days earlier on Zoom it was a particular joy to have his team man, Tadej Pogacar, take the yellow jersey in spectacular style in the time trial on Saturday. Allan had told us of the meticulous planning which goes in to preparing for such stages and it was clear from what Tadej said in interviews that this had clearly benefited him.

What was particularly enjoyable was that the pundits basically got it wrong as they predicted Primoz Roglic

would hold on to yellow as he was a more experienced rider against the clock. In the event Roglic failed to match Pogacar's pace and was in arrears from the outset.

There were many similarities with 1989 when Greg LeMond beat Laurent Fignon on the final day's TT to take yellow by 9 seconds. Again the pundits got it all wrong and thought Fignon could not be beaten....

Pogacar is just 21 years old so has massive potential in the sport. I was pleased to see that he rode the time trial without a power meter. He just went for it! Roglic had had massive team support compared with Pogacar but in a TT it's every rider for himself. The Race of Truth.

Primoz Roglic, although clearly devastated by his comprehensive and unexpected defeat was magnanimous in applauding his fellow Slovenian.

Thanks to all who had the vision to see the event take place and to Tadej for demonstrating that a young rider can succeed even without a particularly strong team.

AGC

Deeside's Next ZOOM Chat

Deeside Thistle's successful evening Zoom chats continue in October with Isla Short. This time the interviewer is Laura Sarkis.

Isla is a 23 year-old Scottish MTB racer currently making waves in a truncated UCI MTB racing circuit (such as it is in this Covid-afflicted year) with a career best 11th place in the Czech Republic World Cup event at the end of September.

At only 16 years of age, Isla won the National XC series and has continued to progress through the ranks in both CX and MTB, and achieved an outstanding 5th place in the Commonwealth Games on the Gold Coast in 2018.

We wait to confirm the precise date around Isla's racing schedule, but it will be likely 7pm on a weeknight, mid-October. Please submit any questions for Isla in advance to Laura Sarkis on lsarkis4@gmail.com

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.

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)

In My Opinion

As a nearly-retired fan I avidly watched every stage of this year's Tour de France switching between Eurosport and ITV4. Well, when I say every stage I told a lie.

I can't stand the final non-stage with that long slow promenade to Paris. Okay, there's a bit of high speed action on the Champs Elysees but the convention over the last 20 years or so is that the yellow jersey is decided the day before. To my mind this non-race devalues the epic quality of the previous 3 weeks. I've often wondered what would happen if the rider in yellow were to fall off and break a leg while posing on that last stage and be unable to finish the event.

So, in my view it's either a race for all the jerseys or it's not. Cycle racing tactics are hard enough to understand for the average viewer without a stage which isn't really part of the race.

The French may, understandably, wish to finish in the unrivalled cityscape of Central Paris and showcase its splendours to the world. My suggestion would be a race to the finish with no poncing and posing until after the finish. Maybe a 100km final stage with just 4 laps on Champs Elysees and a final sprint or a lone breakaway or whatever.

Then after the finish lines the teams would regroup and ride a couple of laps at a slow pace for the fans and cameras. This would be the time to do their champagne toasts and photos prior to the podium.

What do you think?

Oh, and while I'm on my high horse, I wouldn't permit Teams to ride Le Tour with predominantly yellow kit. Jumbo Visma's kit is so similar to Le Maillot Jaune that even experienced commentators couldn't distinguish Jumbo riders from the overall leader.

There's an easy answer and one which has been applied in the last 25 years. A big Spanish team, ONCE which was pronounced onsey, had a distinctive yellow and black kit but in Le Tour the yellow on their kit was altered to pink to avoid confusion. (Somewhere, I have a jersey in that pink version which I refer to as onsey poncy). **AGC**

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**

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.

The Ballad of Bennachie

A Brodie (1987)

*Two mountain men set off ae day
Their mountain bikes to test.
Said Sandy, "Let's climb Bennachie,
Then gie oorsel's a rest.*

*"But first we'll pass by Leslie
An' the hills oot ower tae Keig.
But what's that danglin' from your bike,
An' I dinnae mean yer leg?"*

*"Ah! That's my bike computer."
Said Ali with a smile.*

*"It'll tell our distance, tell our speed
An' time us every mile.*

*"See, now we're doing a steady speed
Of fifteen miles per hour,
And now we're up to twenty,
And now it's twenty fower.*

*And now we're back to fifteen,
And now we're at eleven,
And now going up to Chapelton
We've dropped right back to seven."*

*And as they hit the forest trail
And they began to climb
On and on and on he went
Of distance, speed and time.*

*And Sandy wondered what to do
'cause he had heard enough.
"He'll maybe stop on Bennachie
When he runs out of puff."*

*At last the slopes came into sight
And upwards led the tracks.
The forest trail came to an end
And the bikes went on their backs.*

*The way was tough, the heather deep
But the summit came in sight.
Ali led the way ahead
And pushed with all his might.*

*But then he stopped, quite suddenly
And a plaintiff scream let forth.
It echoed oot ower Bennachie
And across to Tap o' Noth.*

*And windows down in Premnay
Were shattered with the sound
"My bike computer's gone," he screeched,
"It's somewhere on the ground."*

*Oh many was the hour they searched
And great was Ali's plight.
Oh many was the hour they searched
But 'twas hidden from their sight.*

*And many was the long sad day
He gazed at Bennachie
"I wonder what kind of average speed
It's workin' oot today?"*

*But Sandy was a worthy chiel,
A cyclist of great haste.
"Thirty quids worth on a hill?
It seems an awful waste."*

*So off he went ae Sunday morn'
Up the mountain track,
With map and grid and compass
And bike upon his back.*

*Oh Sandy is a worthy chiel,
He searched the highest ground,
He searched the bike computer out,
He searched and brought it down.*

*Oh what a joy in Ali's house
Was heard that happy day.
"My computer's back, it's workin' still,"
The neighbours heard him say.*

*Oh long, long is the mountain trail
That leads to Hermit Seat
But never again will it see the like
Of such a worthy feat.*

New Members

The following new or returning members have joined in recent weeks

2975	Ben Butler	Aberdeen	30
2976	Chris Handsley	Cults	19
2977	Paul Johnstone	Kintore	47
2978	Calum Dinnes	Aberdeen	55
2979	Owen Sangster	Banchory	13

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

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.

VOLUNTEERS

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

25 Years Ago

ADCA MTB CHAMPIONSHIP

Boy was it wet! We're talking serious amounts of water and yet over 90 cyclists battled their way through the rain washed course at Kirkhill Forest.

This course has become a favourite in the SCU MTB Series and to make it more "interesting" was run clockwise adding to the versatility of the Kirkhill labyrinth of paths and single tracks.

One unusual feature was the "puddle" at the foot of a downhill single track, measured at 18 inches deep! And the only way round it was through it.

Despite the weather, the mud caked bikes and Deeside jerseys stained for life, we had one victory - proving old age is no barrier in mountain biking.

Masters	1	Sandy Lindsay
	2	Roger Wilson
Sport	11	Philip Kelman
	16	Neill Blacklaw

A special thanks has come from the organiser to Ali Thompson and Hamish Duguid who stood in the rain all day to marshal. Without their assistance there would have been no race.

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

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](#)

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

Synopsis of F & M Meeting 31/08/20

A Finance and Management Committee meeting took place on-line, on Monday 05 October 2020. In attendance were Andrew Harrington, Sandy Lindsay, David Eastwood, Sam Long, Laura Sarkis, Peter Smart, Neil Stables, Jonathan Strachan, Mark Walker, David Walton and Steve Walton.

Agenda

Apologies – No apologies

1 Minutes of Previous Meeting – Accepted as correct record

2 Business Arising from Minute

- a) Covid-19 Co-ordinators – Of those who had done the e-learning package to gain Co-ordinator status, or similar, Laurent Schirrer had taken on the role as leader. Since then he had resigned his post. It was agreed that he need not be replaced
- b) Return to Clubruns/Competition – The clubruns from Kintore had restarted but due to the developing situation with the Coronavirus they are once again held back. The Falling Leaves Reliability Trial scheduled for early October has also been cancelled

3 New Business

- a) Fees Sponsorship 20/21 – Fees for the year 20/21 are to remain the same and the club sponsors are to be invited to continue supporting the club
- b) Events Calendar 2021 – Members are to be asked to volunteer to organise clubruns under the new registration system. The Evening League should go ahead in the new season. The club's new radios are to be checked for suitability. Scottish Cycling does not appear to have requested a calendar of Open events for 2021. The Grampian Transport Museum Track is to be assessed for events
- c) New Website – A beta version of the new website received favourable comment. The development is ongoing with Cath Riddoch. Comments are welcome. It is hoped to publish the new site by the end of October
- d) Neuro Re-Hab Unit Woodend – A request was made to support the replacement of exercise bikes. It was suggested that a fund-raising event could be organised on Zoom with the club supporting it £ for £. Replacement costs for the machines were requested
- e) Zoom Interviews – It was agreed to go ahead with an Isla Short Interview after 12 October. Fee is £100. This is to be advertised through Facebook and Notes Extra
Alan Campbell is investigating an interview with a local mechanic

4 Any Other Business – None

5 Next Meeting – 09 November 2020 at 7.00pm



Britain's National Cyclists' Association

Working for all Cyclists

Newcomers are welcome particularly on the Morning/Slower Full Day runs.

Medium and Faster Full Day runs are for the more experienced

For more information visit our website:

ctcgrampian.org.uk

Chairman	John B	01224 571984
Secretary	Sheila	01224 639012
Runs Co-ordinator	John S	01224 790269
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

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.

CORONAVIRUS

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Follow the rule on social distancing

Wash your hands often

Do your bit to help keep it at bay

Historical Reminiscences

(Part 25)

Two winters had gone since the previous serious excursion off road and it was with foreboding of being unfitted for the task that a young companion and I set forth.

It had been Bill Rawles's idea to do the Lairig out and the Fords of Avon back. A long way, near 40 miles, and that was the main worry. The Lairig Ghru looms large in the minds of many as the par excellence of roughstuff crossings. It rises to almost 1000 metres over a great distance. I remembered the run through Glen Dee as mildly difficult with plenty of cycling and the descent to Rothiemurchus is over speedy peat moss. How time clouds the memory.

Early that morning, 10 minutes from Linn of Dee, Derry Lodge stood silent, smashed windows staring black and blank at us speeding by. Bowls of oatmeal sat soaking waiting for the awakening of the inhabitants.

Seesawing over the alluvium of Derry and Luibeg Burns took us to a ford and into Glen Lui. Keeping feet dry was easy as we stepped carefully over the atrophied stream, yet climbing towards the skyline wet heather soon soaked our feet. It would have been as well to have cooled off in the crystal waters far below.

Across glaciated granite into a wilderness of heather, the monotony split by a strip of well-trodden and eroded path, strewn with boulders, we battled in pursuit of two walkers. It took a long time to overtake them but the benefits of travelling by bike in some areas of the hills proved obvious – or so we thought.

I marvelled at the manoeuvrability of Bill's machine, the new-fangled MTB; how it handled the black stuff, tread pattern sealed into the wet peat while my skinny tyres sank soft and sucking; how on descents it bounced freely over boulders and on climbs the 18 inch gear allowed all but the most difficult obstacles to be hurdled. I longed for my 28T chainwheel long relegated to a nail on the wall.

Devil's Point hove into view, Ben Macdhui towered menacingly, vestiges of snow clinging to the upper slopes. Alpines bloomed, tiny leaves and small brightly coloured flowers sheltered from the debilitating winds by the hardier heather. Visible animals were scarce; occasional beetles scurried in the sand of the track and unknown birds fluttered close to the ground.

Glen Lui turned north giving way to Glen Dee. Before lay the ribbon of track which memories recalled being cycleable for much of the way.

How wrong and soon the MTB had also to be humphed. Instead of miles the bits on our bikes were measured in yards. A hard climb to the Pools of Dee and the boulder field took us to the Lairig proper.

Lurcher's Crag hung overhead, boulder strewn slopes feeding the valley floor. Noiseless ptarmigan ignored our presence except for a hen with chicks. Well camouflaged, the colour and markings like heather, she still feigned injury. Dragging a wing on the ground she scurried around until some distance from her brood when she suddenly took flight and flew back to her family.

On the descent towards Rothiemurchus the wind increased in strength from the south and blew us past the Sinclair Memorial Hut. Scrambling down to the remembered peat moss the MTB bucked and bounced with ease over the narrow twisting path, avoiding boulders and riding over wet peat bog without sinking in. My bike followed with difficulty.

"How are the bikes performing?" called a walker struggling uphill into wind. *"Well,"* came my reply as my narrow front tyre sank through the neat pattern of the MTB's tyre and I summersaulted at the walker's feet. Where had the open peat moss disappeared to?

The return leg took us into Lairig an Laoigh. Past Glenmore Lodge it was now easy to mount and though the wind blew strong much was rideable on the long climbs and reasonable descent to Fords of Avon.

Once having crossed the River Avon and started the climb into Lairig an Laoigh the distance told. Bill, just a little inexperienced went down with the dreaded knock. Stuffing with sweet things soon had him back to sorts and he proved his worth once again, bouncing over stones and boulders into Glen Derry.

I'd trouble during the day springing the front wheel twice but on each occasion it had snapped back into place and I didn't expect any more bother as we joined a good landrover track which would take us back to Derry Lodge. In an effort to redeem my standard machine versus the MTB I bashed on. Now on a good surface the MTB tailed out the back.

Reaching a ford I knew that getting off to wade would let Bill catch up again so throwing caution to the wind I charged in. Immediately the wheel caught between stones and folded over. Chucked over the handlebars I splashed about in water surprisingly warm. The wheel didn't straighten well this time and the twisted rim had to be battered into shape with a stone.

Low cloud obscured Tap o'Noth. The ice under slush made cycling difficult. A telephone cable lies exposed and broken on the track leading to the top where there once had been a weather station.

On the top is a vitrified fort. The depression bounded by the ramparts is well sheltered. On the exposed surround, bitter, sleet-laden wind cut through my clothing. I crouched behind the vitrified rock and ate a sandwich. There were no views through the close cloud.

In some respects, a wasted journey; in others a challenge accepted. Winter ascents can be cold and miserable; descents are invariably worse. Handless and footless the ride down to the nearest tarmac on the Cabrach rushed by with a mad dash back to Auchterturra to dry out.

Ben Rinnes, white, had a plume of cloud hiding the summit at just under 3000 feet. Firm snow covered inches of soft stuff and our tyres kept breaking through. The bikes just couldn't cope.

Clouds broke to reveal blue, a stiffish wind blew from the south. The snow deepened as we reached the plateau and the added effort was tempered by the views which came

and went. A splash of sun along the Spey valley favoured Aberlour and to the south wave upon wave of mountains heaped to the horizon.

The strengthening wind soon had the snow moving underfoot and our balaclavas had to be pulled down to protect cheeks and lips from the cold bite. Rocky outcrops on the summit became visible as the wind blew the cloud aside.

Now hard and frozen the ice covered ground had been swept clean of free snow and this heaped in rippled dunes. On the summit, sculpted by the wind, snow and ice covered everything with the crystal forms laid symmetrically like jewelled feathers along the edges of rocks.

On the descent, plunging downhill through the ever deepening snow, it was only this deepness which prevented us overtaking ourselves.

Grassic Gibbon's third book, *Grey Granite*, in the trilogy, *Scots Quair*, concludes its enthrallment on the summit of the Barmekin at Echt. *Chris Guthrie*, the heroine, sits there alone looking long at her world.

Access through Craighash Quarry might be the easiest but a white van chased us. We were trespassing though diplomacy reigned and soon we'd left the track and climbing through the heather it only took 10 minutes to reach the top.

Change elevation and immediately the outlook is altered. In height the Barmekin is not particularly impressive but from the top you get a new view of Bennachie, of Hill of Fare, of Skene Loch. You stand remote from the rest of the world.

That must have been the case a couple of thousand years ago when dozens of hard working individuals laboured to build the stone rampart and two stone walls which surround the plateau. It's a fortified construction, the two walls two metres apart and some 200 metres in circumference.

Legend has it that at the beginning of time the Devil cruised around. He took a bite out of the side of Lochnagar. It repulsed him. He disliked the taste and spat it out. Where the lump of granite landed it has remained to this day.

In days of yore Bennachie may have been the beacon for fisherman sailing home to Aberdeen but Clach Na Ben is equally as significant.

About three miles south of Strachan on the Cairn o'Mount road is the AA box at the Watersplashes. The Watersplashes resonate in the memories of many. The local authority in their lack of wisdom bridged the two streams and stole for ever these attractive fords, a feature of yesteryear.

We turned right, then after a few hundred yards turned left through the trees to the Burn of Greendams.

Climbing steeply, the wind, from the north, which had grown stronger all the while, fairly pushed us those last few hundred yards to the giant gob on the top of the hill.

The rock had its own mini-climate. The strong wind elsewhere now blew as a gale making the climb to the top of the weather eroded stone even more hazardous. Lifting my bike onto the rocky platform I hung on grimly as the wind lifted the bike even further and fluttered it like a flag.

Many bikes have gone before. Indeed the slopes on the north side of Hill O'Fare are a mecca for the downhill brigade.

Turning in at Sunhoney Farm a short distance from Echt we headed for the tops. It's all on landrover tracks generally in good condition so meant the day proved easy. In places soft surfaces slowed us as did bits of flood or red granite splintered to sand by frosts. And a sleeper road built over a bog.

We went to the highest point of the range. This is an unnamed summit looking down over Midmar. Into the wind it took an age for the mile but the return was swift. Downhill with a tailie we passed the bothy and crossed the Hill of Corfeidly before descending from Craighash to the Skairs.

The Hill O'Fare doesn't get many mentions in history. It is best known for its red granite (Hill O'Fare houses at the north end of King Street for example), but of far greater significance is what you would have seen had you stood at the Skairs on 28 October 1562. Looking east over the slopes to the iron rich Queen Mary's Well you'd have seen the Burn of Corrichie on the barren hillside.

*Murn ye hei'lands, and murn ye lei'lands,
I trow ye hae muckle need
For the bonnie burn o' Corrichie
Has rin this day wi' bleed.*

Without going too deeply into the history of that day enough can be said that local landowners were either supporters of the crown (Mary Queen of Scots) or in opposition. It was in a period of reformation in the churches and the Earl of Huntly with his son, Sir John Gordon marched towards Aberdeen with 1000 men. Queen Mary, in Aberdeen at the time, advised the Earl of Moray to rally his troops of 2000 men and they set out to meet Huntly.

Camped on Gordon's Moss at Cullerlie, Huntly retreated to Hill O'Fare on the morning of 28 October. On the slopes of the hill Huntly's men were at an advantage but continually raked by harlebesque fire from lower down they were driven into the narrow defile of Corrichie Glen and the battle was over.

Earl Huntly, grossly overweight, collapsed during the battle and a number of his officers and men were captured.

In St Mary's Chapel of the Church of St Nicholas with an entrance off Correction Wynd in Aberdeen is a mortuary to the Gordon Family of Huntly. This is the *Pitty Vault*, and contains the remains of Sir John Gordon, beheaded at the Castlegate, three days after the battle.

The legend that the Queen witnessed the Battle of Corrichie from a stone chair on the slopes of Meikle Tap is probably fiction as is the story that she was forced to watch Gordon being decapitated by *The Maiden*.

Roughstuffer

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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

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- 4 Cannondale Caad13, 56cm, 105 with Rim Brakes, done less than 100 miles, in mint condition, bought from Cycle Highlands for £1600.00 would be looking for £1200. Still under warranty etc. A bargain for someone. Contact stuart.black@yahoo.co.uk (3)
- 5 Dolan Prefissio 50cm. Sram Apex gears. Only ridden a handful of times. £300. Based in Aberdeen city. Currently has fatter tyres- good for absorbing bumps! Contact Lesley on lesley.m.strachan@gmail.com (3)
- 6 Dawes Super Galaxy Tandem. Reynolds 531 tubing. Shimano Tiagra Levers and centre pull brakes. Alivio rear mech 9 speed 14/28. Tandem Crankset - 48/36/26. Mavic T520 40 spoke rims on quality Suzue sealed bearing hubs. Sell San Marco “Rolls” saddles. Complete with pannier rack. Used condition with some scratches to paintwork but no material damage. £800 or best offer. Contact Simon on schric55@gmail.com (3)
- 7 a) Cougar road bike: Red frame. Acciaio 18 MCDV6 H.T steel. 8 spd Dura ace groupset. Fir Quasar wheelset (Ultegra hubs). Tubular. Sis downshifters. Excellent condition. Photo: <http://www.deeside.org/knockies/Cougar.jpg> (3)
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All bikes suit rider 5'7" +/- . Offers to Norman Hatton on norman_hatton@hotmail.com

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