

Issue 579

June 2022

Cranks

Volume 49

The magazine of
Deeside Thistle Cycling Club
Sponsored by:

MPH
Mechanics Plan How

Tierney Strachan
PROCESS CONTROL ENGINEERING

Current Membership 574 (590)
SCU Membership 306 (302)

Editorial:

The first big event of the year used to happen the last Sunday in February. This, our 100-mile Reliability Trial, started from the Mill Inn and headed out Deeside to Crathie where it turned and retraced.

There was a memorable year when riders rode through blizzard conditions reducing them to hypothermic wrecks seeking shelter in hostelries and phone booths. Maybe that event is the precursor of what has happened since.

When Alan Campbell took on the organisation he renamed it the Spring Classic and introduced a 100km alternative. The event gradually migrated into April and attracted a lot of attention. Some 100 riders regularly rode. With the introduction of major climbs, the route toughened up and our early season leg bender gave a welcome boost to early miles as the year progressed.

This year's event had depleted numbers of hardy souls slogging into nagging head winds but thoroughly satisfying themselves with the knowledge that those who didn't ride were missing something special.

A genuine sporting promotion with lots of socialising before, during and after it's something not to be avoided. This year the event took place in the middle of June! Maybe it should be renamed the Summer Classic. Perhaps it was just a warm up for the following week's MSBH

PHILOSOPHER'S CORNER

Sometimes when we train, we just have to go out to meet the man with the hammer – *Laurent Fignon*

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

Deeside Thistle BC 2022 National Youth Omnium Series Dundee Track

Saturday, 28 May 2022

Youth A Boys Race

1	Elliot Rowe	Deeside Thistle CC	15
2	Joseph Cosgrove	Anexo Group Race Team	12
3	Joel Hurt	Derwentside CC	10
4	Luca Bednarek	Kirklees Cycling Academy	8
5	Harrison Dainty	Cystic Fibrosis Race	6
6	Adam Murray	East Kilbride Road Club	5
7	Ahron Dick	Edinburgh RC	4
8	Struan Shaw	Edinburgh RC	3
9	Jake Speed	Stirling Bike Club	2
10	James Sweeney	Edinburgh RC	1
11	Jakob Hill	Clifton CC	0
12	Seth Jackson	Kirklees Cycling Academy	0
13	Colin McGourty	East Kilbride Road Club	0
14	Robert Smart	Deeside Thistle CC	0
15	Rhys Edwards	Edinburgh RC	0
16	Oliver Walker	East Kilbride Road Club	0

Youth A Girls Race

1	Lucy Glover	Derwentside CC	15
2	Erin Boothman	East Kilbride Road Club	12
3	Arabella Blackburn	Deeside Thistle CC	10
4	Isabel Mayes	JRC-INTERFLON	8
5	Sarah Johnson	Edinburgh RC	6
6	Millie Thomson	Deeside Thistle CC	5
7	Molly Evans	Deeside Thistle CC	4
8	Anna Birrell	Edinburgh RC	3
9	Amelia Walton	Sportcity Velo	2
10	Thea Aitken	Deeside Thistle CC	1
11	Isla Easto	Edinburgh RC	0
12	Sarah Darling	West Lothian Clarion CC	0
13	Harriet Hendry	Deeside Thistle CC	0

Youth B Boys Race

1	Elliot Speedie	Edinburgh RC	15
2	Charlie Brennan	Sportcity Velo	12
3	Colin Johnston	Johnstone Wheelers	10
4	Ewan McGrath	Salt Ayre Cog Set	8
5	Innes Long	Deeside Thistle CC	6
6	Ross Eastaugh	Deeside Thistle CC	5

Youth B Girls Race

1	Phoebe Taylor	Eastlands Velo	15
2	Melanie Rowe	Deeside Thistle CC	12
3	Niamh Waters	Edinburgh RC	10
4	Eve Fairbairn	Discovery Junior	8
5	Hope Thomson	Deeside Thistle CC	6
6	Kasey Park	Edinburgh RC	5

Please assist at events
when asked



AWCC Quines Hilly TT Midmar - Sunday, 12 Jun 2022

Women

Name	Club	Time
1 Lorna Breetzke	Vanelli-Project Go	33.12
2 Lucy Ritchie	Vanelli-Project Go	34.07
3 Lynne Cordiner	Moray Firth Cycling Club	36.29
4 Roz Boynton	AWCC	37.46
5 Natalie Taylor	AWCC	39.23
6 Deborah Ferns	Glasgow Green Cycle Club	39.40
7 Tamsin Law		39.40

Men

1 Colin Duncan	Elgin CC	31.14
2 Robert Cowie	AWCC	33.47

Youth Update

On Saturday 28 May Youth and Junior went to the regional performance centre at Caird Park in Dundee for some track time. Eleven A and B riders took part in the British Cycling Youth Omnium which was organised by Deeside Thistle. Big thanks to Doug Easthaugh, Mark Evans, Saskia Blackburn and Andrew Ramsey for organising and running the day's racing.

On Sunday 29 May B and C riders participated in the Scottish Cycling Youth C and B Omnium Championship while the youth A riders competed in the afternoon. 8 DTCC youths raced with several taking podium places in their respective events.

Junior Evie White was also in action this weekend. Evie was racing in the Junior TT and Road Champs in Yorkshire.

On 04 June eight DTCC youths raced in the Loughborough round of the National Youth Series. Notably Melanie Rowe was 1st Youth B Girl with Hope Thomson in 4th place, Arabella Blackburn was 5th in the Youth A Girls and Elliot Rowe was 4th Youth A Boy.

Round 3 of the SXC series was held at Cathkin Braes trails (Glasgow) on Sunday 05 June. Five DTCC riders took to the trails with Olivia Poole claiming 1st place in the U12s race and Zara Main taking 3rd spot. Finn Watts claimed 4th place in the youth males and Ross Easthaugh was 7th in the juvenile male category.

Two DTCC juniors were also in action over the weekend. Evie White and Jamie Liversidge rode in the Junior Tour of the North West. Evie placed 10th on GC.

On 13 June at the Fife Cycle Park Spokes hosted the Summer Dash. The event was made up of support races for younger riders on the Saturday and a two-day stage race for the u14 and u16 riders. All in all, 16 DTCC youths took part in the weekend's racing. *Lyndsay Aitken*

Spring Classic Reliability Trial Sunday 12 June 2022 100 miles or 100km

Mysteriously, only 27 riders turned up at Echt Hall to ride Alan Campbell's well-advertised Spring Classic Reliability Trial. This elite group had a tough day battling head winds, but all the hard graft proved worthwhile for the final push from Tarland had the wind behind.

Ably supported by Raymond Drummond and John Anderson, Alan provided a smorgasbord of sandwiches and cake for the finishers.

So why such a small field? Were riders competing elsewhere – there are hardly enough events being organised just now to make that an excuse? Were riders put off because the name didn't tally with the season? Or were folk saving themselves for the MSBH Sportive the following weekend? Poor excuse that for Alan's even could have been a good warm-up.

Anyway, those who didn't ride missed an excellent event and they should be sure to register for the Falling Leaves due towards the end of September.

MSBH Sportive Saturday 18 June

Scotland's best value sportive took place on Saturday 18 June. It is also one of the toughest events on the calendar, certainly in the UK.

Three categories, UNDO, REDO and DINNAEDO, all undertake the Cairn o'Mount. REDO and DINNAEDO come back over the Cairn.

First, they all do the Powbare climb from Stonehaven, followed by the hilly road through Glithno, then the Slug and Garrol. On the return the Garrol and Slug must be repeated by REDO and DINNAEDO.

DINNAEDO also does an early anti clockwise circuit round the Shooting Greens and Corsedarder. On the return from the Cairn, DINNAEDO then does a clockwise circuit of Corsedarder and the Shooting Greens.

That's a lot of climbing and on Saturday about 900 riders set out from the massive Cycle Shed (marquee) at the Stonehaven Beer Festival

Another 100 riders on gravel and mountain bikes set off on the GRDO, a 60km off road ride through the Fetteresso and Durris Forests.

The thousands of feet of climbing certainly cements the reputation of this event.

Support was second to none with multiple food stations, mechanics on hand to fix that broken gear cable, cheer leaders clapping you over the summits, sunny weather, the Cairn itself closed to normal traffic. On top of all that was



a bag of freebies and entry to the beer festival. What more can you ask for? How about a repeat event in 2023?

Robert Lindsay has masterminded the organisation of this sportive and coupled with the 3-Day Beer Festival it is a hit. He has a huge army of helpers to ensure that everything runs smoothly leading up to and during the day.

It is a not-for-profit venture with any surplus of funds being distributed to local charities and needy causes. This year the event has raised a massive £65K.

Evening League 2022

Our league is already more than halfway through for 2022. The different categories, road bikes and TT bikes being given points separately, experimented with last year is again being used. The leaders and results are available [here](#).

The league calendar may be accessed on our [website](#). The site is also open for Registration so follow the [links](#) and get your name down. During registration you'll find pages which tell what to do and what not to do – League Rules! Courses are listed. Changes for this year include, importantly, a mandatory, front white light.

It is also a requirement if you take part in the series that you commit to assisting at one event or more. You can add your name to specific events on the website.

Scottish Cycling has announced that members who list Deeside Thistle as their Second Claim Club may take part in Club Confined Events. This is a change from last year when all riders had to be First Claim Members.

Steve Walton

Youth & Junior Vacancies

DTCC Youth and Junior offers Coaching sessions for riders aged 6-18 years, covering road and off-road disciplines. Following COVID19 we have a number of spaces in our groups and are looking for new riders. If interested please contact youth@deeside.org to register your rider, advising date of birth and current riding capability

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*

SCNEG Update

Here's our proposed calendar for 2022: The links take you directly to the event on National Calendar.

18 Jun	Ladies RR	TENs
22 Jun	Massie Shield	YCC
30 Jun	Evening RR	DTCC
8Jul	NE 250	Roy
9Jul	NE 250	Roy
10 Jul	10TT	DTCC
17 Jul	Methlick Cycle Challenge	
28 Jul	Evening RR	TEN
07 Aug	100TT	AWCC
13 Aug	Jolibar RR	DTCC
21 Aug	Youth Crit	YCC
03 Sep	Crit Races	
04 Sep	ToB Start	
11 Sep	10TT Champs	TEN
18 Sep	Classy 10TT	AWCC
18 Sep	H/C Champs	AWCC
02 Oct	Ladies RR	AWCC

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

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>



Sunday Banchory Rides

The rides will start 10:00 am (sharp) from Banchory Townhall (carpark opposite town hall). The rides will be published on SPOND, and we would ask you to sign up for the ride via SPOND, so we know who is riding and we have your emergency contact details.

You can download SPOND on your smart phone or access any computer or tablet via: <https://spond.com/welcome>.

To join the Banchory Rides group please sign up via: <https://group.spond.com/TTADU>.

There are other rides through the week and sometimes adhoc meetups, so it is worth joining.

- (1) The route will be published on SPOND and will always include a coffee stop
- (2) Route will be around 50 miles
- (3) We will try and run two groups. Espresso and Latte. Espresso will be a ride aiming for 18 to 20 mph average. Latte will be no drop ride riding at the pace of the slowest rider, but hopefully around 16 mph, or slower if needed.
- (4) Espresso will set off first, anyone dropped from Espresso can drop back to Latte
- (5) If we do not have enough for two groups it will be a no drop ride
- (6) All levels of rider welcome

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](#)

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

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](#)

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

Tour of Britain 2022

Any thoughts or ideas for support events? Please contact me on colinallanach@aol.com *Colin Allanach*

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>

Please assist at events
when asked





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
---------------------	-----	--------------

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.

LIGHTS

Runs

June

Wed	22 Jun	Pub Run	19:30	Duthie	Park,
					Riverside Drive to Marine Hotel, Stonehaven, Return by train
Thu	23 Jun	Thursday Run	09:30	Airyhall	Library,
					Destination to be decided on the day, morning ride coffee stop.
Sat	25 Jun	Faster Full Day	09:00	Old Mill	Inn,
					Maryculter, Coffee at Raemoir Garden Centre, Banchory (01330 825059), picnic lunch at Ballater
Sat	25 Jun	Morning Run	09:30	Woodend	Hospital,
					Eday Rd, Coffee at Marshall's Farm Shop, Kinellar
Sun	26 Jun	Slower Full Day	09:30	Duthie	Park,
					Riverside Drive, Coffee at The Sitting Room, Portlethen (01224 781777), picnic lunch at Stonehaven Harbour
Sun	26 Jun	Try Cycling	10:00	Westburn	Park,
					Westburn House, Short easy rides, all welcome.
Thu	30 Jun	Thursday Run	09:30	Airyhall	Library,
					Destination to be decided on the day, morning ride coffee stop.

New Members

The following new or returning members have joined in recent weeks

1180	Brian Duncan	Alford	41
3061	Iain Campbell	Torphins	24
3062	Henry Lincoln	Banchory	5
3063	Nihaal McGarry	Banchory	15
3064	David Stockan	Banchory	45
3065	Lucy Porter	Aberdeen	6
3066	Alistair Glen	Aberdeen	43

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.

Registered for the Evening League?

Go [here](#)



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

CAR CLINIC

Email: greatservice@car-clinic.com

Web: <http://www.car-clinic.co.uk/>

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

Phone: 01224 891414

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

Phone: 01224 821010

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

25 Years Ago

ALL NIGHTER 1997

In keeping with tradition, you are cordially invited to the **ALL-NIGHT CYCLE** to celebrate the summer solstice. The idea is simple. Leave the Linn of Dee at approximately 8.30pm on Saturday 21 June 1997 and cycle through the night.

This year's route is easy enough – technically – but a high level of endurance is required. We **PROMISE** that no one will be dropped as it's not a race but an excuse for fun.

Please note lights will be frowned upon. For further information telephone Phil Kelman

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.

Best Regards, Jon Strachan
(jas@tierney-strachan.co.uk)



Historical Reminiscences

(Part 45)

Andrew Manwell is to be congratulated for inaugurating Randonneur events in our part of the country. If you enjoy a challenge then you would have been delighted by the prospect of a hard 200 mile run on the longest day of the year in near perfect weather.

The car park at Banchory was busy even at 4 a.m. that day back in the 1980's as 10 bike riders got ready to start amidst some loutish behaviour by revellers still on their way home from late-night discos.

The riders came from England (Gravesend and Kidderminster) and Dundee. Six riders from the north-east were, in order of seniority, Norman Smith, Bob Anderson, Alan Campbell, Sandy Lindsay and Bill Rawles with a young Banchory rider, Ian Diack from the University club.

Equipment varied considerably. The English riders had everything – lights, dynamos, front bags, rear bags, map holders, reflective strips, cameras, spare parts, toolkits, change of clothing, etc. I'd a poseur machine in white enamel and was carrying a thin inner tube and one spanner.

In accordance with Audax rules, all had mudguards. One of the Dundee riders looked decidedly unbalanced having a pannier bag on one side of his carrier only.

A trophy was even offered but the idea didn't get off the ground. The reason is that touring contests aren't physically demanding and don't suit the racing man. Stuff and nonsense.

Only 10 brave men (and women) and true turned up at the Midmar Hall to take part in Andrew Manwell's Orientouring event. I can't speak for others, but my own commitment was total.

Card in pocket I was fortunate to a large extent in understanding the route. The map was simple, perhaps too simple, yet using judgment at unmarked junctions no mistakes were made and each of the ten stamps were collected. Only a few seconds were lost at these stops and because they were nearly all at the top of steep (very) climbs the brief respites were welcome.

For the 50 kilometres I took 2 hours 47 minute, slow going, or so it would seem, but I grafted, ask Michael Hodson, and at the end was absolutely knackered.

Of course, these events can be leisurely, and we must make room, for members who want to participate in that fashion. However, what most folk aren't aware of is that they can also be hard. I'm willing to bet that in those few short miles in Manwell's event I climbed more (there were umpteen climbs, all steep and long) and worked harder than anyone out on the regular Sunday run. With a gentle run to Midmar and, after the competition, an even gentler one back, Aberdeen cyclists would have got their 70 miles in, met new faces, chatted over a cup of coffee and felt they'd done something really worthwhile.

Out Deeside, near Dinnet, I'd a rev counter attached to the front wheel. These early counters looked like the old mileometers which clicked away at the front hub recording your distance.

The rev counters were markedly more fragile with each strike of the peg, attached to a spoke, moving the counter on one digit. Not exceeding 15mph was the order of the day for the energy in the striking pin could easily fracture the flimsy band of numbers 0 – 9.

On a day of course measuring I'd cycle out to the Aberdeen end of the Drum Straight where we had an accurately laid out measured mile. This measured mile had been set years before by Jock Shaw, Dick Londrigan and me. Using a 50-metre temperature compensated tape this was repeatedly laid along the Drum Straight until the mile had been completed. Each time, when laying the tape, the air temperature had to be recorded. Factors relating to the temperature were read from a table. Multiplying these factors into the tape measurements a final distance resulted, with an adjustment made to any error. The accuracy of the measuring meant that the measured mile ended up not less than and not more than one mile!

Drawing a start line between the corner of Wardmill Cottage and the metal flag stuck into the ground on the opposite side of the road the front wheel was rotated to just past the strike. Setting the wheel on the start line I could commence the day's work.

Riding carefully to the Banchory end of the straight I'd stop the bike on a similar line drawn between the corner of the bus shelter and a metal peg. The number of strikes were recorded, and an estimate made for the final wheel revolution.

To confirm the number of revs in the measured mile the exercise had to be repeated and maybe repeated more than once if any anomalies were thrown up.

At the end of the day's measuring, confirmation that the number of revs had not altered, the measured mile had to be ridden over again.

Out near Dinnet the counter had been clicking away for hours carefully showing that the Deeside 100 course was up to scratch. Above me I suddenly heard the air brakes of a descending glider.

Peering skywards, watching the antics of the aviator, I ran out of road. The bike bounced over the grass verge summersaulting me into the ditch.

What to do now? Back to the Drum Straight and start over.

Yagala is an impoverished village. The locals will tell you it is the poorest in the area. And this in a country which is said to be twelfth from the bottom of the LDC list – that's Least Developed Countries. Just out of a Rebel war which saw millions made homeless, over 50,000 dead and countless others mutilated when limbs were amputated, it's



not surprising that Sierra Leone nears the bottom of the scale.

Up in the north of the country the town of Kabala sits at about 400m. Everything is green and the temperature just tolerable. Dark clouds roll in and there's the occasional rumble of thunder. June is just at the start of the monsoon season. When the rain comes on, boy, does it rain. Fortunately, these heavy showers last only minutes and then the sun reappears, drying things quickly. Later in the season things will change, water courses will be raging torrents, bridges unsafe, travel unlikely.

Alastair and I visited Kabala. We reached the town along a tarred road, though badly holed and flooded in places. This road climbed through spectacular volcanic hills and continues northwards into Guinea. In the town the streets are unmetalled and feeling our way along one of these looking for accommodation a brilliant lightning flash split the sky above our heads. Immediately a terrible clap of thunder repeated itself in a rapid cacophony of loud cracks that echoed and echoed.

Rosemary and her friend, Lady CJ, had travelled from Freetown and they waited at Sengbeh Guest House with food.

Calling at the Ministry of Agriculture's office in central Kabala we met with Foday Papayo Koroma. He is the monitoring and evaluation officer for the area, and he explained that everywhere was poor, desperately in need of help, particularly a village called Yagala. A guide would help us get there.

This guide had been in the mining town of Kenema when the Rebels invaded. His family was lined up and they were shot or had limbs amputated. When it came to his turn he snatched his arm back and lost only his fingers. He escaped with his life and mother into the bush.

Once in Yagala village with Foday, adult female representatives from each of the families were called to the school. We'd been told to avoid negotiating with the men for they'd just spend any donation on alcohol and tobacco. It was explained to the women that we wanted to establish a goat project in the area. We were able to provide enough goats to let half of the families get two animals each. If properly managed over a period of only a few months there would be enough progeny to pass on so that every family in the area could start to establish their own small herd.

Goats are easy to look after, reproduce quickly and can be kept for their meat or milk or both. Once a small herd is established excess animals can be sold to provide additional essentials or passed on to assist neighbouring communities.

The women were overjoyed and said they could get goats locally. This was a bit disconcerting for where were they coming from. Asking discreetly, it transpired that

neighbouring communities could provide animals. And to prove that excess animals can be sold on to provide other essentials one small girl later told us that she would get to school tomorrow. Her mother had sold a goat and now had enough money to pay the school fees.

Then the bagpipes and bodhran came out. Drums appeared and soon dancing, singing, and cheering filled the village square. Eventually the women had to leave to make meals for their men. Foday wasn't too complimentary saying that it's the women who do everything to hold the families together.

The ride back to Kabala was uphill, very hot. Bikes are very valuable assets in this part of the world. The machines which we rode had been donated and were to be left behind so that two youngsters could benefit by not having to walk hours to get to school.

Rosemary and Lady CJ again waited, this time with a light lunch of rice, fish, and potato leaves.

In year 2000 Nobby Clarke told Doug Haig to celebrate the millennium by riding a 24hrTT. Now, some folks say that this isn't racing; it's more like long distance touring. I dispute that. Riding your bike over 24 hours takes a special type of person with loads of fitness and enthusiasm for his sport. Ask too, how many short distance time trialists could undertake the full day event, or how many road racing stars would have the patience or endurance.

In 2011 we'd three riders took the trip to Merseyside. Phil Kelman, Mark Tandy and Ian Wilson had committed themselves to uphold the tradition of the past ten years when each Deeside rider riding the event had lasted the full distance. No pressure then! They were eminently successful.

Opinions are expressed in various quarters that time-trialling is a back water branch of our sport, that to be seen and admired the only route is road-racing. Opinions are an entitlement and mine is that all aspects of our sport should be given respect and participants cheered for what they do. Time trialling is a genuine measure of how much you put into your competition and the rewards are good, for there is always a carrot of beating yourself.

Incidentally, we all formed our own opinions when watching the Tour de France during July. We decided which riders were the best and which stages were the tops. Of course, Cav was the fastest – over the last 200 metres – but which stage was the most decisive, maybe kept you on the edge of your seat the longest? Was it Stage 19 when the Yellow Jersey's lieutenant rode away to win on Alpe d'Huez, or the penultimate stage at Grenoble, the time-trial that sorted out the field?

Roughstuffer

The Deeside Thistle Cycling Club publishes this magazine. The Editor is Sandy Lindsay MBE, Rowan Cottage, Inveramsay, Inverurie, AB51 5DQ. Tel: 01467 681330 / 07867 857221 – Email: knockies@aol.com

