

CYCLE LETTERS

Write to: Cycle Letters, CTC, Parklands, Railton Road, Guildford, GU2 9JX, or email cycleletters@ctc.org.uk

HI-VIZ VESTS



On page 67 last issue the snippet on the Poundland high-viz safety vest says that 'a high-visibility vest or gilet is compulsory for cyclists on the

Continent as of this year'.

Are you sure this is correct? I know that the wearing of high-visibility gilets is now compulsory in France but even here this only applies at night or in poor visibility and outside 'agglomérations'. I have not heard anything about any other countries.

Andy Miller, by email

The comment about reflective gilets in the 'Shop Window' feature in the June-July edition might have inadvertently given your readers the wrong impression about the need to wear these garments while cycling on the Continent.

We checked with various national cycle clubs in Europe and were informed that: cyclists in France need to wear a reflective gilet when cycling outside built up areas in darkness or in bad weather. In Spain, cyclists need to wear reflective clothing and a helmet outside built up areas, but the reflective items are not defined. Feedback from touring cyclists is that the Spanish police do not appear to take this law very seriously.

No other countries demand that cyclists wear these reflective gilets at the time of writing. Oddly enough, pedestrians but not cyclists in Luxembourg need to wear a reflective item in darkness outside built up areas. On the other hand, motorists need to have these gilets in their cars in a number of continental countries and wear them if they need to alight from their vehicles in an emergency.

**Judith and Neil Forsyth, Bergstrasse
Bike Books, Viernheim, Germany**

NOT SO FAST

I read your article on slow cycling (June/July issue) with interest. There's something to be said for slow cycling and a few good points were made.

However, to be safe in traffic, slow isn't always best. A certain amount of

assertiveness and acceleration can be necessary and you can't easily do that on a heavy bike. Why deliberately have a heavy, sluggish bike just because you want to go slowly? Just ride a decent bike slowly and it'll be effortless!

I can't agree with your views on clothing. Unless you cycle very slowly or your journey is short, you're going to sweat to a certain extent, especially in summer. I don't want to work all day in a sweaty shirt and I strongly suspect my colleagues might not want to sit next to me either! It surely makes sense to wear at least a different shirt. And what exactly is wrong with being a 'day-glo warrior'? There have been several occasions where I know that wearing yellow or other bright clothing has made me visible a lot sooner than without it.

So yes, cycle slowly – you're not 'on a mission'. However, forget fashion and what you would or wouldn't wear on or off the bike. For your own safety it makes sense to wear something bright, and for the sake of those around you, you'll smell a bit sweeter if you don't sit all day in a sweaty shirt.

John Haddock

Thank you, thank you! – for Chris Juden's feature on slow cycling. For years I have been reading this magazine, feeling rather like a visiting Martian: it's all fascinating, but has very little to do with me. Do I even belong in here? I don't call myself a cyclist: I'm just someone who uses a bicycle. But Slow Cycling is almost exactly what I do: using the bike in and around town, just because it's a bit faster than walking.

I ride in normal clothing, in an upright position, and I have a wicker basket on the handlebars – partly because it's so useful for dumping small items into, and partly to give passing motorists the not-entirely-accurate impression that I am a dithery old lady and they had better give me plenty of room!

How good it is to learn, at last, that my way of using a bicycle is valid too.

Fiona Vincent, St Andrews, Fife

I was so pleased to read the article on slow cycling in the June/July issue of Cycle.

Last summer, as a novice cyclist of 55, I set off on a long-distance ride to Italy from my home in Otley. During this ride I discovered 'slow cycling' and it took me over the Alps. I was amazed in Italy to find towns where, in temperatures approaching 40 degrees, professional



Courtesy of Velorbis

people were cycling about their business wearing suits and carrying briefcases in a basket or rack. This applied to both men and women.

Many of the towns I travelled were traffic free and often involved a hill climb into the centre. These people didn't need to wear lycra to get to work or have showers once they got to work. They were immaculately dressed, as Italians generally are. Yet here in the UK, when I talk to people about commuting by bike, the most common gripe is that there are inadequate showers and changing facilities at work.

Part of this reflects on the culture in the UK that cycling is a sporting activity and you have to wear the appropriate clothes (lycra, padded pants, etc.) and as so rightly pointed out in the article, it is very difficult to find a bike for sale in your high street bike shop that is designed for commuting in normal clothes.

If we want to get the public at large cycling, then we need to run a high-profile campaign that avoids the mention of lycra, cleats and even perhaps helmets. People need to be able

RECYCLE YOUR 'CYCLE'
When you've read Cycle, why not give it to a friend – or a doctor's surgery?

to walk out of their house, get on the bike, cycle into work, park it in a bike rack and sit down at their desk, just as they do when they walk or drive. You allude to this in your editorial. Let's see regular features involving normal people cycling in normal clothes.

Pete Henry, by email

WEIGHING IT UP

Reading the Topeak Bikekamper review made me go and weigh my Hilleberg Akto tent. At 1.9kg, including additional groundsheet, it is only 0.2kg heavier than the Bikekamper, but offers plenty of space, a covered porch for bags and cooking, and height to sit upright. More expensive but a fine tent – perhaps I should try a complete review!

Rod Dalitz, by email

If you'd like to send a review, you can get details of what's required by emailing editor@ctc.org.uk or writing to PO Box 313, Scarborough, YO12 6WZ.

FAMILY CYCLING

You recently reported on a Dutch cycle/kid carrier as something new. Here's a photo of the late CTC life member Gladys Armond with her daughter Violet in the pram. Violet was born about a year before me in 1926, so that dates this photo quite well. She died during WW2. I believe that Frank Armond, Violet's father, was known to take the pram on club runs!

Violet's younger sister Margaret Hay responded to my request for the picture.

Harold Bridge, Canada



TARMAC TOURING

I am a cycle tourist and joined CTC a few years ago now. Whilst I generally enjoy the club magazine, I am growing

somewhat disappointed that it focuses less and less on road touring and increasingly on mountain bike touring. The latest issue (June/July) has a least two articles where MTBs would be the logical bike but little for the traditional tour bike.

In my magazine store, there are many publications devoted to the MTB and a number to road bikes but none on touring. Clearly this is a minority market and one Cycle needs to cover.

So let's have some more tours and also some road tests of traditional touring bikes. In the last year or two, Ridgeback have produced two affordable touring bikes, but I have not seen these tested in any press. Cycle seems to be the obvious magazine to test this type of bike, so please can you do so.

Les Davies, by email

CTC has always been involved with 'rough-stuff' touring. But tarmac touring isn't forgotten. See page 60.

DIGITAL MAPPING

Really enjoyed reading Anthony Cartmell's article on route mapping. I have been working on a LEJOG route for eight 'retired' cyclists and needed somewhere that gave me feet climbed. I Googled a few words and was introduced to www.veloroutes.org, which is American based but covers the UK too. It was brilliant in as much as it gave me mileage, feet climbed, an elevation chart, and I could save each day's route on the website.

You can create your own route or enter a place name and see whether anyone else has beaten you to it and has a route to share. All saved routes can be accessed by anyone. You seem to be able to export to Google Earth, Garmin, GPX and Excel although I have not investigated any of these.

I have now been able to confuse my fellow riders with so much information that they will agree the route straight away. Highly recommended.

Mike Freemantle

And don't forget to visit www.ctc-maps.org too!

HALTING THE ROAD BUILDERS

Riders following the Cumbria Cycleway in South Lakeland may be unaware that the peaceful lanes through the Arnside-

ON THE 'NET

An abridged excerpt from the CTC Forum: <http://forum.ctc.org.uk>

NO MUDGUARDS?

Manx Cat: Why do mountain bikers not use mudguards? When I get back from a run out with the girls, I have a mud track up my rear. Chas has got me some MTB mudguards: they are nice and high up, wide, and don't look as if they will get in the way, but maybe I'm wrong...

Stewartpratt: Conventional ones will get bunged up with mud and debris, will break when you come off, etc. MTB-specific ones work better, though many rattle and flap about, hit the tyres, swing sideways on the seatpost and are more trouble than they're worth. THE are about the only ones I'd say are worth having.

hamster: Crud Guard/Crud Catcher work well too – on the back (attached to the seatpost) and one on the downtube on the front. Between the two they keep the worst off.

pedalpusher: Try a Neoguard from Rapid Racer Products. It's basically a piece of neoprene that stretches inside your forks and attaches by velcro. This stops anything being thrown up by the front wheel for you to ride into a split second later.

RobM: Love the mud. Wouldn't want it any other way. Coming back with mud all over me slipping and sliding trying to keep control of the bike, now that's mountain biking.

fluffy mike: Shouldn't the question be 'Why have a mudguard?' rather than why not? Aren't they just more stuff to carry up hills... more stuff to buy... more stuff to go wrong...

Northstar: Are you serious? In the scheme of things they weigh practically nothing. If you can afford a bike, you can afford guards if you want them. Go wrong? It's a plastic fitting to your bike.

MarkC: Why do mountain bikers not use mudguards? Haven't you seen how bad they look?

cycleruk: I filled in a magazine questionnaire that asked what was the best modification I had done to my MTB. 'Fitted mudguards' was my answer. Never heard back from them.

OBITUARIES

ERIC BIDDULPH

Died of a heart attack aged 71, on 10/12/08, while out riding his bike. The former lecturer lived in Malawi for three years. During that time he established the country's first national cycling team, which competed in the 1972 Olympic games. Back in the UK, he became a member and at one point president of Huddersfield Star Wheelers and joined Halifax CTC. He cycled all over the world.

PHYLLIS ROWLAND: 1922-2009

Married to John, who died last October, Phyllis loved cycling and outdoor life. They met on a club run during the war and honeymooned on bikes. They rode with the Essex DA, Viking RC and Wessex DA. Both enjoyed travelling and led CTC tours to the Continent. Phyllis was always a warm, sociable person, who will be remembered for her sense of fun and humour. *Jean Anderson*

JEAN BRAY: 1920-2009

Married to Stan, who died in 1992, Jean died peacefully on 29th April. They were from Loughborough but lived in south Birmingham after the war and were members of Solihull Cycling Club and CTC. Their three children were brought up with cycling holidays, and Jean and Stan regularly attended the CTC Birthday Rides and went on holidays abroad. They rode with the over-60s CTC section until Stan's death. Both were committed Christians. *Chris Bray*

JOHN BRODY

Died on 12th May, aged 56, after suffering a heart attack on an eight-month tour of the United States with wife Linda. A former Royal Marine and later a fireman, John was retired and had no history of heart trouble. As well as cycling, he enjoyed climbing, hill walking and kayaking. He died after cycling up a hill near Perry, Georgia. His last words were, 'This is the best weather we've had yet... see you at the top of the next hill.' *Linda Brody*

V. STUART ILLINGWORTH: 1913-2009

Stuart joined CTC Lothians after WW2 and was soon on its committee. He moved to Forteviot, Perthshire, and as President of Fife DA held a well-

Silverdale area were preserved due to a fortuitous incident to a club member 37 years ago.

In 1972, I was riding in the Beetham area when I had to dismount on a steep hill. A typed notice pinned to a telegraph pole caught my attention. It announced that the Ministry of Transport would shortly commence the construction of the Barrow (Arnside) Link Road. The proposed road was to be a link from the M6 motorway at Carnforth to the A590 Barrow road at Lindale.

I wrote to the local newspapers to advise readers of the proposed road. Friends helped to obtain 850 signatures on a petition. With two teachers, I formed a three-man committee. We organised meetings in village halls, had posters placed along the proposed route, etc. The Friends of the Lake District joined forces with us, as did the Ramblers Association. The Council for the Preservation of Rural England declined, saying that as the Link Road was clearly going to be built there was little point opposing it.

We wrote to the Duke of Edinburgh, enclosing a detailed plan of the proposed road, which showed that the road would cross a disused railway line on which the Royal Train parked overnight when going to Barrow. We were informed that Prince Philip had passed the plan to the Countryside Commission. I sent a telegram to the Ministry of Transport: '850 objectors to the Barrow Link Road demand a public enquiry.'

Following more months of hard work, it was announced that a public inquiry would be held, of a fortnight's duration, at Grange-over-Sands. On the eve of the inquiry, I received a telegram at home. It read 'The Countryside Commission are opposing the Barrow Link Road and will be appearing at the public inquiry.'

I asked CTC if they would like me to present a case for the club at the public inquiry. They said 'yes', so I did, at some length. The case for the Countryside Commission was presented by Sir Jack Longland QC, who told the inquiry that they were considering the designation of the Arnside-Silverdale area as an official Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, but they would have to withdraw the idea if the Barrow Link Road were built.

A few more months elapsed before the Ministry announced that the Barrow Link Road would not be built.

We understood that it was the first time that a major road scheme had been cancelled.

A recurrence of polio, contracted in the Western Desert while on active service in 1943, prevents me from riding my beautiful British-racing-green Longstaff tricycle. But in my 95th year, I am fortunate to be living in the Arnside-Silverdale AONB.

Len Levesley, Arnside

Great work. CTC still needs grassroots campaigners today. Contact Cherry Allan at CTC National Office for details on becoming a CTC Right to Ride Rep: 01483 238317, email cherry.allan@ctc.org.uk.

CYCLISTS DISMOUNT

Have you seen a sign like this before? This is in the village of Blockley, Gloucestershire, at the bottom of a rather steep hill.

Rowland Binns, Gloucester



BIKE TECH FOR BEGINNERS

If CR Ayres of Bagley (Letters, last issue) had had the pleasure to read every journal cover to cover that CTC has produced since 1878, as I did when compiling the 'Classified Index' to the club's journals, he would know that on about a seven-year cycle there have always been articles for the beginner: 'Mechanical and Practical', 'A Handbook of the Bicycle' and so on through the ages, either as a series or as single articles. As every teacher knows, and must be constantly aware, there is always a first time for a student – just because I know it doesn't mean that the student should know it!

Simple elementary articles from time to time are an intelligent way to attract children and youngsters generally to cycling, for they soon find out that they too can read dad's copy of Cycle,

comprehend and perhaps begin to cope with their own bike to some degree. One has to accept that the youth today look to the internet rather than to books in the library.

Lionel Joseph, Forest Green, Surrey

MISSING WHEEL

I find the words in the June/July issue of our magazine, reporting the AGM motion 11, somewhat hollow: 'The policy of using both logos, where practical, remains.' (This is referring to the use of the 'winged wheel' and the current modern logo.)

In this magazine, the club's own advertisements, family membership, introduce a friend to CTC, and member benefits (comprising four full pages) do not show the winged wheel at all. Was that really not practical?

During my time as president, I fought hard to retain the winged wheel on the cover of the magazine – yes, it did disappear briefly. I sincerely hope that it will remain, even if there is a tendency to relegate it to the background. Should 'the powers that be' wish to dispense with the old and honoured trademark, please do it openly and not by stealth.

Ted King, MBE, President 1991-96

I read with some disappointment that the recent AGM decided to continue to use both the old and the new CTC logos side by side.

I know of no other organisation that promotes its old logo alongside the new. This can be perceived negatively.

- It looks as though you want to identify with the 21st century but cannot relinquish 19th century ideas.
- You appear to lack faith that the new logo is as worthy as the old.

I used to wear a badge of the original winged wheel logo but got tired of people peering at it, trying to read the letters. I also felt it presented a dated image.

I then got a badge of the updated winged wheel logo, with the letters 'CTC' in a plain, modern font, and I felt much happier with this; it shouted out its message. Gothic blackletter still has its place but should only be used with whole words mainly in lower case or else it is difficult to read.

The new logo is a clever piece of graphic art. It has been used for over 10 years and is the one commonly and exclusively used in most places – it is

established. Perhaps some think it is not as iconic as the winged wheel – then come up with something better to replace it. Move forwards.

If you feel you must keep reminding us of the winged wheel, then could you please confine it to page three, along with the 'Formed in 1878' narrative (as you did in the late 1990s), rather than have it competing with the new logo on the front cover.

Denis McMahon, Basingstoke

THE ROAD TO NOWHERE

Was it Talking Heads who produced the song with that title? I found this little gem in Portsmouth recently. It seems to have been recently painted to access the cycle lane that passes the Mountbatten Sports Centre.

Advanced stop lines, like those described in rule 178 of the Highway Code, are useful. But where's the junction? Indeed, where's the road?

I guess that if you wish to proceed any further, and cycle across to the top of Portsmouth harbour, you really would have to wait for a very, very low tide!

Paul Faithfull, Portsmouth



CYCLE: 'A CHEAP TABLOID'

I was sorry to see that your style of reporting now matches the lower end of the tabloids (cyclist victim 'damaged car', June/July issue, page 10). You give no supporting evidence to indicate whether the cyclist was the innocent victim or the cause of the collision – just that he was a child cyclist.

Roger Geffen's comment implies that pedestrians and cyclists should not be held liable for damages, whether caused by accident, negligence or recklessness on their part. Insurers may not have historically pursued such claims, but to imply that pedestrians and cyclists should not be held liable for their actions is a very dangerous road to follow.

Michael Glanfield, by email

OBITUARIES

attended 'President's Camp' there for many years. His home was always open to visiting cyclists, in whose adventures he took a lively interest. He was a well-known and active member of The Rough Stuff Fellowship, and a gentleman whose opinions were expressed with unflinching courtesy. *Gordon Paterson*

SYLVIA CLIFFORD (nee Cheung Shuet Mei)

Died instantly, aged 64, in a tragic cycling accident in June descending the Col du Lauteret. She was perhaps St Albans Forty Plus's most lively, popular, caring and enthusiastic member. Her first long ride was over the Pyrenees on her shopping bike. She later rode with many clubs, migrating from a mountain bike to a lightweight. She loved long rides, and cycled in Vietnam, from Land's End to John O'Groats, along the Australian Great Ocean Road and across Tasmania. *Judy Allfrey*

DAVID KIRK: 1969-2009

An indefatigable cycle tourist, keen paraglider and sometime CTC employee, David died suddenly in April. A gentle and at times troubled man, he was a much-loved friend. His passion for cycling took him all over the world – Scandinavia, Iceland, Morocco, New Zealand and more. A fervent believer in the importance of cycling, he was never happier than when on his bike. He will be sadly missed by all his friends. *Stuart Reid*

ARTHUR RODGERS: 1911-2009

Arthur was a life member of CTC from 1929 onwards, and cycling was his passion. He rode the End to End aged 68 and was still cycling at 90. He was a keen time triallist as a member of the Teesside Road Club, winning many medals and holding the Yarm-to-York record: 4hr 20min there and back. An avid tourist, he cycled in every county of the British Isles, as well as Germany, Belgium, Holland, Denmark and Australia. He always looked forward to the Annual Coxwold Service. *Ian A Rodgers*

Send obituaries, preferably 100 words or fewer, to the usual editorial address. Limited space means that some may not appear immediately.