



Keeping up with the Redmon Cycling Club

Editor's Comment

JA

So the strange year 2020 is now past, but sadly the strange times don't appear to be over yet. Still, let's be positive and hope that 2021 is a better one.

I trust that you are all well and looking after yourselves. Are you keeping fit on your bike? Perhaps some virtual riding? But does it count as cycling, riding on a turbo, playing computer games? My Dad wouldn't have thought so - I can hear him say:

"Come on, you should be out on your bike! When I was a lad, we rode in all weathers, to and from work, all through the war and 500 miles every weekend..."

However, it is keeping me riding and more than I would be ...perhaps even ready to race? The Club is planning the normal events, just not quite as many. Richard has published a list of our racing on page two. And, in this 'bumper' issue we have several inspiring articles, which will hopefully cheer you up, and encourage you to get out on your bikes, where and when safe to do so.

Please help me with the next issue of the newsletter which should be published in April. Can I have your contributions by around 20th, articles about cycling, our Club or your reminiscences, would be great. Thanks!

A Word from the Chairman

CB

As we start 2021, we are once again restricted on our social gatherings and the racing program is again on hold. When we are in a position to restart the Open TT events, I will look to publish the events that will count towards this season's club competitions. That said, it might be that some medals cannot be awarded, ie. where there are not enough events to make them properly competitive, such as the Sporting Courses Competition, as this consists of series of events which are traditionally held in the early part of the season. I guess time will tell.

Going forward the club will be awarding plaques / medals for all competitions that we run. You will also be aware from previous notifications that we are running a reduced program of events due to the declining number of members taking part in TT events.

Regarding our committee meetings: we are still not able to actively hold a group meeting, so myself (Club Chairman), Richard Hoskin (Club Sec) and John Allen (Club Treasurer and memberships) will continue to keep in regular contact to ensure the club operates as best as possible in these difficult times.

The three of us would like to thank the membership for your continued support during these uncertain times and look forward to seeing you all once we can again socialise, hopefully at the evening 10's and club open events.

Stay Safe

Membership for 2021

JA

Just to make sure that everyone is clear, as I have received a few questions about renewing Club membership: since 2020 was a bit of a nothing for club events and we had no real activities, the committee has decided that the 2020 membership year will be extended to 2021.

This means that those of you that renewed your membership in 2020, will not have to do so for 2021. This is, of course, unless you decide to cancel your membership, in which case please contact me.

Please note that if you wish to race in 2021 as Redmon CC and you didn't renew in 2020, you must rejoin the Club as a first claim member, and pay the appropriate fee. You can pay on the website.



REDMONster – is certainly in
'lock-down' when he's forgotten the key

Thanks to David Eccles for his continued contributions to the Newsletter, and his considerable creative skills with Redmonster. With David's permission, I have just finished creating a Redmonster archive on the website, where you can see many cartoons from the past years. Do please go and have a look, it's guaranteed to make you laugh, which is so good in these troubled times. The archive has around 150 of the past Redmonsters!

Proposed Redmon Events 2021

R H

As most of you already know, the Club proposes to run an Open Time Trial on Saturday 8 May 2021 at 2pm in the afternoon, on the familiar G10/42 Holmwood course. As well as Time Trial bikes there will be events for Road Bikes, Hub Gears and Tandems. The HQ will be the St John's C of E Primary School, the usual school we use on the roundabout. No one knows what Covid restrictions will be in place in May, we may not be able to "Push-off"; and not be allowed to provide refreshments. However, I am very optimistic and hope that I will be able to run the Time Trial, but as the organiser I will be relying on members and friends to help me run the event. So please volunteer.

In addition, I hope to run some Thursday Evening 10's from 27 May to 29 July with a Hill Climb on 5 August. I have included the option of running 15s on 24 June and 8 July. If there are obstacles on the 15, GS/483 course we can revert to the G10/42. Once again, I don't know what restrictions will be put in place by Cycling Time Trials. It's presently a case of wait and see! I will be in touch with members when I have more information.

| Date | Event | Course | Time |
|--------|------------|--------|----------|
| 27-May | Evening 10 | G10/42 | 19:30hrs |
| 03-Jun | Evening 10 | G10/42 | 19:40hrs |
| 10-Jun | Evening 10 | G10/42 | 19:40hrs |
| 17-Jun | Evening 10 | G10/42 | 19:40hrs |
| 24-Jun | Evening 15 | GS/483 | 19:40hrs |
| 01-Jul | Evening 10 | G10/42 | 19:40hrs |
| 08-Jul | Evening 15 | GS/483 | 19:40hrs |
| 15-Jul | Evening 10 | G10/42 | 19:40hrs |
| 22-Jul | Evening 10 | G10/42 | 19:40hrs |
| 29-Jul | Evening 10 | G10/42 | 19:30hrs |
| 05-Aug | Hill Climb | GH/41 | 19:00hrs |

The 22 July event will be the provisional date for the Club's Championship 10. Details are on the website.

Derek Wardle

J A

Liz Wardle has recently been in touch to say that a bench in memory of Derek has been installed in Beddington Park, where she has many happy memories of walks with him and their dog Mitzi, as it was flat for his mobility scooter. The bench is on the south side of



the lake, last one before green bridge and overlooking The Grange. Park in the London Road car park.

She also let me know that Derek had kindly left the club a legacy in his will of £250.

Derek was a very enthusiastic sportsman, keen member of the Redmon and very passionate to keep the Club Evening 10's going. He was planning to run them again in 2020, had it not been for Covid. So, I think that it might be a nice idea to use it to support them.

I have a few ideas, but please do let me have your suggestions. Free bread pudding at every event? Or perhaps Fish and Chip van one evening, maybe the Championship 10 evening? Perhaps a special competition? *[No trophy, as the Club is no longer awarding trophies].*

Club Kit

C B

Unfortunately, due to various business reasons Halo Sports are closing the Redmon Club page on their online shop, and so losing the facility to place individual kit orders. Therefore, if any members require the darker cyclocross design kit, the club will need a volunteer to coordinate a bulk order. There are several caveats that apply to kit bulk ordering: including minimum order value and minimum item numbers. I believe that we would struggle to meet the requirements.

We do still have the ability to purchase via Imp Sport but from memory there are very similar constraints regarding ordering. Halo Sports will be making the changes to their systems some time in February so you may still have time to place an individual online order before the shop page is closed. Password is 'red88tr!'.
John Allen tells me that the Club still has some kit for sale at good prices all less than half price:

Traditional Red/White design:

| | | |
|--------------------------------|-------|-----|
| Bib shorts | XS | £25 |
| Short sleeve jersey (full zip) | XL, S | £25 |

Pete Reynold Commemorative design:

| | | |
|--------------------------------|-------|-----|
| Short sleeve jersey (full zip) | L, M | £25 |
| Hoodie | M | £15 |
| Winter Jacket | XL, M | £40 |
| Cap | | £5 |

The original prices were: jerseys £60, bib shorts £60, hoodies £33, jackets £160 and caps £17. John will post any orders out for £3 per item (post office parcel post). Just email him with your order, you can pay through Paypal, credit card or bank transfer, but we can't currently accept cheques.

A minor incident

P H

It is about 8 a.m. on a wet and dreary Sunday in late October. The shiny black tarmac mirrors the dark and heavy lowering clouds overhead. I am cycling from my home in Fetcham, Surrey, across the county to a healing retreat near Lingfield. As the traffic is light, I take a direct main road route in the direction of Reigate. I am approaching the roundabout which links the bottom of

Pebble Hill with Betchworth. Suddenly I see a large Alsatian dog wandering across the road from my left. It stops right in front of me in the middle of the road, blocking my way forward. Fixing me with a threatening stare, it shows no signs of moving away, and I have to make a split second decision: do I stop, and hope to pacify it, or should I continue riding, and try to force it to let me through? Having realised that after the roundabout the road slopes significantly downhill, I decide on the latter option. Slowing only a little, I aim my front wheel straight at the beast. It side-steps enough to avoid a direct collision, then, barking ferociously, sets off in hot pursuit, snapping at my heels. I break into a frantic sprint, quickly exceeding 20 mph. Heart racing, and gasping for breath, I subject myself to a serious cardiovascular workout. (And it is a while since I finished my racing season for this year!) Recalling that dogs are renowned for their stamina, I have momentary misgivings about the wisdom of my course of action. And this one can obviously run fast! I dare not look behind, and focus totally on escape. (I would love to have a backward-facing camera to monitor the situation!) After what seems an eternity, but is probably only a couple of minutes, the barking has ceased, and there is no sign of my assailant, which has evidently come to the end of its perceived territorial patch, and, now feeling out of its comfort zone, has turned tail. I slow down, allow myself to relax, and continue on my way.

Though this experience could be considered a minor incident, in that no injury or damage resulted, I did wonder afterwards what such a dog was doing on a main road early on a Sunday morning, in the rain and unattended. Did it live nearby, and where were its owners?

Perhaps there was an animal welfare issue to be considered. Had there been more traffic around, the dog itself could be in serious danger. And was I a one-off, or had this animal tried to attack other people, either cycling or on foot? Such dog attacks seem to be very rare in this country, though I have occasionally been pursued by one while cycling abroad. Sadly, I shall probably never have any answers to these questions.

When I came home from my meeting later in the day, I was glad that I always follow a back lanes route, nowhere near that roundabout – just in case the dog was still at large in the vicinity.

Age is Just a Number

J A

This French hero should spur us all on, and his story certainly helps me focus on the important things in life: fitness, healthy food and a good life style: Cyclist **Robert Marchand**, Centenarian World Champion.

For those of you who haven't heard of him, he is a 109 year old French cyclist. He was born in 1911 near the

frontline of the First World War, was a firefighter in 1930s in Paris, and a POW in the Second World War.

He moved to South America, and worked as a lorry driver and sugarcane planter. In the 1950s he went north to Canada, as a lumberjack, then back to France in 1960, where worked as a gardener, shoe seller and wine dealer until he retired in 1987.

Robert Marchand has always played sport. In 1946 he finished seventh in the Grand Prix des Nations. More recently (2012), he set an hour world record in the over-100 age group at 24.25km at the UCI velodrome in Aigles. He improved it two years later at St Quentin en Yvelines to 26.927km, nearly 17mph! In between times, in Lyon, he had ridden 100km in 4:17:27.

In 2017, he set another world record for the hour, this time in the over-105 age group, covering 22.547km. Afterwards he declared: *"I could have done better, if I had seen the 10-minute warning, I would have pedalled a bit faster at the end"*.

In 2016 Guinness World Records recognised him as the world's oldest competitive cyclist, at 105 years old. However, after his 106th birthday doctors advised to stop competing for world records. Whilst he accepted this, he refused to quit racing completely. In 2018 he went to back to the track and competed at 4,000m.

Image
Removed

Marchand celebrated his 107th birthday by going for a 20km ride in the Ardèche. Unfortunately, a year later, at 108, he had to stop riding outdoors due to hearing loss. He is, however, still cycling on his indoor trainer, and throughout the Covid19 Pandemic has continued to do so, also keeping active by walking around his apartment and doing gymnastic exercises.

Whilst he currently complains about having trouble breathing, his heart rate is 55bpm, better than most people of a quarter of his age. Marchand puts his health, fitness and remarkable longevity down to a diet of lots of fruit and vegetables, little meat, not too much coffee – and an hour a day on the cycling home-trainer.

Macron said, faced with Covid: *"We are at war"*. Marchand said: *"Not war, and I know since I have experienced two world conflicts. War is a human will."*

They are causing it and no one else. Here we are fighting against a virus that came from nature. We're trying to survive but I don't call it a war".

An inspiration for us all. Let's hope that we learn something from this.

Small Wheels to Big Wheels

G G

I think most of us had a little three-wheeler when we



were young. I can remember mine...

We lived in a little village, Chetisham, and my grandparents lived down the road. On a Sunday, it was the thing to do, and have afternoon tea with them, and I would cycle all the way, both to and from their house.

The years went by and my cousin was growing out of his two-wheel bike, so my parents bought it from his family. I gradually grew up big enough to ride it. My father used to take me down to the common, to teach me how to handle it and balance on two wheels.

He used to hold under the saddle lightly and tell me not to lean. Now and then he would shout at me not to lean, he would say if you keep leaning, I'll B----- leave you to go into the dyke. In the end I got the hang of things.

In due course I was allowed to cycle to school. The years went by and I left school and the chance of a job as a telegram boy came up at the Ely Post Office. I went for an interview, and was asked if I could ride a bicycle – the job was mine!

The area covered by Ely was extensive, so I was going to be cycling plenty of miles delivering telegrams. Some of the local villages had to be covered on their day off, and so more miles cycled. This was hard work on a Post Office single gear cycle, in all weathers.

One village covered was Barway. We were allowed three hours to deliver there. In the good weather you could cycle along the river bank, and do it in half the time, and slip off home for a rest.

After a year, I was sent to Cambridge Tech on a day release. I used to cycle to Ely Station, and leave my cycle at a pub. One day when I came back to pick it up, someone had stolen my B17 saddle. It was an extremely uncomfortable ride home.

All my daily cycling for the Post Office was good training for when I joined the Ely City Road Club.

The Club met every week at Witcham Toll in a large coal shed, that John Brown's father cleared out for us. We fitted it out with furniture and made a Club Room of it.

The Club ran events, 10s, 25s and 50s through the season, and some of us entered open events. I can remember going to one open event with a couple of other riders in John Brown's father's coal lorry to Wisbeach.



A few years have passed since that three-wheeler, and at 87, I'm still doing a few miles a week.

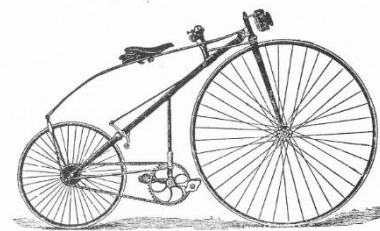
[Ed: I'll bet your father would have been proud of you now Geoff!]

Lawson rides again

D E

As all our readers know, the 'Bicyclette', patented in 1879 by H.J. Lawson, was one of the first safety bicycles to incorporate a chain transmission; of course you knew that. What you may not know is that a 21st century interpretation of this machine has been painstakingly constructed through the commission of an inspired patron and the skills of an eccentric frame-builder.

Here we see the original (the Science Museum has a real one but you won't be allowed to take it out for a time-trial).



Lawson's chain-driven Bicyclette, 1879.

At the time of this machine, the penny-farthing ('Ordinary' to you) was still the king of the road, so it's not so surprising that Lawson's front wheel was so huge. With solid tyres, the large spring on which the saddle is mounted (position adjustable) might have taken some of the bumps out of the ride. That coupling rod from the steerer to front forks looks a bit retrograde, especially as Lawson had mentioned the possibility of direct steering handlebars in the patent and some of his earlier designs actually used it. And then, the famous chain: cycle historians will probably argue forever on who, apart from Leonardo da Vinci, had the first idea: Shergold, Meyer, Lawson? And note the luxury of a rear brake, a sophisticated addition in the days when, on an Ordinary, stopping suddenly invariably pitched you headfirst over the bars.



And here is the modern version. Not, as the owner is at pains to point out, a 'Repro' as such, but rather an interpretation of the original, and

which had to be rideable as well. Opinions differ about the Victorian one.

So, what's different? Pneumatics for a start, 24-inch rear wheel and 36-inch front. We're told that rims/tyres in the big size are available for unicycles (but let's not go there). The floating bottom bracket has much stouter support in the rear triangle than the original, but Lawson probably didn't intend doing off-road bunny hops. The long spring supporting the saddle has been abandoned in favour of a conventional seat tube and we now have efficient disc brakes front and back. But what Lawson could never have dreamt of is the six-speed 'Pinion' gearbox in the bottom bracket. The staggering range is nearly 300%; compare 58% for an AW Sturmey three-speed! Finally there's the belt drivetrain (similar to that on Harley-Davidsons), so even that pioneering chain has come a long way. But the basic geometry is pretty well intact.

A word about the builder. He is one Petor Georgallou of 'Dear Susan' bikes, probably slightly mad, but also highly skilled and hugely inventive. Among other things he has re-invented the Tall Bicycle and rides it regularly. Getting off a saddle some four foot off the ground is a bit tedious so he tends just to track-stand instead, ('you get good at it quickly', he says, 'as the stakes are high.'). Also from his stable is a specially commissioned big girly's 'Princess Freedom' bike for artist Grayson Perry. And quite a lot more. You will get a broader picture of this truly wacky guy by going to an NABHS interview at bikerumor.com

[PS It is thought that our word 'bicycle' derives first from Lawson's French-sounding 'bicyclette'.]

Early TT days

Every Thursday night during the summer of 1984 to 1987 you'd find me out on the roads of Hampshire competing in the Fareham Wheelers CC hilly 10. The course was a loop around the relatively quiet roads north east of Fareham. The route passes through Hambledon and



K I

other little villages in the area. I always remember the "hill" and pushing as hard as I could using my 42/21 gear. Despite my 50kg weight (those were the days) I would push that bike up the hill until I felt physically sick. From the top it was a quick descent to a tight left bend followed by a meandering road back toward near the start.

I had not been on this road for years until a few weeks back when I found myself driving it. I instantly recognised it and I have decided that in a few weeks time after lock down I will head back out there with the bike. I may even do my own little TT to see how quickly I can haul myself around the course. My gears may be lower but I am 30+years older and a few kgs heavier...

...watch this space!

In the picture is me riding a cheap Peugeot framed bike with steel wheels equipped with fat 25mm tyres (everyone else was on 20s max). The bike had an old 105 chainset (52/42); 105 front mech; 600ex rear mech; suntour 7speed freewheel (21-12).

Picnic on the Beach

P H

One of the consequences of Covid and lockdown was that I hadn't had an opportunity to visit the sea for nearly a year. And, despite cycling every day, I hadn't been able to do any really long rides – true, I had celebrated my 70th birthday in June with a 75-mile touring ride; and I had salvaged a few time-trials from what was left of the racing season when restrictions were eased, but by then 50 miles was the longest event I could enter. 2020 was the first year since 1988 that I failed to ride at least one event at 100 miles or longer.

So, I decided to combine both aims, and planned a 100-mile ride to the Sussex coast, around Bognor Regis, and back. With the rapidly shortening autumn days, and the mostly incessant bad weather in October, the window of opportunity was narrowing. I finally focussed on Wednesday October 7th, which looked promising, albeit with a cold start. Wanting to make maximum use of daylight, I was on the road at 7 a.m. from my home in Fetcham. I expected the sun to appear soon after dawn, but stubborn grey gloom persisted for nearly the next two hours, and in a temperature of 7°C I soon began to suffer, regretting not having packed an extra scarf in my bike bag. At one point, feeling alarmingly close to hypothermia, I stopped to remove a polythene bag from my food supply in order to give some more wind protection under the front of my jacket. Eventually some weak sunshine began to burn through the mist, averting a potentially nasty situation.

I adhered to a simple route, following the A 29 beyond Beare Green nearly all the way – a lovely scenic old country road, despite traffic levels being higher than

comfortable at times. (I had used this route by car a few weeks earlier, on the way to ride an early morning time-trial at Fontwell. I remembered the magic of the view from the top of the South Downs as dawn broke.)

Even on the main road, the terrain is relentlessly rolling, and the steep climb of Bury Hill towards the southern end ensured that I no longer had problems with feeling cold. I was using my Thorn Raven touring bike, with 14-speed Rohloff hub gears, which were well used in keeping a comfortable cadence. After the summit, I branched off at Slindon, via Binstead, Yapton, and Middleton, in the process having to cross the A 27 dual carriageway, which thankfully was quiet enough not to present a problem. By the time I reached the coast somewhat before mid-day, I had covered 46 miles, with a couple of brief food stops along the way. I headed eastwards through the little village of Elmer, which



appeared to end in a cul-de-sac. I was wondering how to access the coast when I noticed a public footpath sign, and after portering my

bike over a narrow and tricky flight of steps, I emerged on to a beautifully secluded beach, where I found a large rock to shelter me from the brisk westerly wind, while I ate my picnic lunch, basking in welcome sunshine. The temperature was now a comfortable 17°C.

It would have been tempting to linger for some time in this idyllic spot, soaking up the therapeutic sound of the waves; but I was aware of the task ahead of me to get home again, preferably before dark. I set off westwards to Bognor before heading north. This proved to be a mistake – it was probably a decade or more since I last cycled on those roads, and they were traffic-ridden, with something of a concrete jungle of new industrial estates and road layouts. I was relieved to escape from the area and climb back onto the South Downs. In retrospect I would have done better to retrace my lanes route from Elmer.

I then continued my homeward route on the A 29, varying it only to avoid major road works north of Billingshurst, where traffic jams had impeded my progress on the way down. Taking the B 2133 from Adversane to Wisborough Green, then minor lanes to re-join the A 29 conveniently bypassed this problem. Shortly after Coldwaltham, I found a quiet footbridge

over the railway line, parallel to the main road, which made a pleasant venue for another food stop. While there I had a (socially distanced) conversation with two local lads on mountain bikes who were heading in the other direction (my only company all day). They seemed impressed that I had already cycled 65 miles at this stage, and had a long way further to go northwards. I was still feeling quite fresh, but it was not long before the fatigue began to set in – not surprising, as although I had done plenty of rides over 50 miles this year, this was already my second longest. Also, despite the pleasant weather, the nagging crosswind didn't help. By the time I reached Ockley (83 miles), I needed another break, and I sat in one of my favourite spots on the village green near the road, where there is an old well with a decorative roof over it and a comfortable seat. A quick calculation told me that if I went straight home from here, my distance would fall three miles short of target. I considered turning right towards Capel, and across to Newdigate before joining the more peaceful Henfold Lane parallel to the A 24. The additional distance would be more than necessary, and, feeling weary by now, I decided on the former option. Thus it was, that when I finally reached my home village, I had to find the energy to add another three miles "round the block", ignoring the lane up to my house until I came to it a second time. I arrived home at 5.45 p.m., having spent 5 hours 37 minutes in the saddle. I estimated that probably about 3000 feet of climbing was involved over that route as well. The sky was now overcast, and less than an hour later it was raining again! After a much-needed dinner, I enjoyed a leisurely soak in a hot bath, and luxuriated in the achievements of the ride, especially that picnic on the beach.

Diary Dates

08-May-21 Open 10

27-May-21 First club evening event – 10 miles

Next Edition: **28-Apr-21** Copy date: **10-Apr-21**.

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Data Protection: the presumption for GDPR is being as a paid up member, you consent to receiving communications from the Redmon Cycling Club relevant to your membership. To opt out you must contact one of the committee members in writing.