

Issue 567

June 2021

# Cranks Volume 48

The magazine of  
**Deeside Thistle Cycling  
Club**

Sponsored by:

**MPH**  
McIntosh Plant Hire

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PROCESS CONTROL ENGINEERING

Current Membership 590 (593)  
SCU Membership 302 (318)

## Editorial:

It's a strange situation we find ourselves in. Things have opened up and time-trials are seen as an acceptable competition with little difficulty in imposing the new rules. However, there seems an even greater reluctance than pre-pandemic for organisers to step forward.

Apart from our Evening League, which has got off to a great start, there is only one other road-event in the north-east this year.

Elsewhere in Scotland a number of closed-circuit events are appearing and a few clubs in the Glasgow area are putting on CTT events but there appears a lack of interest in promotion.

I've harped on about the past often enough and I know that there has got to be an acceptance of change. Even if 40 years ago we had forty time-trials at 50 miles in the one season it is not the way of our sport today.

I know that cyclists have a wide choice in how to follow their chosen physical activity.

For example, the Sportiv type ride with chip timing attracts a great following and is the advent of Strava segments a greater pull than chasing PBs at standard distances?

Or is this the end of the World as we know it?

## PHILOSOPHER'S CORNER

*You might say I went out for a walk on my own in the dawn and didn't come back until sundown. There is so much to see before it gets dark – John Muir*

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@deeside.org](mailto:knockies@deeside.org)

## Coronavirus Update

Just to advise that following the recent announcements from the Scottish Government, we have now published updated guidance on our website. The only changes are the introduction of Level 0 for Argyll and Bute islands, Western Isles and Orkney and Shetland Islands.

We've only made some minor amendments to the wording of some sections across Level 1-3 to clarify the rules for indoor socialising rules in cafes as more of society opens up.

You can view it on the website [here](#) and as always give it a few (normally three works for me) refresh' to see the updated documents. If you've got any questions, please don't hesitate to get in touch. *Fraser Johnstone*  
[clubdevelopment@scottishcycling.org.uk](mailto:clubdevelopment@scottishcycling.org.uk)

Please take care to follow the rules, to not offend.

## SPOND Guide for Riders and Ride Leaders

**Once all the restrictions have been lifted there may be no need for us to keep carefully recording all those who attend our organised runs - but what is being established through SPOND is for the good and will help leaders arrange outings with greater benefits for participants. It could be the way forward and certainly helps ensure that those who are taking part are club members.**

Please find below a link to the SPOND Guide for riders and ride leaders that Andy Kerr, Neil Stables and David Stewart have put together. It shows you how to Register for SPOND and how to request membership of a DTCC Group. It lists the various Groups which are already in place, and these will be added to as more official runs re-start.

Link to [SPOND Guide](#)

## Situation Vacant

### Knockburn Coffee Shop

Knockburn Sports Centre requires a manager for the café from June to October, 2-3 working day week. Bert's usual good terms of payment apply and some experience in this field is preferred. Please apply in writing to Bert McIntosh on

[bert@mphltd.co.uk](mailto:bert@mphltd.co.uk)

## Club Branded Aluminium Water Bottles

We have purchased a stock of club branded, high quality, aluminium 750ML water bottles which feature a handy carabiner for attachment. Cost is only £5.00 per bottle. Go [here](#) for more information and to order yours

## Deeside Thistle CC – Dundee Youth Omnium Saturday 22 May 2021

The first youth track race in over a year took place at the Mark Stewart Cycle Track in Dundee on Saturday 22 May with the sun shining all day and the rain staying away until after racing had finished. Almost 40 youth riders were present at the Deeside Thistle CC Youth omnium (part of round 4 of the National Youth Omnium), with racing covering an 800m TT, elimination race, scratch race, sprint and points race.

In the youth A boys it was Archie Fletcher from Innovation racing taking the win with 182 points and 4 event wins, followed by Peter Drabble in 2nd and Jamie Thomson in 3rd. The highlights included a sub 1 min 800m TT from Archie Fletcher and a brilliant late attack from Corey Whiteford in the points race managing to stay ahead of the field and sweep up plenty of points at the finish.



The youth A girls was settled by only 2 points after 5 events in favour of Lucy Glover, who held on after Evie White took a solo lap gain in the points race. Mille Thomson of Deeside Thistle took 3rd overall after a strong final showing in the points race.



The youth B boys was won by James Sweeney of Edinburgh Road Club who won 3 of the 5 events with Adam Murray of East Kilbride Road Club winning the other two finishing 3rd overall. Whilst consistency

was key for Struan Shaw of Edinburgh Road club who finished 2nd overall.

In the Youth B girls, Arabella Blackburn and Erin Boothman battled down to the final event splitting the top step in each event which included an aggressive points race where they took 2 laps on the main bunch. Arabella Blackburn took the overall victory by 18 points over Boothman with Anna Birrell of Edinburgh Road Club in 3rd place.



The day was filled with aggressive racing with riders showing the hard work they'd put in during lockdown and a really positive first track race-day back, ahead of the next youth omnium at the Mark Stewart Cycle Track on June 12th.

## Gravitate 2021 Spring Newsletter

### State of the nation:

Like everything else in life, we did not expect 2020 to turn out the way that it did. Gravitate NE had to adapt our 2020 plans and objectives through the year as we kept a watching brief on events and the local environment. We had an ambitious 2020 plan inclusive of stepping up our fundraising efforts, organising events through the year for publicity and engagement, expanding our stakeholder profile and commencing the execution of preparatory activities and surveys to engage in the Community Asset Transfer process. Unfortunately, we were not able to progress with these plans due to COVID lockdown, and with a massive change in the fundraising and charity sector we had to significantly review our plans and strategy.

First, we moved online. Your committee continued working in the Zoom environment reassessing our plans and seeking to understand the environment as it developed through 2020 and on into 2021.

We have by necessity updated the ambitious accelerated fundraising model to a more organic and phased approach to the growth of the Gravitare NE Bike Park in Durris Forest. The new strategy will be underpinned by Trail Adoption approach for existing trails in Durris Forest starting in 2021. In parallel we are continuing to work a revised fundraising strategy to meet the future requirements to build an initial set of trails in the forest.

We firmly believe that the new strategy can deliver and moreover will be an organic and engaging growth strategy that can build upon the increase in cycling participation during lockdown and build an inclusive and attractive facility supporting more people getting out on bikes and enjoying the outdoors.

### **Trail Adoption:**

Our trail adoption strategy is to work with the support of Aberdeen Trail Association (ATA) to adopt a number of the existing network of mountain bike trails in Durris. Hard work over many years by keen diggers has resulted in great and very well used trails through the forest. That's part of what inspires us about Durris! These trails are of course not 'official'. We feel that with a bit of dedicated time and effort, drawing on members and stakeholders joint experience of trail improvement, we can make a difference in Durris now, and build the hub organically from there. Trail adoption is important to both engage the current user's group, encourage more visitors and to demonstrate to potential investment funds that we are progressing a great and safe foundation trail area.

With that in mind we have approached Forest and Land Scotland (FLS), in partnership with ATA, to request to adopt 4 trails on Mundernal hill. Our proposals are to first make safe and then work to improve these trails with our members volunteering time to help. We've bought the tools and in May we received a positive response from FLS so we're good to go!

With the recent easing of lockdown by the Scottish Government Gravitare organized our first members trail maintenance day on the 29th May. This was a really huge milestone to get boots on the ground in Durris, had great support from the membership and the sun finally came out! Overall a cracking start! Of course, afterwards we had to test the trails out – a great way to end a fine day.

Another aspect that we are keeping an eye on is the current thinning works that have been ongoing on Mundernal since end of 2020. We do expect a short-term negative impact on the existing trails, however, hope that the work will open the forest up in the longer term. This will be beneficial.

We have set up a WhatsApp group to coordinate trail maintenance. If you want to get involved and have not yet advised us, just get in touch through a social media link and we can get you involved and added into the WhatsApp

group. Watch out for future social media posts and newsletters on progress through 2021!

### **Membership**

On March 18th we held our annual AGM (online for the first time!) where we provided updates to our members. We were hugely encouraged by the attendance after a very quiet year and by the very positive feedback on our updated strategy. We have posted the AGM Minutes on our website in the Members Area, so if you are currently a member, please go to the Gravitare NE website and look this up! If you are not a member – what's holding you back?

Membership has fallen during the pandemic with many members not renewing. There was a technical fault with our hosted membership facility (preventing membership reminders being sent out) that is now fixed; but it was also not something we had not pushed hard on either. That's all changed now, so if you were a member, or have not yet been a member, please don't think twice. Sign up now on the link below.

Your membership will support us in a number of ways – you will contribute towards annual fundraising (at £10 per year it's not a lot, but it's something and keeps parts of our business plan ticking over!) plus we demonstrate the level of support Gravitare NE has. This is essential to the investment funds out there – something not to be underestimated! So again, what's keeping you!?

### **Membership**

<https://www.gravitarenortheast.com/support/membership/>

With summer upon us, we hope you are enjoying a safe return to the trails. Look out for each other, look after your trails and we hope to see you soon!

*The Gravitare Team*

### **Tour of Britain**

I need some help deciding what we do on TOB day. The organisers would like races in Aberdeen City centre as we have done in the past but:

- a/ We may have reduced numbers as these races will have to be run while the main TOB race is on, and folk will want to be watching the main race
- b/ Spokes are putting on youth championship races in Fife (Martin Harris will be at that)
- c/ Cairngorm cycling weekend is then

The corporate race is a money spinner for the regional funds which is a plus point.

Any thoughts? Please let me know on [colinallanach@aol.com](mailto:colinallanach@aol.com)

*Colin Allanach*



## 25-mile TT is On

You are invited to enter the event below. It's a team event but you may still enter as an individual - however, this is your chance to compete for the coveted awards on offer

What to do is form a team of three (male and female) and let the organiser know. The fastest teams on the night will take the spoils

A race – yes, a real live race. After 18 months of training you can finally take part in an open, real live, rubber on tarmac, local event.

The SCNEG championship time trial is on (subject to any other disruptions).

It's a 25mile individual TT incorporating two SCNEG championship trophies and it'll happen on Wednesday 23 June from Dogtap, Ellon, AB41 8BX.

- 1- Massie Shield awarded to fastest three male club riders from a SCNEG club.
- 2- Isobel Smith (Pedal Power) trophy awarded to fastest three female club riders from a SCNEG club.

Teams of three must be nominated before the race starts. Multiple teams from same club may enter.

Entries here:

<https://www.britishcycling.org.uk/events/details/241260/Massie-Shield-25-mile-TT> *Colin Allanach*

## Club Mountain Bike Rides

There's long been a need to hold regular mountain bike rides for club members, but the question was how to achieve this. As with everything there will be a wide range of abilities, bikes, fitness and locality within the club so one ride group won't satisfy everyone, every week.

Rides will vary in who they are catering for, who they will suit. Technical one week or cruisy XC tours the next, etc. This will have to be the way until we 'staff up' with leaders to take on different levels of rides.

With all that in mind can you comment if you are interested with the following:

- a) What level/type of rider are you?
- b) What kind of rides would you like to see the club put on?
- c) Where are you located and where do you predominately ride?
- d) Do you have any qualifications?
- e) Would you be interested in leading a ride?

You can register here <https://group.spond.com/WWDYZ> and comments, please, to Neil on [mtb@deeside.org](mailto:mtb@deeside.org)

## Welfare Officers

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](mailto:welfare@deeside.org)

## Notes for Cranks

My ability to find suitable material to fill the pages of your monthly magazine, Cranks, becomes more and more difficult.

The Coronavirus stringencies are easing and results from events are appearing, and these results will help a little, but I'd like to see more personal stories from you.

It troubles me more than a little that some months Cranks seems to fill up with my personal notes. That's not the way it should be. There should be a good cross-section from others in the club.

How about penning a few lines and sending it through to [knockies@deeside.org](mailto:knockies@deeside.org).

## North-East Cafés

Mark Hagger has done a bit of research on the cafés in our area. With the countryside being opened up again you might want to find a place to stop when out on your club-run. Mark says it's best to check before a visit as details change rapidly.

Here's the list and there will be others:

- \* Courie Courie, Cambus o'May. Open Wed to Sun. Best cheese scone
- \* Brown Sugar, Ballater. Closed Wed/Thurs. In/out
- \* Highlander Café, Crathie. Open Sat/Sun. In/out
- \* Deeside Activity Park, Dess. Open every day. In/out
- \* Potarch Hotel. Open Sat/Sun
- \* Platform 22, Torphins. Closed Sun/Mon. Takeaway to park
- \* Meet Again, Lumphanan. Closed Thurs. In/out
- \* Clatterin Brig, Cairn o Mounth. Closed Tues/Weds
- \* Castleton, Fordoun. Open daily. (Note underpass by burn Fordoun to Redmyre School) Road closure passable
- \* Grassic Gibbon Centre. Open 7 days. In/out
- \* Harbour Café, Stonehaven. Takeaway
- \* JGRoss, Inverurie. Open daily
- \* Inverurie Garden Centre. Open daily
- \* Ride Café Banchory seems popular
- \* Floras Café reopening soon

## 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*

## CTT Events 2021

See below a link for a list of events proposed for 2021 Handbook

Can you all please note that we will be compiling a Short Distance BAR in 2021 but we will not be asking the organisers for the district levy of £1 as was proposed and accepted for 2020.

**Attachments available for download:**

[CTT Scotland 2021 Events](#)

## KNOCKBURN LOCH MANAGEMENT

John Huston Knockburn Site Manager, Knockburn Loch, Strachan, AB31 6LL [info@knockburn.co.uk](mailto:info@knockburn.co.uk), 01330 822234 / 07741314999 [www.knockburn.co.uk](http://www.knockburn.co.uk). You can like us on [FaceBook](#) and follow us on [Twitter](#)

### Club Officials

We're in a bit of a quandary. Your Finance and Management Committee (that's the group of members who work to keep your club running) are not up to strength.

To ensure all our Championships are properly calculated we need a Championship Secretary. This person looks after the race results during the year and works out who wins what.

Then there's our Events Secretary. This position works hand in glove with the Championship Secretary and can even be the same person though two folk helps spread the load. This official ensures that all the club promotions follow correct procedures and assists in sourcing race personnel and equipment.

Finally, there's our Social Media Person. We're looking at this position taking over the Press Secretary duties. He or she will be expected to have regular input to the various social media outlets (Facebook, Twitter, etc) as well as releasing notes to the press.

If you are interested, why not drop a note to [info@deeside.org](mailto:info@deeside.org) to let us know.

### 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>

## Zwift Sunday Club Endurance Ride

Created and administered by Simon Stromberg

We now have a Sunday Club Endurance Ride on Zwift, with different groups at a different pace. Details [here](#). This is run in partnership with ZwiftScotland group.

There will be different groups formed on ride each at a different pace. Regrouping at top of KOMs.



[ZWIFT.COM](http://ZWIFT.COM)

## New Members

The following new or returning members have joined in recent weeks

1195	Elliott Kinch	Aberdeen	43
1831	Alex Strachan	Peterculter	63
3008	Ava Cleal	Banchory	13
3009	Jenny McDonald	Banchory	5
3010	Callum Bruce	Kintore	29
3011	Duncan Chedburn	Aberdeen	35
3012	Stuart Moir	Aberdeen	28
3013	Jenny Brown	Aberdeen	32
3014	John MacLean	Aberdeen	32
3015	Thomas Marx	Peterculter	43
3016	Maria Marx Swerling	Peterculter	11
3017	Sofia Marx Swerling	Peterculter	14

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/members](http://www.deeside.org/members) or to email [members@deeside.org](mailto:members@deeside.org) asking for information.



Grampian Health Foods  
Mon - Fri 9 am - 6 pm  
Saturday 9 am - 5.30pm  
Sunday Closed  
34 Market Street  
Aberdeen  
AB11 5PL

## 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 refer to it. It will also be highlighted to new members.

## 25 Years Ago

### Event No 5 15mlTT 30 May 1995 Garlogie

It had poured with rain all day. The wind blew wildly from the south. 61 riders graced the start card. They shivered and thought it best not to leave home. Gloom and spray greeted the third who did turn up. It must have been bad for even Ian Curphey arrived in a limo.

The elected council deliberated, cogitated and were about to cancel when away deep in the south-west a glimmer of light showed. It fanned and spread slowly north-wards. A change came over the gathering. They rejoiced, danced and cast clothes. Bikes emerged from the shelter of boot-lids and the race was on. Points galore were going to be available to everyone. To celebrate Sandy Lindsay put his number on the wrong hip. This flaunting of the rules caused untold consternation and he came near to being disqualified.

Curph took the plaudits for overall but that young man, Malcolm Wilson, on his flying machine, produced the fastest of the night. The handicap disappeared so fast the guy was difficult to identify. It turned out to be that newcomer again, David Gray, with an unheard-of performance of 17.07.

## Club Kit Order

Pactimo kit orders may be collected from Tierney Strachan, 12 Greenbank Place, East Tullos, Aberdeen, AB12 3BT. We are not receiving persons at our reception.

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.

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.

Any queries contact [clubkit@deeside.org](mailto:clubkit@deeside.org) *Jon Strachan*

## Club-Kit Shop Window

The Pactimo Club-Kit Shop will open Friday 11th June and closes midnight Sunday 20th June.

Garments should be with us end of July.

a) Before buying please check whether you could use any of the existing club stock (stock-list is on the club website).

b) If you are using a Visa Debit, you should inform your bank otherwise your purchase transaction may be blocked by your bank as believing to be fraud. Pactimo are a US based clothing company and so many banks will block the transaction to protect the client. When banks are informed prior to placing the order then usually transactions go through without incident. Visa and Master card are accepted but NOT American Express. VAT is now included on the garment prices.

c) ENTERED ORDERS CAN'T BE CANCELLED. If a wrong size is entered it can be altered BEFORE we close the team store but not after the store has been closed. Contact me if you need support in this activity through [clubkit@deeside.org](mailto:clubkit@deeside.org)

d) The club carries limited stock to allow swaps if garments are the incorrect size. Also, we are able to provide a limited 'try before buy' to confirm sizing - again please contact me to arrange. We will accept back and refund any incorrect sizes through the club though.

Instructions to access the shop window (only when open!):

Enter  
<https://teamstore.pactimo.com/stores/select-https://deeside.us17.list-manage.com/track/click?u=f62ca54113e71afcd2424d190&id=77ab74920c&e=8e693b889e>

Input "deeside" as the team password.

The system will ask you to register / login and then the shop goodies will appear...

Any queries contact me on [jas@tierney-strachan.co.uk](mailto:jas@tierney-strachan.co.uk)

*Jon Strachan*



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**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:

<http://www.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

**Runs Co-ordinators**

Try Cycling Rides	Moira D	
Morning Runs	Cindy	01224 310719
Slower Full Day Runs	Heather	01224 699399
Medium Full Day Runs	Sheila	01224 63901
Faster Full Day Runs	John S	01224 790269

Following guidance from our Covid 19 Officer, Rod Adams, the following has been agreed to ensure that our runs will operate in a Covid secure fashion.

Our risk assessment has been uploaded to the CTC Grampian website: <http://www.ctcgrampian.org.uk/> and participation in club rides will be subject to all participants having familiarised themselves with, and agreed to comply with, the terms of the risk assessment.

To be Track and Trace compliant, we are asking all participants to arrive with a small (business card size) paper with their name and contact details. These papers will be collected by the Ride Leader at the start of the run in a plastic bag and held securely for 21 days, before being destroyed. This requirement will be incorporated into the risk assessment and displayed on the Runs list page of the club website.

**“No ticket, no ride”!**

In addition, all riders continue to be required to carry a Next of Kin card in the event of an accident. These are available from the Ride Leader and/or Secretary.

Newcomers: We welcome newcomers, particularly on the ‘Try Cycling’ and ‘Morning’ runs. You do not need to be

a member of the Cycling UK to join our runs, but after 3 runs you would be expected to join Cycling UK.

Runs start promptly at the time stated. Distances are calculated from the meeting place. Bring spare inner tube, puncture repair kit, tools, wet weather gear, some food, drink and LIGHTS where relevant. It is recommended that all cyclists carry a First Aid kit.

Try Cycling: rides are intended for those who have not been on the saddle for a while and for those who want a quiet ride around Aberdeen.

These are easy rides followed or interrupted by a coffee stop, families are welcome.

Morning Runs: These runs are at a relatively slow pace and are usually about 25–30 miles long. A coffee or picnic stop will usually be made.

Full Day Runs: These are all-day runs intended for experienced cyclists. A coffee stop and lunch/picnic stop will be made. Distances and speeds vary as outlined below:

Slower Full Day Runs: Slowish pace. Distance normally 30-45 miles.

Medium Full Day Runs: Moderate pace. Distance normally 45-60 miles.

Faster Full Day Runs: Fast pace. Distance normally 60-75 miles (\* runs are longer).

Pub Runs: Start prompt at the time stated, to reach the pub by 21:00 approximately. LIGHTS

**Runs**

**June**

Thu 10 Jun	Thursday Run	09:30	Airyhall Library, to be decided on the day, morning ride with picnic coffee stop.	Cindy, Alan
Sat 12 Jun	Faster Full Day	09:00	Old Mill Inn, Maryculter, coffee at Inverbervie, picnic lunch at Drumtochty Glen	Jacqui, John B
Sat 12 Jun	Morning Run	09:30	Woodend Hospital, Eday Rd, picnic coffee at Brimmond Hill	Anne, Dave H
Sat 12 Jun	Try Cycling	10:00	Hazlehead, Groats Rd Car Park, Short easy rides, all welcome.	John P, Gordon
Sun 13 Jun	Slower Full Day	09:30	Duthie Park, Riverside Drive, coffee at Chapelton of Elsick, picnic at Crathes Castle,	Sheila, John T
Thu 17 Jun	Thursday Run	09:30	Airyhall Library, to be decided on the day, morning ride with picnic coffee stop.	Cindy, Dave H
Sat 19 Jun	Faster Full Day	09:00	B&Q, Bridge of Don, picnic coffee at Pitmedden, picnic lunch at Bullers of Buchan	Doug, Andy G
Sat 19 Jun	Morning Run	09:30	Brig O Balgownie, picnic coffee at Newmachar	Imogen B, Cindy
Sun 20 Jun	Medium Full Day	09:30	Parkhill Bridge, Dyce, picnic coffee at Oldmeldrum, picnic lunch at Fyvie Castle, Fyvie	Rod, Rob C
Sun 20 Jun	Try Cycling	10:00	Duthie Park, Riverside Drive, Short easy rides, all welcome.	Peter S, Mike
Thu 24 Jun	Thursday Run	09:30	Airyhall Library, to be decided on the day, morning ride with picnic coffee stop.	Alan, Dave H
Sat 26 Jun	Slower Full Day	09:30	FourMile House, Kingswells, coffee at Kinellar, picnic at Chapel O Garioch	Heather, Adrian R
Sat 26 Jun	Try Cycling	10:00	Seaton Park, Don St Entrance, Short easy rides, all welcome.	Moira, John C
Sun 27 Jun	Faster Full Day	09:00	Westhill Shopping Centre, picnic coffee at Alford, picnic lunch at Strathdon	John B, John S
Sun 27 Jun	Morning Run	09:30	FourMile House, Kingswells, picnic coffee at Midmar	Alan, Anne



## Historical Reminiscences

### (Part 33)

The tents were pitched in a protective circle and the bikes locked in the prison compound.

Day two took the riders off the main thoroughfare away from the Cheetah buses and onto a strip road. A strip road dates from the early years of the 20th century when tarmacadam was first introduced to Zimbabwe (then Rhodesia). It is a simple arrangement.

A strip of tar is laid parallel to another strip of tar. These strips are a vehicle track width apart. Not now maintained they serve only for local communication with occasional links to the main road. They have fallen into disrepair with great chunks missing, culverts collapsed and shifting sand filling hollows.

The cyclists coped well. Now split three ways, into groups of seven, management was much easier and the inevitable time lost through stops for photographs, mechanical problems and discussions with the locals (Ndebele), was minimised.

The leading group visited a village. They moved off as the second group arrived. To avoid overpowering the inhabitants with the same questions the third group stood at the end of the lane and waved at the watching villagers crowded round the gate.

An elderly gent came pedalling along on a large green bike. He stopped and started a conversation.

It turned out that he was the local minister and approached 70 years of age. He has seven children. That morning he'd already conducted three services and was on his way to the first of two afternoon ones. His last would be an early evening worship. One of the cyclists told him that he evidently had a busy day. Another, walking away, under his breath said that with seven children he was obviously busy at night as well. The minister overheard, laughed loudly and said that he couldn't speak about that.

Along the way, every time a villager was passed, the cyclists were greeted cheerily and enquired after where they were going.

Every now and then a borehole and water pump appeared. These holes may be as deep as 100 metres and provide drinkable water for scattered communities. Often met were women and children with wheelbarrows laden with plastic containers. Just as often women were seen carrying 25 litre metal containers safely balanced on their heads. A plastic bowl inevitably bobbed on top.

The second day ended at St Luke's Mission where accommodation had again been scheduled in tents but Father Chris had negotiated space in the nurses' home attached to the hospital.

The third day would take the cyclists to Shabula School and onwards into wild animal country near Hwange National Park.

Owls hooted long into the night. A few revellers sat round the campfire and discussed how they would fare the second day on the strip road.

In the morning beer bottles ringed the ring of ashes and overturned chairs showed from where the drinkers had staggered to bed.

The road from St Luke's to Lopane is still maintained. Narrow but tarred it took us through typical African countryside. Every child passed shouted and waved, every adult asked where we were going. We were heading to Shabula, to Fatima, to Half Way House Hotel. We were heading into big animal country.

Lopane is out of this world. There is a green filling station that sells ice cold water, a public toilet, and a store that has an unbelievable variety of foods. At 9.00am chips are on sale. It is winter. The locals wear woolly pullies and balaclavas. We're in t-shirts and shorts. It is dusty and hot.

Crossing the main Victoria Falls road, in three groups of seven, we headed along the strip road. In fairly good condition it allowed us to maintain a reasonable pace except where sand had drifted in. The sand is powder fine and the inexperience of the riders was obvious as they tried to battle through in big gears. An occasional hint and practical demonstration soon had them gearing well down in these areas.

At Shabula School a presentation would take place. Part of the fund-raising organised by Alastair to help Street Kids in Bulawayo would be re-avenued to assist a few schools in outlying districts. A row of four buildings sat parallel to the track; all was quiet. A black woman walked sedately along the stone lined paths. When the first group of cyclists arrived, she was approached and asked if the classes could be visited. Of course, they could. Only one room was occupied. About 30 children, all around seven-years-old sat cross-legged on the floor and were intent on writing in exercise books. They were doing a test and were left undisturbed.

Then from the bush, drums were heard and singing started. Soon, many blue jerseyed children were seen in formation walking out of the scrub. They formed lines on both sides of the track and as the second group of cyclists arrived the children started chanting and dancing. The visitors from Aberdeen were thrilled that their visit had provoked such a welcome. This was not the usual tourist attraction laid on by a few professionals; this was genuine culture.

The visit to Shabula meant a longer than planned day and Mike, the Zimbabwe co-ordinator, became concerned as the sun dipped low. The last few miles to Fatima were done



at a charge. The first largish wild animal was spotted when a warthog ran squealing across the track. The sun crept closer to the horizon and an orange haze blotted out the west as the main road was reached a short distance from Half Way House Hotel. The last mile was done in near darkness and luckily no Cheetah buses passed by.

This spot of luxury sits exactly half the distance between Bulawayo and Victoria Falls. Another green filling station selling ice cold drinks sits next door, directly across the road wild animals' roam. Chalets surround the hotel. In African style they are round and thatched.

Large flat spiders looked like paintings on the wall. They are welcome for they eat mosquitoes. In the bar the walls are hung with a taxidermist's delight. Stuffed heads of buffalo and eland vie for space with baboon and hyena. Inside the roof space skins of lion and leopard cling to the thatch. Against the bar lean drunken safari holidaymakers and their guides.

After an easy night in comfortable beds everyone woke believing that it would be a short pedal to Hwange National Park. In distance this is right but as we'd headed north-west the temperature gradient had steepened. Mike also joined us letting one of the helpers drive his car while he rode Sijabuliso's bike. This kept our speed down and the cooling effect of wind didn't happen. The 3km climb from Halfway took an age and by the Sweet Shades lunch stop everyone was shattered. The catering crew for the first three days had gone and the new group with iced water, cold beer and braai meat were to be waiting. They weren't.

Hanging around for an hour consuming the few cokes from a vending machine didn't help temperament and rumours filtered through that elephants roamed close by. A little disquiet settled in and a few elected to take motor transport the last few miles to Hwange.

Alastair, Mike and I had a summit conference and decided to forgo lunch and make haste to the Park where some sort of food could be rustled together. Just as we were leaving a big car towing a trailer arrived. This was our new crew. They'd been delayed in Bulawayo waiting on bread rolls to come out of the oven. Need they have bothered? Yesterdays would have done for the long trip in the hot car had caused the crusts to soften. The crew were despatched to Hwange to make a sandwich lunch.

Beat, our t(g)ame guide, joined us in a battered Landrover. The 20km ride from the main road to the railway crossing had to be done under escort. Soon Chris, Beat's partner, and Richard, a contracted driver, also joined us. At the crossing all the bikes were loaded onto a truck and the final few kilometres were covered in true safari style.

That afternoon and into darkness all the riders enjoyed a game drive. At close hand, elephant, zebra, crocodile,

jackal and many others were viewed from the safety of vehicles.

The long straights of the Falls Road were left behind. Instead, we turned north to the mountains that fringe the Kariba Dam. The town of Kariba lies in the north of the country and a hydroelectric scheme was established here in the 50s. The river Zambezi, which flows through the town, was dammed and the valley filled. The Batonga people who lived in the valley had to be moved out. Families were split, some moving northwest to the plains of North Rhodesia (now Zambia) and others, southwest to South Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe).

The Batonga are reckoned to be some of the world's poorest people. They live in an area where rain seldom falls, farming is almost non-existent and there is no other industry. The women from the villages walk up to a distance of 10 kilometres each way to fetch water. This is carried in 5-gallon barrels balanced on their heads. Because of the heat and the effort involved much of the water has to be consumed before they get back to their villages. The only income possible is from carving. Tourists and business people passing northwards to the holiday resort of Mlbingi or fishing resort of Binga will seldom stop at the stalls set out along the edge of the road. But they should, for the same goods are on sale in places like Victoria Falls and here on the roadside there are bargains.

Keeping the riders in groups did work. It meant that competition between members was kept to a minimum and stoppage time due to mechanical problems was divided by three. When the hills were hit though, the groups came together. Most had to get off and walk.

Kamativi Mine did at one time provide some work for the community. It is now closed. There is a guesthouse and Club Bar both little used. Projected ideas include reopening it as a Further Education College. We stayed in the guesthouse and some riders went for a walk in the darkness to the Club Bar.

That night we had our braai and enjoyed the giant red ball of a full moon rising rapidly in the east. A local storyteller pointed down into the depths of the mine valley and said that only a few nights ago a crocodile had attempted to take a young elephant. The mother, alerted to the screams, had repeatedly stamped on the crocodile until it let go. She continuing to stamp long after the crocodile had been killed.

Continuing northwards in the morning a huge number of schoolchildren watched us depart. A dozen cheerleaders marched, drummed; baton whirled and sang in front of us for what seemed miles.

Another school at Simbala had to be visited. Mike and Sija had done a lot of groundwork. Once more the whole school

had come out in force to greet us. Alastair gave me the dubious pleasure of speechmaking.

That day we lunched beside a fallen baobab tree. Several black lads clambered over it and told us to stay back. There was, they told us, a black mamba living in a hole in the trunk.

At Mlbizi signs prominently advise you to beware of crocs. This is a holiday resort on the banks of the dam. There we'd spend the night in chalets. It had been the plan to take a houseboat through Devils Gorge to Sibankwazi and regain our route to Victoria Falls. A weed called Kariba weed is currently overtaking the dam. Huge swathes of green stretch outwards over the water. The houseboat owner advised us against attempting the journey for some of the narrows are choked.

Tomorrow we hit the dust roads. *Roughstuffer*

## Evening League 2021

Our Evening League has already reached half-way. Have you registered to take part in the rest of the events? No? Go [here](#).

Once the registration page has been visited follow each button in order, for additional information. The series is informal, even laid back. If you're unsure how to get involved with competition this is the ideal place to start.

As always, we're desperate for volunteers to help our events run smoothly and we need three marshals for this first event. If you're minded to get involved before you start racing you may reply to this email offering your services.

### The Results are available here:

<http://deeside.org/evening-league-2/evening-league-results/>

The Youth Section is led by Erin Murphy with Jamie Liversidge in second place and in third, Molly Evans.

Those riding standard road machines are led by Chris Main, followed closely by Stuart Gordon and Douglas Reid.

Robert Bacon leads those riding TT bikes, with Margaret MacMillan in second spot and Steve Walton in third.

As always, the League is based on a rider's best six events and as entrants start to reach that total the results tables will start to shape themselves.

The Vets Tables are led in the TT list by Margaret Macmillan with Steve Walton second and Andrew Yule third. On road machines Doug Reid leads the fray with Alan Campbell and Dave Ogden tied for second.

The Vets Tables are divided into age categories and leaders here will start to appear as the season progresses.

Remember, if you'd like to be involved in the best supported of our club activities, go [here](#) to register.

## For Sale

Items will appear here for three consecutive issues. If the item sells before the final appearance, please contact [knockies@aol.com](mailto: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](mailto:jas@tierney-strachan.co.uk) (1)
- 2 16-inch Islabike, red. Excellent condition. Suitable for age 4+. Widely accepted as one of the best quality brands. Ideal for the young cyclist who has mastered the balance bike and wants to pedal! 50% of the sale price will be donated to charity. Cost £350. Sale price: £200:00. Contact Malcolm Wilson, [malcywilson@me.com](mailto:malcywilson@me.com) 07970 227548 (1)
- 3 ELLIPTICAL TRAINER - £80. Model: Pro-form 605 ZLE. Bought (£500) new in October '16. In excellent condition. Phone: 013398 86557 or email [janiceborland@icloud.com](mailto:janiceborland@icloud.com) (3)
- 4 **Reduced price.** 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. Sella San Marco "Rolls" saddles. Complete with pannier rack. Used condition with some scratches to paintwork but no material damage. £300 or best offer. Contact Simon on [schric55@gmail.com](mailto:schric55@gmail.com) (3)
- 5 Giant TCR compact carbon frame TT bike, ONCE colourscheme. Size small, suitable for 5'6" to 5'11". Ultegra throughout, 9 speed cassette, 12 – 21T. Profile Design bar end shifters. Mavic Ksyrium Elite wheels, SPD pedals (if required), Cateye computer. Excellent first TT bike, £445 ono. [dick.bird@ifb.co.uk](mailto:dick.bird@ifb.co.uk) Photo available (3)
- 6 Carbon Cervelo P3 (2015). Size 51cm. Excellent condition - only used for racing, only 250km. Ultegra spec. Mavic Cosmic Elite Wheels. Brand new Adamo Prologue Saddle - never used. Price £1750. Contact Mike Adams - 07885 933360 (3)
- 7 a) Eddy Merckx carbon TT aero frame (medium size). Fast Fwd disc tubular rear wheel and deep section aero tubular front. Profile TT bars. Conti Competition tubulars almost new. Campagnolo Super Record groupset 52/36 Chainset. Excellent condition £2000 (3)  
b) Specialized Sworks SL6 Tarmac high mod carbon Size 54. Rare paint job. Two years old. Sworks finishing kit. Shimano Dura Ace Di2 groupset 52/36 Quarq Sworks power meter Chainset. Enve clincher carbon wheels, Continental GP 4000 tyres. Very good condition. £3300 (3)  
c) Bottechia Superlight team bike, high mod carbon, one year old. Size 51. Deda bars and stem, Campagnolo Super Record groupset 52/36 Chainset. Campagnolo Shamal Ultra clincher wheels. Very light. Frame in as new condition. £2500  
Please email; [duncananderson01@gmail.com](mailto:duncananderson01@gmail.com)



A young Alan Gibb in the Lairig Ghru. It was probably Saturday, 02 August 1969. The previous day at Loch Morlich had been horrendously wet but for the crossing the weather dawned fine

***Ian Grant***

Gardening: - Grass Cutting  
 General Tidying - Rotovation  
 Pressure washing - Tree Surgery,  
 Welding (electric) and small repairs  
 £9.00/hr or estimates

**CORONAVIRUS**

Stay Safe Stay Home

Follow the rule on  
social distancing

Wash your hands often

Do your bit to  
keep it at bay

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](mailto:knockies@aol.com)

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