



# “The Hub”

The Newsletter of Mid Devon Cycling Club

April 2018

## Spotlight on Youth Edition Flying the flag on the National Stage



Reuben Heal - U14



Isabella Ashford - U16



Morgan Gibson-Clay - U16

Sunday 25th March dawned grey but still and gradually the sun appeared, the day brightened and there was even genuine warmth in the air. A wonderfully staged event welcomed nearly 300 top riders from right around the country to the 1.9 km circuit on Torbay seafront. There were even athletes waiting for others not to show so they could ride and a poor lad from the Isle of Man had to take out his frustration of not getting a place by cycling long and furiously on his rollers at his club's stand on the seafront during the U 16 Boys event. The races were capped at a maximum of 80 riders and this number could not be stretched as that would invalidate the insurance covering the event.

There were crashes which clearly highlighted why that insurance is needed. One girl crashed in the sprint for the line about 100m from the finish of the U16 Girls event, below, and a lad in the U16 Boys was still in the hands of the medical people as the Riviera registration staff cleared their area. Another girl had a near miss as



she rode over the fallen bike, the fallen rider did get back on to finish but when the adrenalin stopped flowing I'm sure the pain, stiffness and bruising would have been very uncomfortable.

The racing was quite a spectacle with some very powerful riders showing their strength and tactical nous. The U 14 Girls race was a procession after the first 200m as Zoe Backstedt, Maindy Flyers (Cardiff) lay down an unrelenting pace for the 30 plus field that would have seen her, according to the commentator, some 10 minutes ahead of the U 16 Girls race towards the end of the event. All the other 3 races had much more going on and the larger fields meant that the spectators always had some action to view whether it was at the 2 tight U turns at either end of the seafront or on the 3 sharp turns on and off the seafront or at the top of Abbey Gardens combined with the many attempts made by riders to escape from the peloton.

Reuben, Isabella and Morgan from MDCC were up against very tough opposition. They rode strongly throughout and will have learnt much from the experience. I have featured these 3 fine young riders in a 'Profile On' piece later in this edition.

Izzie had the following thoughts after her race: How do you feel you performed on Sunday? "I had a bad race, but I've never had a good start to any season so it's not necessarily a bad thing."

What did you learn from the experience? "I loved the atmosphere, having a home National was so relaxing for me, I've learned to relax and enjoy races, good or bad."

Morgan is riding first year A. He said: "The race on Sunday was my first national series race but I have ridden other races previously at national level.

Sunday was not my best performance after being held up then dropped off the back but it was a great experience. The race taught me that positioning is everything and that I have an important year ahead to be competing in nationals."

This was a huge event to stage and hundreds, no, thousands of hours of preparation from the core team led by Mike Gibson ensured that talk of another event coming back to this area was clearly in evidence at the end of the event, there's no higher praise than that. The official British Cycling photographer was very impressed saying that he had never previously witnessed the complete barrier screening of a National Youths event course before.

The close proximity of the registration, changing area to the start/finish must have been very welcome. The only small downside might have been access to shower facilities which if you have travelled from Scotland, Wales or the Isle of Man would be very important before the very long journey home. Some riders and families had used motorhomes to stay in the grounds of the Riviera Centre overnight so might have had their own facilities.

Lastly, a huge thank you to the dozens of club members and partners who volunteered to register, marshal, spot, provide First Aid etc, etc to ensure that this event could showcase all that is good about our club and the fantastic venue of Torbay Seafront. The club would like to put on record its thanks to the support they received from Torbay Council and the staff of the Riviera Centre in the staging of this event.

## **Editorial:**

### **National Youth and Junior Series Success and Youth Focus**

The Riviera Classic event provided yet another fine example of all the wonderful things that go on in our club. I'm sure the hundreds of riders, families and supporters from around the country will have been impressed. That is certainly the case from the feedback that the organisers received.

On the same day as this event 2 of our leading cyclists were taking part in the opening event of the National Junior Series in Cardiff with wonderful results. Big congratulations to Louie Priddle who finished 4th and Harrison Wood who finished 6th in a high class field. A full report appears later this edition.

There are other reports on our young riders later as well as the profiles on Reuben, Isabella and Morgan.

### **Winter Training Sessions Conclude**

The club has staged many Velopark training sessions over the winter months which has been even more challenging this winter with the often very low temperatures. Thank you to all those who provided the Ride Leader, Group Riding Skills, 6

Academy Race Training sessions as well as all of the Youth training sessions that have taken place. No one can say that there are not plenty of opportunities to develop riding and/or racing skills.

There has been so much I could have included in this issue that will have to be held over, always a good thing!

Have a great Summer,

Paul - [news@mdcc.org.uk](mailto:news@mdcc.org.uk)

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## National Junior Series Cadence Road Race – Round 1 Sunday 25th March

The Mid Devon CC are proud to have a squad of 4 talented Junior riders for 2018. On the same weekend that saw the club stage the first National Youth Series event in Torbay the first of the Junior National Series took place in Wales with both 2nd Year Juniors Louie Priddle and Harrison Wood representing the club. To have two riders place in the Top 10 in an event such as this is a remarkable achievement. Louie came in 4 and Harrison just behind in 6th. Massive congratulations to them both.

### Louie Priddle



This was a race I was unable to race last year. I had heard and read a lot about this race from previous years. It seemed like it was a race to break away on – but not too early and not too late! On the Saturday Harrison joined us to drive up and stay at the 'Three Cocks' right next to the sign on for the Sunday. I went out and did course recon just after we arrived at the hotel and I ended up doing 2 laps whilst Harrison went on for some extra. The course looked tough in places mainly the finish where it went up a 1km climb! There were also some very tight bends with some slippery surfaces due to gravel and mud.

On the Sunday I woke had my breakfast and got in the van and travelled literally 1 min to the HQ! All signed on and kitted up I started a 15min warm up just focusing on getting my legs opened up because I knew it would be a quick start being the first national of the year. We began the sketchy neutral section where there were actually a few crashes towards the back because of people trying to move up. After the first lap we were stopped because of 'white lining' and also to let the load of people who crashed get back on. After a good telling off we were off again. People

were chipping off the front but nothing was successful. I had to keep the early race excitement under control and focus on what I wanted to achieve.

After 2 and a half laps had passed I knew I had to move now because there were two riders up the road gaining time and I thought hopefully others would follow and form a nice group! And that we did. I attacked with Joe West who had been out for two laps prior to that so he was a bit tired. But I knew there was a group of 3 coming up behind so I pushed on even harder to make the gap bigger. The group of 3 made it to me and we worked very well to chase down the two out front. After two laps of chaingang and chasing them down we caught the front. We now had a break of 5 and still gaining time on the peloton. I believe the time gap went up to 2mins 40 at its peak.

On the 2nd to last lap one of the Spokes riders from Scotland chipped off the front. From then on our group started looking at each other and not wanting to work. We worked but it wasn't smooth at all with riders skipping turns and just sitting on (very frustrating after working so well for 65km!) we hit the final climb and the bell to signal the final lap! This was it – we had to push on hard or else we'd start to get caught quickly by the chasing group! Which included Harrison and a few other strong riders. We hit the final climb and I glanced behind to see the chasing group behind about 10s back. I really had to dig deep if I wanted a top 3 now. I attacked half way up the climb and came past the group when cramp hit both my legs, legs on fire I was about 30 meters from the line and I could hear heavy breathing and panting just behind me. I sprinted to the line and just missed out on third place by half a wheel length finishing 4th. For the first national of the year I was pleased with how the legs were and am excited to be doing the MDCC Hilly TT on Good Friday and then Travelling to Luxembourg on the Saturday to race in the Bob Jungels UCI race on the Sunday. Massive thank you to my Dad for driving us around and also MDCC for all of the support given to us.

## Harrison Wood



Last year was an eventful first national awakening for me. Being taken out by a motorbike wasn't exactly how I planned on ending the 2017 race. I was therefore excited and of course a bit nervous for the 2018 edition of the race. I travelled up the day before with Louie's Dad and rode 4 laps of the course the day before so I knew exactly what was to come! Now onto race day. The race started in typical UK fashion. Riders crossing the white lines with a few crashes chucked in the mix as well for good measure. The race was then stopped as I

predicted after the 1st lap. They told us off. I got to the front and rolled off the front. Kind of by accident really but still a group of 5 of us rode through and off. I didn't commit really and after half a lap we were pulled back. I held my position towards the front until around 60 kms to go from the end when I got caught behind a rather big crash. Luckily I only ended up in a thorn bush which was good ish! However I then had to chase back on for a bit as the pace was pretty high as Louie and a few others had attacked just before. I got back on and it eased. I used this opportunity to move towards the front. Then I noticed a few riders were drifting off so I decided to jump across with just under 3 laps to go. We went hard and eventually the elastic snapped to the peloton and we were away. A group of 5 of us working well together chasing a group of 6 who with around 40 kms to go still had 2.5 minutes on us. With 1.5 laps to go we had caught a few from the break but we're still 1.5 minutes behind the break. We went even harder and eventually just as we hit the bottom of the final 2 minute climb we caught them. I was done in by this point after a very hard few laps. I rolled over the line to take 6th which I was happy with after having a fairly eventful race.

Next time I hope to avoid crashing and I'm sure the top result will follow! Thanks to MDCC for the support, well done to Louie for 4th and his Dad for taking us!

## Morgan Gibson-Clay - Maiden victory in first race as Youth A



10th March 2018 Wheel Jane : SW Series Race 1

As expected the wind was strong up at the circuit in Cornwall making warming up on the rollers quite a challenge. The closed circuit consisted of a short but steep climb, followed by a rolling flat section and a gradual uphill stretch towards the finish. After the line a slow hairpin corner into a fast downhill – flat section with fast corners back to the hill.

I didn't know what to expect being my first race of the season as a first year cat A. The field consisted of a few strong riders, Sam Medlyn being the rider to watch. As soon as the race started I felt a huge difference from last year in terms of my performance, the race starting quickly splitting the group up to five riders, including me, up at the front. The race consisted of a lot of quick attacks up the climb and at the downhill. From the start I was feeling comfortable with the pace and was doing my part on the front, as well as sticking close to the wheels of the riders to watch. Halfway through the race an attack

went on the hill, everyone instantly set out to catch the attacker as I sat in with a group of three, bringing back the solo attacker within three laps or so. With two laps to go the group of four sped up. On the last lap I sat on the back of the group ready for a sprint, with two hundred or so meters left Sam Medlyn made a seated attack as I stuck closely behind. On the last thirty meters I snuck in on his inside out the wind and sprinted for the line stealing 1st place. Overall it was a great race, the speed and effort levels constantly in short intervals making it quite a demanding race. A great way to start my season and the SW series and get some points and experience. Thanks to Mark Dolan and Andy Parker for helping out with my coaching.



## Icebreakers Youth Omnium Round 1 - 27.01.2018

### Henry Howells reports...

Yesterday I competed in the first round of the Youth Icebreakers in The Welsh National Velodrome. This is a highly competitive event, with riders coming from as far afield as Scotland and London. This is my first year as an under 14 (Youth B) and my expectations were not very high. We had to sign on at 9:30, but the racing didn't start until 12:00; it was a long nerve-wracking wait.



First up was the scratch race, heat 1, with 12 out of the 24 riders qualifying for the finals. The race started fairly slowly, with lots of short, punchy attacks. With four laps to go, I got caught on the wrong side of a split. However, I went all-out bridge the gap; got across and sprinted past several riders to finish around 10<sup>th</sup>, qualifying for the final.

The final was a different race altogether, with a high pace from the offset. I clung on as hard as I could and finished at the back of the bunch.

Next was Points race, 24 laps with a sprint every six laps. I was still suffering from the final of the scratch and finish 13<sup>th</sup>, one place outside the qualifying.

The final race was the elimination, no heats, 24 riders – one out every lap. I got a good start, easily getting the first 9

eliminations. Then the trouble started, I push to the back and I had to do three full on sprints around the top of the banking to survive. On the 14<sup>th</sup> lap, I found myself, boxed in with nowhere to go. I sat up and was eliminated to finish 10<sup>th</sup>.

This year on the track, I will be competing in the next two rounds of the Icebreakers at the end of February and March and I have entered the Youth Omnium series in Wales. I will also be doing some circuit racing. Henry



## Youth Rider Profiles

**Name: Reuben Heal** - picture right during Good Friday Hilly TT

Age: 14      Age Group: Youth B 14 - 16

Bikes owned: Moda(8-10), Planet X(10-12), Massi(10-12), Cannondale(13-14), Scott(13-14)

How & at what age did you get into cycling: One Xmas my Dad and Mum bought me a road bike and I got hooked.

How often do you train?: I haven't trained much over the winter and only just started to step it up in the last few weeks as I have been inspired by my teammates

Say something about your training & how it's developed as you've got older: I haven't trained much but as I have stepped it up over the past few weeks I am beginning to feel a difference.

Main successes: South West Circuit Champ 2016

Future hopes/targets: Dropping my Dad up a climb in Mallorca! and develop my TT ability

What gives you the greatest buzz about cycling?: Racing and winning

Your Cycling hero: Andy Perkins (he paid my Dad £20 to say that)

Other interests, sporting & other: Rugby, hockey, squash, football, cricket, Paintball, fortnite

Advice to youngsters thinking of getting involved: Pain is temporary, winning is forever!

What do you think of MDCC?: A good opportunity to develop my cycling and make friends to play Xbox with!

**Name: Isabella Ashford** - Picture right during National Series Event

Age: 15      Age Group: Youth A 14 -16

Nickname: Izzy/Iz

Bikes owned: Cervelo R2, Scott Speedster, Dolan track bike.

How & at what age did you get into cycling?: 2014, when we went to the track world's in London.

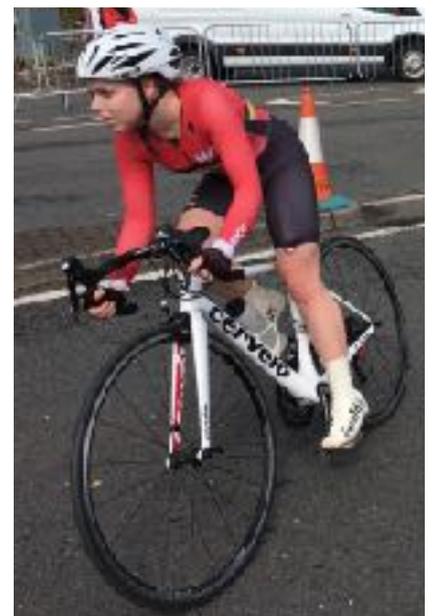
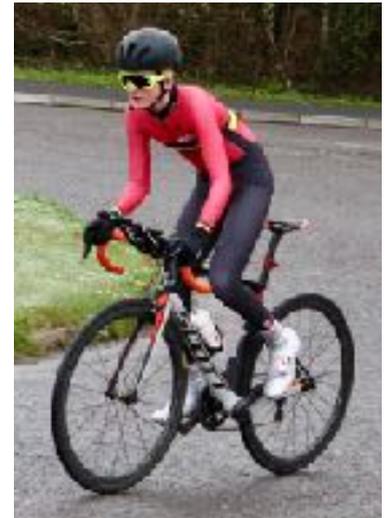
How often do you train?: Everyday but Monday

Say something about your training & how it's developed as you've got older: I started training myself at first but in the past couple years have had 2 different coaches which I've worked really well with, my current coach really pushed me well over winter.

Main successes: I've had many podiums at regional but had a few top 20s in national fields.

Future hopes/targets: To get on a team for juniors, podium at a National

What gives you the greatest buzz about cycling?: When you get to the last lap in a National and you're prepping for the bunch sprint, it really excites me and I know I've done well.



Your Cycling hero: Started off as Laura Trott but I now really look up to Kristina Vogel, her legs are my inspiration!

Other interests, sporting & other: I take an interest in feminism and makeup, both very different and with that and cycling I have a really broad set of interests!

Advice to youngsters thinking of getting involved: Throw yourself in at the deep end, you'll thank yourself for it later.

What do you think of MDCC?: Definitely the best club in the South West, but mainly the people are so great.

**Name: Morgan Gibson** Age Group: Youth A 14-16 1st Year

Age: 15

Nickname: Morgs or Skinny Legs High revs

Road Bikes Owned: Bianchi Aria, Planet X RT80 and Omega (Enigma) Matrix

I have been cycling since I was young with influence of my Dad but only really got into racing around a year and a half ago.

I usually train around 6 days a week.

From having a good winters training the improvement is massive. A large part of training depends your rate of development which we can't control but a good weekly training plan has really helped.

Some of my successes include mainly winning local races such as Westpoint and Velopark races and recently I won the first of the South West Series at Wheal Jane in Cornwall.

Future hopes are winning the South West Series and being able to be a competitor to watch in the National Series next year.

The greatest buzz about cycling is mostly the speed, the cornering and the excitement of riding fast in Crits with others around you.

My cycling hero is probably Miguel Indurain.

Other sporting interests include running and cross country running which have competed in regionally.

My advice to youngsters is to get involved, find a friend who is also involved in cycling and get out on rides with them. To get into racing I suggest going to watch elite or pro races or even better watch UCI races or track championships.

MDCC has been a great opportunity for me to improve at cycling and have fun, its allowed me to be involved in a team of other youngsters and get the most out of training



# Good Friday Hilly TT - 30th March

Pictures, mainly courtesy of Oli Masters - Good work Oli!

A chilly and damp morning greeted the 40 starters for the Good Friday Teign Valley Hilly promoted by the club.



Matt Langworthy  
14 year old Reuben Heal – making his first appearance in the event, recorded 1:13:37 to take the Youth rider prize

It was a good day for our riders with 5 of them crammed into the top ten. As expected former-MDCC star Matt Langworthy took the honours, clocking a credible 54:14 for the hilly 23-mile in conditions which were far from ideal. George Kimber from Exeter took the runner up spot, coming in 56 seconds down on the National Junior 25-mile record holder.

Junior, Louise Priddle continued his excellent run of form to clock a time of 56:47 only 3 seconds off the pace of third placed Phil Bray (Plymouth Corinthian). Harry Birchill was only 8 seconds further back – a remarkable feat given that he was riding a road bike. Ian Cullen took sixth place, his 57:21 fast enough to give him the first Vet's prize too.



Louie

Other MDCC riders included: Lee Sanderson (9<sup>th</sup>) - 1:00:22, Don Brookes - 1:02:43, Jason Kettle - 1:02:56, Andy Parker - 1:04:00, Dan Dolan - 1:04:17, Mark Sanders - 1:04:39, Tim Prowse - 1:05:34, Mike Gratton - 1:07:59, James Scott - 1:08:16, Alex McGrath - 1:08:21, Robin Delve - 1:08:40, Simon Medlyn - 1:09:15, John Scanlon - 1:13:30, Ian Deakin - 1:14:35

A huge 'thank you' to all the club members who made the event possible.

Andrew Perkins



Harry

Lee

Ian

Simon



James

Robin

Louie

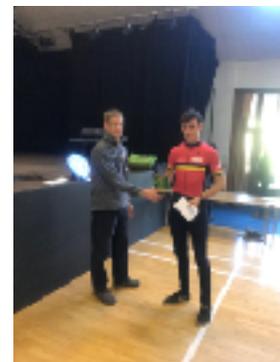
# Primavera Road Races - Sunday 25th February - Harry Birchill Wins



A bitterly cold morning in Hatherleigh saw the races delayed for 90 mins whilst the officials assessed the course and removed some icy patches. A tractor then decided to start hedge cutting adding to the excitement but we eventually got underway shortly before Midday. The support race saw Mid Devon CC Junior Harry Birchill break clear of the bunch after half the race building up

to a minute lead. He was then joined on lap 3 by 7 others who combined well to keep the bunch at bay. Harry easily won the sprint and demonstrated that he will be one to watch on the road after years of top level Mountain Bike racing. Tom Nancarrow and Oliver Yates came 2nd and 3rd respectively whilst Joseph Patrick won the bunch kick for 9th.

1. Harry Birchill, Mid Devon Junior, 2. Tom Nancarrow, 3. Oliver Yates



The Elite race saw one of the best fields that we have had for many years. Hot favourite was Somerset's Marcin Bialoblocki now riding for Steele Davis Via Roma RT. Marcin bridged over to the original break including Southern Champion Matt Downie, Mikey Mottram from Morvelo and Lee Frost. This group stayed together until the run in to Hatherleigh when they broke up and Marcin came in victorious with Downie 2nd and Rupert Graham from Spirit Tifosi in third. Mid Devon's 2nd year Junior Louie Priddle came in 17th (1st Junior) with team mate Harrison Wood just behind in 20th.



1. Marcin Bialoblocki
2. Matthew Downie @ 13s
3. Rupert Graham st
17. Louis Priddle – MDCC Junior
20. Harrison Wood MDCC Junior

## Race Report – Tristan Davies 3rd at the Velopark



The start of the race was fairly casual with no-one really attacking. Because I didn't know what the pace would be like, I sat in for a few laps. On lap 3, I sprinted from the back of the bunch and attacked down the right hand side of the road. This was effective and I got a good gap almost immediately. I was alone however and hopes of staying away were quickly brought back as I was caught after nearly 3 laps away. I decided that the best thing to do was to sit in the bunch and follow the wheel of Tom Nankarrow, as I felt he was the strongest.

With roughly 8 laps to go. Three of us attacked, including Tom. We had a decent gap and rode hard to snap the elastic between us and the bunch. A national mountain biker called Fletcher bridged the gap, making there 4 of us. We extended our gap each lap and to be honest my legs

were starting to feel it from my win the previous day. With 1.5 laps left, Tom from Exeter University attacked from behind us and no body could respond. I was certain we were going to have to sprint for third and wanted to be behind the other two riders for the finish. This was not possible however as the others were keen to keep

me on the front, no matter how much I slowed down. I could have done with rear mirrors at this point as I was waiting for someone to launch their sprint. Fletcher launched his sprint, so as did I. I managed to hold off 4th but I couldn't quite get my front wheel ahead for second. I was pleased however as it was a close finish and I was easily the youngest and smallest racing. For sure I was pleased with third and picked up a nice amount of points. Tris.

## **MDCC Race Team Meeting - 15th January**

### **Mike Gratton reports**

Thanks to everyone who came to the Bike Cafe in Bovey on Friday - what a great venue! Unfortunately due to its success it was quite noisy so we opted for an informal style meeting rather than trying to shout over the other guests.

For those that weren't there or if you were and I didn't manage to get the messages across - here is a summary.

The clubs Rider Support Fund will continue as in previous years. Road racers can claim the licence cost back after 5 races, Testers can claim back 1 in every 5 race fees back, support for National racing up to £50 a time etc. If you have any specific goals in 2018 that you'd like the club to support then please put submissions in writing to me which will be presented to the club committee for approval. If you want to claim support then you have to help the club in some way. It's expected that you'll help at the Dartmoor Classic + at least one other event.

Event organisers: The club will be supporting organisers by offering £50 worth of vouchers per event for CLC. We still have a few Velopark events to cover. You can buddy up with a mentor for your first event so you can learn the ropes. Please message if you can help.

We are a broad church with many different disciplines and race categories. It's always good to plan race calendars in advance so within your groups try and co-ordinate travel together to share the costs and experiences. Either post here or set up WhatsApp message groups etc.

The Calendars can be downloaded from here:

Road: <https://www.dropbox.com/s/rweom5x1bl3e62g/South%20West%202018%20calendar%20v2.xlsx?dl=0>

TT: <https://www.dropbox.com/s/bj7hrw2s8am0n26/ctteventslist2018.xlsx?dl=0>

Hope you all enjoy your racing in 2018. Good luck

Best wishes,

Mike

## **GB's Great British Bike Bash #2 - Part 4 - Graham Brodie writes..**

(Newton Abbot to Mull and back)

### **Part 4— Ingleton – Newton Abbot.**

Day 16 – Ingleton to Southport (Churchtown) 69.1 miles 950m

After it settled night at Ingleton, I was looking forward to an easier days riding with about 70 miles down to Stockport where I'd been offered a bed to stay with my old boss. I set off in search of I bike shop. For about the last 100 miles the left cleat had been jumping out on hills, the pedal seemed worn. The "Escape Bike Shop" sold me a new set of SPD's which I bunged on and set off.

Heading south-west towards Bentham I hadn't realised how close I was to the Forest of Bowland, whose northern edge I climbed and skirted before a superb drop down in to Lancaster. It was a bright sunny morning so I headed into the city and had a morning break whilst I studied the map, and looked for a good route to Preston. It was basically follow the M6 south, but there were no parallel roads, so there followed some zigzagging along some lovely rural lanes and villages with the motorway usually only a few hundred yards away. The last few miles were down the A6 into the city which was very quiet in the centre, stopping for a coffee and working out a way out of the city. It wasn't that straightforward, using directional sense and a few bits of cycle route I found some reasonable lanes through Howick and Much Hoole, and then stuck on A595 to Southport. There was

a fairly wide cycle track, but there was grass along it for much of the way.

It was great to meet up with Roy & Ruth Corlett, who took me around the delights of Southport in the evening and a fish and chip supper in a nearby pub

Day 17: Stockport to Bridges (Long Mynd) 106 miles 1230m

A slight change of plan day. I was booked into the backpackers at Bala, about 100 miles away, but realised this was going to give me another 100 mile plus day after it to get to Longtown, so I decided to head due South, cutting out the Welsh excursion. Bidding Roy and Ruth farewell, I set off fairly briskly towards Bootle in search of the "Ferry across the Mersey". It was reasonably good cycle route along the coast to start with. Then it took me inland and deposited me in a field with a narrow muddy track. The going was too slow, so I negotiated my way onto the A565 for a few miles, and then found good lanes taking me right into Bootle and on through to docks and the iconic Liverpool buildings. The next ferry ( a bucket list job!) was in 15 minutes so it was good timing. The ferry takes the "Tourist route" up and down the river before stopping at Birkenhead, so I had coffee and cake on the boat enjoying the views on the crossing.



From Birkenhead I followed the A41 to the outskirts of Chester, always a delightful city, and headed into the centre for lunch, it was a warm day and I was glad of some shade.

Roughly following the England/Wales border I entered and left both countries on several occasions, stopping for an ice cream to cool off near Threapwood, and threading through villages of Penley, Ellesmere and Baschurch, and eventually into Shrewsbury. A quick supermarket stop was necessary to get some supper and breakfast as I remembered Bridges as being a fairly simple hostel.

The end of the day saw a few anticipated hard climbs up to Ratlinghope. On arrival I found I had the entire place to myself apart from the warden. After sorting out a ready-meal, I cooled off in the adjacent pub, The Horseshoe Inn (The Bridges) which was serving good ales, and had wifi!

Day 18: Bridges to Longtown. 59.8miles 1573m

This was another day of skirting the borders. Shropshire is a lovely county for cycling. My shoe had started jumping of the cleat again, so guessed it was a worn cleat, so I tightened everything as far as it would go before setting off.

There were some significant rolling hills through Bishops Castle and Clun, then crossing into Wales at Knighton for a long climb, descending to Prestigne, and then back into England through Kington and on to Hay-On-Wye (border) whereupon I visited a notorious Ice Cream parlour, and indulged in milk shakes and Ice Creams.

( I had an idea of what was to come.)

Heading through town ( back into Wales ) and then turning left, I began what is the base of the climb to the Gospel Pass. I called into Drover Cycles part way up the climb and treated myself to a new peaked cap, and shortly afterwards took the left fork back into England through Craswell towards Longtown.

Whereas the Gospel climb is long and steady this road skirted the side of the mountain and seemed to run up and down like a yoyo. I'd expected a few lumps but it was relentless and probably puts in more climbing than the pass.

Luckily it was a shortish day and I arrived in plenty of time to enjoy supper at Ron and Anthea's place in Longtown, and the evening was spent in the nearby pub (Cornwall Arms) meeting the locals.

Day 19: Longtown to Stretre 95 miles 971m

I joined Ron & Anthea for a walk up to the castle in the morning before heading South to Abergavenny. I followed roads I knew heading down the valley to Usk for coffee, and then some dragging hills over to Chepstow. It really felt like I was coming home. I was weary as it was still a SW headwind as it had been for the previous two days, and it's always busy and a bit fraught getting

through Avonmouth.



Crossing the Severn

The tour almost ended prematurely as I followed the cycle route for a bit, and then came off the roundabout to find the cycleway over the bridge to Pill. It wasn't the route I normally take, but the roundabout before and I was sure the cycle lanes linked up. They did but I had to take a cycletrack that went under the M5. I could see an underpass ahead of me, and with the sun in my eyes I launched down the ramp, which then turned out to be a flight of steps. There was no option but to try and go with it. I crashed down the few top steps heavily and managed to pull up half way down on a landing. Amazingly the front wheel and forks had survived, and my heart probably hit the max BPM for the trip!

After getting through Gordano and the Portway, the lanes were quite busy to Clevedon, and I was quite late arriving at Strete. Luckily there was a "Spoons" in town, so I took advantage of Friday fish night - £7.45 including a pint!

Replenished, I started to consider the idea of a night ride home, as it was about 70 miles, reasonably flat, but in the end decided to stay put at the youth hostel.

Day 20: Strete to Newton Abbot. 77.6 miles 1076m

Staying overnight was a good call – at 2am there was a thumping great thunderstorm with lightening carrying on for much of the night.

Roads were wet as I set off, but soon drying out. The a361 was fairly quiet, and got me to Burrow Bridge, where I swung off onto the level lanes and into North Curry in search of a mid-morning coffee. Sorted at the community Café I passed some of the Wellington Wheelers going the other way. I picked up the canal towpath again into Taunton, but somehow came off of it at the wrong point in town, so had a slight detour through the city, and dropped onto to the old A38 a bit earlier and rode through to Wellington, a quick shopping trip for picnic lunch, and then through Rockwell Green, and the familiar lanes through Nicholashayne to Culmstock for sandwiches by the river.

The last few miles were very familiar, rumbling down the B3181 (Old A38) through Cullompton, through the back of Exeter, up over Longdown Hill and into the Teign Valley.

Home and all done – just a few hundred pictures to download and the write up to do , and now that's finished to. Time to plan another trip.

Total mileage for the trip: 1612 miles

Total elevation for the trip: 27,200m

Accommodations Costs: £450

Punctures – 0

Breakages – 1 gear cable. 1 STI gear lever. Left shoe pedal cleat failed.

Website: [www.cyclegb.org](http://www.cyclegb.org)

## So what is an "AUDAX" Randonnee?

**The word AUDAX is Latin for 'bold', and was first used in the context of endurance sports towards the end of the 19th century. Audax rides can be considered as bold or "Audacious"**

'Randonnée' is a French word which loosely translates to 'ramble or 'long journey' - it's not really cycling-specific, but in AUK we take it to mean a long cycle ride.

A 'Randonneur' is a person who has completed a recognised 200 kilometre ride.

When you ride an Audax event you receive a "BREVET" card at the start. It's your route checkpoint card and also the certificate of the ride, often treasured and collected by regular randonneurs.

It means 'certificate', more or less. So it's the card you carry, which gets stamped at controls and finally validated by AUK as proof of your ride. The word is often also used to describe the event itself - ie, a

certificated ride.



### What is Audax UK?

Audax United Kingdom (known as Audax UK or AUK) is the foremost long-distance cycling association in the UK, and the biggest in the world. It was established in 1976. AUK oversees the running of long-distance cycling events, and, using a system of timed checkpoints, validates and records every successful ride.

Anybody can ride an AUK event or an Audax, although technically, AUK does not 'run' events - these are run by clubs or individuals under AUK's supervision.

When a non-member enters an event, there is a small additional fee ( usually around £2) over and above the usual entry fee, which gives the rider 'temporary membership' of AUK for the duration of the event. This is necessary for insurance reasons.

So although a 200Km ride is the recognised distance for a “Randonneur” it does organise a lot of shorter events around 100KM or less. These rides are really to try to encourage people who have never had a cracked at any distance riding to tackle a ride over 60 miles. There is a theory ( proved by myself and others), that if you have completed a 50 mile ride, then you can do a 100 mile ride. And if you've done a 100 mile ride than you can make a 200, and whilst rides beyond 200 miles start to cross the barrier of “ a day or 24hr ride”, it has a lot of truth as many like myself have found, when only really intending to get a 200Km ride in and you end up finding yourself in France with 5000 other Randonneurs on the 1200Km run over four nights from Paris to Brest and back.

Paris-Brest-Paris is probably the ultimate achievement and the one aimed for by most randonneurs, although London-Edinburgh-London (1400Km) is now becoming the UK's outsold event.

To enter a ride like Paris-Brest you need to complete your “Super Randonneur” award – the series of 200, 300, 400 and 600Km rides all in the same season. If this sounds like hard work, there are many other award for doing audaxes, e.g for completing 10 x 200Km in a year, or completing lots of hilly events and gaining “Altitude points”

It's no mean feat to support these rides – control points for longer rides have to be open for many hours , even days possibly on really long rides, as the events are run with a minimum and maximum s speed/time limit. Time limits are typically 30kph top average speed, and 15kph minimum average speed for 200Km – 600Km rides, and it these speeds and timing that determine how long the controls/checkpoints/feeding station will be available.

So if you get to your checkpoint too early or too late then you won't get fed!

Locally in the South West there are a lot of great Audax rides. The Devon Delight runs each summer, and there are lots of rides in Cornwall , Somerset and Dorset. They usually cost just few pounds to enter, although you are often expected to buy food, or donate for free food along the way.

They are generally non-profit making, with any profits going to local charities or supporting the organising cycle club.

MDCC dabbled in Audax organisation a few years ago when the late Andy Lander-Stow organised an event, unlike the Dartmoor Classic it never really got going although the club was smaller then.

Myself, Andy Lander-Stow and Stephen Dart all completed PBP in the past, and I managed my Ultra Randonneur (10 x Super randonneur) before my legs started to fall off.

Audax rides are becoming very popular again, several now sell out as entries are normally limited to a couple of hundred riders.

And there is a lot more to it than this so for more detailed information you can consult the AUK website. Links below:

For the calendar of AUDAX events see here:

<http://www.aukweb.net/events/>

For frequently asked questions about Audax

<http://www.aukweb.net/aboutauk/faq/>

# Velopark Veterans' Group

Bright sunshine bookended the Velovets 2017 sessions. We launched the group, on an unseasonably sunny, calm and relatively warm winter's day and closed with the orange orb breaking through for the final few circuits of our December 20th gathering. Again, it was a good turnout, with the dozen riders present staying together until the final lap, of which 16 were covered in the hour.

Over the last few sessions we finally appear to have got Ken Robertson's concept of "Bike & Banter" right; a steady pace that most can sustain for sixty minutes - and no more need of my whistle to keep "breakaways" from forming. Most now appear to be happy with the idea that the dash to the finish only starts opening up with a lap to go.

The post ride "Cafe Stop" (in the nearby leisure centre) is now proving popular, with the greater majority of riders staying on for half an hour or so to extend the pleasure of the experience.

During the course of our twice monthly meetings - always the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays at 2:00 in the afternoon - over fifty individuals have attended, of which nearly 20% have been women. However, this percentage is not reflected in the regular turnout and it would be nice if the group could achieve a better gender balance this year.

As always, the weather has had a major influence on attendances, with highs of twenty plus and lows of half a dozen - or less. On one particularly stormy day, towards the start of the autumn, Tony O'Brien was the only one courageous enough to brave the elements.

The general age, experience and discipline of the group lead to an incident free year and the track's smooth well maintained pothole and rut free surface has seen not a single puncture. By my rough calculations, that's about seven thousand wheel miles without a flat.

Another good thing about riding around this particular facility is that, if you do drop off the back of the bunch, you can soft pedal and wait for it to catch you up or take one of two short cuts and rejoin - or, if you want to, take a lap out! For me, repeatedly riding around the Torbay Velopark is an expression of my personal existential futility; lots of effort just to end up back where I started. But it works for me and it can for you. So, if you haven't yet given it a try, why not come along soon and join in the fun. And, if you've only already attended just once or twice, we'd love to see you more regularly. February's sessions are on the 7th and the 21st of the month, as are those in March.

Looking forward to seeing you all.

Rocket (Ron Keegan) For more info ring Torquay 605008

## Social Committee Update - Quiz Night #2 & Bike Maintenance Courses

**Quiz Night - Friday 20th April, 1900h start at Stover Golf Club with 2 course buffet.**

Following the first successful quiz back in October 2017 when 55 people enjoyed an excellent evening with quality and ample food and time to socialise we have organised our 2nd event for a few weeks time. **Over half the places have already been booked, 64 is our maximum number**, in teams of 4 to 6, we'll put teams together if needed. The buffet will offer a choice of about 5 dishes such as curry, lasagne, stroganoff, sweet & sour etc with a vegetarian option as well plus salad, rice and the wonderful fries they serve. You can choose to try more than one. Hot desserts, to be chosen on the night, will be served to the tables. The quiz costs £2.50 and the buffet £12.50, so £15 pp in total. More than half of entrants went home with a prize last time. **Entries, email: [news@mdcc.org.uk](mailto:news@mdcc.org.uk) first come first served. Payment will be requested nearer the day.**

### Bike Maintenance Courses for 2018

3 successful courses in 2017 allowed 18 members to have 'hands on' training sessions on the basics in a small group environment. If there is enough interest we will 2 more courses this year and maybe a third if the numbers require. These courses are ideal for young riders and adults. The cost is £15 for the 3 sessions payable in advance.

The 3 sessions will cover:

1. Saddle & handlebar heights & levels, wheel removal & puncture repair.
2. Brakes, changing brake blocks & chain maintenance.
3. Front & rear gear mechanisms & their adjustment, alignment.

The dates are:

Course D - Fridays 4th 11th and 18th May, 1800h for 1 hour at Colin Lewis Cycles, 17 Dartmouth Road, Paignton, TQ4 5AD. Tel: 01803 553095

Course E - Fridays 1st 8th and 15th June all details as course D.

**To apply for places please email:** [news@mdcc.org.uk](mailto:news@mdcc.org.uk) first come first served.

## MDCC Committee Corner

**The Committee would like to make all members aware that you are invited to sit in on their meetings at any time. If you would like to raise a particular issue for discussion you would need to contact the Secretary, Ian Myers at [info@mdcc.org.uk](mailto:info@mdcc.org.uk) with the details preferably a couple of weeks before. All meetings (unless otherwise stated) start at 1930h at Teigngrace Community Hall, School Road, Teigngrace, TQ12 6QS.**

Next meeting: Monday 29th April TBC, 1930h at Chudleigh Knighton Village Hall.

### Club Officials for 2018 as appointed at the AGM

Post	Holder
President	Colin Lewis
Vice President	Ken Robertson, Ron Keegan, Ron Georgi
Chairman	Andrew Perkins
Vice Chairman	Max Vautier
General Secretary	Ian Myers
Hon. Treasurer	Mark Sanders
Time Trial Secretary	Conrad Moss
Club TT	Ian Myers
Road Race Secretary	Mike Gratton
MTB Secretary	Nick Roach
Press Secretary	Vacant
Membership Development Officer	Liz Crawford
Social Secretary	Committee representative
Newsletter Editor	Paul Martin
Welfare Officer	Liam McGrath
Mid Devon Youth	Andrew Parker
Women's Officer	Michele Radant
Sportive officers	Jamie Horton

# MDCC Calendar 2018

## MDCC Open Time Trials, MTB & other club events, Sportive Committee, Sportives, Audax etc...

Some 2018 events have already been advertised but many have not yet published. This list will be updated in future editions to inform you as to what's available .

The following list is not exhaustive and mainly uses a travel distance within 100 miles to access the event.

Entries/information available via [www.britishcycling.org.uk/events](http://www.britishcycling.org.uk/events), [www.aukweb.net/events](http://www.aukweb.net/events), [justevents.org](http://justevents.org), [www.ukcyclingevents.co.uk](http://www.ukcyclingevents.co.uk)

**All MDCC Competition events are highlighted in Red, Sportive events in Green, Social Committee in Blue.**

Saturday 7th & Sunday 8th April	New Forrest Spring Sportive - 30, 50 or 80 miles.
Sunday 8th April	Audax - A Cornish 100 - Falmouth, 50 & 100 km.
Saturday 14th - with Sunday 15th April Race,	MDCC Totnes - Vire National 'B' Stage Race Stage 1, Torbay Velopark support races, Stage 2 Haytor Hill Climb, Stage 3 70 mile Road South Brent
Sunday 15th April	Audax - Comwich Century - 160km, Honiton, £7 SWXC MTB Series - Bush Farm, Saltash (Pilgrim Flyers)
Wednesday 18th April	MDCC Summer Series Time Trial 10 miles, Clay Pits, 1830h
Friday 20th April	MDCC Quiz Night, Stover Golf Club
Friday 27th April - Sunday 29th April	MDCC Brittany weekend A - 25 riders - Roscoff to Perros-Guirec
Saturday 28th April	Audax - Valley of the Rocks - 200km - Honiton, £7.
Sunday 29th April	Hammer Sportive - Salcombe Rugby Club, 65, 105 & 135km
Wednesday 2nd May	MDCC Summer Series Time Trial 10 miles, Clay Pits, 1900h
Thursday 3rd May	Velopark Circuit Race 1, Torbay Velopark
Friday 4th May - Monday 7th May	MDCC Brittany weekend B - 23 riders - Roscoff to Perros-Guirec plus
Fridays 4th, 11th & 18th May	Bike Maintenance Course D - See Social Committee report above
Saturday 12th May	Colin Lewis Cycles Grand Prix, Torbay Velopark
Sunday 13th May	Eden Classic - Eden project Cornwall
Sunday 20th May	SWXC MTB Series – Haldon (Mid Devon CC)
Thursday 24th May	Velopark Circuit Race 4, Torbay Velopark

Wednesday 30th May	MDCC Summer Series Time Trial 10 miles, Dartington, 1900h
Fridays 1st, 8th & 15th June	Bike Maintenance Course E
Wednesday 6th June	MDCC Summer Series Time Trial 10 miles, Clay Pits, 1900h
Sunday 10th June	Bournemouth Sportive - 30, 65 or 100 miles. £23-30 SWXC MTB Series – Mount Edgecombe (Edge cycles)
Tuesday 19th June	MDCC Open TT, 25 miles, 1900h
Sunday 24th June	Nello Charity Bike Ride - Topsham - 100 & 55 miles, <a href="http://www.forcecancercharity.co.uk/event/the-nello-2017/">http://www.forcecancercharity.co.uk/event/the-nello-2017/</a>
Sunday 1st July	Dartmoor Classic - 35, 67 & 107 miles - Newton Abbot Racecourse, 0700h
Wednesday 4th July	MDCC Summer Series Time Trial 10 miles, Dartington, 1900h
Saturday 7th July	MDCC GHS Youth Heat, 1400h
Thursday 5th July	Velopark Circuit Race 7, Torbay Velopark
Saturday 7th July	National Youth Championship (S West) TT 10 miles, Teign Valley, 1400h SWXC MTB Series – Haldon (Mid Devon CC) (( also round 1 of evening series))
Sunday 8th July	Velothon Wales - 110 & 140km - Cardiff
Sunday 15th July	Audax - 25th Anniversary Devon Delight  Mendips Sportive - Gloucestershire - 36, 67 or 102 miles
Sunday 15th July	Two Moors 100 - 100 miles & 100 km - Bideford Rugby Club
Sunday 22nd July	MDCC Open TT, 25 miles, 0800h
Wednesday 25th July	MDCC Summer Series Time Trial 10 miles, Clay Pits, 1900h
Sunday 29th July	Ride London - 100 miles
Wednesday 1st August	MDCC Summer Series Time Trial 10 miles, Dartington, 1900h SWXC MTB Evening Series(TBC) – Haldon (MDCC)
Saturday 4th August	Just Events - Taunton Flyer - 0700h, 34, 70 & 111 miles £23 - 28 as of now.
Saturday 11th August	Paignton Regatta, Torbay Velopark
Sunday 12th August	SWXC MTB Series – Mount Edgecombe (Edge cycles)
Wednesday 15th August	SWXC MTB Evening Series(TBC) – Haldon (MDCC)
Wednesday 22nd August	MDCC Summer Series Time Trial 10 miles, Clay Pits, 1830h
Wednesday 29th August	SWXC MTB Evening Series(TBC) – Haldon (MDCC)
Sunday 2nd September	MDCC Tour of Britain Ride

- Saturday 8th September Just Events - Moor 2 Sea - Exeter Racecourse - 37, 65 & 112 miles, 0700h.
- Sunday 9th September **MDCC Open TT, 25 miles, 0800h**  
 Devon Rotarium - 100km - Honiton Rugby Club, Northcote Lane, Honiton, Honiton, EX14 1NL
- Saturday 22nd & Sunday 23rd September **MDCC YHA weekend to the Eden Project - 70 miles**
- Sunday 23rd September Birmingham 100 Sportive
- Saturday 29th September **MDCC Open Haytor & Widecombe Hill Climbs, 1000 & 1200h**
- Saturday 6th October Just Events - **Lands End 100 - 46, 100km & 100 miles, Marazion**
- Sunday 14th October Hammer Martello - Okehampton Community College, 110 & 160 km.
- Sunday 16th December **MDCC Mince Pie Run**
- Wednesday 26th December **MDCC Boxing day Time Trial 10 miles, Clay Pits, 0930h**
- Saturday 5th January 2019 **MDCC AGM, Stover Golf Club, 1830 for 1900h start**

MDCC Club Rides - April - June 2018			
F - 50 @ 13/15 mph, G - 40 @ 12/14 mph, S - 30 @ 10/12 mph, SS - 35 @ 11/13 mph			
Date	Ride	Destination	Leader
1st April	F	Cheriton Bishop	Andrew Muir
1st April	G	Cheriton Bishop	Dave & Sarah long & Tandem
1st April	S	Moretonhampstead	Liz & Colin Butler
7th April	SS		
8th April	F	Lyme Regis Ride Back	TBD
8th April	G	Lyme Regis Ride Back	TBD
8th April	S	Lyme Regis Ride Back	TBD
14th April	SS		
15th April	F	Grimspound	David Fulton
15th April	G	TBD	Bob Butcher
15th April	S	Brick House Cafe, Ashburton	Jennie Fitzjohn & Graham Sykes
21st April	SS	Meadfoot Beach Cafe	Louise Swann
22nd April	F	Hill Top Cafe, Pensilvania, Exeter	Peter Mason
22nd April	G	Cafe 360, Bovey Tracey	Jim Black
22nd April	S		
28th April	SS	Dawlish	Jim Black
29th April	F	TBD	Peter Dingley - Brown
29th April	G		
29th April	S	Salmons Leap, Buckfastleigh	Michele Radant
5th May	SS	Cafe on the Green, Widecombe	Simon Fryer
6th May	F	Bow	Caroline Twigger
6th May	G	TBD	Cherith Wood
6th May	S	Central Cafe, Moretonhampstead	Mike Radant
12th May	SS		
13th May	F	Stokeley Farm Shop	Viv Crees
13th May	G	Orange Elephant	Mark Whalley & Nicky Gregory
13th May	S	Chudleigh via the reservoirs	Emily Simcock
19th May	SS	Venus Cafe, Blackpool Sands	Rose Parkhouse
20th May	F	Postbridge	Kevin Loader
20th May	G	TBD	Mark Harvey
20th May	S	Ben's Farm Shop, Staverton	Michele Radant
26th May	SS	Mystery Tour	Andy Styles
27th May	F	TBD	David Gow-Smith

<b>MDCC Club Rides - April - June 2018</b>			
<b>F - 50 @ 13/15 mph, G - 40 @ 12/14 mph, S - 30 @ 10/12 mph, SS - 35 @ 11/13 mph</b>			
<b>27th May</b>	<b>G</b>	Dockside Cafe, Exmouth	Rose Parkhouse
<b>27th May</b>	<b>S</b>		
<b>2nd June</b>	<b>SS</b>	Orange Elephant	Louise Swann
<b>3rd June</b>	<b>F</b>	Chagford	Dave Long
<b>3rd June</b>	<b>G</b>	Wrangaton	Ken Robertson
<b>3rd June</b>	<b>S</b>	Widecombe	Mark Phare
<b>9th June</b>	<b>SS</b>		
<b>10th June</b>	<b>F</b>	Bernaville Nursery, Cowley	Jim Black
<b>10th June</b>	<b>G</b>	Buckfast Steam Railway	John Cooper
<b>10th June</b>	<b>S</b>	Dean Court Farm, Buckfastleigh	Michele Radant
<b>16th June</b>	<b>SS</b>	Guardhouse Cafe, Berry Head	Mary Stocker
<b>17th June</b>	<b>F</b>	Dartmoor Classic Route	Kevin Loader
<b>17th June</b>	<b>G</b>	Dartmoor Classic Route	TBD
<b>17th June</b>	<b>S</b>	Dartmoor Classic Route	TBD
<b>23rd June</b>	<b>SS</b>		
<b>24th June</b>	<b>F</b>	TBD	Simon Fryer
<b>24th June</b>	<b>G</b>	Bird Cage Cafe, Chagford	Paul Martin
<b>24th June</b>	<b>S</b>	Cheriton Bishop	Mark Phare
<b>30th June</b>	<b>SS</b>	Dartmoor Classic preparation	All