

I'm dreaming of a white Christmas. But if the white runs out, I'll drink the red



Editorial:

Many competitions were lost during 2021. This means that many club trophies have not been competed for. Yet, there has been some racing, especially at Youth level. Road-racing also restarted with events, including events in our own area, taking place. A few Open time trials were promoted up and down the country.

For that reason, I am minded to recommend, where members have met the criteria and we can collect the results, awards should be made.

For time-trials you are asked to notify your results in Open events during 2021 to info@deeside.org. These should only be at Standard distances (10, 25, 50, 100 miles) on registered courses. For under 18s, results from Confined events are also eligible.

Already returns have been made re road-races so a recommendation will be going forward in that category.

During the year competition for Youth members restarted and many riders were very active up and down the country. Though our younger members, Youth and Junior, have Championships restricted to their category, they may also be eligible for Open Awards where rules allow. This is significant with our 25-mile cup where a rider's best two performances in the current year qualifies.

So, if you'd like to be considered, and have events under your belt from 2021, please get in contact.

PHILOSOPHER'S CORNER

A winner never stops trying —Tom Landry

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

Annual General Meeting

14 January 2022 at 7.00pm

Your club's AGM will take place on-line on Friday 14 January 2022 from 7.00pm. Members will be supplied with a link to join the meeting

AGM papers will be published on-line

This is your opportunity to get involved with the running of your club. If you are keen let us know by contacting

knockies@deeside.org

We are especially looking for someone to take on the role of posting suitable items on social media. If that's your interest get in contact on

knockies@deeside.org

Club Fees

Have you paid yours?

Club Fees become due on 01 Oct

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

Telephone payments are also possible by phoning 07867 857221

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Club Kit Arrival

Pactimo kit order is now available to collect from Tierney Strachan, 12 Greenbank Place, East Tullos, AB12 3BT.

Please observe social distancing and wear a mask.

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 ring the office number 01224 295000. If the main gates are closed, we are closed, simples.

Visitors 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 need to give you weights and dimensions if you want to do this. *Jon Strachan* jas@tierney-strachan.co.uk

Club Championships 2021

During 2021 very few events took place which means that few, if any, season long Championships took place.

However, your club has several trophies which might still be available to members!

If you, or if you know of any member, who competed in standard distance time trials from the period 01 March 2021 to 30 September 2021, then please get in contact by return on info@deeside.org.

What we need to know are the performances at 10, 25, 50 and 100 TTs - that is all performances, not just the best during the year. Please reply to info@deeside.org.

Please list:

Name of Event
Date of Event
Distance
Name of Rider
Rider's Time

Sandy Lindsay

Butchers Bike Wanted

I am after the loan of an old fashioned black "mail boy" bike next April for a production of A Sound of Music that we are putting on at School.

If you have one I can borrow or give me a guide to where there is one please contact me on john.blunsdon@hotmail.com

John Blunsdon

Trainee Commissaire Courses in 2022

British Cycling have released a number of online Trainee Commissaire Courses in 2022, Courses include BMX x 3 courses

Circuit	x 3 courses
MTB XC	x 2 courses
MTB Gravity	x 1 course
Road	x 3 courses
Track	x 1 course

Currently no Cyclocross, Cycle Speedway or Time Trial courses are scheduled, but if you, or someone you know is interested please get in touch. If anyone is interested, they should get in touch with Colin Esslemont (SC Regional Commissaire Coordinator) on montyebicycleworks@btinternet.com & Ashley Ryan (SC Event Workforce officer) events@scottishcycling.org.uk and we can arrange for them to link up with an active official to chat more about the role and send on sign up links. *Colin Esslemont*

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.

Knockburn Sports Centre

We enjoyed a welcome uplift overall in 2021, probably related to circumstances never envisioned in our lifetime, will 2022 follow this trend? All the Knockburn team made this happen which I greatly thank all for their hard work

The need for café staff is a challenge which we need to overcome; otherwise, I am minded at this date not to open in May 2022. As a final "incentive" I am prepared to offer the café on a payment of consumables / rates only

Interested parties must be in compliance with all employment and operation legislation

Larger events out with the café may be under a different agreement

CV's sent by email to bert@mphltd.co.uk is appreciated

Wishing you all a good festive season

Bert McIntosh

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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

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*

Coach Education courses

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

Coronavirus Update

Go to the SC website [here](#) where there is a short article providing some key considerations to make regarding activity.

All limits on group sizes and physical distancing have been lifted but for the time being, as the Test & Protect system continues in operation, it will still be necessary to maintain a register of attendees to ensure that people can be traced as contacts of positive cases.

This will be constantly reviewed. *Scottish Cycling*

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](#)

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 Thayne*

Have you paid your club fees?

Go here – www.deeside.org/join

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Storm Damage

The repairs to our electricity supplies may be completed but the effects of Storm Arwen continue. Sneaky previews of the devastation to local forests tells the story. Toppled trees by the tens of thousand have closed virtually all the off-road access routes and it will take many months for the forestry companies to re-open them.

Maybe you could thread your way through the branches and get to open hillsides where it is safe to ride but think on. That tree you climbed over, might precariously support another.

If you do try to access routes, take care.

Buchan Formartine Way

The Buchan Formartine Way, north of Dyce to just short of Newmachar, is to close from the start of the New Year into March. If you use this route for leisure, commuting or training, then the first access point is from the road junction at NJ 894 180. Diversions are on the A974 Newmachar road or the C22C minor road from Parkhill to Newmachar.

E-Bike Option

I took a spin round Oldmeldrum a few days ago. The weather was cold, the roads icy, so care needed. However, throwing caution to the winds, I forged on.

Another rider, seeing sense, took it easy over the frozen sections. Overtaking, I realised, too late to shout a personal greeting, that it was Mark Shepherd, an ex-member.

When he realised who I was, he begged the question, had I got an e-bike? Life in the old dog yet. *AJL*

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](#)

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:

- What level/type of rider are you?
- What kind of rides would you like to see the club put on?
- Where are you located and where do you predominately ride?
- Do you have any qualifications?
- 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

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

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25 Years Ago

SPIRIT OF THE HILLS

Ian Curphey has come up with a good idea. He wants to introduce a competition which could appeal to both roadman and time-trialist and might also encourage local clubs to embark on a co-operative venture.

The basis of his idea is a two day, four stage Hill Climb taking riders up the local "Classic Climbs". This would surely represent a challenge outwith the norm for end of season events.

His anticipation is for four clubs to take on a stage each attempting to upstage each other in the process. The winner would be the person with the best time on aggregate from all four events.

He proposes that on the Saturday riders should suffer on Cairn Mon Earn (1ml) and the Cairn o'Mount (2ml). Then on the Sunday riders would tackle Glenshee (2ml) from the Spital side with the fourth stage a climb of the Lecht from Cockbridge (2ml).

This could be a winner.

New Members

The following new or returning members have joined in recent weeks

2345	Richard Harris	Aberdeen	54
3043	Monty Palmer	Strachan	13
3044	Amy Addlesee	Kemnay	23
3045	Rob Glendinning	Banchory	61

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.

Ian Grant

Gardening: - Grass Cutting

General Tidying - Rotovation

Pressure washing - Tree Surgery,

Welding (electric) and small repairs

£9.00/hr or estimates

30 Sclattie Park, Bucksburn, Aberdeen

Tel (01224) 713033



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,

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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

December

Sun 19 Dec	Faster Full Day	09:30	Airyhall	Library, Coffee at Forest Cafe, Midmar, lunch at Cafe 83, Kennay	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

January

Thu 06-Jan	Thursday Run	09:30	Airyhall	Library, Destination to be decided on the day, morning ride coffee stop	Cindy
Sat 08-Jan	Faster Full Day	09:30	Hazlehead, Groats Rd	Car Park, Coffee at Milton Brasserie, Milton of Crathes (01330 844566), lunch at Gordon Highlander, Inverurie (01467626780).	Adrian R
Sat 08-Jan	Morning Run	09:30	Hazlehead, Groats Rd	Car Park, Coffee at Tesco, Danestone (01224 809500).	Imogen B.
Sun 09-Jan	Slower Full Day	09:30	Cults Library,	Coffee at Mains of Drum Garden Centre, Drumoak (01330 811000), lunch at Mains of Balquharn, Portlethen (01224 783856).	Tom S
Sun 09-Jan	Try Cycling	10:00	Duthie	Park, Riverside Drive, Short easy rides, all welcome.	Mike
Thu 13-Jan	Thursday Run	09:30	Airyhall	Library, Destination to be decided on the day, morning ride coffee stop.	Cindy
Sat 15-Jan	Faster Full Day	09:30	Airyhall	Library, Coffee at Forest Cafe, Midmar (01330 830000), lunch at Finzean Farm Shop, Finzean (01330 850710).	Rob C
Sat 15-Jan	Morning Run	09:30	Brig O Balgownie,	Coffee at Sterling Furniture store, Bridge of Don (01224 704250).	Alan
Sat 15-Jan	Try Cycling	10:00	Seaton Park, Don St	Entrance, Short easy rides, all welcome.	Moir
Sun 16-Jan	Medium Full Day	09:30	Brig O Balgownie,	Coffee at The Barn, Foveran (01358 788707), lunch at Redgarth Hotel, Oldmeldrum (01651 872353).	John T
Thu 20-Jan	Thursday Run	09:30	Airyhall	Library, Destination to be decided on the day, morning ride coffee stop.	Cindy
Sat 22-Jan	Slower Full Day	09:30	Four Mile House,	Kingswells, Coffee at Ceann Torr, Kintore, lunch at Forest Cafe, Midmar (01330 830000).	Dave H
Sun 23-Jan	Faster Full Day	09:30	Leggart	Terrace, Coffee at Mains of Drum Garden Centre, Drumoak (01330 811000), lunch at Number 44 Hotel, Stonehaven (01569 762979)	Jacqui
Sun 23-Jan	Morning Run	09:30	Duthie	Park, Riverside Drive, Coffee at Mains of Drum Garden Centre, Drumoak (01330 811000).	Cindy
Sun 23-Jan	Try Cycling	10:00	Hazlehead, Groats Rd	Car Park, Short easy rides, all welcome	John C

Thu 27-Jan	Thursday Run	09:30	Airyhall	Library, Destination to be decided on the day, morning ride coffee stop.	Cindy
Sat 29-Jan	Medium Full Day	09:30	Airyhall	Library, Coffee at Milton Brasserie, Milton of Crathes (01330 844566), lunch at Grant Arms Hotel, Monymusk (01467 651777).	Rod
Sat 29-Jan	Try Cycling	10:00	Westburn	Park, Westburn House, Short easy rides, all welcome.	Peter S
Sun 30-Jan	Faster Full Day	09:30	B & Q, Bridge of	Don, Coffee at The Coffee Apothecary, Ellon (01358 721946), lunch at Lochters, Oldmeldrum (01651 872000/78).	Andy G
Sun 30-Jan	Morning Run	09:30	Woodend	Hospital, Eday Rd, Coffee at Marshall's Farm Shop, Kinellar	Heather

February

Thu 03-Feb	Thursday Run	09:30	Airyhall	Library, Destination to be decided on the day, morning ride coffee stop	Cindy
Sat 05-Feb	Faster Full Day	09:00	Parkhill	Bridge, Dyce, Coffee at Andersons, Inverurie (01467 620360), lunch at Raemoir Garden Centre, Banchory (01330 825059).	Alberto
Sat 05-Feb	Morning Run	09:30	Cults Library,	Coffee at Floras Coffee and Refill, Cullerlie (01330 860848).	John S
Sun 06-Feb	Slower Full Day	09:30	Brig O Balgownie,	Coffee at The Barn, Foveran (01358 788707), lunch at Murly Tuck Cafe, Tarves (01651 851489).	Heather
Sun 06-Feb	Try Cycling	10:00	Duthie	Park, Riverside Drive, Short easy rides, all welcome.	Moir
Thu 10-Feb	Thursday Run	09:30	Airyhall	Library, Destination to be decided on the day, morning ride coffee stop.	Cindy
Sat 12-Feb	Faster Full Day	09:00	B & Q, Bridge of	Don, Coffee at The Barn, Foveran (01358 788707), lunch at St Olaf Hotel, Cruden Bay (01779 813130).	David B
Sat 12-Feb	Morning Run	09:30	Torry Battery	Car Park, Coffee at The Sitting Room, Portlethen (01224 781777).	Imogen B
Sat 12-Feb	Try Cycling	10:00	Seaton Park, Don St	Entrance, Short easy rides, all welcome.	John C
Sun 13-Feb	Medium Full Day	09:30	Duthie	Park, Riverside Drive, Coffee at Slate and Grain Brasserie, Chapelton of Elsick (07341 819618), lunch at Burnett Arms, Banchory	Rob C
Thu 17-Feb	Thursday Run	09:30	Airyhall	Library, Destination to be decided on the day, morning ride coffee stop.	Cindy
Sat 19-Feb	Slower Full Day	09:30	Four Mile	House, Kingswells, Coffee at Parkhill Garden Centre, Parkhill (01224 722167), lunch at New Inn, Ellon (01358 720425).	Rod
Sun 20-Feb	Faster Full Day	09:00	Parkhill	Bridge, Dyce, Coffee at Ross's Coffee Shop, Inverurie (01467 620764), lunch at Station Hotel, Inverurie (01464 821111).	Adrian R
Sun 20-Feb	Morning Run	09:30	Brig O Balgownie,	Coffee at Parkhill Garden Centre, Parkhill (01224 722167).	Cindy
Sun 20-Feb	Try Cycling	10:00	Hazlehead, Groats Rd	Car Park, Short easy rides, all welcome.	Mike
Thu 24-Feb	Thursday Run	09:30	Airyhall	Library, Destination to be decided on the day, morning ride coffee stop.	Cindy
Sat 26-Feb	Medium Full Day	09:30	Airyhall	Library, Coffee at Forest Cafe, Midmar (01330 830000), lunch at Dess Activity Park, Aboyne (013398 83536).	John T
Sat 26-Feb	Try Cycling	10:00	Duthie	Park, Riverside Drive, Short easy rides, all welcome.	John P
Sun 27-Feb	Faster Full Day	09:00	Old Mill	Inn, Maryculter, Coffee at Kirktown Garden Centre, Stonehaven (01569 764343), lunch at Castleton Farm Shop, Fordoun (01561 321155)	Jacqui
Sun 27-Feb	Morning Run	09:30	Airyhall	Library, Coffee at Forest Cafe, Midmar (01330 830000).	Alan

March

Thu 03-Mar	Thursday Run	09:30	Airyhall	Library, Destination to be decided on the day, morning ride coffee stop.	Cindy
Sat 05-Mar	Faster Full Day	09:00	Westhill	Shopping Centre, Coffee at Inverurie Garden Centre, Inverurie (01467 621402), lunch at Bistro, Alford (019755 63154).	John S
Sat 05-Mar	Morning Run	09:30	Four Mile	House, Kingswells, Coffee at Green Pastures Community Cafe, Westhill (01224 740291).	Dave H

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Sun 06-Mar Slower Full Day 09:30 Woodend Hospital, Eday Rd, Coffee at Marshall's Farm Shop, Kinellar (01224 790493), lunch at Inverurie Golf Club, Inverurie (01467 624080). Tom S
Sun 06-Mar Try Cycling 10:00 Seaton Park, Don St Entrance, Short easy rides, all welcome. John C
Thu 10-Mar Thursday Run 09:30 Airyhall Library, Destination to be decided on the day, morning ride coffee stop. Cindy
Sat 12-Mar Faster Full Day 09:00 Peterculter (West End), Coffee at Raemoir Garden Centre, Banchory (01330 825059), lunch at Gordon Highlander, Inverurie (01467626780) Andy G
Sat 12-Mar Morning Run 09:30 Leggart Terrace, Coffee at Skateraw Store, Newtonhill (07841 209044). Cindy
Sat 12-Mar Try Cycling 10:00 Hazlehead, Groats Rd Car Park, Short easy rides, all welcome. Peter S
Sun 13-Mar Medium Full Day 09:30 Old Mill Inn, Maryculter, Coffee at Kirktown Garden Centre, Stonehaven (01569 764343), lunch at Crown Hotel, Inverbervie (01561 361213). Heather
Thu 17-Mar Thursday Run 09:30 Airyhall Library, Destination to be decided on the day, morning ride coffee stop. Cindy
Sat 19-Mar Slower Full Day 09:30 Leggart Terrace, Coffee at Skateraw Store, Newtonhill (07841 209044), lunch at Waterfront Cafe Bar, Stonehaven (01569 762912). Imogen B
Sun 20-Mar Faster Full Day 09:00 Parkhill Bridge, Dyce, Coffee at Lochters, Oldmeldrum (01651 872000/78), lunch at Morgan McVeighs, Culsalmond (01464 841399). Alberto
Sun 20-Mar Morning Run 09:30 Seaton Park, St Machar Cathedral Entrance, Coffee at Craibstone Golf Club, Craibstone (01224 716777). Dave H
Sun 20-Mar Try Cycling 10:00 Westburn Park, Westburn House, Short easy rides, all welcome. Mike
Thu 24-Mar Thursday Run 09:30 Airyhall Library, Destination to be decided on the day, morning ride coffee stop. Cindy
Sat 26-Mar Medium Full Day 09:30 Parkhill Bridge, Dyce, Coffee at Ross's Coffee Shop, Inverurie (01467 620764), lunch at Kellockbank, Inch (01464 851114). John S
Sat 26-Mar Try Cycling 10:00 Duthie Park, Riverside Drive, Short easy rides, all welcome. John P
Sun 27-Mar Faster Full Day 09:00 Airyhall Library, Coffee at Milton Brasserie, Milton of Crathes (01330 844566), lunch at Belwade Farm, Aboyne (013398-85398). David B
Sun 27-Mar Morning Run 09:30 Brig O Balgownie, Coffee at The Barn, Foveran (01358 788707). Alan
Thu 31-Mar Thursday Run 09:30 Airyhall Library, Destination to be decided on the day, morning ride coffee stop. Cindy

Historical Reminiscences

(Part 39)

One of the north clubs organised a kermesse round the streets of Culloden. I'd entered, knowing full well that my performance would be unlikely to bear fruit.

But there I was, a few hundred metres in front of the baying bunch. Lap after lap I went over the start line and ringing in my ears came the supportive cheers from the watching crowds.

Only the noise I heard was more likely derisive jeers.

As the bunch collected for the Commissaire's words of wisdom before the starter's flag dropped, I'd sneaked off to practice a couple of the corners. When I returned the race had already gone and I spent much of the event chasing, at almost a lap down.

Cycling home to Swanley sometime in the 1960's I found a couple of large bangers lying on the grass verge. As an inquisitive teenager there was no chance I'd miss this opportunity to let off a firework.

In front of our cottage a path led through the woods and here I dug a small hole and inserted one of the bangers. I'd light the fuse and beat a hasty retreat to watch the explosion.

Striking a match, I held it to the short length of rope fuse taped to the side of the large cylinder. The rope smouldered, then fizzed. Standing up, I turned, and almost before a single step had been taken, a gigantic bang and blast lifted me off my feet and dashed me to the ground some yards away.

The second banger, probably also a detonator from a quarry, went in the bin.

Heading through the forests, northwest of Aviemore, Alastair and I were spending a day roughstuffing in the Monadhliath Mountains.

Climbing steeply from the Milton area of the town we could hear a rumbling behind us. Glancing back, the khaki of a canvas topped Landrover could be seen. Gradually it hauled us in, and we moved over to let it through. It stopped.

The occupants, dressed in gamekeepers' outfits, got out and approached us. Stern faced, they demanded why we were there. Knowing our rights, but not wishing to offend, we apologised for the intrusion but were just spending a day sightseeing and following new trails in the hills. "What's that in your bag?" came the question, pointing at the Carradice on my back.

Swinging the bag off, I could see the two of them retreat a little. All I had was food, clothes, maps, a compass,

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I'm dreaming of a white Christmas. But if the white runs out, I'll drink the red

spares, and a bicycle pump. When all had been explained the men of the woods reddened and apologised.

They'd seen us pedal by with the Bluemels frame fitting pump, too long for the squat, Harrison mountain bike, stuck incongruously out of the flap of the bag.

Seeing this as a gun, and fearing we were poachers, they'd set off in hot pursuit.

That evening we looked at the huge, formidable rift in the mountains that was our route the next day. The Lairig Ghru.

From Loch Morlich we made our way to Coylum Bridge where left took us into Rothiemurchus Forest. After a bridge over the Lairig Cruachan River we still cycled in places, but soon were relegated to boots, walking, and carrying our bikes with saddlebags strapped across our shoulders.

Clearing the river, Lurcher's Crag lay on our left, a steep bank of scree that climbed hundreds of feet to be topped by a vertical wall of granite reaching 3448 feet. All the way to the Pools of Dee massive slopes of scree on either hand were topped with these jagged rocks.

The ill-famed boulder pass we felt is ill-named since careful walking by way of a well-marked path saw us easily through.

The sun blazed down and by the Pools of Dee we were already well jiggered. To the left stood Ben Macdhui with a snow bridge striding a stream near the summit; Cairn Toul, right, had glaciated granite, shining wet in the sun and ahead, Devil's Point, with near vertical slides of glaciated granite, gleaming.

By the time we reached Braemar Youth Hostel much of the day had gone. Another cyclist, a young lad from Inverness, had already retired. Shaking him awake he told us he'd cycled the 80 or so miles from the Highland capital through the Cairngorm National Park and hoped to recover enough for the next day's stint over the Devil's Elbow.

Alan Gibb and I made him get up and took him to the Fyfe Arms in downtown Braemar where we plied him with Sweetheart Stout and taught him how to play darts.

John MacMillan, later to become President of the Scottish Cyclists' Union, will deny the story from that evening.

The food had been excellent, from the Mulligatawny soup in the Soaltee Oberoi to the sizzling steaks in the Yak and Yeti we'd fared well. Now on the road things changed. At Dolalghat Bridge we'd the courage to buy doughballs from a street vendor but with stomachs rebelling the sight and smell of food cooking made our nausea worse.

Days passed with little eaten. Bottles of coke and attempts to keep rice down just managed to stave off collapse. Then someone mentioned cheese.

Above Ringmo there is a cheese factory at Trakshindo. On leaving this morning a detour to the Swiss sponsored industry had to be taken. The factory is reached after only a short climb. Here, we found they were having a day off. However, it took little persuasion for the boss to show us round. After the interesting tour, a kilogram of the yak cheese was bought. This will be kept until tonight when it will do for supper. At least we know it's palatable. Locally there are no yaks, so all the milk is brought from distant points, like above Namche Bazar.

Just above the cheese factory is Trakshindo La at over 3000 metres. Here, we met a nurse. Sarah Lewis married a chap McGowan from Ellon in Aberdeenshire. In 1970 she'd been a student midwife at Carden Place, a maternity home in Aberdeen. Divorced and remarried she had, this time, retained her maiden name.

Working in this area of Nepal she travels around administering to the needs of all and keeping the local health centres operating. Her husband, too, works in this area but at a distance of two days. With walking the only means to get around their meetings must be infrequent.

Off Trakshindo La it is a long steep descent to the Dudh Kosi. Many stories have been told of the difficulties ahead in the Dudh Kosi valley, gateway to Everest. My reading of the maps suggests that the difficulties may reduce as we turn north and no longer cross the grain of the land.

When I first started racing, the Horseshoe 25 from Mannofield to Leggart Terrace had fallen out of favour. Instead, an out and home 25 on the North Deeside had replaced it. Riders were pushed off a few hundred yards on the Aberdeen side of the Cults Hotel.

For a time, the police authority actively worked against the promotion of events and on one occasion they lay in wait close to the Cults Hotel.

I recall coming at great speed past the Kirk Brae junction, the shops and lining up for the final charge on the incline to the finish.

A constable stepped out into the road-way and held his hand up. I'd no choice but stop though in retrospect I was doing nothing wrong and feel he had no right to impede my progress.

Now, those of you who are of a certain age will well remember the old tank engines, which bumbled up and down the branch lines, puffing and panting. Steam, smoke, and live coals spat from stacks as they hauled vigorously on the gradients. Many remember those days with romantic notions. I do too and linger on memories -

I'm dreaming of a white Christmas. But if the white runs out, I'll drink the red

of heading out with my father to forest fires on the line side kindled by errant sparks, of leaning over the bridge parapet to be engulfed by a smog of warm, wet water vapour and sooty smoke. But not now. Those days are gone.

I do recall one afternoon in 1958 standing on the south side of the Dee valley near Kirkton of Durriss watching the first diesel locomotive to be put into service in this country. It was a dark green two-coach rail-bus affair heading out to Ballater. The forerunner of today's stock, it didn't last long on the Deeside line. Beeching was on the rampage, and he rang for last orders during the 60s. Gradually the branch lines disappeared, and so also steam locomotives.

Though much of the metalwork, buildings and other infrastructure have disappeared what is left is still obvious. Farmers have reclaimed a lot of the track on field edges or have built access roads where the trains used to go. Meanwhile many new houses have appeared where the track has passed close to tarmac. However, where the track crosses marshland on causeways or thrusts through cuttings in wooded areas the ballast still lies, inhibiting vegetation. In these places self-seeded birch trees have sprouted and broom is sometimes growing thickly but in winter time grass and other weeds die back to reveal the hard base from almost half a century ago.

We joined the MacDuff branch line from Inverurie where it passes under the A920 Oldmeldrum to Colpy road. Sheltering under the bridge from the wet and wind, gloves were cycled around, the driest pair warming cold, clammy hands.

Heading south from there, the journey not distant in miles, long in effort. Overhanging branches cascaded instant cold showers as we struggled over trees blown down in gales. Gates were climbed as we passed from one field to the next. Dumped farm implements were negotiated where they'd been discarded at the end of their usefulness. In other stretches field gatherings of boulders had to be threaded through.

As with all these old-line routes, bridges have generally disappeared, dismantled for safety reasons. We came to one point where a stream bubbled happily at the foot of a missing span. The stonework had long gone, the earthworks and ballast gradually eroding to a deep V-shape.

Planting my bike in the water to form a temporary Bailey bridge, using the pedal as a step and a convenient rusty paling wire which spanned the gap, to balance the other foot, I made it across. My companions followed suit, the eagerness of youth making up for the lack of skill.

Passing Wartle House, through a cutting, the east bank had been dug by animals into a myriad of tracks and holes; the nocturnal badger's sett.

Eventually we reached Inveramsay and the main Inverness line. Here we crossed the Ury Water on a footbridge. This footbridge dates to the heyday of the railway when lengths of old rail lines were used to support the woodwork. In recent years this bridge has fallen into a sad state of repair. The woodwork has rotted; it has been vandalised or spate water has torn it away.

Gingerly balancing bikes on one iron rail and feet on the other, we eased our way across the grey swollen stream.

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)
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 (1)
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

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