

# Cycle Club Sudbury Spindle - December 2010



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It's hard to believe that I'm already writing this Christmas edition of Spindle. Where did our summer go? In a few weeks time, the nights will start to get lighter which means more



Peter Whiteley tries out one of his latest bike creations for Santa

time on the bike. That's assuming the snow doesn't come down in bucket loads like it did last year. (It's already making a determined start!)

The club has had another very successful year, with membership numbers taking an upward curve towards the 90's. The members themselves have excelled on the road, in Time Trial's, long distance Audaxes, and with personal triumphs up Col's, Alps, Sportives and Sea to Sea rides, all of which you have probably read about in here.

This month's edition includes an account from my best contributor, (sometimes, my only contributor!) Viv Marsh, on a recent 'leg breaker' sportive he took part in, in the Peak District. It's not for anyone of a nervous disposition!

Mark Gentry wins the Spindle's 'E-mailer of The Year Award', for his highly enjoyable wacky descriptions of forthcoming club runs. Priceless stuff!

A large turnout gathered at the Stevenson Centre recently, to listen to Cycle Coach Dave Green, give a very comprehensive talk on all aspects of training for time trials. He managed to convey that 'old school' methods had there place when no one knew any better, but modern thinking and the science behind it all, had progressed the sport to unprecedented levels of excellence.

It was made plain, to achieve faster times on the bike, a structured training plan is essential. Not having a training plan and just going out for occasional training runs and 'getting' the miles in, will not continually produce the time gains that riders strive for.

I'm sure that basic training plans can be found on the internet (or within training manuals) and would

advise any rider out there, who wants to improve, to find one and start now for next years T.T. season.

It all made an awful lot of sense when presented by someone who obviously knows his onions, even if some of the scientific bits were beyond my meagre brain.

Dave is a qualified cycle coach as well as doing his day job in the RAF, and already has three CCS riders under his wing at the moment. If you think he can help to improve your riding, contact him at - [david@green5114.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:david@green5114.freeserve.co.uk)

Further to my recent Stevenage Audax adventure, (see further on) I had the good (bad?) fortune to nip up to Norfolk to ride the first of the Norfolk Nips Audaxes. Also along for the ride were CCS's Brian Mann, Simon Daw, Dave Fenn and Robin Weaver. The fog we encountered on the way up didn't clear until the ride was nearly over. This made navigating for me (alright, for Robin, my personal navigator) a bit difficult at times. We rode along the North Norfolk coast road for about 15 miles without actually seeing any sea. We didn't see many of the 80 other riders either, to be honest!

The only thing of note that happened around the course was some geezer head butting a van (very Slowly!) on a blind bend. He was on the wrong side of the road and had no where else to go. Typical, you may think, but the rider was the one on the wrong side of the road! Simon Daw was on the scene doing a good job of helping out, with an ambulance already in attendance.

Moral of the story is, always expect something bigger than you to be coming round the next bend. It certainly grabbed my attention and kept me alert for the rest of the ride.



## Diary Dates:-

Nov 25 CCS AGM. Stevenson Centre 7.30pm  
Dec 5<sup>th</sup> Shorter Club Run ride. Market Hill. 9.00am  
Dec 9 Quiz night. Stevenson Centre 7.30pm  
Dec 11<sup>th</sup> 100k Norfolk Nips 2 Audax Norwich 9.00  
Dec 27<sup>th</sup> Boxing Day Ride/Comp. Lavenham 11.00  
Jan 13<sup>th</sup> Subs night Stevenson Centre 7.30pm  
Jan 15<sup>th</sup> 100k Norfolk Nips 3 Audax. Norwich 9.00  
Jan 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Dinner/Prize giving. Leavenheath Lion (New venue!)  
Jan 30<sup>th</sup> Reliability Ride. Stevenson Centre 9.00am  
Feb 12<sup>th</sup> 100k Norfolk Mardle Audax Norwich 9.00  
Feb 12<sup>th</sup> 200km Old Squit Audax Norwich 8.00



## 2010 Open Time Trial - Season Review

This season has followed on from last year's success on the 'Open Roads'.

A total of 145 individual rides in the Open events was slightly down on the previous year's total of 154. They were ridden by 13 different CCS members throughout the season.

Quite a few top 6 placings were gained as our riders continue to improve and bring their times down.

**Rob Davies** rode a remarkable 53.11 on the E2 in June to claim the trophy for the fastest 25 and also a new club record. He then went on to claim the fastest 50 with a 01.57.05 towards the end of the season. A PB of 21.05 for a 10, again on the E2, topped off a successful season and he will surely start closing in on club records next year.

**Simon Daw** had one of his best seasons for many a year as he also rode grass track and road races as well as TT's. During a very busy and committed season, he posted P.B.'s and improved with nearly every ride. He admits he doesn't like the 'drag strip' TT courses and we can only wonder what times he would return if he did!

**James Rush** continued to improve his times on various courses and ventured into the 50 mile T.T. territory for the first time. He was hampered mid season with a fall on his second 50 TT (on spilt diesel at a roundabout) and a hospital stay (not related!) and hopes for a more consistent season next year.

**Damon Day** wins my unofficial 'Open TT Rider of the Year' with some

outstanding improvements. He devised his own structured training schedule during the winter and reaped the rewards



throughout the season. He finally went under the hour for a 25 in April and then beat this time by over 2 minutes in June with a 57.09 which was nearly a 4 minute improvement from the previous year. His times for the 10 also saw him improve by 20secs to a 22.39.

**Stewart Kirk** also ventured into new territories by riding two 100 mile TT's during the season. His best time of 04.38.03 was only 8 secs quicker than his second ride. That's consistency for you! His times have also continued to improve over the courses he rode during the previous years and is now homing in on a sub hour ride for a 25 in the coming season.

**Len Finch** and **Terry Law** have been trading similar times with each other throughout the season in the 10 T.T.'s with **Terry** just shading it with a best of 27.19 over **Len's** best at 27.28.

**Terry** also had a fall during a TT, when a car overtook him then promptly turned right in front of him. Neither he nor the bike was worse for wear, but he still kicks himself for not taking up the young lady driver's offer of a lift back to the H.Q.!

**Bob Bush** had a consistent year with a 31.31 being his best time for a 10 and in a rare foray into the 25 T.T.'s he recorded a 01.30.41.

**Barbara Law** had a quieter season, but still managed a very good 28.38 which was very nearly a PB for a 10. She also rode a 01.21.04 for her only 25.

**George Hoppit** dipped his pedal into the Open TT world by entering two late seasons 10's. His best time of 24.10 was not only a PB but an extraordinary ride for a young newcomer. There's a lot more to come next season from this rider.

We could do with more riders following **George's** example and having a go at Open TT's.

With the increase in membership, which in turn has bolstered the number of club riders taking part in the Evening Points Series TT's, it would be good to see some of these riders filtering through to Open TT's next season.

## CCS Hill climb

By 'Bloke at the Bottom'

Organiser Andrew Hoppit received a bumper entry for CCS's Open Hill Climb which also doubles as the East Anglian Hill Climb Championship. Even the weather behaved itself and stayed mainly sunny throughout. A very large crowd assembled on the hill, to add to the atmosphere, as they cheered all the riders on, with Mark Gentry bringing over a sizeable group with the club run, to swell the numbers.

The field was depleted by 'no shows' on the day from 11 riders which is always disappointing for organisers and spectators alike.

For once, a local rider, Paul Moss (2<sup>nd</sup> last year) from the Stowmarket club, scooped the fastest time of the day and first prize with a very quick 46.07sec.

Visiting rider, Richard da Silva from Stevenage CC, took 2<sup>nd</sup> place with 47.02secs which was just 1/100ths of a second faster than third place man Daniel Zagni from Ipswich BC. James Rush's hopes of retaining the CCS hill climb trophy were dashed just yards from the finish line when a 'Sunday driver' stopped in front of him.

Simon Wright's quick 51.02secs time was therefore good enough to claim the title. Matt Shotbolt was another victim of 'hill traffic' but still recorded a very good 53.02sec ride for 2<sup>nd</sup> CCS rider home. James ended up with a 54.08 ride for 3<sup>rd</sup> place.

Other CCS riders included hill returnee, Rob Harman with a good 57.05 which was just 4/100ths quicker than Viv Marsh's great effort.

Trevor Pillet's hill debut ride saw him

record a decent 1min 02.08sec for a first ride. Junior rider, George Hoppit, now a bit of a Semer hill veteran, knocked a whopping 11 secs off his previous best time with a 1min 07.09.

As ever, CCS showed up what they do best – 'organising events'. Andrew should be congratulated for his efforts.



Simon Wright



Trevor Pillet



Rob Harman

## Tour of the Peaks

By Viv Marsh

"Living as I do, nearer Colchester than Sudbury, I have been joining regular training rides with a group of riders associated with the 53-12 Tri-Club in Colchester. They are mostly pretty strong riders, certainly better than me so it has helped me to improve my speed and climbing slightly over the last year. However I was still rather dubious about the wisdom of entering the Tour of the Peak sportive with them in October. I stressed that if I did they should not wait for me on the ride but they insisted that it would be fine so one Friday evening six of us (5 he's and one she) set off for the Peak District in two vans loaded with lots of expensive carbon fibre - and my bike. Knowing I would struggle keeping up on the hills I opted for steel with a triple chain-set.

We had a pretty awful time with the Friday night traffic and a puncture in one of the vans



(obviously not using Schwalbe Marathon Plus tyres – Ed) before we even left Colchester but eventually arrived at a Pub/B&B near the event HQ for a carb-loading evening meal and a few doses of fermented barley, sports recovery drinks. We woke at 5.30 am for our home-prepared breakfasts – too early for the b&b breakfast. The morning was cold and dark being the last day before the clocks changed back to GMT but we filled our bellies, bidons and pockets with various nourishments for the day ahead.

The ride was billed as 97 miles and climbing the three notorious climbs of The Cat & Fiddle (375m over 11km), Winnats Pass (170m over 2.1km) and Holme Moss (395m over 7km). All pretty scary stuff for this soft East Anglian boy but hey, I've been up Mt Ventoux – this should be easy. With over 1,000 entrants we were set off in groups of about 30-40 and got on our way without incident at 8.10am. We rolled through Chapel-en-le-Frith down to Whaley Bridge where we dutifully stopped and waited for the lights. Then it all got rather colourful - the lights went green, my heart rate shot into the red and my mood went black. We climbed and climbed and as predicted I was soon left behind most of the others. I found myself staying fairly close to Jason but Grahame,

Ruth, Perry and Daz disappeared up the road. As they'd insisted, they waited at various laybys and junctions for us to regroup. This was great but of course meant that we never got any rests. (I know what you mean.. Ed) After what seemed like an interminable climb we arrived in Macclesfield and passed straight through and out onto the Cat & Fiddle- supposedly the first climb but my legs were already burning.

I'd ridden this one before however – several years ago on a mountain bike - and my memory of it being long but steady proved to be accurate and although the others still disappeared round the first corner I enjoyed the climb that was relatively comfortable at my pace. We climbed up into cloud to the infamous Cat & Fiddle pub at the summit, at 515m on what is often considered the most dangerous road in England. After the initial 3km which is fairly steep, the gradient eases. At halfway you get a first glimpse of the top, still 5.5km away, but by then the hard part is over. There is even a downhill section after about 6km. Whilst not especially difficult, it is a lovely climb with expansive views over the Cheshire countryside – at least it would have had if it weren't so misty. After re-grouping at the pub the reward of the climb was a long descent down the other side which was pleasant but somewhat chilly. We passed and re-passed each other on the ups and downs to Tideswell where Jason and I, off the back again, missed the first feed stop completely and ended up ahead of the others who were kindly waiting for us at the control. It took us a while to realise our mistake but with the very hilly terrain there was no way we were going to retrace. At the top of the next climb we tried to phone them but settled for sending text messages to explain our mistake.

We decided that as the others were continually waiting for us there was no point in waiting for them, so we pressed on to Winnats Pass as the sun came out and it turned into a very pleasant day. Although a relatively short climb (still well over a mile) the road kicks up ferociously and winds through a cleft, surrounded by towering limestone pinnacles. It seems to get steeper and harder as you climb. The steep-sided green valley is scattered with grey rocks that the road cuts through like a fairytale book picture. On two wheels it's a nightmare but today was crowded with well-wishers cheering us on. One family shouting encouragement and ringing a hand bell can have had no idea how much that spurred me

on – even I couldn't get off and walk while they were ringing so enthusiastically. I was very quickly in my bottom gear (30x23) and there I stayed. Eventually the gradient eased off but continued to climb up to the next junction. Here the 97 mile route splits with a 67 mile alternative so having separated from Jason on the climb I turned up towards the top of Mam Tor and off on my own for a long lonely slog. Both my legs cramped before the top – front and back and I had to stop and stretch them before the thrilling descent into Edale.

After Edale we had almost 5 miles of FLAT! Suddenly in my element and pressed on hoping to hold off the others as long as possible

who I'd been expecting to catch me at any moment. It was short lived elation though and very soon it was climbing again – another long grinding climb this time. Although separated from my colleagues there were always other riders around. I turned to one and pointed out that we had just passed halfway and with 2 of the 3 climbs behind us must have completed the hard half. He looked at me in astonishment and said that I obviously hadn't done this ride before – that was the easy half! I nearly gave up on the spot but as he pulled away from me I convinced myself he must either be wrong or just lying. How could the second half be harder than the first? Well it was. Almost from that moment onwards it was continual strenuous climbing interspersed with a few short sharp descents. The next stage in particular up to the second feed station was as hard as anything we'd done so far including Winnats. Although I never actually gave up and walked, I was often going no quicker than walking pace and on this back-breaking climb with no apparent name and I had to stop once and lay in the road for a few minutes.



Eventually I crawled into the feed station and devoured a very welcome vegetable soup and bread roll. Amazed that my friends still hadn't caught me I set off for the final 30 mile stretch. It was more of the same – long grinding climbs and short sharp descents. I got to Holmfirth, the most northerly point of the route, and from the traffic lights at the centre of the town the road just went up. The houses and shops were

all staggered like a staircase as far as you could see. Immediately back in bottom gear I ground my way out of the town and onto Holme Moss itself. This towered above me – it's rather tame name giving no hint as to what this climb would be like. I didn't know at this point that is it known locally as Le Col de Moss! This beast was a proper mountain – especially at this stage of the ride. The road swept round to the left and then the steepness increases through a series of switchbacks. A mile from the summit the gradient climbs above 14%, and remains testing until the summit is crested. It was made even more challenging by the prevailing south-westerly wind. As I left the town I continued to climb skywards. Maybe it was my delusional state but this mountain looked to me, for all the world like the top bit of the climb on Mt Ventoux from Malaucene. It was barren and relentless with a perfectly smooth road snaking up to the top where a transmission aerial was sited. The road had distance markings to the top every quarter of a mile. It was another relentless grovel in that bottom gear. Also like Ventoux everyone else had long gone and I was alone – but this time I was ahead. How did that happen? Where was everyone? At last I crawled over the exposed summit and into a howling head wind that was so strong I had to keep pedaling on the descent too. But thankfully it was a long fast descent and I convinced myself it would now be a lovely cruise along the valley bottom to the finish in about 15 miles. But of course I was wrong. As with the rest of the day it was more climbing.

About this point, Daz came past me and explained that he had missed the last cut-off point by a few minutes and had been diverted around Holme Moss on a short-cut. If I'd had the strength I'd have thumped him. I'd grovelled over Holme Moss for about an hour and he'd gone round it! Apparently though, the rest of our party had had a disastrous day. Firstly none of them had their phones with them so our message hadn't got to them. They'd waited for almost an hour for us not realising we were ahead. Despite them all being fitter, faster, and stronger than me several of them had struggled on their standard chain-sets and had decided to switch to the 67 mile route after Winnats Pass. Of the two who had followed me, Daz had suffered with bad cramp and only Perry had actually kept on course and was the only one still behind me. I was nearly dead on my feet

having battled to keep ahead of them and only one of them was following me and he was an hour behind!

Anyway my lovely cruise along the valley bottom came to an abrupt end as we turned to leave Glossop and once again the road stretched up as far as I could see. I adopted my now familiar tactic with such spirit sapping climbs and lowered my head so that the peak of my cap prevented me from seeing the full enormity of it. This climb must also have been several miles long and whilst not that steep was so very painful to my tired legs and once again I ground out bottom gear. Eventually nearing the top I told myself that this must be the last climb but of course it was just a quick descent to the next village before were climbing again. Finally within sight of the finish town the route suddenly swung off the main road to the right and undulated along the ridge top before plummeting into the town. Even this wasn't the end though – we went right through the town and out the other side to take in one more climb right back up onto the ridge again before finally dropping back into the town for the finish.

I'd taken 8hrs 15mins to get round the 97 miles – mainly in bottom gear. Perry rolled in two minutes behind me having pulled back almost all of the hour he'd lost waiting for me at the first feed. He was as shattered as I was but was pleased to have finished the full route and to finally catch me too. The others were already making their way home. Once again I realised I had taken on a ride that was beyond my realistic abilities but again I had somehow completed it against the odds. Was it as hard as Ventoux? Well no but it was close and at least on Ventoux you always knew exactly where you were and what you had left to do. Here every corner revealed a new horror so mentally I think it was even tougher. When will I learn?



## Riding in another world

By 'Bloke at the Back'



I made a rare foray into the Audax world recently by riding the Stevenage Emitremmus 100km event, along with Brian 'Smiler' Mann and Simon Daw (fast manic group); Dave Fenn, Steve Barnes and Mark Gentry (medium manic group) and Robin Weaver and myself in the... Slow-ish, but 'enjoy the scenery' group. A few random thoughts came to pass as we made our way around in the drizzly rain that had set in for the day;

1) What an arse end part of our world, Stevenage is. Apologies and sympathies if you have any connections with this place,

2) Why would anyone wish to ride this event with 360 other riders all fighting for the same road space? (I have ridden it 4 times before and should've known better)

3) What appalling riding standards and manners some riders show by riding 2-3 abreast and overtaking on blind bends on country lanes (usually carried out by anyone with Welwyn Wheelers emblazoned on their backs – which makes a change from the usual suspects from Southend Wheelers),

4) I always forget how hilly this ride is and always vow to give it a miss, should I be asked to ride it again,

5) The inordinate number of mudguardless riders, who wore brown socks through the wet and muddy lanes,

6) Why would anyone want to wear a cycling jersey with Watton Wheelers on their back? That has to be the daftest club name I've ever seen. If you weely are a watton wheeler, why tell everybody about it,

7) The number of riders we passed in the hedgerows, mending punctures (snigger, snigger). These were invariably the riders who had passed us earlier on skinny tyred racing machines at 30mph, without mudguards and without so much as a nod. What a shame I thought to myself!

I felt heartened enough at their plight that I kept count... 28 were spotted. Now, did I tell you, Robin and I have just fitted Schwalbe Marathon Tyres...nooo problems, not very sexy but very effective! Anyway, back to plot. For the first time ever, I forewent the tea/cakes available at the first control and sped straight

off towards the halfway halt at Saffron Walden. (Well, perhaps 'sped' is a bit strong, let's say pootled) We failed to spot the medium CCS

group that we had been subconsciously trying to catch, so after a quick café stop, we sped (there I go again) off into the murky and mucky countryside.

At the 3<sup>rd</sup> control, the brown sock brigade was to be seen in greater numbers, but on looking closer, they just had dirty muddy legs and not brown socks. Doh! Most of them had straggly beards as well, so you get the picture.

As we got saddled up, the medium group arrives. Pardon me, I thought, "Aren't you lot supposed to be miles ahead of us" I enquired. "Yes we would have been, but our navigation system was faulty and we went 7kms astray" "Ha, well we're now off" I said quickly. "Hang on and we'll come with you" said their intimidating leader. Oh goody, that means I'll be hanging on at the back while they all try to rip my legs off. A few hills further on and with legs fairly well ripped, another fault with their nav system (let's call him Dave...snigger) saw Robin and I escape up the road and to freedom at our own pace.

To be fair, they did catch us up again and usually waited at the top of each hill until we reached them and then they rode straight off. They get a rest at the top of the hills and we get to join on the back with no rest. How is that fair?

The nav system called Dave was not utilised anymore as Robin (who has a degree in route finding) lead us faultlessly through the concrete outcrops and tunnels of Stevenage to the finish.

I have to admit that there are two good things about the place, the first is the road out!, and the second is that Lewis Hamilton grew up there. No wonder he learnt to drive at 5 years of age, he was probably trying to escape!

I won't be going back there again thank you. Well, not until next year, when my memory fails me again and blanks out all the negative thoughts

**So** that's all for this year. I hope you all get the new bikes you asked Santa for or the latest bit of bike bling.

I still desperately need articles for the Spindle, especially in this 'close' season so keep them coming.

