

## NEWSLETTER

Issue 4/2009

December 2009

### **HANNAH PAYTON CROWNED WEST MIDLANDS CHAMPION**

**Your  
News  
From  
Your  
Club**

*Congratulations to Hannah on becoming the West Midlands Cyclo-Cross Champion (Youth U16 Female) after winning a close fought contest with Bethany Crumpton (Halesowen Athletic and Cycling Club) at Baggeridge Country Park on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> December. This was a superb performance by Hannah who showed great fitness, determination and skill to cope with the extremely muddy conditions and a very challenging course with lots of white paint required to highlight hazards.*



*Orange jerseys were also seen in the Youth U16 with George Appleby and the Youth U14 with Anthony Neave, while Kevin Payton, Roger Allen and Bryan Hedges competed in the Veterans, leaving Matt Bowker to do battle with the Seniors and a very muddy and churned-up course.*

*Finally, Tom Payton riding in the colours of Cult Racing Cycles, was the first U23 across the line and ninth overall in the Senior race. Well done everyone and of course the helpers!*

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*Our first competitive event for a while was fantastic and many thanks to all involved, and by that I mean both the volunteers and the riders; 27 riders competed and the event involved a total of about 40 that ensured the event was all we had planned it to be. For those who were not there, the event was an On Road/Off Road hill climb that took place Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> October. The first stage was the Road Climb and then the action moved to the Off Road climb to the summit of Clent Hills. Overall honours went to Tom Payton, followed by Chris Hallford, Roger Allen and Kevin Payton. Of particular note was the 5<sup>th</sup> place of George Appleby who beat many others senior to him. We even made the Stourbridge News with a report and a picture of George! Special thanks must go to Stefan Harrison for organising the event and with this confidence we can move on into our 2010 racing event programme. There are lots of ideas in the pipeline to maintain the inclusive theme of this event, which involved Go-Ride graduates, seniors, youths, males and females and quite a few of the more mature members in the Club! We have worked in partnership with the National Trust and Cycling Time Trials to create a special event. I have also been talking to the National Trust about developing our cycling interests around the Clent Hills which is a fantastic off-road venue.*

*Yes, the guy that recently gave the Club a talk on 'Cycling Road Safety' has ridden head-on into an oncoming car! A moments lack of concentration returning from the Spiders, a low winters sun, thoughts elsewhere and catastrophe can occur in a flash. A lovely bike wrecked is only a bike after all, death lasts a lot longer. Thank you all for your concern. I was very lucky and the driver was a cyclist who reacted to my actions in a very fortunate and considered way, being very interested in my welfare. I am just very sore, physically and mentally, having ridden for 60 years and never come into contact with another vehicle.*

*So take heed of the article on lights and winter clothing. We need to ensure we are seen as visibility gets poor, be it due to winter sun or the poor winter weather. Otherwise, safe cycling!*

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A colleague of mine complained the other day about a cyclist riding at night without lights and how he nearly hit him. The colleague just so happens to be a very good driver who is also very sensible; not the 'boy racer' or 'Joe Rep' type of driver if we are to stereotype drivers. The point he was making was that cyclists are often their own worst enemies. So, with the weather getting murkier, the nights and mornings meaning travelling in the dark, what should we do? How about:

1. Ensure you have lights and they are working. Let's face it, the law makes this perfectly clear when cycling and the law (Road Vehicle Lighting Regulations 1989 amended in 1994 and 2005) requires pedal cycles to have various lights and reflectors fitted, clean and working properly, when being ridden on a public road between sunset and sunrise. Cyclists may also be required to light up in conditions of seriously reduced visibility during the day, but only if they have functional lights already fitted. Lights are not required when the cycle is stationary, hence we can use dynamo lighting, or being pushed along the roadside. (<http://www.ctc.org.uk/DesktopDefault.aspx?TabID=4071>)

2. A nice reflective top with lots of 'dayglow' to enable you to be seen. Yes, those yellow tops are often seen as rather silly, but the difference they make, both at day and particularly at night, can mean the difference between being seen and being seen too late, if at all. Orange is also good and the Club winter tops have 'dayglow' areas to help make you visible. So be visible rather than be fashionable!

3. Helmets often have reflective strips on them and if not then why not stick some on? It is also possible to tie-wrap a small LED light to them which in flashing mode really grabs the attention of other road users.

4. Be aware that even when you are lit up like a Christmas tree, it will not guarantee you are visible to others as they may not be looking for you, so you have to look for them and always assume that you have not been seen. A friend of mine treats all other road users as complete idiots and is always expecting the unexpected. It works for him!

So continue to cycle as weather/conditions deteriorate, but be safe!

## **Anne Mustoe – A Cycling Legend**

*It was with sadness I read the obituary of Anne Mustoe who died on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2009 aged 76. Not only was Anne an exceptional author, she was an exceptional cyclist who cycled round-the-world in both directions and only resolved to do that after retiring from the position of headmistress and at the aged 54. Yes, aged 54! Despite admitting to being somewhat overweight and unfit, without any idea of how to mend a puncture and not having ridden a bike for 30 years and wobbled when she tried again, she set about planning her “new career” not in the slightest bit undeterred by what some would consider to be inadequacies. The most important accessory was a bicycle which was bought for her as a leaving present from the girls at her school. She chose a Condor bicycle that was customised for her by a mechanic in a local bike shop and she was still riding it 22 years and about 100,000 miles later on her last cycle trip this year. (Good old steel frames!)*

*So what inspired her to do such a trip? It was the glimpse of a lone cyclist in January 1983 while she was travelling on a bus through Rajasthan on a holiday in India. She said it took her 4 years from that defining moment to gather up her courage, resign her job and cycle into the sunrise, but she calculated that she had no ties, her stepsons were married off, and she could just afford it if she lived modestly until her teaching pension came through. In 1987 she set off from London to ride round-the-world from west to east and completed the circumnavigation 12,000 miles and 15 months later. Her first book, ‘A Bike Ride’, dealt with all the preparations, route-planning, packing and budgeting, as well as the riding. The extra dimension with which Anne sustained her travels was that she followed historical routes: Roman roads across Europe; Alexander the Great’s route from Greece to the Indus Valley; Pakistan and India with the Moghuls and the Raj; and so on. Across the United States she followed the great pioneer trails, and undeterred by downpours, heat, political turmoil or amorous waiters, she promptly decided to do it all over again, in reverse direction. Her books chronicled the rides in a most exquisite manner and it is an exceptional author who can supply a book with three appendices so varied as a technical specification of a bicycle, a timeline of the life of Cleopatra and an ichthyologic listing; such was the skill of Anne. In all she published eight books in which incident-packed journeys were recounted in a warm, accessible, no-nonsense prose in which a wry, understated humour was coupled with indefatigable fortitude, enthusiasm and optimism, making light of robberies, injuries, freak floods, storms, desert heat waves, blizzards in the Rockies and ferocious winds in Jutland and Patagonia — and even of being knocked off her bike by a short-sighted nonagenarian in a Fiat Panda. Anne cycled off on her last expedition in May this year, but became ill in Syria. She died in Aleppo (Haleb).*

**So why highlight Anne Mustoe? Well, she is an inspiration to many in that an ordinary person achieved extraordinary things, and without any fancy kit or specialist training. Anne was like many others with a dream, but she did something about it! So why not consider emulating Anne? No need to ride round-the-world or subject yourself to the hazards that Anne faced. But how about planning a smaller adventure? A weekend away, a cycle touring holiday, cycling across England on the C2C, or the length of Britain from Land’s End to John O’Groats (or vice versa), a short trip abroad perhaps? The list is endless and there are probably plenty others within the Club who are willing to take part in the adventure if you want some like minded company and ability. So, if you have some ideas or dreams, why not contact us? General Secretary is only too willing to help circulate ideas and details are at the end of this Newsletter if you have any dreams.**

## **Bits and Bobs**

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### **Up and Coming Rides – Touring Section**

All rides leave Stourbridge from the corner of the Hagley Road and Ring Road (The Living Gallery Offices (old Library/Art Gallery)) at 0900 hrs. Depending on the destination, riders can join the group at approximately 0915 hrs at the Summerhill Hotel, Kingswinford, or The Talbot Inn at Belbroughton. All rides involve a café stop, are a steady 12 mph, and are very sociable in nature. The 2010 ride list is currently being planned and details are available from Richard Ottridge at: [richard.ottridge@stourbridgecyclingclub.com](mailto:richard.ottridge@stourbridgecyclingclub.com)

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### **Off-Road Ride Christmas Special – 29<sup>th</sup> December 2009**



An off-road ride has been planned by Matt Bowker on Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> December starting at 0900 hrs based around Bewdley and the Wyre Forest. While the exact route and start point has yet to be finalized, it will be a good 4-5 hrs long, although this will not be because of overall distance or difficulty, but more logistics of moving a large group along. Distance is estimated at about 20 miles that will include lots of ups and downs. The route will also be in a loop to enable

‘baling out’ as appropriate. As always there will be a café involved at some point and if last year’s ride is anything top go by, there will be plenty of company! All those interested should contact Matt on 07855 967882 or by e-mail: [matt.bowker@stourbridgecyclingclub.com](mailto:matt.bowker@stourbridgecyclingclub.com)

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### **Holly Run – 20<sup>th</sup> December 2009**

This year’s Holly Run is planned for Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> December and will leave from the corner of the Hagley Road and Ring Road at 0900 hrs. Following the ride we will take refreshments in The Talbot Inn, Belbroughton. They are expecting 30 -40 Club members, families and guests between 1200 till approximately 1400 hrs. The whole of the front bar area has been reserved and bar meals/snacks will be available. If the weather is poor, please don’t enter with muddy shoes and if you have been off-road or have no mudguards, make sure you are not absolutely filthy; it would be wise to bring a cover for a wet back and behind anyway. If it is icy then why not do a walk and join us anyway as there is plenty of car parking opposite the pub. So come along and enter in the spirit of Christmas!



### **Mallorca 2010**

As in previous years we will be visiting Mallorca in March 2010, and staying at the Pollensa Park Hotel, Puerto de Pollensa. The dates are from Thursday March 11<sup>th</sup> to return home on Sunday March 21<sup>st</sup> giving a total of 10 nights. There are rides every day to cater for all levels of fitness and Puerto de Pollensa is ideally located on the north east coast for flat or mountain rides. The hotel offers extensive buffet breakfast and evening meals so you can eat as much as you like, and all rooms are en-suite with air conditioning. Local bike hire is available if you don't want to take your own bike on the aircraft. This is a fantastic opportunity to prepare for the new season or just escape from those winter blues and experience wonderful cycling on a very cycling friendly island packed with like minded people. If last year's event was anything to go by, it is a fantastic opportunity! For more detailed information on flights, hotel costs and airport transfers please contact Bryan Hedges on 01384 293502 or by e-mail: [bryan.hedges@stourbridgecyclingclub.com](mailto:bryan.hedges@stourbridgecyclingclub.com)

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### **Reliability Trial 2010**

A reliability ride will take place on Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> January 2010 starting from Dudley Kingswinford Rugby Club. The format is that riders will depart according to their ability levels with touring speeds starting at 0900 hrs, moderate speed at 0910 hrs and a scratch group (fast) at 0920 hrs. The route will be Swindon, Smestow, Royal Oak, Bridgnorth, Kinlet, Bewdley, Wolverley, Kinver, Enville, Bobbington, to finish back at the Rugby Club. Total distance will be 47 miles (unless you decide on a detour!) and an entry fee of £2.00 will be required. Further details are available from Roger Allen on 01384 273390 or e-mail: [roger.allen@stourbridgecyclingclub.com](mailto:roger.allen@stourbridgecyclingclub.com)

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### **Annual General Meeting (AGM) 2010**

**The AGM will take place in March 2010 and a separate notification and Agenda will be circulated in February. Although the date has yet to be confirmed, we really need your input and also attendance. So please keep the event in mind and that early in the 2010 details will be sent to you. This is the opportunity to have your say on what we should be doing and what you would like to see happening in the Club. Please contribute, as we need your input. Details from the General Secretary (below).**

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### **Contact the General Secretary**

Richard Painter can be contacted via e-mail at either:

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or by telephone (with message facility):

01384 403266

Or by traditional mail at:

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