

Issue 575 February 2022

Cranks

Volume 48

The magazine of
Deeside Thistle Cycling Club

Sponsored by:

Tierney Strachan
PROCESS CONTROL ENGINEERING

Current Membership 594 (592)
SCU Membership 294 (302)

Editorial:

Time will tell if the new Rules in the updated Highway Code are to make use of our roads safer. I'm two-minded.

Indeed, two questions spring to mind. Will one to the other show greater respect and understanding? Or will there be even more frustration as the queues of traffic build to greater numbers?

My cynicism begs the rhetorical question, "What do you think?"

On narrow roads, being bold and taking up the advisory position half a metre from the road edge, might not give overtaking vehicles enough space to follow the new code. The code states that overtaking vehicles must give 1.5 metres clearance and more when travelling faster than 30mph. I can see the red mist forming as the driver dutifully follows the rule and doesn't squeeze past.

The updated code says that when cycling in groups consideration should be shown to the needs of other road users. We can ride 2 abreast - and it can be safer to do so.

Riders are asked to be aware of vehicles behind them and allow them to overtake (for example, by moving into single file or stopping) when it's safe to do so.

And that is my maxim; move into a field gate or layby. Give a wave as the vehicles go by. You might just get a friendly toot.

PHILOSOPHER'S CORNER

May the road that you take be the road less travelled

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

KNOCKBURN SPORTS CENTRE

Café season May 2022

There has been no positive interest for the part time position of manager / waiting staff at this date.

There are 4 months remaining before decisions have to be made on the café's future.

I would be pleased to discuss with interested parties.

My earlier advert from last year's Deeside Notes refers also. Contact me on bert@mphltd.co.uk

Bert McIntosh

New Highway Code

Passing when driving

Our 2019 [State of Cycling](#) report found that 87% of British Cycling members are close passed at least once a week, and though these dangerous incidents are not reflected in Government accident statistics, we know that they are a huge deterrent to more people riding.

At the time of publication, our Policy Adviser Chris Boardman said that close passing is "*ostensibly a casual disregard for human life*" – something which can be absolutely terrifying when you're on the receiving end and something which leads to many people stopping cycling altogether.

Therefore, there was a great deal of attention paid to the revised wording of Rule 163 regarding overtaking in the Highway Code consultation, and we were pleased to see that the new wording incorporated a simple but very powerful new statement:

- Leave at least 1.5 metres when overtaking cyclists at speeds of up to 30 mph and give them more space when overtaking at higher speeds.

It is now crystal clear to all road users what is required of them, and most importantly there is now no ambiguity for learner drivers. Of all the recent changes to the Highway Code, this is the change that we expect, and hope will deliver a quick and noticeable improvement once it is communicated through the Government's awareness campaign over the course of 2022.

Most courteous drivers want to do the right thing, and this clear unambiguous guidance now provides the clarity we have been seeking. We have urged the officials at the Department for Transport to consider how they explain the passing distance to people, given that 1.5 metres doesn't mean a lot to many people – whereas a statement such as 'the width of a large car conveys something far more visual.

As I have discussed this guidance will not deter actively aggressive and dangerous people from making unsafe close passes. It will however support the police and the courts to enforce the law, especially where camera footage of a close pass is available.

Despite the progress made in this area, we were disappointed that our suggestion for a simple addition (in brackets) to the following statement was not taken forwards:

- give way to oncoming vehicles (**including cyclists and horse riders**) before passing parked vehicles or other obstructions on your side of the road.

We believe that this is a missed opportunity, and we will continue to press for its future inclusion.

Passing others when cycling

There are a two further revised statements that it is important to flag, especially for clubs and groups who enjoy cycling at higher speeds on rural roads.

- Pass horse riders and horse-drawn vehicles at speeds under 10 mph and allow at least 2 metres of space.
- Allow at least 2 metres of space and keep to a low speed when passing a pedestrian who is walking in the road (for example, where there is no pavement).

There is nothing here that will surprise most considerate people who cycle, as it is what we do already. However, it really is vitally important that we all show other road users, especially the equestrian community, that we understand and acknowledge their needs in the same way that we ask people driving to do for ourselves.

Despite the very real aggression and danger posed by a minority of people who drive, cycling remains a safe and fun activity for most of us. We desperately need behaviours to change on our roads and I remain confident that they will change for the better over time.

Please do keep in touch over the coming months and let us know of your experiences out on the roads as the Government begins its much-anticipated awareness campaign. As always, you can contact me at choosecycling@britishcycling.org.uk.

Nick Chamberlin
Policy Manager British Cycling

Letter

Sir, Today, Saturday, I was lying in a heap on the roundabout on King St and St Machar Drive; I was sent flying by a car coming at speed down the drive; his excuse he did not see me.

Fortunately, I had a few good witnesses all saying he was driving at such a speed that I did not have a chance.

All I knew about it was flying through the air looking at sky, road, sky, and crash landing.

A great big thanks to all that stopped and who phoned for police, and ambulance; one student medic really did a great job, one star witness who said it was a spectacular big air event!!!!

The ambulance crew were fantastic, the trauma team did a great job, very lucky not to have broken anything, only deep tissue damage on my right side.

For me the big saviour was my Specialized S-Works Prevail cycle helmet. If I hadn't been wearing this the A&E Consultant said it would have been a very different outcome. The rear of the shell is split open exposing the inner reinforcing and one side of the shell is flattened.

This was an incident not of my making. The helmet did its job and saved my life.

No matter how much the new Highway Code rules says on hierarchy for road users, it does not take into account drivers who just don't see us I was wearing my bright yellow club jacket, it was good visibility. While lying there thinking, why me? I did hear the driver saying, I just did not see him. One witness asked if he could see me now. Why didn't he see me on my bike?

Good news, the other casualty, my trusty Trek is fine, happy days. Safe cycling. *Regards, John Campbell*

Sir, I'm a student cyclist from St Andrews doing the Spokes season starter cat 4 race on the 27th February and I saw that a fair few of your riders are entered as well.

I cannot drive, don't have a car, no other cyclists from St Andrews are entered and the trains are due to be non-operational over that weekend, so currently I am having to cycle 55km to get to the start line. This hasn't put me off entering the event but given that your guys are coming over the Tay bridge I was wondering if any of them had any space for a bike and a person in their car.

I'm very happy to cycle over to Dundee for pickup, as it's a much shorter bike, I would just want to avoid that 55km warmup. It would be fantastic if you could put me in contact with anyone who's planning to go and who might be willing to lend me a hand, even just for one way, I would be eternally grateful.

Hope to hear back soon on fjh20@st-andrews.ac.uk

Regards, Fred Hockey

Youth Update

Some of DTCC youth spent the day treading the boards, well racing on the boards, at the Johnstone Jets Back to the Track 1 on Saturday 12 February.

Riders from categories C through to A put on their green kit and span their legs. The riders competed in four races each (points, elimination and two scratch races).

The big take away from the day has to be the team spirit and smiling faces as the Deeside riders raced and supported each other throughout the day.

Well done to Elliot, Molly, Thea, Melanie, Innes, Aidan and Zara.

The next day saw the Johnstone Jets Youth Omnium take place. There was a lot more riding around in circles today. Well racing around in ovals would be a more accurate description. 9 Deesiders took to the track today and between them racked up around 759 laps, that's about 190km!

The Omnium started with a TT which was swiftly followed by a scratch race. After lunch the riders rode an elimination event followed by a matched sprint (based on their times from earlier events). The event closed with some closely contested points races.

DTCC Youth gave their all both on and off the track. It was clear to see that all the riders were trying their hardest during their races and it was fantastic to see and hear them supporting their team-mates - whether this was shouting encouragement as others raced or giving advice and pep talks to riders needing a wee boost, DTCC Youth had it covered. Well done guys, you're a team to be proud of.



Zara Main after the Elimination race

Lyndsay Aitken

Looking for an Alternative to Zwift/RGT?

I have been cycling online for the past 7 years with a small, friendly group which is looking for more participants. We have a short race once or twice a week, using BKOOL software and this forms the basis for a monthly league. We try hard but are not very fast due to being too old and/or heavy! If you have a smart trainer and want to join the fun, the league is running now. For details, please drop me a line at rod.mcGovern@outlook.com **Rod McGovern**

Club Affiliation 2022

It is more than a little off-putting when you write to your National Governing Body with a question, and you get an automated response acknowledging receipt but no follow up. That's how it's been with much of the correspondence I've written to Scottish Cycling over the past 4 months.

When notified last October that Club Affiliations for 2022 were imminent I hastened to deal with things – there was an early bird discount if paid by the end of the year.

This time round there had to be many more official documents completed to show that our club meets current requirements. I did my best to fulfil the commitment and sent things off early December. I got the acknowledgement and expected an invoice to arrive soon after. It didn't.

Into the New Year members started to ask why they were having difficulties completing applications on the BC web site. I knew why. It was because our Affiliation was not in place. Eventually the SC gave me an ambiguous explanation. Some compliance form had not been submitted – no details relating to who or what had to be complied with.

After more correspondence I found out that the form had to list club coaches working with under 18s, and their qualifications. And I felt the hint that GDPR rules precluded me from access to this information. Even if GDPR rules say that records relating to individuals cannot be openly distributed there is an important codicil allowing officials with the need, to have sight of the data.

Our affiliation is now in place for the current year. A bill did come in for the fee and it included the subscription for club sponsors. In order to expedite matters the total fee was paid immediately – but those clubs registered as Go-Ride Clubs have club sponsor subscriptions waived. I wait with bated breath for a refund. **AJL**

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 know of one I can borrow please contact me on john_blunsdon@hotmail.com

John Blunsdon

Spring Bunny 25TT

The Spring Bunny 25-mile TT is on
Sunday 3rd April on the Echt, Carnie,
Millbank, circuit

We need helpers and marshal's

Please contact Dave Walton on
j.d.walton@btinternet.com

SCNEG Championships

SCNEG are hoping to award some of their 2021 Trophies. If you rode any Open time-trials during last season it could be worth your while to let us know. Send results to knockies@deeside.org and we'll ensure they get passed on.

Please send: Name, Distance, Your Time, Date of Event.

Coaching Courses

Those members keen to get involved with coaching can find details of upcoming courses and funding opportunities on the SC web site. Go here:

<https://www.britishcycling.org.uk/scotland/coaching>

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 montysbicycleworks@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 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

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

Club Committee

At our AGM in January the committee to run your club for the next year was elected. Unfortunately, a few positions could not be filled.

Principal among these were someone to help look after Event and Championship Management, and a person to maintain a presence on Social Media and the local press.

We also need a new Welfare and Protection Officer.

If you are interested please get in touch with me on info@deeside.org. *AJL*

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.

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](#)

Tour of Britain 2022

Never before will the Tour of Britain have started so far north than when Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire host the race's Grand Départ on Sunday 4 September, one year on from the region welcoming the final stage of the 2021 race.

The Tour will start in the city of Aberdeen, where a full weekend of activities to run alongside the race, including the Scottish National Criterium Championships will take place. The stage will finish in spectacular style elsewhere in Aberdeenshire, taking a different route to the one raced in 2021, which will bring the event into the heart of brand-new communities.

Stage 2 is also in Scotland with routes still under discussion.

Any thoughts or ideas for support events? 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.

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

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.

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](#)

New Members

The following new or returning members have joined in recent weeks

3046 Perran Horrell Banchory 51

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

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

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



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 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.

LIGHTS

Runs

February

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, Inch (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
 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, Inverberrie (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

CAR CLINIC

Car Clinic contacts: -

greatservice@car-clinic.com ,
<http://www.car-clinic.co.uk/>

Car Clinic, Unit 2, Hillview
 Road, East Tullos, Aberdeen,
 AB12 3HB

(01224) 891414

Car Clinic, Broadfold Road,
 Bridge of Don, Aberdeen,
 AB23 8EE

Phone: (01224) 821010

25 Years Ago

THE SEAN YATES WEEKEND

The Sean Yates Weekend had something for every bike fan. A quick look around at the audience on the Friday night at Grampian TV studios revealed the appeal of the "Beast" to cyclists old and new, to the has-beens, to the wanna-bees and to the never-wases.

All agreed that it was an honour to be in the same room as the man who has ridden twelve, count them, twelve Tour de France campaigns and lived to tell the tale. And tell the tale he did, to Alan Campbell and the full house audience.

For three hours we were treated to reminiscences from a relaxed Yatesy which were interspersed with an expertly prepared video montage courtesy of Tom Mowat. Alan led Sean on a journey from promising amateur to rookie professional with Peugeot and on through years spent with Fagor, 7-Eleven and finally to his contract with Motorola.

It is said that Sean did not have an enemy in the peloton and that he was the perfect professional who was willing to work his **** off to help his team to victory. But he is more than that. The overriding impression given is that he is a thoroughly decent man who, unlike some other newly retired pros, is not willing to kiss and tell for short term gain.

Much as Alan tried to tease out just a whiff of scandal about Yatesy's old team-mates, Yates was commendably tight-lipped. He eventually admitted that Millar was a "bit of a funny bloke sometimes" and "yes, Cipollini is a bit of a poser" and "yes, something must be done about drugs", but no scandal. He may be retired but he wants to keep his friends!

The evening was brought to a close by Sean showing us some of his jerseys and telling us what it took to win them. Finally, we came to the yellow jersey of the 1994 Tour de France which is the absolute pinnacle of any cyclist's career. Few present could not have felt a lump in their throat as he held his prize aloft and said that after 15 years of hard graft "this is what it is all about".

The following Saturday morning around 35 brave souls turned out for a training ride with Sean around the Castle Fraser circuit. Two groups, one fast, one less fast, set off, with Sean being shuttled between groups in the Nobbymobile. This did not prove testing enough for Sean and so another lap was added with the company of our own fast men, Messrs. Stewart, Yates, Watt and Jolly. Even this was not enough for Sean and so he declined the offer of a lift and cycled back to Alan Campbell's house.

It is not known what he made of Andrew Harrington's recumbent, but Sean does not need such technology to get under nineteen minutes for a ten. Sean was looking very lean and clearly he still has an appetite for miles. Coach Bryson reckons we should watch out for Yates in the coming time trial season.

Malcolm Wilson

For Sale

Colnago C40 Mapei bike with Campagnolo; your opportunity to own an icon which rides superbly - The Colnago C40 is the bike that pros like Bradley Wiggins and Pippa York regard as the most desirable in their extensive experience. The Mapei team paint scheme makes it particularly iconic, and collectible given their multiple successes in Paris Roubaix etc. Alan Campbell has had this carbon fibre frame from new - and has looked after it. The forks are Star Carbon. The size from centre of bottom bracket to top of seat tube is 58cm. It's likely to be suitable for a rider of 5'10" and taller. Clincher wheels are Campagnolo Neutron Ultra. The brakes and rear mech are Campag Record. The front mech and chain set are Campag Centaur. Saddle is San Marco Regal. ITM 12cm stem on Deda bars. Price £1850. Photos available. Can be seen in Aberdeen. Contact Alan at campbell66@btinternet.com (3)

Club Fees

Over the past several months every effort has been made to remind members that annual subscriptions are due at this time of the year. Most have paid but there are still a few to do so.

If you are one of the few still to pay it can be done via PayPal at www.deeside.org/join, do a bank transfer to Deeside Thistle Cycling Club / Sort Code 30 10 01 / Account 00802182, telephone 07867 857221 to pay over the phone

We don't want to lose you as a member but appreciate that you may have decided to take a different avenue and thank you for the time you've spent with us – please let us know – email members@deeside.org

Remember, we don't want you to leave our club, but the time is near when we'll be updating our Membership list and non-payers will be deleted. This could be your last Cranks!

Historical Reminiscences

(Part 41)

Mike Ndebiwa met us at the airport and guided us through customs with no checks on our luggage. On our first visit to Zimbabwe, Alastair and I were planning a big bike ride from Bulawayo to Victoria Falls.

Mike, the celebrated Town Clerk for Bulawayo, had created a first-class reputation for the city. He ensured we were well cared for.

When our party of cyclists arrived, a top reception was laid on. Mike extolled our visit complimenting us on the projected fund raising to support street children and other charitable ventures in and around his city.

Alastair had given me the honour of replying on behalf of the visitors.

I opened with a word of thanks on the welcome given to us, visiting a foreign country.

Mike immediately got to his feet. *“This is not a foreign country. You are foreigners in our country.”*

There is a farm about a mile north of Fyvie Castle. It sits on a cnoc beside the Tifty Burn. This is the old Tifty Mill and famous for a tragic incident. Nearby in Fyvie, in the graveyard, is a cross, a memorial to Agnes Smith or Tifty’s Annie as she was known.

About two miles to the east is a wooded ridge called Windy Hills. The formation of this ridge happened long before Tifty’s Annie had to endure her persecution and execution.

Then a further two miles or so to the east of Windy Hills is a building erected some time before Agnes was born but certainly occupied during her lifetime. Gight Castle now stands in a ruinous state.

We’d found a secret way into Haddo Estate. About a mile north of Tarves on the unclassified road bounding the east side of the NTS property is an old footpath leading through the woods and towards Haddo House. On that early summer’s Sunday morning little disturbed the quiet, other than birds heralding the coming day, rabbits and deer bouncing among the fresh grass.

Pedalling on to Methlick, a gently rising wind behind us we couldn’t have been more contented. At this small village where the local garage sells Ordnance (sic) maps we joined a forest track along the bank of the Ythan. Sleeping buffalo turned out to be half burned bales of straw as Gight wood, a nature reserve, was entered. The track ended and a meandering path took us over a bridge and up a steep bank to trace along the ridge to Gight Castle.

Designed in the middle 16th century Gight Castle is immortalised in a number of ways. The Games of Gight once held sway in this peaceful setting above the Ythan Gorge where many of its lairds and their families met violent deaths. The 13th Laird, a Catherine Gordon, married Mad Jack Byron who gambled away the family fortune

until the castle and its estate had to be sold off in the late 18th century to meet debts. Progeny of these two includes Lord Byron, the celebrated Aberdeen poet. Though definitely Scottish, Byron’s works seldom had the indigenous ethos of Robert Burns’.

Here the 7th Gordon Laird, legend tells us, hid his fortunes from the Covenanters in Hagberry Pot, a deep natural well near the castle. In an effort to retrieve them after the rebellion his serf met an untimely death when the devil himself intervened and severed the diver’s body into four pieces.

And perhaps the saddest thing of all is summed up in the traditional ballad, *The Bonnie Lass of Fyvie*. From Fyvie Castle and long since disappeared ran a road to Gight Castle. In the field in front of the ruin stands a stone with HH5 on it. Obviously this sat on the road and indicated how far to Haddo. It was on this road that the soldiers marched from Fyvie taking Captain Ned away from his beloved Peggy and to his death.

One line in this ballad, *The drums they did beat owre the bonnie braes of Gight*, suggests that there has been more than one pronunciation of Gyte, Gicht, Geet.

From Gight Castle we headed north on the ancient drive towards Windy Hills. This is a tree-covered ridge three miles northeast of Fyvie. Created more than 10 million years ago it is now a site of special scientific interest. Not signposted it took a little searching to locate but once found we settled down to eat our jammie pieces in a small amphitheatre created by Tarmac, the civil engineering company. Before the dinosaur, and certainly long before man walked the earth, a giant river flowed here and gradually built up a ridge of deposits. Until recently this had been excavated as building materials. Now it belongs to the community. Mountain bikers and trail bikers obviously use the terrain for their own interests, as do fossil and mineral hunters. Sitting on the shingle examining the round polished stones created so long ago we found it difficult to credit the passage of time and couldn’t begin to wonder about the future.

Leaving this thought-provoking quarry, we descended to Tifty and found the old mill. Now a private house little remains of the original purpose. An outhouse obviously contained the machinery and the noise of the Tifty Burn cascading past the building added to the confirmation.

In the 17th century Agnes (Annie) Smith lived here with her parents, her father the miller. A mile away at Fyvie Castle lived Lord Fyvie’s trumpeter. He wooed and won the heart of Annie. Often they met in the den between the mill and the castle until Annie’s father found out about the tryst. Objecting sorely, he did his worst and forbade the meetings. In fact, it is recorded in the lament *Mill o’ Tifty’s Annie*, that Annie was beaten repeatedly by her parents in an effort to stop the relationship. The miller wrote to Lord Fyvie instructing him to keep the trumpeter away.

During one of the beatings administered by her brother she cried out

*“Oh faither, mither, sisters a’
Why sae cruel tae yer Annie?
My heart was broken first by love
Noo my brother’s broke my body”*

Lord Fyvie said,

“Had she been born o’ richer kin”

he’d have made her *his ain lady* but not to be, for Tifty’s Annie died from her beatings. The community made this murder a thing of legend and the memory of Tifty’s Annie, who died on 19 January 1673, is cast in stone, a memorial having been raised some years after her death.

I hardly knew what constituted a pizza. A far-flung delicacy from some foreign country it hardly appealed. My taste buds more accustomed to mince and tatties were in for a lesson.

Having completed our research and the Bulawayo to Victoria Falls bike ride route taking shape we’d time to fill in before catching our flight.

Wandering the streets of Zimbabwe’s second city we saw a garish red and white sign advertising culinary satisfaction. What the heck, bite the bullet, and ordered two large pizzas.

Waiting in the shade for our food it gave us a chance to discuss plans for the proposed bike ride. We’d ride the strip roads, eat doughballs in St Luke’s, stay in Hwange Safari Park, sail on Lake Kariba, all before arriving on the bridge at Victoria Falls where participants could, if they’d the courage, bungee jump over the Zambezi River.

Our pizzas arrived. Gigantic is hardly descriptive enough. The cartwheel diameter bread base, with a smorgasbord of meats and vegetables could have fed an army.

Squeezing an extra few pounds of pressure into our knobbles we watched a huge bank of cloud lowering its brows to the north and we shivered.

This was a road outing. The annual Reliability Trial had attracted us and we’d headed to Garlogie to mix it a bit with the roadies. Eric, the caretaker, was there clearing the hall from last night’s party. The event was off, he said. Had the others heard about us coming to join them?

Leaving with just each other for company the cold soon set in and extra gloves had to be donned and an occasional stretch walked to revitalise frozen feet. A gritter went past spraying salt and sand.

Following the proscribed route in an anti-clockwise direction the first snowstorm struck about 7.30am near

Echt. It was a feeling of elation that swept over us as the snow dinged down. *Not many out today* was the comment as the snow swept horizontal across the road.

At Premnay after about 30 miles we stopped for a jammie piece and paced about trying to warm frozen toes. It had been a plod into the wind. Conversation had ceased long since and even if the sun felt warm when out, the air was bitter.

The Suie and concerns about the effect of this wind on the climb gripped us. Passing Knockepoch we could see the ramp sloping on the hill and white clouds of ice spicules blew wildly near the top.

A snowplough barged through but blew a friendly horn in passing. Then the grind began. Soon Alastair rode away from me. Near the top the drifting snow blew cold but wasn’t stacking on the tarmac and down the south side to Tullynessle with the wind behind I managed to recatch Alastair and we pedalled into the lunch stop together.

Only, there was no soup. Remember, the event was off. Alastair produced a couple of pork pies and gulping these down we continued. Unfortunately, things had taken a turn for the bad. With each wee slope I laboured more. My energy had gone. Blown away like the snow on top of the Suie even the gusting wind behind couldn’t help.

On the leg to Crossroads Alastair nursed my despairing soul, and when we turned for the last, relatively easy leg back to Garlogie, spirits lifted as the pie kicked in.

J D Whisker always had a small advert in the classified section of Cycling Weekly, so small, if you weren’t looking for it you’d easily pass it by. He’d a mail order list that folk would salivate over for hours. Every bit of Campag kit had an entry and when no one else could supply Whisker’s would rise to the occasion.

He sold everything by mail order and many cyclists throughout the country waited with bated breath for the postal deliveries. His prices were always cheaper than those in local shops and it led to quite a bit of conflict. Shop owners were known to refuse to service machines which were fitted with any of Whisker’s components.

Guilty as any I used Whisker’s services regularly and looked forward to the day I could visit his shop.

I’d cycled overnight to London to see my sister and while there paid a visit to Goffs Lane, Goffs Oak. A large blue door at the top of a couple of steps led into a dim room. A long wooden counter stretched the length of the room and behind were row upon row of shelves and drawers.

Whisker made no effort to attract custom by fanciful displays. He didn’t have to; his unlimited choice of every spare part, from ball cups for Campag hubs to Universal brake lever spares, spoke volumes and did all the advertising he needed. *Roughstuffer*