

Issue 594

September 2023

# Cranks

## Golden Jubilee

### Volume 50

The magazine of  
**Deeside Thistle Cycling Club**  
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**Current Membership 561 (584)**  
**SCU Membership 293 (299)**  
**Scottish Cycling's Largest Club**

#### Editorial:

The new rules controlling the behaviour of, and treatment of, cyclists on our roads are a two-edged sword. They may have made it safer for the cyclist but, inadvertently, have increased the frustration of other road users.

Motorised traffic must now give cyclists at least 1.5 metres clearance when overtaking. This means the vehicle must cross the centre line to overtake. In some circumstances, and if traffic is light, this might not be a problem. But if there is a solid white line in the centre of the road and/or traffic is heavy, then the overtaking manoeuvre is not possible – and the vehicle has to sit at the cyclist's speed, becoming increasingly frustrated, until a new opportunity presents itself.

There has got to be understanding and respect shown. It is not difficult to ease the situation.

I was at the front of the queue at road works at the Oyne Fork only a few days ago. When the lights changed in my favour, I led the long column of vehicles through. If I'd let them go in front of me the lights might well have changed again before I had a chance to move.

As soon as I cleared the lights, I stepped off the road and let the 40 or so vehicles go about their business. In the circumstances I then had a relatively traffic free run for a mile or two.

#### PHILOSOPHER'S CORNER

##### *Respect is like a boomerang*

Do you have a view on life? Why not submit your favourite few words of wisdom for public consumption in this exclusive corner of your magazine. Send now to Sandy Lindsay, Rowan Cottage, Inveramsay, Inverurie, AB51 5DQ or email [knockies@deeside.org](mailto:knockies@deeside.org)

#### Racing Update

##### Ellon Crit – 20 August

With the schools preparing to go back this week, it was inevitable that the sun would make an appearance and give the DTCC Youths one last day of the summer holidays to remember. The 4th Round of the Scottish Circuit Series came to Ellon. With the DTCC gazebo set up in the town square and an abundance of green jerseys on show, it was no surprise that DTCC Youths would have kids entered in all the racing categories.

First up in the U8's race was Lucy and Harrison. Both did their LTR groups proud by making the racing look easy in amongst a strong contingent of riders from all over the country.

Next to go was the slightly more experienced U10's. Emma, Calum and Freddie giving it their all and racing round the closed road circuit in Ellon like the true champions they are. The 3 riders made it to the first corner in 1st, 2nd and 3rd positions (guessing start practice has been high on the TTR group agenda). All 3 closed out the race in brilliant fashion with Emma winning the girls race, Freddie 2nd Boy and Calum 3rd Boy.

The U12's meanwhile were chomping at the bit to get onto the circuit. With 30 mins of full gas racing ahead Josh and Aleksandr took to the line amongst over 20 other riders. The race started at a frantic pace and both lads managed to settle into a group with one other rider to ensure they all worked together and finish in the top half of the field.

The U14/U16 Girls were watching on knowing that 45 minutes of racing in a similar fashion would test their endurance limits. Eva, Hope, Ava, Emma and Zara, all experienced at this level knew what laid ahead. The race started at a frantic pace with the bunch lined out, around 7 laps in Eva was caught up in an incident that allowed some of the group to ride ahead. With close racing right to the end, Zara passed Ava by the smallest of margins in the downhill sprint with the girls taking 1st and 2nd in the U14's race. Hope also finished strongly to win the U16's category.

The final race of the day saw the U14/U16 Boys take to the start line. Innes, Euan, Murdo, Oliver and Rurik throwing themselves into the gauntlet with a some of the strongest youth riders in the country. Similar to the theme from the previous races throughout the day, the pace was blistering from the start. Bunch positioning was key in the opening laps, as closing gaps isn't easily achieved at the speed this race was being carried out at. Innes did a great job in landing 3rd place in the U14 boys. Murdo's PE teacher meanwhile was watching on assessing his race performance as part of his Nat 5 exam, surely a grade A will be in the post.

Results:- <https://results.sportshive.com/events/PC2356720>

*Chris Main*



## Glencoe DH 21 August

The gravity gang headed west to Glencoe this weekend, for the penultimate Round 4 of National Downhill Series (which also served as the final round of the Scottish National DH Series).

Most of the riders opted for an extra day of practice on Friday, in order to get a few laps on the new upper section of track built this summer. Overall impressions of the track were favourable, although headwinds on the top section meant the bigger jumps were not possible.

A few overnight showers suggested Storm Betty had indeed signed up for the race, but the first few runs on Saturday were dryish, and the wind had swung enough to bring some upper jumps back into the race. Conditions gradually deteriorated through the day, however, bringing heavy rain for seeding runs on Saturday afternoon.

The BDS Series uses a single Seeding/single Race run format over two days. Afternoon Seeding on Saturday saw several Deeside riders take "slightly longer" routes down the hill, with wind and loose corners leading to a few errors.

With the weather deteriorating further as the storm took hold, gazebos flying round the car park and streams flowing through tents as darkness fell, most of the race village headed to the newly rebuilt cafe and bar, thanks to the lovely folks at Glencoe Mountain staying open late over the race weekend.

Somewhat improbably, Sunday dawned dry. The midges were back, but a gentle breeze kept them manageable for most of the day. Riders were off up the hill on time, and race day was on us.

A few mechanicals through the long morning practice session kept the Dadchanics and Ladchanics puzzling, but at the lunchtime regroup all the riders and bikes were still functioning, and the talk, as ever, was of lines and near-death incidents on sketchy jumps. Lunch hoovered up, race jerseys on, goggles cleaned, and a final nervous squeeze of the tyres and the first riders head up the hill.

### RESULTS

#### JUV

|        |    |
|--------|----|
| James  | 5  |
| Monty  | 8  |
| Sandy  | 23 |
| Finlay | 26 |

#### YOUTH

|        |    |
|--------|----|
| Fraser | 10 |
| Daniel | 32 |
| Finn   | 44 |

#### JUN

|         |    |
|---------|----|
| Matthew | 15 |
|---------|----|

#### VET

|          |    |
|----------|----|
| Jonathan | 15 |
|----------|----|

#### SEN

|        |    |
|--------|----|
| Fergus | 11 |
|--------|----|

A huge thank you Gav, Ros and Freya for marshalling in some horrendous conditions) and to the riders for keeping it together over a rather testing weekend.

It's been an amazing DH season for us so far, with some great results. Podiums and Top 10 spots at SDA and National Events are hard-earned and the amount of work that has gone into the racing this year has been noticed across the DH scene. Best of luck to riders heading to Antur Stiniog next month, and its back on the Enduro seven for the rest of the gravity gang with two more AES races to go.

**Gordon Watt**

## Pitfichie DH 28 Aug

### Race Report - AES Round 3, Pitfichie

This weekend saw the penultimate round of the Aberdeenshire Enduro Series, on the unforgiving granite trails of Pitfichie. We had 21 riders entered for this round, another sell-out event attracting top riders from all over Scotland.

The weather in the lead up to the race hadn't been kind, and pre-race reports were that the trails were slippy and unpredictable. The Full (6 stages) and Lite (5 stages) took in some of Pitfichie's finest trails, and while our riders will have ridden all the tracks in the race, it's safe to say few of them will have seen them in that bad a mood...

Our first racers headed out from 9am onwards in a fairly steady stream. Queues at the top of some stages were obviously slowing progress down slightly, but the weather was mild and calm, and it was really only the hill baring its rocky teeth that seemed to be causing issues.

As the first riders reappeared in the finish arena it was obvious that the key to a good result was going to be keeping it tidy, riding patiently and staying upright.

Full results are available online: <https://www.sportident.co.uk/.../DoonThaBrae/2023/Pitfichie/>

Some standouts: Fraser P. taking the Junior Male (13-17) win from Daniel C. by a few seconds. 4th for Matthew C. and 6th for James C. with a snapped shifter. Stage wins for James, Matthew and Daniel (2).

4th for Skye C. in the Junior Females (13-17)

2nd for Molly S. in the Lite | Female Youth (9-12) category (and a stage win on Pheonix DH).

4th for Finlay B. & 5th for Jackson C. in the Lite | Male Youth (9-12).

Well done also to Eve D. (Winner of Lite Females 13+) and honorary Deesider Isabelle H, taking 4 stage wins out of 6 in the Junior females.

**Gordon Watt**



## North West Youth Tour 2023

12 Deeside riders made the trip down to Lancaster for the 2023 edition of the North West Youth Tour. This is a tough three-day stage race comprising of a prologue, being a time trial, a hilly stage and a criterium.

Stage racing is the top end of the game for road racing in the UK. So, a special mention goes to Calum Campbell and Freddie Ball who raced in the D (U10) category at their first every stage race. Putting everything they've learned and practiced on the Knockburn track into place. Both Calum and Freddie, rode hard, raced fast but most importantly, learnt loads!

The first of the three stages (the prologue) took place in the afternoon of Saturday 26th. With our first Deeside rider, Freddie Ball, setting off at 12:09! With on and off rain and wind conditions changing throughout the day, the approximately 2-mile course demanded full focus from all our riders. Everyone got their head down (literally!) and rode hard. Melanie Rowe took an impressive and convincing win in the B (U14) girls' race. Whilst deteriorating conditions left Eva Murphy and Euan Ramsay riding in pouring rain!

Stage two is often the one that riders talk about the most. With a long climb, a mean descent and technical corners, it's no easy task!

An early start saw our U10's and one U12 (Griff Aitken) tackling the climb first. Melanie continued her winning streak by finishing over 30 seconds ahead of 2nd place in the B girls' race, with teammate Ava Luce crossing the line in 8th shortly after.

The third and final stage took place on the Lancaster University campus, with our riders having to navigate a fast, twisty and technical course.

A special mention goes to our B girls - Emma Campbell, Zara Main, Ava Luce and Melanie Rowe - who put on a dominant display with all of them constantly moving up the bunch and pushing on the front. With Melanie going on to get 2nd in the final sprint.

It also was great to see Innes Long (B boy) showing good form and being on the front of his race. The A girls (U16) faced an exciting stage with Harriet Hendry riding decisively to stay in the front group.

Thanks to her hard work over the 3 days Melanie Rowe secured a comfortable overall win in the B girls General Classification.

All Deeside riders should give themselves a massive pat on the back (once they've done their Training Peaks!) for how they handled the past three days of fast, technical and hard racing. Every rider showed true determination and the positive racing across the board is a real reflection of the standard of coaching and hard work that our riders put in.

Whether it was your first NWYT or your third, this race always leaves you with something new learnt. Well done to all, especially the race support crew! *Ailsa Long*

## The MUR DE FOWLIS Road Race

Tullynessle – Thursday, 10 Aug 2023

The inaugural Sparta Breda Road race

34 miles with 2355ft of climbing

The race started in Alford Community Campus leading to 2 laps of a circuit including Muir of Fowlis/Milton of Cushnie/ Craigievar loop finishing on the iconic "Wall of Fowlis" hill commonly known as the Glacks hill.

**Result:** 1 Thomas Gelati KR, 2 Lee Rosie WCTC, 3 Ciaran McSherry TCA, 4 Cameron Adam SRT, 5 James Merry UNA, 6 Matiss Robertson NACC, 7 Neil Scott DTCC, 8 Tyler Clare ICC, 9 Robert Smart SRT, 10 Mark Walker DTCC, 11 David Ogden DTCC, 12 Innes Jamieson DTCC, 13 Eloi Gispert Llandrich DTCC, 14 Daniel Long ECC, 15 Callum Anderson UNA, 16 Steven Sharp TENS, 17 Stuart Gordon DTCC, 18 Stuart Moir DTCC, 19 Alexander MacLeod DTCC, 20 Matthew McEwan UNA, 21 Calum Cormack DTCC, 22 Richard Harris DTCC, 23 Steve Rae YCC, 24 Grant Sandison AWCC, 25 David Finlayson RT23, 26 Robert Cowie AWCC, 27 John Leal DTCC,

## Ythan Road Race - Thursday, 17 Aug 2023

Ythan CC hosted a regional C+ class race that forms part of the Grampian Evening Road Race Series. The race was held over several laps of a circuit comprising Kinharrachie, Ythanbank, Shire Brae, Ardlethen, Kinharrachie.

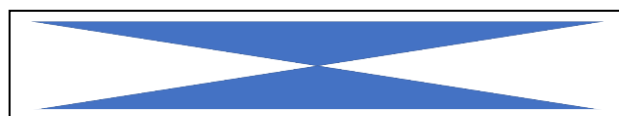
**Results:** 1 Lee Rosie WCTC, 2 Thomas Gelati KR, 3 Lewis Dey RT23, 4 Matiss Robertson NACC, 5 Daniel Long ECC, 6 Brian Duncan SB, 7 Hamish Armit GR, 8 Neil Scott DTCC, 9 Tyler Clare ICC, 10 Innes Jamieson DTCC, 11 David Finlayson RT23, 12 Richard Harris DTCC, 13 Steven Sharp TENS, 14 Grant Sandison AWCC, 15 Stuart Moir DTCC, 16 Peter Ferguson LUYCC, 17 Matthew Ansell VE, 18 Calum Cormack DTCC, 19 Alexander MacLeod DTCC, 20 Stuart Gordon DTCC, 21 David McKay DTCC, 22 Steve Rae YCC, 23 John Leal DTCC, 24 Robert Cowie AWCC

## National Championships

On Saturday 26 August Margaret McMillan took 9th place in the RTTC Women's 25TT Championship with a 1.00.47.

Then, on Sunday 27 August, in the Scottish Vets RR Championships, in the V50 category Robert Lindsay took 3rd place, Richard Harris 6<sup>th</sup> and Cal Cormack, 16<sup>th</sup>.

In the V40 category Mark Walker placed 4<sup>th</sup> and David Ogden placed 9<sup>th</sup>.



## Falling Leaves Stage Race

Ballater – Saturday, 02/03 Sep 2023

The return of the Falling Leave stage race, a two-day stage event brought to you by VCRT and DTCC and includes the Jolibar Trophy.

The Jolibar Trophy is awarded to the highest place finisher of a Grampian registered club and will be decided over stage one. To allow for this, this event is being run as a regional A (234).

This event will also be the final opportunity to gain points in the SCNEG Road Race Championships.

### Results

Prologue:

|    |                  |       |
|----|------------------|-------|
| 1  | Elliot Rowe      | AGRT  |
| 2  | Richard McDonald | VPG   |
| 3  | Murray Soutter   | TR    |
| 4  | Thomas Gelati    | KR    |
| 5  | Craig Paterson   | SRT   |
| 6  | Matis Robertson  | NACC  |
| 7  | Hamish Armit     | UNA   |
| 8  | Alan Dean        | ERC   |
| 9  | Alastair McNicol | DC    |
| 10 | James Merry      | VPG   |
| 11 | Samuel Carrotte  | AUCC  |
| 12 | Darren Rider     | UNA   |
| 13 | Liam Douglas     | UNA   |
| 14 | Ewan McMillan    | DTCC  |
| 15 | Finn Mason       | TCA   |
| 16 | Calum McVie      | TR    |
| 17 | Matthew Mernin   | MCC   |
| 18 | Mark Walker      | DTCC  |
| 19 | Cameron Muir     | WCC   |
| 20 | Adam Millington  | CVBRT |
| 21 | Graham Hollinger | TR    |
| 22 | Neil Scott       | DTCC  |
| 23 | Jack Moore       | GCC   |
| 24 | Richard Butler   | GKSU  |
| 25 | Lewis Dey        | RT23  |
| 26 | George Daly      | SCC   |
| 27 | Milo McIntosh    | TCA   |
| 28 | Noah Bleteau     | TCA   |
| 29 | Alex Mutter      | UNA   |
| 30 | Scott Meldrum    | LP    |
| 31 | Kevin Barclay    | DC    |
| 32 | Gregor McArthur  | TCA   |
| 33 | Edward Riley     | EUCC  |
| 34 | Alistair Merry   | DTRC  |
| 35 | Darren Dean      | ECC   |
| 36 | Keir Gaffney     | SRT   |
| 37 | Alexander Roger  | MFCC  |
| 38 | Fergus Robinson  | RRRT  |
| 39 | Alasdair Baillie | SRT   |
| 40 | David Ogden      | DTCC  |
| 41 | Martin Reynolds  | KR    |
| 42 | Joseph Agnew     | GCC   |

|    |                   |      |
|----|-------------------|------|
| 43 | Brian Duncan      | SB   |
| 44 | Conal Davidson    | SRT  |
| 45 | Cormac McConville | SRT  |
| 46 | Marc Roberts      | ECC  |
| 47 | Innes Jamieson    | DTCC |
| 48 | Murray Ferguson   | TR   |
| 49 | Jamie Riddoch     | ECC  |
| 50 | Ross Burgess      | TR   |
| 51 | Richard Harris    | DTCC |
| 52 | Robert Smart      | SRT  |
| 53 | Steven Sharp      | TENS |
| 54 | Alexander MacLeod | DTCC |
| 55 | Grant Sandison    | AWCC |
| 56 | Calum Cormack     | DTCC |
| 57 | Steve Shand       | AWCC |

### Stage 1

1 Milo McIntosh TCA, 2 Hamish Armit UN, 3 Brian Duncan SB, 4 Alan Dean ERC, 5 Jack Moore GCC, 6 Richard Butler GKSU, 7 Murray Soutter TR, 8 Darren Rider UNA, 9 Mark Walker DTCC, 10 Elliot Rowe AGRT, 11 Finn Mason TCA, 12 Craig Paterson SRT, 13 Alex Mutter UNA, 14 Alastair McNicol DC, 15 Cameron Muir WC, 16 Liam Scott Douglas JGCCC, 17 Fergus Robinson RRRT, 18 Richard McDonald VPG, 19 Keir Gaffney SRT, 20 Matiss Robertson NACC, 21 Noah Bleteau TCA, 22 Gregor McArthur TCA, 23 George Daly SCC, 24 Neil Scott DTCC, 25 Robert Smart SRT, 26 James Merry VPG, 27 Joseph Agnew GCC, 28 Adam Millington CVBRT, 29 Graham Hollinger TR, 30 Alistair Merry DTRC, 31 Alexander MacLeod DTCC, 32 Kevin Barclay DC, 33 Alexander Roger MFCC, 34 Ewan McMillan DTCC, 35 Calum McVie TR, 36 Conal Davidson SRT, 37 David Ogden DTCC, 38 Richard Harris DTCC, 39 Martin Reynolds KR, 40 Murray Ferguson TR, 41 Edward Riley EUCC, 42 Lewis Dey RT23, 43 Alasdair Baillie SRT, 44 Thomas Gelati KR, 45 Samuel Carrotte AUCC, 46 Scott Meldrum LP, 47 Grant Sandison AWCC, 48 Cormac McConville SRT, 49 Calum Cormack DTCC, 50 Marc Roberts ECC, 51 Matthew Mernin MCC, 52 Innes Jamieson DTCC, 53 Jamie Riddoch ECC, 54 Ross Burgess TR

### Stage 2

1 Murray Soutter TR, 2 Elliot Rowe AGRT, 3 Finn Mason TCA, 4 Darren Rider UNA, 5 Craig Paterson SRT, 6 Hamish Armit UNA, 7 Thomas Gelati KR, 8 Mark Walker DTCC, 9 Jack Moore GCC, 10 Alan Dean ERC, 11 James Merry VPG, 12 Alex Mutter UNA, 13 Richard McDonald VPG, 14 Cameron Muir WCC, 15 Calum McVie TR, 16 Neil Scott DTCC, 17 Richard Butler GKSU, 18 Alastair McNicol DC, 19 Noah Bleteau TCA, 20 Matiss Robertson NACC, 21 Gregor McArthur TCA, 22 George Daly SCC, 23 Keir Gaffney SRT, 24 Milo McIntosh TCA, 25 Kevin Barclay DC, 26 Liam Scott Douglas JGCCC, 27 Matthew Mernin MCC, 28 Alistair Merry DTRC, 29 Fergus Robinson RRRT, 30 Samuel Carrotte AUCC, 31 Martin Reynolds KR, 32 Brian Duncan SB, 33 Alexander Roger

MFRT, 34 Graham Hollinger TR, 35 David Ogden DTCC, 36 Ewan McMillan DTCC, 37 Scott Meldrum LP, 38 Marc Roberts ECC, 39 Murray Ferguson TR, 40 Alasdair Baillie SRT, 41 Joseph Agnew GCC, 42 Edward Riley EUCC, 43 Lewis Dey RT23, 44 Grant Sandison AWCC, 45 Alexander Macleod DTCC, 46 Robert Smart SRT, 47 Richard Harris DTCC, 48 Calum Cormack DTCC

### Overall

1 Hamish Armit GR, 2 Elliot Rowe AGRT, 3 Murray Soutter TR, 4 Craig Paterson SRT, 5 Darren Rider UNA, 6 Finn Mason TCA, 7 Alan Dean ERC, 8 Jack Moore GCC, 9 Richard Butler GKSU, 10 Richard McDonald VPG, 11 Thomas Gelati KR, 12 Mark Walker DTCC, 13 Matiss Robertson NACC, 14 Alastair McNicol DC, 15 James Merry VPG, 16 Cameron Muir WC, 17 Calum McVie TR, 18 Neil Scott DTCC, 19 Alex Mutter UNA, 20 Noah Bleteau TCA, 21 George Daly SCC, 22 Gregor McArthur TCA, 23 Keir Gaffney SRT, 24 Milo McIntosh TCA, 25 Liam Scott Douglas JGCCC, 26 Kevin Barclay DC, 27 Alistair Merry DTCC, 28 Brian Duncan SB, 29 Fergus Robinson RRRT, 30 Graham Hollinger TR, 31 Ewan McMillan DTCC, 32 Alexander Roger MFCC, 33 Martin Reynolds KR, 34 David Ogden DTCC, 35 Samuel Carrotte AUCC, 36 Murray Ferguson TR, 37 Alasdair Baillie SRT, 38 Joseph Agnew GCC, 39 Matthew Mernin MCC, 40 Scott Meldrum LP, 41 Marc Roberts ECC, 42 Edward Riley EUCC, 43 Lewis Dey RT23, 44 Alexander MacLeod DTCC, 45 Robert Smart SRT, 46 Grant Sandison AWCC, 47 Richard Harris DTCC, 48 Calum Cormack DTCC,

### Scottish Cyclocross Series

The first round of the Scottish Cyclocross Series took place at Kinneil Estate in Bo'ness on 10 September.

#### DTCC Youths had 6 riders down.

|           |                  |               |
|-----------|------------------|---------------|
| U12 Boys  | 17 <sup>th</sup> | Josh Sharp    |
| U14 Girls | 2 <sup>nd</sup>  | Zara Main     |
| U16 Girls | 2 <sup>nd</sup>  | Hope Thompson |
| U16 Boys  | 3 <sup>rd</sup>  | Oliver Carter |
|           | 8 <sup>th</sup>  | Oliver Bain   |
|           | 9 <sup>th</sup>  | Ross Eastaugh |

#### DTCC also had a few adults racing.

|            |                  |              |
|------------|------------------|--------------|
| Vet 60's   | 12 <sup>th</sup> | Graham Gauld |
| Vet 50's   | 14 <sup>th</sup> | Victor Allan |
|            | 48 <sup>th</sup> | Joseph Fee   |
| Vet 40's   | 3 <sup>rd</sup>  | Dave Ogden   |
|            | 7 <sup>th</sup>  | Chris Main   |
| Senior Men | 7 <sup>th</sup>  | Neil Scott   |

*Chris Main*

### SCNEG Update

Provisional Calendar for Scottish events in 2023 is [here](#).

Dates may change and events be added.

*Colin Allanach - [colinallanach@aol.com](mailto:colinallanach@aol.com)*

### Vuelta 2024 and lessons from the past

In a long and active cycling life I've been following the Grand Tours, and especially the Tour de France, since 1960. That 1960 event revealed to me the highs and lows and the reality of pro cycling.

Gastone Nencini, an Italian won the race. There are photos of him slumped against a wall in yellow at the end of a stage having a much-needed cigarette. On one of the hilly stages, he was being pursued by the handsome 24-year-old Frenchman, Roger Rivière. Destined for a great career he was already World Hour champion but that day on Col du Pejuret he was attempting to follow legendary descender Nencini.

Rivière couldn't do it, crashed in to a ravine, was stretchered out with life-changing injuries. He never rode again, spent his life in a wheelchair and died young. Although not immediately reported he was found to have taken a cocktail of drugs and those impaired his judgement on the descent and also prevented the medication administered after the crash to work on his body.

Just a few years later Tom Simpson, a hero to us young riders, died on Mont Ventoux largely because of a mixture of drugs and alcohol he had consumed in an effort to obtain a good placing in Le Tour and a lucrative contract.

I was still fascinated by the drama especially in the high mountains.

There have been so many doubtful performances of course - some detected but many only suspected. Some were covered up and some appeared to be ignored. Others went undetected but are very suspicious. If you've been following the sport for any time at all you will have your own list! Mine include Festina, Gewiss, US Postal, Mapei and Sky as well as individuals and teams who achieved a dominance which looked unlikely / impossible especially in the third week of a Grand Tour when a rider on normal nutrition would be totally knackered and needed to sleep for three days.

There is also the situation where a particular team has riders of different builds and skills who appear capable of riding together at the front of the General Classification group day after day in all terrains.

Commentators who don't have an easy job, particularly on those long boring sprinter stages, are reluctant to be critical of performances which look decidedly dodgy. Phil Liggett, a man I admire, and who gave his services free to our Club on our 50th anniversary celebration, was sucked into the "Lance Armstrong as a hero" movement. Even when it was blindingly obvious to seasoned fans that some things didn't stack up the commentators were firmly behind the cancer-miracle story which was, and still is, an inspiration to so many.

In more recent times the supremacy of Sky and their 'marginal gains' producing Tour winners year after year went unscrutinised even when there were disclosures about Jiffy bags, therapeutic use exemptions and missed tests.



Because I've been a bit unwell recently and required to be hospitalised, I took a subscription to CGN+ so I've seen nearly all the televised Vuelta this year.

Once Sepp Kuss found himself in the Red leader's jersey, I imagined he would be looked after by the machine that is Jumbo Visma. I was horrified when each of Roglic and Vingegaard attacked him at the end of mountain stages. Given that Sepp had been their ultra successful mountain domestique over many Grand Tours, all three this year, it was the ultimate disloyalty in my book! Jumbo Visma had really mucked up before that because Roglic had been their designated team leader until Vingegaard had demanded to ride. As soon as Vingegaard got his own way the writing was on the wall for Roglic.

It was always going to be a mess that could only be resolved by a crash or illness! Jumbo Visma management abandoned their control and gave the impression that it would be any one of the three riders that could go for it. The leader was not to be protected other than to ensure the three all did well.

Fortunately, Sean Kelly very vocally reminded the viewers about the long-established convention that the leader is protected so long as he's capable of hanging on and the victory isn't going to a rival. Roglic and Vingegaard were talked to and abandoned their selfish aspirations - much to the annoyance of Roglic who would most probably have been beaten by Jonas anyway!

Glad that Sepp Kuss prevailed. He's a much - needed American success and a pleasant personality as well as a very strong rider.

But I would like to see the day when commentators feel able to convey the message that the apparent supremacy of a large number of riders from one team arouses suspicion when they can do it day after day. There are so many precedents which plague the sport. Even the supremacy of Jumbo Visma in this year's grand tours looks worthy of scrutiny. It's certainly the talk of the peloton just like Team Sky in more recent years. The performance of Jonas Vingegaard in the TdF time trial and his huge gap on the second rider is worthy of a detailed enquiry.

To ignore such is to do our sport a disservice.  
*Alan Campbell, Hon President*

### Letter

Sir, recently on my way to Aberdeen at 4pm at Garlogie I met a girl leading 30 vehicles. By way of my two-way radio link this queue started near Subsea 7 area. Involved in the queue were 7 artics; they need long clearances when overtaking.

The girl cyclist had probably a good day at the office, but her timings caused grief to others needing home who maybe had a bad day.

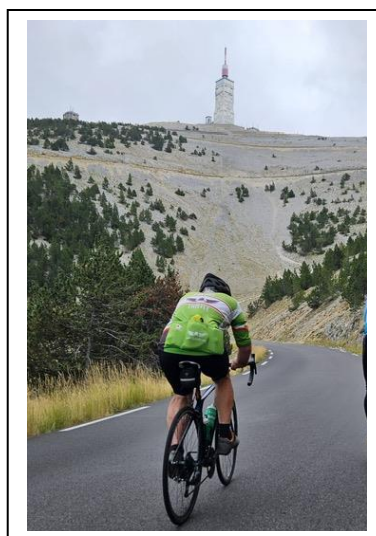
During peak hours it would assist if cyclists could draw into laybys or openings removing the endangering of lives. It's a matter of time before there is an incident, the cyclist is always the loser, this I know.

*Kind regards, Bert McIntosh*

## Un, Deux, Trois – Cingles De Mont Ventoux

I'd not have done the Mont Ventoux if Robert hadn't given me the birthday present. But that mountain has for more than 50 years been uppermost in my mind and I'd the dream that one day I could visit Tom Simpson's Memorial on the slopes.

It happened on 03 September. Out of Bedoin we rode to the top in under 2.5 hours. Carrying straight on we descended to Malaucene to about turn and climb the hill again. This time after patting ourselves on our backs we descended to Sault to about turn and climb to the top for a third time.



Riding all three routes to the summit in one day is known as Cingles de Mont Ventoux.

And I had my emotional moment heading down to Chalet Reynard for the last time, when we stopped at the Simpson Memorial. Amongst all the clutter of commemorative stuff that litters the steps we left a Club vest. It'll be gone in the first gale that hits

the mountain, but I know that since we left the vest the site has been visited and photographs have made their way onto the Tom Simpson Appreciation Group Facebook page.

Most folk would have said enough's enough, put their feet up and sampled the local wine. Not Robert.

On day 2 we climbed the sinuous Lacets De Montvernier. At less than 4km and less than 4% average it was comparatively easy. Only, we went on to ride the Col Du Sapey which has a lung bursting 20% section.

Next day came a circuit including the Col de la Croix de Fer. A huge climb with magnificent views of Mont Blanc.

Day 4, in near 40-degree heat, we climbed Alpe d'Huez Confessions, one of the legendary TdeF climbs.

On the final day of this gentle holiday, we took in the Glandon, the Croix de Fer again, the Telegraphe and the monster of the Galibier.

Day 5 was relentless. At over 100 miles we were out for 13 hours and finished with lights. Mind you, the 30 miles of steep, twisting descent back to our accommodation was something else.

*AJL*



## Peter Yeats

You may have heard news of the recent passing of a former club member, Peter Yeats.

Peter had a long fight against cancer but managed to remain active and positive for most of it. He was a work colleague of mine at TAQA and became a great friend even paying me a visit in hospital when I had a mishap in an Evening League TT a few years back.

I kept some old Club photos with him pictured and shared them with Peter recently. A great Guy who did more Triathlon & Hill running as he got older and will probably still be remembered by quite a few within the Club.



*Scottish Cycling 1996 12Hr Championship Team  
Ken Bryson/Ian Curphey/Peter Yeats*

He'd been running in the hills around the hills of his new home in Loch Ness side until comparatively recently.

*Bill Bavidge*

## Sporting Misadventures with Chris Hoy

I've recently launched a new podcast with Sir Chris Hoy called Sporting Misadventures where we get a comedian on each week to talk about his or her sporting misadventures.

I was just spreading the word to cycling clubs across Scotland as I know Chris has a big fanbase there and thought of you guys at Deeside Thistle Cycling Club. I thought it might be of interest to your members.

Here's a link to all the places where you can have a listen to it - <https://pod.link/1680181306>

*Matt Majendie*

## KNOCKBURN LOCH MANAGEMENT

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

## Scottish Cycling Badge of Honour

Scottish Cycling is welcoming nominations for its prestigious Badge of Honour accolade, which recognises the contribution and achievement of individuals who have shown exceptional dedication, made a remarkable contribution or given an outstanding performance, through a lifetime dedicated to the sport of cycling in Scotland.

If there is anyone you wish to nominate, please do so via this link:

[https://www.britishcycling.org.uk/scotland/article/20230831-Badge-of-Honour-Nominations-open-for-2023-0?fbclid=IwAR3bonwxaVbKVEy\\_4GZdD3dAgtRIQnZKNGrxfb7fvTwl\\_bh7HSKB79syUMs](https://www.britishcycling.org.uk/scotland/article/20230831-Badge-of-Honour-Nominations-open-for-2023-0?fbclid=IwAR3bonwxaVbKVEy_4GZdD3dAgtRIQnZKNGrxfb7fvTwl_bh7HSKB79syUMs) *Ewan McArthur*

## New Kit Bag

I have been working with the Montrose Bag Company to come up with a new and improved Deeside Thistle Kit Bag. The version 2.0 bag incorporates improvements fed back from youth riders and new products that the Montrose Bag Company offer.

The last kit bag made for the club was in 2015, with a good number of these still being used to date. It gives an example of the robustness of the bags made by the Montrose Bag Company.

I personally have used a Montrose Bag Company bag for the last 12 years of offshore travels and despite a few scuffs from un-friendly helideck personnel, it is still waterproof and as strong as the day I got it.

The new bag is based on the original design but with some improvements. The original bag size of 66cm x 30cm x 30cm remains, there are 2 end pockets that are 10cm wide and a central pocket of 46cm wide giving the following capacity of 9L + 41.5L +9L. Please see pictures [here](#)

The new bag will be in the same waterproof material however in a turquoise green colour with white Logo patches. There will be a netted pocket inside the lid of the central compartment, and it will have a double rucksack strap. It will have a side pocket and a clear card holder.

Each bag can have an individual rider's name printed beneath the club's wings logo on the end panel. The full club logo would be on the side panel opposite the pocket. This bag will cost £88 per bag based on an order quantity of 20-50 pieces and the current lead time is 6 weeks from the point of order. I appreciate that this is not an insignificant amount to spend on a bag. However, from my experience with the bags from the Montrose Bag Company they are very hard wearing and should last a long time. If you are interested in getting a bag please comment [here](#)

*Russell Macnamara*



## Commissaire Opportunity

Ready to start the journey to become a commissaire? Events don't run without them. Want to be part of the wider biking community.

Find out more about becoming a commissaire and the training you undergo here. [Trainee Commissaire course \(britishcycling.org.uk\)](http://britishcycling.org.uk).

If anyone's interested, please contact [volunteer@scottishcycling.org.uk](mailto:volunteer@scottishcycling.org.uk)

## New Members

The following new or returning members have joined in recent weeks.

|      |                 |            |    |
|------|-----------------|------------|----|
| 3120 | Kieren Willis   | Montrose   | 11 |
| 3121 | Lucy Taylor     | Banchory   | 6  |
| 3122 | Callum Urquhart | Banchory   | 11 |
| 3123 | Martin Moore    | Portlethen | 34 |
| 3124 | Harry Spencer   | Banchory   | 11 |
| 3125 | Finlay Spencer  | Banchory   | 8  |

Any friend, family member, work colleague, who is interested in cycling but not involved with a club, should be dropped the hint to look at [www.deeside.org/members](http://www.deeside.org/members) or to email [members@deeside.org](mailto:members@deeside.org) asking for information.

## Zwift Sunday Club Endurance Ride

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.



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

## Youth Free Membership

Deeside Thistle Cycling Club is delighted to offer free membership to new youth riders for their first year. If you would like to take advantage of this offer, please see: <http://www.deeside.org/membership.html>

## 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.

## Spond Guide Update - Group Codes

If you are already registered in Spond and in one DTCC group, you can join another with these links (or use the "Enter Code" option in the App).

|                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| <b>DonsideBunch</b>   | <a href="https://group.spond.com/WWDYZ">https://group.spond.com/WWDYZ</a> |
| <b>Banchory</b>       | <a href="https://group.spond.com/TYLWP">https://group.spond.com/TYLWP</a> |
| <b>DTCC MTB</b>       | <a href="https://group.spond.com/MRFCH">https://group.spond.com/MRFCH</a> |
| <b>LeggartTerrace</b> | <a href="https://group.spond.com/AGTNP">https://group.spond.com/AGTNP</a> |

Click on the group(s) you want to be member of, and the ride admin will accept you.

Link to PDF Spond guide: [http://deeside.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/DTCC\\_Spond\\_and\\_Ride\\_Leader\\_Guide.pdf](http://deeside.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/DTCC_Spond_and_Ride_Leader_Guide.pdf)

Link to PPT Spond guide: [http://deeside.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/DTCC\\_Spond\\_and\\_Ride\\_Leader\\_Guide.pptx](http://deeside.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/DTCC_Spond_and_Ride_Leader_Guide.pptx)

*Peter Smart*

## Donside Bunch Rides

Mostly starting from Kintore, these will vary in length (and sometimes start time). Make up of groups will depend on who attends on a week-by-week basis.

For those who are venturing outside for the first time or returning after a break/injury etc, there will be a shorter/steadier (sub 3hr) ride posted every Sunday. Can't guarantee a leader for that ride but will attempt to get a volunteer on a weekly basis.

All rides will be posted on [SPOND](#). The more people that sign up for the steadier ride, the more chance of it being a success.

## Wednesday / Friday Banchory Rides

Town Hall at 1000. Check on [SPOND](#) if you are able to. Rides on Friday are to Ballater. Best to book table at Brown Sugar via FB Messenger. Rides on Wednesday are to 'somewhere else', usually about 80km/50mi.

## 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/TYLWP>

There are other rides through the week and sometimes adhoc meetups, so it is worth joining. The route will be published on SPOND and will always include a coffee stop. Distance is around 50 miles.

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. Espresso will set off first, anyone dropped from Espresso can drop back to Latte. If we do not have enough for two groups, it will be a no drop ride. All levels of rider welcome



## Saturday Morning Group Rides - Leggart Tee

Over autumn and into winter, the Saturday morning group rides from Leggart Terrace will start at the later time of 09:00. Alan Campbell will take a steady group on the ride while Steve Brechin will lead a slightly brisker group if numbers allow.

The 54mile/87km route, known within the club as The Chairman's Classic, takes in some of the best climbs in the local area. You can view the route here: [The Chairman's Classic | 86.7 km Cycling Route on Strava](#).

It's a no drop ride and all are welcome. Email Steve Brechin on [DTCC-Banchory.Saturday@outlook.com](mailto:DTCC-Banchory.Saturday@outlook.com) or look for us on [Spond](#).

Please consider the use of mud guards on your bike until we get into the better weather again.

## 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>

## 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.

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

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

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



## 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

The full calendar of runs is available here: <https://ctcgrampian.org.uk/runs-list/>

### Club Kit Arrival

The latest Pactimo kit order is now available to collect from Tierney Strachan, 12 Greenbank Place, East Tullos, AB12 3BT. Normal office hours apply. Please ring the bell at our Goods-In door and announce that you are here to collect Deeside Kit with your name.

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.

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](mailto:jas@tierney-strachan.co.uk))



### 25 Years Ago

The end of the racing season is fast approaching. It has been an appalling one with bad weather plaguing many events and training sessions. Event numbers were low. Many folk suggested that our evening league had diluted numbers - but enough of the gloom.

This is not a resume of what happened, how it happened. That will be left to later, once the fat lady sings, once this month is gone and the season has flickered its last and fizzled out.

What this is, is an appraisal of two fine young men and what they have individually done. Not a blow-by-blow account of the events they have ridden but a simple statement of the standard reached.

First there is Neil Brown who, without the support of a road team, has carried the flag nobly throughout the season. His successes and places have gained him a high ranking in the BCF list of elite riders.

The current list has positioned him at 26<sup>th</sup> in Britain with 189pts. Since it was published at the start of August, he has gained a further 36 points. Other riders will also have gained points but with any luck Neil's position should have further improved.

The second rider is Brian Duncan Jnr. At 17 Brian already has a number of seasons of competition behind him. Much of his racing has been in the club's Evening League but this year he has, on occasion, ventured further afield.

One of those occasions was just a couple of weeks ago when he popped down to Dundee. The promise had always been there. Now it has been realised. Previously held by Adam Ramsay of the Wheelers and just before that by our own Neil Brown, Brian broke the Scottish Junior Record at 25 miles.

A 55.42 is something else. Coupled to that is a 2.01 for 50 miles which has set Brian in pole position for the Scottish Junior BAR.

There aren't many good juniors on the circuit at the moment and the argument "where's the competition" could be levelled. However, you can't argue when records get broken.



## For Sale

- 1 a) New condition, 2021 Orbea Ordu M20 LTD, Hydro Disc brake TT Weapon, S/M or M/L, many upgrades, inc Disc rear and 100mm front wheels. £2400. Details: [Upgraded Orbea Ordu M20 LTD Hydro Disc TT Bike.docx](#)
- b) Immaculate, little used, 2018 Santa Cruz Tallboy, Carbon CS 29er, L, Forest Green, £1300. Details: <https://1drv.ms/w/s!Amc2Ug7TIDbSgpl00j4I2NoE68JVqw?e=dPOOrC>. Bought from Cycle Highlands in 2018 (who are happy to speak to potential buyer)  
Contact: Bob McGraw [robert.mcgraw@virgin.net](mailto:robert.mcgraw@virgin.net)
- 2 a) Airborne - Carpe Diem in red (aluminium frame) 19" centre to top tube. Set up as a winter bike (although it can make a great cyclo-cross bike) New Sora 9 speed with Ritchey WCS cranks. Shimano Dura Ace wheelset and new Selcof stem and Planet X bars. SKS mudguards. Great condition. £400 secures
- b) Planet X Stealth frame set (blue) in large. Comes with seat pin, TT bars + risers and front mech £150 secures
- c) DT Swiss R20 wheelset. Used as backup wheels when I was going through my Everesting phase so, not much use. £150 secures.

Photos available and for further info. contact Phil Kelman - [philipkelman@aol.com](mailto:philipkelman@aol.com).

## Ian Grant

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## Historical Reminiscences

### (Part 60)

Symmetry is important. Handlebars have got to be squared to the frame, brake levers precisely angled. This so that your hands could rest in an exact mirror image position; so that your shoulders were level. Shoe plates had to be fitted to the millimetre; shoelaces tightened equally and toe straps pulled with equal tautness.

All the care and attention to ensure that both sides of your bike, all the dedication to avoid any unequal strain on your body, made certain that every ounce of energy could be devoted to propelling your dream machine forward.

Bike set-up took an age to perfect. Saddle adjustments, forwards and back, raised and lowered 5mm at a time, stem set at 40mm in front of fingertips and 40mm lower than the point of the saddle. All this to ensure the symmetry of your body would not be compromised.

All this without realising that seldom does one half of your body mirror image the other half.

Then the guy on the steps asked, "You need porter?"

The hiring of porters had often been discussed during our planning and always the same answer came up that we'd manage without any outside help. This trial of endurance did not require the assistance of an entourage of helpers. The road in from Kathmandu to Jiri had been successfully covered without any help. Or had it? My mind went back to the first day when I'd succumbed to the heat and stomach problems and tied my bag to my carrier; how I'd persuaded Alastair to do the same thing the following day; and how this morning we'd thankfully loaded our bags into the back of the Swiss engineers' car. In light of this could we even consider carrying the bags a short distance tomorrow when we went off road. Maybe porters were needed. I asked this fellow to wait until Alastair returned.

Alastair returned and told me the place didn't appear too good. Do we have standards, western standards, to be imposed on a different culture? Are our standards any better? Often, I think not but the fear of being taken for a ride by the local Mafia decided us against this lodge. Nonetheless, it was jointly decided that the Nepali who'd offered us a porter could tag along for further discussion.

Jiri, even after dark, seethed with people so I stayed to protect our bikes and bags while Alastair went to find somewhere to stay. He found the Sagarmatha Lodge. It had a good menu and I looked forward to trying out a full meal.

The Nepali, our prospective porter, told us he wanted Rs130 per day. Having been told never to give what was asked we bargained and knocked him down to Rs100. Having won on that account, or so we thought, he was then asked if this included food. It did not. Food would cost Rs30 per day. It looks much like he will get what he asked for. But, what the heck!

He picked up Alastair's bag and marched off to the Sagarmatha Lodge. It appeared Alastair had gained himself



a helper. This guy's assurance that he'd secure someone else to carry my bag did not help at all in the short walk to the lodge.

The lodge stands back from the main street, the only street, in the town. It is reached by stepping over an open sewer and going to the left of the washing area. Through the front door, rooms are passed on either side of the short corridor, which leads to the stairs. Off the stairs are several landings, off each of which are more rooms. The top landing gives access to the restaurant and kitchen. Sitting in the restaurant are several trekkers dressed in t-shirts and shorts. Our room is off one of the landings. On a sort of veranda, built out from another landing, is a toilet. Alastair could not believe it. I did. It was appalling. An awful stench did nothing for my stomach. There is an oval hole in the floor, no running water and a bottle of disinfectant on a dwang.

Warned months before we left, that a meal could take up to two hours to prepare, proof came that evening. Having travelled ten and a half hours from 6.30am, fast food would have pleased us but the a la carte menu did not indicate a selection of instant choices. At 6.30pm we ordered fried potato, fried rice, egg, chicken, beer, Pepsi. It sounded okay, even appetising; certainly refreshing. Steering clear of the red meats on the menu we'd nevertheless taken the plunge by ordering white meat, which is supposed to be acceptable.

Shortly after ordering the meal, I headed down to the toilet and met one of the lodge boys coming up. Under his arm he had a fresh chicken, squawking well, still feathered. Could that be our meal?

When it came to the eating bit most of the food went over okay, but the chicken had seen better days. It was tough, stringy and I left mine uneaten as did Alastair, his.

Later, our second porter turned up, obviously a friend of the first chap. They hung around, sinister looking while we completed our food. I had no fear of them, yet somehow could not bring myself to show trust. Time will tell if my feelings are just those of someone from a different culture, something inbred because of our way of life.

The second porter is younger. I'd put him in his early twenties. He has a sad face yet smiles easily. He is wearing gym shoes, a white shirt and coloured Nepali hat. The first porter, obviously assuming the role of leader, is wearing a baseball hat, a dirty khaki, military style jacket, long trousers and similar gym shoes. He is skinny and looks wiry.

There had never been time to write home during the day as I'd hoped and, in the evening, as always, I had to give time for this diary. Tonight, our newly hired porters have also taken a lot of time to sort out. Once those things had been done, I went straight to bed. Now I'm about to conk out.

Who would have believed anything could have gone on for so long. The track went up and up. Every corner turned showed more steps, another nightmare. During the whole effort we had no chance to get on our bikes except for a few seconds past a stagnant green pond near Goem.

For several days now we've been taking Imodium to try and alleviate the problems of diarrhoea and though the effect is to prevent a visit to the undergrowth they do not quell the upset stomach – and waste is contained in the body. I do not like the idea and wonder if it would not be better to suffer the indignity of frequent stops.

From Kinja, Lamjura soared. White mountains could be seen to the north and travelling parallel to these our first stop is Sete. Yesterday Chhatra had pointed out Sete stuck on the side of the mountain, reached by a bush-screened path. That had been our preferred stop, which we'd failed to reach, given best even before the climb started. This failure to ascend those first few hundred metres meant that today's task would prove even more difficult. Sete would be our first food stop.

Looking at the lodge, set on a ledge almost vertically above us, to our inexperienced eye, we thought that it would not take long to reach. Chhatra's "*you stop for food*" sounded as if he just wanted an early second breakfast.

At home, in Scotland, I'd have judged it as an hour's climb. Here, because of the heat and altitude, with no stretch cycleable and the track zig-zagging, according to Chhatra, "*you take 2 hour.*" Slogging upwards, Sete disappeared from view. Each building passed let us down. Imagining we'd scaled the distance, our porters walked on past leaving us deflated. Correct, as always, Chhatra off-loaded his basket after two hours on the porters' ledge outside the lodge at Sete.

Now the value of Chhatra and Beam is being appreciated. Their knowledge of the trail seems boundless. Where we would have judged wrongly, they correct us diplomatically; when we are correct their acquiescence serves to bolster our confidence. There are still reservations, and we are not willing to show complete trust though I have got to admit not once have they given any real cause for concern.

Chhatra has selected a bed directly above the kitchen where smoke pours through the floor from the stoves below. It is his own choice to do so but I suggested to him it was not a good one.

At the top of the stairs, directly across the landing and to the left of the door to our dormitory, is a small box room. Here, two children, brother and sister, are sitting on yak skins. For light they have a kerosene flame burning from a wick pushed into an old Camping Gaz container. They are labouring over school homework.

Returning to the kitchen, our food, ordered earlier, is served on metal plates. We sit at a small round table, and, like the children, have only a guttering flame to see by. An older child tends the fire while a yet older girl tends to us. Round the table is a wide bench and bedding stacked on shelves. This is obviously the sleeping quarters for the family while guests get the dubious pleasure of sleeping upstairs in the smoke-filled dormitory.



Wakening this morning with a sore head it worried me a bit when Alastair said he felt the same. At breakfast discussion got round to the altitude and agreeing that it could be this I also suspected there might be a bit of dehydration. Each day temperatures are high and the resulting sweating from our efforts means a greater need for increased fluid intake. To maintain the correct balance is difficult and I think that yesterday's climb took a big toll.

Even with the high temperatures and sunshine for much of the day our clothes seem to take a long time to dry. Tied to our bags and exposed to the air you'd think that they would dry in a short space of time. This indicates that along with the heat there is a high humidity.

The remaining stretch to the top of the pass was completed slowly. With deference to the possibility that our headaches were caused by the altitude we've heeded the advice. One step at a time had been the instruction. In the thinning air many rests were taken as we passed along forests of rhododendrons to reach a small lodge very near the top. Feeling reasonably well it annoyed now to have to suffer the pain of bashed and bleeding ankles.

At Thodung Lodge we finally gave into the desperate pleas of porters. All along the way porters have urged us to let them handle our bikes. However, standing here near 3500 metres above sea level, it looks like all they want to do is lift the bikes and pose for photographs.

Reaching the summit of the pass, in the sun, lying among the Gentian Violets, we looked down onto tree covered slopes stretching for ever towards Salung. It gave a lot of pleasure to bask for half an hour before taking the bikes over the precarious sandy slopes down to the tree line. Chhatra, too, lay back, though Beam elected to pace on. A gentle breeze ruffled the prayer flags strung on untidy lines from chortens built at the summit of the pass. Tremendous views are all around us and today we may see Everest. Our books have given the information that on the route, at Salung on the descent from Lamjura, the first views of Everest may be obtained.

Very steep to the trees, as usual, little chance of riding was found, but once through them a narrow less steep path greeted us. Mounting, for the first time in about 40 hours an appreciable amount could be cycled. Threading our way along a dyked track, it led us to Shanti Lodge where apples were on sale. Small and filthy skinned, once peeled, a firm white flesh could be safely eaten. Many were. Indeed, before the valley floor, on several other occasions, apples were on sale and purchased. The books insist that the skin is not eaten. So, we pared the skin and ate the rest. The flesh is glorious. Because of the bacteria collecting on the skin, it is dangerous to eat this part – though this did not deter the locals. The children gathering round were delighted with the parings and munched away happily on them.

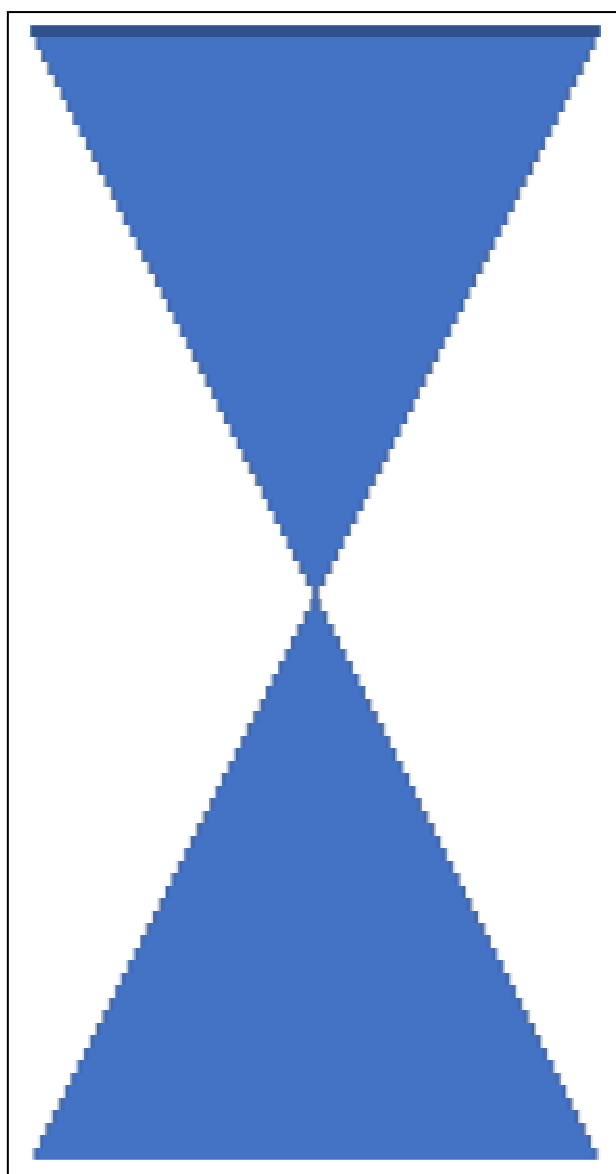
*Roughstuffer*

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01467 621861



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](mailto:knockies@aol.com)



# Falling Leaves 2023

Sunday 01 October 2021

HQ – Echt Hall

Registration from 7.30am

## 100 miles and 100kms

This is a communal group ride on a challenging course. Entries are welcomed now. Contact [info@deeside.org](mailto:info@deeside.org) to secure your place. Helpers are also welcome to get in contact.

There is a fee of £5.00 to help cover costs of hall and food.

The 100miler tackles The Lecht in each direction.

Steady paced 100-mile riders will leave at 8.00am. Additional groups dependent on numbers will leave at reasonable intervals thereafter. There will be three Groups, as follows-

- One Very Steady
- Two A bit faster
- Three Sporting-for those who have been racing or going for a time in a sportif.
- Let the organiser know where you fit in so that similar abilities will be together.

100km groups will leave at reasonable intervals, dependent on numbers, after 9.00am.

As entries accumulate groups will be formed and these will be announced with start times prior to the event.

**Don't delay –Enter today! Contact [info@deeside.org](mailto:info@deeside.org)**

### Routes:

**100 miles** <https://www.strava.com/routes/2875745119419035372>

- 1 Echt-Head west on B9119 to Tarland 17 miles
- 2 Through Tarland turn right to Migvie and A97
- 3 Head north on A97-Boultenstone-to A944
- 4 Turn left and head west A944 to Corgarff
- 5 Then take A939 to Tomintoul via The Lecht 47 miles
- 6 Buy tea and buns at The Old Fire Station Cafe
- 7 Retrace wheel tracks on A939 over Lecht to Corgarff 59 miles
- 8 Then take A939 to Ballater over Gairnshiel and Gairnshiel bridge to Gairnshiel lodge.
- 9 Take A939 heading east to Ballater joining the A93.
- 10 Proceed through Ballater centre to South Deeside Road B976 and head east
- 11 Follow B976 to Aboyne junction then road into Aboyne and join A93 heading East 82 miles
- 12 Proceed through Kincardine O Neil then head north on B993 to Torphins 90 miles
- 13 Stay on B993 north of Torphins over The Learney hill to B9119
- 14 Turn right on B9119 and retrace to Echt 100 miles

**100km** <https://www.strava.com/routes/2875102543274703026>

- 1 Echt-Head west on B9119 to Tarland 17 miles
- 2 Through Tarland turn right to Migvie and A97
- 3 Left to Logie Coldstone on A97
- 4 Right to North Deeside via Burn o'Vat
- 5 Right on A93 North Deeside to Ballater 33 miles
- 6 Proceed through Ballater centre to South Deeside Road B976 and head east
- 7 Follow B976 to Aboyne junction then road into Aboyne and join A93 heading East 45 miles
- 8 Proceed through Kincardine O Neil then head north on B993 to Torphins 53 miles
- 9 Stay on B993 north of Torphins over The Learney hill to B9119
- 10 Turn right on B9119 and retrace to Echt 63 miles

**Don't delay –Enter today! Contact [info@deeside.org](mailto:info@deeside.org)**