

Issue 571

October 2021

Cranks Volume 48

The magazine of
**Deeside Thistle Cycling
Club**

Sponsored by:

MPH
McIntosh Plant Hire

Tierney Strachan
PROCESS CONTROL ENGINEERING

**Current Membership 609 (604)
SCU Membership 308 (314)**

Knockburn CX Race

07 November 2021

Entries are open for the Knockburn CX race on Sunday 07 November

Go here: [DTCC Knockburn Loch CX Events - British Cycling](#) to enter

We're looking for a bumper entry in all categories

And if you are not racing any offers of help with the following appreciated:

Saturday 06 November - course build from 10am onwards

Sunday 07 November - marshalling, sign on and other roles during part or all of 9am-4pm

Contact neil.d.scott@outlook.com

Editorial:

Once again, it's been a quiet season with few events. Occasional road-races and a few short-distance time-trials have just kept the interest going. Fortunately, our Evening League survived, and though not supported as in past years, it gave those desperate to compete an outlet for their energies.

Much of what organised competition there has been has centred on youth riding and it has given me a good feeling to see the successes that our young riders are celebrating.

Now that we're into October there is little prospect of much more in the way of road competition until the new season opens into 2022. None the less there is a calendar of cyclo-cross events, and we hope to see some mountain bike racing as the autumn progresses into winter.

Our own Neil Scott is organising an Open Cyclo-Cross event at Knockburn on Sunday 07 November. He's hoping to have a bumper entry in all categories and says that even if you are not racing you are welcome to work alongside him ensuring the event is a success.

He needs assistance with building the course on the Saturday and on the Sunday, there are marshalling and other duties. It's a rare opportunity to get up close and personal with one of the best spectator sports.

PHILOSOPHER'S CORNER

When it feels scary to jump, that's exactly when you jump. Otherwise, you end up staying in the same place your whole life

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

Club Fees

Have you paid yours for the current year?

Our Financial Year started on 01 October and that's when Club Fees became due.

You can update your Membership (and others in your Family) by going to <http://deeside.org/join/>.

Or do a Bank Transfer to Sort Code 30 10 01 Account 00802182. Be sure and add your name as a Reference if paying it this way

Forthcoming Events

If you fancy an event that's a bit different Scottish Adventure Cycling are organising a Nevisting hill climb raising money for Scotland's Charity Air Ambulance and an orienteering style self-supported Durriss Dash challenge. More details here:

<https://www.scottishadventure.org/ourevents>

Falling Leaves Reliability Trial

After two years of inactivity in this sphere of our sport we had the good number of 40 riders take part in the event at the end of September. It may have been only 50% of the number from two years ago but other events also took place. Though various management issues had to be implemented things ran smoothly with the largest contingent riding at 100 miles (much to the pleasure of AGC) and he expects we'll be back to normal numbers come his Spring Classic.

Youths and Juniors Update

The weekend saw a return to cyclo-cross and for some of the riders taking on the National Series race in Derby this was their first cyclo-cross race in 2 years.

Six youths made the trip to Derby and raced in hot, sunny conditions on a 2.65km course which featured two bridges, some hurdles, plenty of twists and turns and a wooded section. One of the coaches raced on Sunday in the elite men's race.

Some DTCC youths missed out on racing on Sunday as the Scottish National 10 Mile Time Trial Championship & Youth Time Trial Championships were cancelled due to flooding on the course.

The following weekend ten members of DTCC Youth and Junior headed to Westmorland County Showground for the second round of the HSBC UK Cyclo-cross National Trophy Series. DTCC had riders in the U14 and U16 boy's and girl's races on Saturday and also in the female junior event on Sunday.

22 riders from DTCC Youth and Junior took part in the first cyclocross race at Inch Park since 2019. A twisty course on dry grass with hill climbs, tight corners, and hurdles for the riders to navigate. DTCC had entrants in every category except one and took 11 out of a possible 36 top three positions with six first place finishers, four second place finishers and one third place finisher. *Lyndsay Aitken*

Tour of Britain 2022

ToB Grand Depart from Aberdeen is set at Saturday 04 September 2022. Get it in your diary. Can we make a weekend of it? Crit races, Sportive? Friday night TT? Any other ideas? If we do support events on the Friday and Saturday that leaves us Sunday to watch the pros. Any thoughts or ideas of what we could do? Please contact me on colinallanach@aol.com *Colin Allanach*

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.

The World Road Race Championship

It's quite tricky to explain to newcomers to the sport that the rider with the title World Champion and the rainbow jersey can gain the title in one event. Just one long day of 6 to 7 hours or so! Maybe a points system over, say, ten events during the season would more accurately reflect the title of World Champion.

And yet, the one-day format appears to work, especially when like this year there is a brilliant winner who makes a lone escape and stays away in an epically long event!

The race format with the last quarter being on a circuit is good for spectators too and many enthusiasts make a point of being at The Champs every year if it's at all possible.

The other oddity is that the event is ridden in National teams rather than the trade teams which operate every other day of the year apart from Olympics, Commonwealth Games, etc. The national teams format inevitably leads to conflict of loyalties when riders are motivated more by their Paymaster than National allegiance.

Winning the title more than once is also a sign of the validity of the title. Sagan's three titles do seem to exonerate the format. Yesterday's consecutive win by Julian Alaphilippe does the same.

I first followed this event in 1960 when Rik Van Looy won. He was known as The Emperor of Herentals, or King of the Classics, and won the title twice. The partisan Crowd this year would have cheered him to the echo!

Back in those days no TV coverage of the race in the U.K. But Tom Simpson's victory in 1965 made the news headlines here and he won SPOTY that year on the basis of that title. Mark Cavendish is the only other Brit to have won. Tom Pidcock's 6th Place performance in this year's event augurs well.

In the 61 years I've followed this as an enthusiast I reckon that only 9 TdF champions have also won the world title although not necessarily in the same year. The stand-out ones are Eddy Merckx, Greg Lemond, Bernard Hinault and Joop Zoetmelk. (It was very interesting when we had Pippa Yorke as our guest that she remembered in incredible clarity the World Championship Road Race in 1980 when, as Robert Millar, and as a new pro, she was in a group of just 4 towards the end of the event dominated by Bernard).

The most recent Tour winner to also pick up a Worlds was Cadel Evans. It requires different attributes and although the press may predictably speculate that Alaphilippe should now go for Le Tour and end the long French drought the skills and physique as well as mentality required of a Grand Tour winner over three weeks are quite different.

Here's to more World Road Race Championships like this one! *AGC*

SCNEG Update

Here's our proposed calendar for 2022:

05 Mar	Youth Crit	YCC
22 Mar	RKL RR	DTCC
23 Mar	Mount Keen Challenge	Roy
03 Apr	25TT	DTCC
21 Apr	Evening RR	YCC
12 May	Evening RR	VC
08 Jun	10TT	YCC
18 Jun	25TT	YCC
30 Jun	Evening RR	DTCC
8Jul	NE 250	Roy
9Jul	NE 250	Roy
10 Jul	10TT	DTCC
21 Jul	Evening RR	TEN
13 Aug	Jolibar RR	DTCC
21 Aug	Youth Crit	YCC
04 Sep	ToB Start	
11 Sep	TT Champs	TEN
18 Sep	Classy 10TT	AWCC

Colin Allanach colinallanach@aol.com

New Committee Members

Deeside is looking for members to join the committee. We are several people short. In particular we need someone who enjoys social media and would be interested in helping with this.

No experience is necessary as new ideas and enthusiasm are always welcome. Any younger members with fresh ideas? Help us to guide the club through the current year, the 2022 season and beyond. Meetings are held digitally every two months and you will recognize a few wheel kent faces.

Please feel free to get in touch with any questions on chairman@deeside.org or knockies@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. 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.

Coronavirus Update

Following the recent announcements from the Scottish Government, that most of the restrictions imposed during the Coronavirus lockdowns, have now been lifted, Scottish Cycling will no longer publish updates to their Guidance document.

The document is available here: <https://www.britishcycling.org.uk/scotland/article/20200313-Scottish-Cycling-Coronavirus-COVID19-Guidance-0> and now indicates where we are with taking part in competition and involvement with social gatherings.

It is important to remember that Track and Trace requirements are still in place and for the foreseeable future a record of those attending organised events must be kept.

We use Spind to record this information and details are below.

SPOND Guide for Riders and Ride Leaders

What has been established through SPOND 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](#)

Funded eLearning Course

An incredible funded eLearning course on how to respond to a sudden cardiac arrest is now available. This has been put in place from UK Coaching following recent events at the Euro 2020 match game where Christian Eriksen unfortunately collapsed due to a cardiac arrest.

The occurrence of the medical emergency in a live sporting environment has brought the reality of sudden cardiac arrest, on the pitch, in the park, on the kerb, to a stark reality.

This free online course will equip you to know how to respond to a sudden cardiac arrest and learn how to save a life. This is a great opportunity to equip yourself to get involved as it is not only beneficial for the sporting context but also in everyday life.

All information for the course can be found here: https://www.ukcoaching.org/courses/elearning-courses/sudden-cardiac-arrest?utm_source=eshot&utm_campaign=sca&utm_medium=email
Gill Thyne

Synopsis of Meeting

A Finance and Management Committee meeting took place on-line, on Monday 04 October 2021. In attendance were Andrew Harrington, Sandy Lindsay, David Eastwood, Kath Fraser, Sam Long, Peter Smart, Neil Stables, Jon Strachan, Mark Walker and Steve Walton.

Agenda

- 1 **Apologies** – Laura Sarkis, David Walton
- 2 **Minutes of Previous Meeting** – Accepted as correct record
- 3 **Business Arising from Minute**
 - a) 2022 Events – Calendar details are being prepared. Andrew Ramsay, Laura Sarkis, Mark Walker and David Walton have agreed to be organisers of various events
- 4 **New Business**
 - a) RR Team – There has been a good attendance by club riders at recent events. It was proposed to bring a number of these together to form a RR Team. A budget of £2000 was allocated
 - b) Cyclo-Cross – Neil Scott is organising a Cyclo-cross at Knockburn at the start of November. Advertising should happen soon. Finance has been made available to cover start-up costs
 - c) Youth & Junior update - U18s continue to race across the UK, in road and offroad disciplines, with representation at events including the North West Tour (3-day stage race in Lancashire), the UK School Games (with 3 DTCC riders representing Scotland) and the beginnings of the UK and Scottish CX season, including events in Derby and Edinburgh. The Junior Road champs have also been held in recent weeks. MTB racing continues, with DTCC due to field 20+ U18s at the upcoming final of the Aberdeenshire Enduro Series being held at Scolty, Oct 8/9th. SC have approved funding for the Accelerate and Activate programme, with DTCC being one of four clubs to get direct investment from the governing body in the first round. This will provide additional support through '22 and '23. We also have two U18s appointed for the SC Young Persons Panel (Molly Evans and Ailsa Long), with a two-year tenure. Planning for the '22 season is underway, including budgets etc. Additional capital may be spent soon on further radios and a timing system for the MTB Coaches
 - d) Grassroots - Considerable funding from third parties to support increased grassroots cycling, for both children and adults is being highlighted by local government. As a prominent Club in the NE, DTCC has been asked to consider supporting efforts to increase cycling participation in Aboyne and Alford, alongside existing work in Inverurie.

Aberdeenshire Council can offer funding for basic qualifications and other costs in return for leading rides or offering beginner sessions in these areas. The Committee are favourable to this and keen to hear from members in the Club willing to offer a hand. Further information available from

Kathfraser@btinternet.com

- 5 **Next Meeting** – 06 December 2021 at 7.00pm
A Lindsay (Secretary) 05 October 2021

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](#)

Coach Education courses

Course	Location	Start	Booking Link
L1	Edinburgh	20-Nov	www.britishcycling.org.uk/event/course/details/6641
L2	Glasgow	11-Dec	www.britishcycling.org.uk/event/course/details/6642
L2	Aberdeen	08-Jan	www.britishcycling.org.uk/event/course/details/6643

I would also like to highlight the bursaries that are available for young people and females to progress through the Coach Education pathway. You can apply for British Cycling bursaries [here](#), and for **sportscotland** subsidies [here](#).

Hamish Cowton

hamish.cowton@scottishcycling.org.uk

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

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

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

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](https://www.zwift.com)

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>

25 Years Ago

1996 OLYMPIC GAMES SAGA

Peter Keen loved it as he gave us hard sessions to do which meant that you really had to try hard to keep your heart rate in the desired zone. Two sessions of three hours done with the road lads and the likes of David Baker, Gary Foord and Tim Gould proved to be very testing and, in the evening, quite rewarding. These were particularly hard when Brian Smith was keen to make me sprint away from the group as the opportunity arose.

During these rides we were sweating buckets and drinking between three and four litres of liquid. It was a good job Phil Jones had a big van in which to follow us all.

Whilst on the subject of following cars I must tell you about our own protective Police Force who drove with us on every training ride and stopped all traffic at the lights to allow us to coast through. With us being the fairer sex, we were most lucky and fortunate enough to have one of the retired State Patrol officers look after us even to the point of taking us sight-seeing and shopping.

Our own Dr Ron Maughan was there to ensure that we were all acclimatising. He kept a close eye on the weather forecast and provided us with accurate and essential statistics so that no-one was caught out because when it rains it really pours especially late in the day.

Marie, Caroline Alexander, Sandy Gilchrist, Peter Keen and myself spent several days studying the road course as it proved to be quite technical and that was in the dry. We discussed our lead-out tactics for the finish when all three of us would be in the break - the art of positive (but not realistic) thinking.

Needless to say, there was little sleep leading up to the race morning and the toilets were having to work overtime as the nerves were reaching a crescendo.

Well, it finally happened. I was there lined up on the start line for the Olympic Road-Race, a dream which I wouldn't have followed if it wasn't for the support of my family and friends with many of them being good old Deesiders. It was actually Alan Campbell who first mentioned it to me way back in the 1980s when I had just started road-racing. I was very impressed with his confidence in my abilities but thought he had his head in the clouds.

It is difficult to try to tell you all about the race, but it was a tougher race than would be expected if you just listened to people's comments on the course as being an easy, non-technical course, ideal for the sprinter. If that was the description of the course, then I guess I must have ridden the wrong race. There was one main climb to be tackled on each of the eight laps which certainly was wearing

when you consider that there wasn't one flat section on the circuit. This coupled with the rain making the roads treacherous made the race go by very quickly as it required one hundred per cent concentration at all times. People were sliding everywhere. It seemed that there was no safe way to corner as the bike just slid anywhere.

Luckily enough I managed to stay upright which proved to be an achievement in itself. The sound of the bell signifying the last lap came as a relief, just hang on for one more time up the hill then sprint for minor placings - this proved to be more difficult than it sounds. I chose the American, Jeannie Golay's wheel for the sprint as she wins many a race but guess what - not today. She sat up and well, with my dismal sprinting capabilities left me struggling to the line.

Sarah

New Members

The following new or returning members have joined in recent weeks

2676	Marcella Fee	St Cyrus	12
3029	Scott Slater	Findochty	15
3030	John Alexander	Aberdeen	36
3031	Casper Blackburn	Stonehaven	
3032	Iain Peace	Aberdeen	69
3033	Bob Sanguinetti	Peterculter	57

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 or to email members@deeside.org asking for information.

Open Races

If you have been taking part in any Open Race up and down the country, I'd welcome a short report.

It can be as short as Name and date of event, your performance, name and club of winner, the winner's performance.

A wee story about the event will be even more welcome. Send to info@deeside.org

Race Calendar 2022

Are you willing to organise an event next season to help re-establish cycle competition?

Contact Colin Allanach on colinallanach@aol.com



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 Representative

North Aberdeenshire	Rod	01467 623317
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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 mls.

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

October

Thu 21 Oct Thursday Run 09:30 Airyhall Library, Destination to be decided on the day, morning ride coffee stop Cindy
 Sat 23 Oct Medium Full Day 09:30 Parkhill Bridge, Dyce, Coffee at Inverurie Garden Centre, Inverurie (01467 621402), lunch at New Inn, Ellon (01358 720425) Rod
 Sat 23 Oct Try Cycling 10:00 Duthie Park, Riverside Drive, Short easy rides, all welcome. Peter S
 Sun 24 Oct Faster Full Day 09:30 Old Mill Inn, Maryculter, Coffee at Kirktown Garden Centre, Stonehaven (01569 764343), lunch at Salutation Hotel, Inverberrie (01561 361455) Jacqui
 Sun 24 Oct Morning Run 09:30 Four Mile House, Kingswells, Coffee at Forest Cafe, Midmar (01330 830000) Heather
 Thu 28 Oct Thursday Run 09:30 Airyhall Library, Destination to be decided on the day, morning ride coffee stop. Cindy
 Sat 30 Oct Faster Full Day 09:00 Westhill Shopping Centre, Coffee at Forest Cafe, Midmar (01330 830000), lunch at Gordon Highlander, Inverurie (01467626780) Alberto
 Sat 30 Oct Morning Run 09:30 Footdee, Coffee at Parkhill Garden Centre, Parkhill (01224 722167) John S
 Sun 31 Oct Slower Full Day 09:30 Hazlehead, Groats Rd Car Park, Coffee at Mains of Drum Garden Centre, Drumoak, lunch at The Square Bar and Lounge, Kintore (01467 633943) Heather
 Sun 31 Oct Try Cycling 10:00 Hazlehead, Groats Rd Car Park, Short easy rides, all welcome. John P

November

Thu 4 Nov Thursday Run 09:30 Airyhall Library, Destination to be decided on the day, morning ride coffee stop. Cindy
 Sat 6 Nov Faster Full Day 09:30 B & Q, Bridge of Don, Coffee at The Coffee Apothecary, Pitmedden (01651 842253), lunch at Ross's Coffee Shop, Inverurie (01467 620764) David B
 Sat 6 Nov Morning Run 09:30 Brig O Balgownie, Coffee at The Barn, Foveran (01358 788707) Imogen B
 Sat 6 Nov Try Cycling 10:00 Duthie Park, Riverside Drive, Short easy rides, all welcome. John C
 Sun 7 Nov Medium Full Day 09:30 Westhill Shopping Centre, Coffee at Forest Cafe, Midmar (01330 830000), lunch at Belwade Farm, Aboyne (013398-85398) Rob C
 Thu 11 Nov Thursday Run 09:30 Airyhall Library, Destination to be decided on the day, morning ride with stop. Cindy
 Sat 13 Nov Gravel Ride 09:00 Airyhall Library, picnic coffee at Tappie Tower Alberto
 Sat 13 Nov Slower Full Day 09:30 Leggart terrace, Coffee at Skateraw Store, Newtonhill (07841 209044), lunch at Waterfront Cafe Bar, Stonehaven (01569 762912) Sheila

Sun 14 Nov Faster Full Day 09:30 Westhill Shopping Centre, Coffee at Forest Cafe, Midmar (01330 830000), lunch at Belwade Farm, Aboyne (013398-85398) Adrian R
 Sun 14 Nov Morning Run 09:30 Duthie Park, Riverside Drive, Coffee at Marshall's Farm Shop, Kinellar Cindy
 Sun 14 Nov Try Cycling 10:00 Seaton Park, Don St Entrance, Short easy rides, all welcome. Mike
 Thu 18 Nov Thursday Run 09:30 Airyhall Library, Destination to be decided on the day, morning ride coffee stop. Cindy
 Sat 20 Nov Medium Full Day 09:30 Brig O Balgownie, Coffee at The Barn, Foveran, lunch at Redgarth John T
 Sat 20 Nov Try Cycling 10:00 Hazlehead, Groats Rd Car Park, Short easy rides, all welcome. Moira
 Sun 21 Nov Faster Full Day 09:30 Peterculter (West End), Coffee at Raemoir Garden Centre, Banchory (01330 825059), lunch at Commercial Hotel, Tarland (01339 881922) John S
 Sun 21 Nov Morning Run 09:30 Seaton Park St Machar Entrance, The Chanonry, Coffee at Sterling Furniture store, Bridge of Don (01224 704250) Dave H
 Thu 25 Nov Thursday Run 09:30 Airyhall Library, Destination to be decided on the day, morning ride coffee stop. Cindy
 Sat 27 Nov Faster Full Day 09:30 Brig O Balgownie, Coffee at The Coffee Apothecary, Ellon (01358 721946), lunch at Ross's Coffee Shop, Inverurie (01467 620764) Andy G
 Sat 27 Nov Morning Run 09:30 Cults Library, Coffee at Green Pastures Community Cafe, Westhill (01224 740291) Alan
 Sun 28 Nov S lower Full Day 09:30 Airyhall Library, Coffee at Milton Brasserie, Milton of Crathes, lunch, Midmar Tom S
 Sun 28 Nov Try Cycling 10:00 Westburn Park, Westburn House, Short easy rides, all welcome. John C

December

Thu 2 Dec Thursday Run 9:30 Airyhall Library, Destination to be decided on the day, morning ride coffee stop. Cindy
 Sat 4 Dec Faster Full Day 09:30 Airyhall Library, Coffee at Crathes Castle, Banchory (01330 844757), lunch at Kirktown Garden Centre, Stonehaven (01569 764343) Jacqui
 Sat 4 Dec Morning Run 09:30 Hazlehead, Groats Rd, Coffee at Mains of Drum Garden Centre, Drumoak Cindy
 Sat 4 Dec Try Cycling 10:00 Duthie Park, Riverside Drive, Short easy rides, all welcome. Peter S
 Sun 5 Dec Medium Full Day 09:30 Airyhall Library, Coffee at Floras Coffee and Refill, Cullerlie (01330 860848), lunch at Ross's Coffee Shop, Inverurie (01467 620764) Imogen B
 Thu 9 Dec Thursday Run 09:30 Airyhall Library, Destination to be decided on the day, morning ride coffee stop. Cindy
 Sat 11 Dec Social 12:00 Toby Carvery Cocket Hat, North Anderson Drive, Xmas lunch 12 for 12.30. Optional pre-lunch run: Meet for coffee at Thyme Out, Mannofield at 9.30 leave at 10, will arrive at the Cocket Hat in time for lunch. Heather
 Sun 12 Dec Faster Full Day 09:30 Hazlehead, Groats Rd Car Park, Coffee at Floras Coffee and Refill, Cullerlie (01330 860848), lunch at Gordon Highlander, Inverurie (01467626780) Rod
 Sun 12 Dec Morning Run 09:30 Brig O Balgownie, Coffee at Parkhill Garden Centre, Parkhill (01224 722167) Dave H
 Sun 12 Dec Try Cycling 0:00 Seaton Park, Don St Entrance, Short easy rides, all welcome. Mike
 Thu 16 Dec Thursday Run 09:30 Airyhall Library, Destination to be decided on the day, morning ride coffee stop. Cindy
 Sat 18 Dec Medium Full Day 09:30 Leggart Terrace, Coffee at Teacake, Chapelton of Elsick, lunch, Banchory John S
 Sat 18 Dec Try Cycling 10:00 Hazlehead, Groats Rd Car Park, Short easy rides, all welcome. John P
 Sun 19 Dec Faster Full Day 09:30 Airyhall Library, Coffee at Forest Cafe, Midmar, lunch at Cafe 83, Kemnay David B
 Sun 19 Dec Morning Run 09:30 Leggart Terrace, Coffee at Duthie Park Restaurant, Aberdeen (01224 585310) Alan
 Thu 23 Dec Thursday Run 09:30 Airyhall Library, Destination to be decided on the day, morning ride coffee stop. Cindy
 Thu 30 Dec Thursday Run 09:30 Airyhall Library, Destination to be decided on the day, morning ride coffee stop. Cindy

Historical Reminiscences

(Part 37)

Interest in our chosen sport and pastime being eclectic meant I got involved in all sorts of activities. Though racing took up most weekends and every evening had dedicated training I also toured. Most of this centred round Youth Hostelling. A wish to record an attendance of at least one over-night at each of Scotland's Youth Hostels might have been pleasant to contemplate but I knew it was unlikely to happen.

None-the-less I pursued the dream.

For a number of years, I led a Youth Hostelling Tour during the summer months where youthful members of our club were introduced to the joys of social cycling and were taught some rudimentary ways to fend for themselves.

Then there was John Davidson, a competent rider from Fife. He and I often met in competition. We were on a par, and both desperately sought that elusive sub-60 minutes for 25 miles. In our frequent head-to-heads, John would sometimes be faster than me and in other efforts I'd beat him. Float days seldom happened.

That summer, the first two weeks of the school summer holidays, I'd a group of lads touring the west coast. On the Sunday morning we picked up a copy of a newspaper. Tucked in a few lines of a column in the sports section, John Davidson's name appeared. On the Saturday he'd returned a 57 in a Glasgow event.

On the Sunday, while I tried to control a rowdy bunch of teenagers, John rode another 25 in Fife. The Monday morning sports column in the daily paper highlighted his name once again. He'd returned another 57.

To expand my knowledge, I enrolled in evening classes at Robert Gordon's. To fill the time between work and start of class I'd head to the public library on Rosemount. There I'd spend a couple of hours cramming notes.

My bike, chained to the railings at the top of the entrance steps, came to no harm as I sat in the quiet space, poring over books.

On several occasions, at a table in the same space as I occupied, sat a very quiet individual. The concentration devoted to his research intrigued me. Surreptitiously glancing across I could see that he sat there copying articles from newspapers, filling page after page in his notebooks with pencil scribbles, top to bottom, edge to edge.

Not until some years later and after he became headline news, did I realise that my covert observations were of Dennis Nilson.

Mist swept across the montane grassland chased by a stiff breeze. In front lay several hours of descent. This took us

out of the humid air, into a dry jungle. The track, with little traffic, was overgrown. With no warning a liana, tough as sinew, would wrap itself round a brake lever and with complete lack of ceremony either Alastair or I would be dumped upside down in the undergrowth. Then a giant bramble like frond, with barbs an inch long, would rake its way across bare arms and legs. Even if bloodied and bruised this descent proved memorable for its scenery and length.

Now and then we emerged from the toil and tangle of the thicket and looked over the distant settlement of Chakaka. Gradually it drew closer and once free of the woodland long freewheels were enjoyed. Pedalling was still difficult due to the narrowness and depth of the track but with judicious positioning of pedals many of the obstacles could be avoided.

The scenery had changed; mimosa grew freely and as we continued to descend agricultural terraces appeared. Soon children's voices could be heard and in time we cycled through steep fields of cassava plants.

Not tarrying often, our wheels headed further downhill, negotiating streambeds and deep cuttings where bridges had been washed away. Soon we reached Phoka Court and in the village centre, in the shade of spreading trees, a welcoming party grew.

Village elders soon had us showered and fed and a bed promised for the night.

Spending a few days visiting with my sister in London I'd the honour of staying in Clarence House with a guided tour of the Royal cars. Once over, I'd cycle to Edinburgh to the Guinness School of Sport. My second invitation to this top-level coaching extravaganza, this time I was assistant to [Jock Kerr](#), the Viking Pro.

Running short of time, instead of undertaking the 450 or so miles up the A1, I pedalled to Peterborough and caught the train which took me overnight to Edinburgh.

In the early morning the streets through Scotland's capital were quiet and I arrived at the Cramond Campus in plenty of time.

My pack of instructions advised me to head for the main changing rooms where registration would take place and I could meet with the team of elite schoolboys and the head coach.

Threading my way through a maze of empty corridors I found the changing rooms. Only I'd arrived a day early!

Jock Kerr said that everyone should take part in various activities to stop getting stale. Not just different cycling disciplines but also alternative sports. In one of the halls, an evening playing netball, took place.

To make up the numbers I was shanghaied to play in one team. Somehow the ball landed in my hands and turning swiftly on one foot I shied the ball away.

I could feel my leg giving way and hear the tearing of the ligaments from the side of my foot and feel the excruciating pain as I hit the floor.

A massive cheer went up as I landed hard, and my immediate thought was typical teenagers; no sympathy and laugh at others' discomfort. But from the floor I saw my ball spin round the ring of the net, then drop through for our first goal.

On Drumstone Hill, just a few yards from the field fence, stands a circular wall, a ree. It hides from view an upright rock set on top of a craggy outcrop in the pasture.

On one of the facets of the rock is engraved the word Harlaw and the date 1411.

Almost due south and well down towards the River Dee in a dark clump of woodland are the towers of Drum Castle. How are the three places, Harlaw at Inverurie, Drumstone Hill near Skene and Drum Castle in Deeside connected?

In 1323 Robert the Bruce awarded the Royal Forest of Oaks in Aberdeenshire and Drum Castle, which guards it, to William de Irwyn. The Irvines of Bonshaw, a border clan, had long been supporters of Bruce and fought beside him during the long campaign at the start of the 14th century. The new lands were thereafter to become the chief seat of the family.

Possibly the oldest occupied castle in Scotland, Drum Castle was home to the Irvine family for more than six and a half centuries, a full twenty-four generations of nearly unbroken succession. The 24th and last Laird of Drum, Henry Quentin Forbes Irvine, bequeathed the house and 300 acres of ground to the National Trust for Scotland on his death in November of 1975. The Irvine name still lives on, for at Kingcausie House near Maryculter reside the Irvine-Fortescues, direct descendants of the lairds of Drum.

It is interesting that though use and direction of roads change with time, many instances of unused old highways still exist. One such is the ancient driveway to Drum Castle. Just onto the Drum Straight on the A93 west of Peterculter is a gate on the right-hand side of the road. This looks like nothing more than an old entrance to the wood. It is interesting that just a few yards east of the gate is a house. The track to the house comes off the main road at an acute angle. It passes in front of the building and continues into the wood. Back at the gate and just yards from the tarmacadam the track can be reached. Running due west, it takes you through the trees to the new entrance of the castle. The ancient paving, rough stones, impacted with centuries of use, are still visible in many places.

On 23 July 1411, Alexander III of Drum, mustered a small force of men and marched north to join with other foot soldiers from Aberdeen and surroundings. Word had reached them that Donald of the Isles headed southwards

from Inverness with a large army of 10,000 highland men intent on sacking the city of Aberdeen.

A highly respected laird, the good Sir Alexander had no problem in recruiting men to go with him. Their route took them through the mosses of Benthoul and Leuchar before climbing the slopes of Drumstone Hill. As they crested the rise they stopped. Pointing back the way they had come Alexander identified for his followers the smoke, which trickled up through the forest of oaks round Drum Castle. No doubt the thought passed through his mind that he might never look that way again.

The following day on a hillside a mile northwest of Inverurie the armies clashed. This was the battle of Harlaw. During that battle, Alexander encountered the ferocious Chief of the MacLeans of Duart in Mull, known as Red Hector of the Battles. After 'noble and notable single combat' the two of them lay dead upon the field, killed by mortal blows struck one upon the other.

Alastair and I elected to ride the 100km in 6hrs. We'd do it on our knobbies, take the official 30-minute break and wouldn't bother with watches or computers. After all, it was meant to be a Reliability Trial.

Leaving shortly after dawn it meant we were first at the lunch stop but had also to be first home for I'd the key to Garlogie Hall. However, many of the fitter and faster riders surged past with about 10 miles to go.

Ian Brodie grabbed the key in a Madison change and Carol McLaren noted the instructions for getting the food prepared - team work. Our time was within seconds of the 6 hrs

Taking the tandem to Wester Ross we passed the ominous Gruinard Island. Just a few hundred yards offshore, even after all these years, it is still an eerie place. In the 1940s scientists conducted biological experiments by releasing Anthrax spores, leaving the island uninhabitable for decades.

Continuing through the oddly named hamlets of First Coast and Second Coast we reached Aultbea. Along the way there'd been little chance to purchase food and ravenously hungry we booked into the youth hostel.

A wonderfully welcoming warden but hard to understand, Hannah Macleod, managed the collection of wooden huts, looking over Loch Ewe. Sadly, these deteriorated to an unsafe condition and are now closed.

With no shops nearby, Hannah kept a small stock of frozen foodstuffs for resale to hostellers. Selling us a deep-frozen loaf of bread we set it on top of the cast iron stove to thaw but long before that happened, we broke off lumps of icy bread to stave off hunger knock. *Roughstuffer*

For Sale

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

- 1 **Reduced price.** 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, £345 ono. dick.bird@ifb.co.uk Photo available (1)
- 2 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 (1)
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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 (1) Please email; duncananderson01@gmail.com
- 3 a) Cube Litening 56cm – fit someone around 5ft10in to 6 Ft. As new fitted with Mavic wheels and brand-new Ultegra DI2. Never been used. £2,750 (2)
b) Scott CR1 -54 cm Time trial bike- Fit someone up to 5Ft 10in. As new - fitted with Shimano C50 wheels, Zip Aero Bars and Shimano 11 speed Dura Ace. £2,500 (2)
c) Corima Tubular Disk wheel fitted with 11 speed Dura Ace block with 3 spare tubs £575 (2) Contact Kenny Anderson 07711 524526
- 4 LIV Langma Advanced SL1 Size M Ladies Road Bike. £2,400. Shimano Ultegra Di2 11 speed groupset, chainset 50/34t with 170mm cranks, cassette 11/30t, Giant SLR1 carbon tubeless ready wheels with Giant Gavia AC 0 tyres, Giant Contact SLR Flux Stem and SLR handlebar, LIV Contact SLR saddle. Purchased mid-2019 and used a few times outdoors, then used on turbo during 2020/21. Wheels have never been used as other wheels fitted for few times it was ridden outdoors. Will be supplied with Di2 charger and associated items. Contact Stuart Fraser on 07718 560058 (3)

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