



# Newsletter

Hours of leisure  
Miles of pleasure

## GCC's Sportif Man

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GCC now not only has its own *white van man* but we now have our own *Sportif Man*—our very own Jason Tibbs. Jason so far this year has ridden the Burgess Hill 70 mile event, the 100 mile Downland Sportif (out of Canterbury) as well as the Old Portilians reliability ride. Last year he rode the 100 mile Castle Ride (based in Kent), the hilly, rain and wind enhanced 115 mile Tour of Pembrokeshire and the 100 mile Southern Sportif as well as finding time to ride in France. He likes the atmosphere and company of the sportifs, especially if he can get in with a crowd of similar ability riders. He has also entered the forthcoming Pearson's Sportif.

In the early season Jason will ride his alloy Bianchi 7 but when the weather gets better he changes to his carbon Willier using a 53/39 chainring with 11-25 sprockets. For the Downland Sportif he rode the Bianchi and completed the course in 6hr 40 mins.

If you read the Newsletter regularly you will know that Jason regularly rides and supports the Club events, especially the Tuesday time trials.

The picture above is of Jason in the Burgess Hill event while the one on the left is in the Downland event.



**RACING RESULTS****Time Trials**

**6/3/10 GCC Hardriders QS9/2**  
M Coulter (V) 44.51

**27/3/10 Southboro & Dist 10Q10/33**  
M Coulter (V) (incl 45sec late start)29.32

**4/4/10 Sydenham Whs Q25/20**  
A Gibson (V) (age std -3.39) 1.09.39  
M Coulter(V) (age std +5.37) 1.12.08

**10/4/10 Lea Valley CC E2/25**  
A Gibson (V) (+5.33) 1.00.27 **PB**

**11/4/10 KCA/Eldridge/Club Champ Q25/8**  
M Coulter (V) (+10.33) 1.07.12

**14/4/10 GCC Q10/9**  
J Tibbs 28.14  
G Moir (V) (+1.53) 28.23  
S Gibson 29.22  
M Coulter (V) (+50s) 29.26

**17/4/10 West Kent/DCB Q10/22**  
M Coulter (+4.32) 25.44

**20/4/10 GCC Q10/9**  
J Tibbs 26.10

**21/4/10 Bexley CC Q10/26**  
A Gibson 25.15

**25/4/10 San Fairy Ann Q25/12**  
M Coulter (+13.20;4<sup>th</sup> age std) 1.04.25

**27/4/10 GCC Q10/9**  
J Tibbs 24.27  
M Coulter (+3.12) 27.04  
K Ward (+2.13) 27.35

**Welcome** to new members Steve Archer and Phillip Cooper.

**Anyone wanting kit or to order new or more kit** then I will be at the Club Night on Monday 10 May in the Harden Hall, Northfleet. I will bring the current stock. If you are anticipating ordering/buying please bring money or cheque book as it's payment with order.

**Can anyone help Andy Sangster** with the GCC Open events on June 19 and July 18? Marshalling, refreshments, general help all needed. Andy's phone no is 01474 707747 or email [andy.sanagster@btinternet.com](mailto:andy.sanagster@btinternet.com)

**Thanks to** Roger Stevens for raising Club funds by marketing Laurie Hathaway's cycling items.

**Well done to** Keith Ward for keeping the Club Runs going and seeking to generate interest for local Sportifs.

**Thanks to** Ian Stone for his timekeeping efforts each Tuesday. (If he uses two watches I'm sure one must be a slow one and one a fast one - I know which one I seem to get!!!!)

## This & That

~ interested in cycling or walking in Poland? Then try [www.beavertailhouse.pl](http://www.beavertailhouse.pl)  
Anna Lustyk sent the information, adding there are special introductory rates for first-time guests.  
The location is 20 mins from Krakow.

~ Want a bike ride on 3<sup>rd</sup> May? Try the Cloisters Charity Bike Ride from Stansted (Kent) – 44/23/13  
mile options. [www.cloistersbikeride.org](http://www.cloistersbikeride.org)

~ BikeRadar Live will take place at Brands Hatch on 10-11 July. There's something for everyone, whether you want to compete, watch your friends and family, or just check out some of the world's best riders - the whole family can bring their bike and get involved. Buy your ticket now for just £12! Children 12 and under go free. Why not help raise some cash for the British Heart Foundation and take your bike for a spin around Brands Hatch Circuit at the same time? For more information visit [bikeradar.com/live](http://bikeradar.com/live).

Included free with your BikeRadar Live entry ticket is a whole host of entertainment for everyone, from seasoned athletes to families. Put the bike away in our secure 24-hour bike lockup and enjoy the packed timetable of 'off-the-bike' activities that will run throughout the whole weekend.

~ Our own intrepid Ian Whitehead writes (among other things) *"Today I'm wearing my soinguers hat and going to Holland with the GB women's team. Then tomorrow back here in Belgium with them at the Stad Roeselaire. I've already worked on a couple of races with them this year. I also did a job for the Sky pro team earlier this year - I collected their mechanics and all the equipment from Paris and took it up to their Service de Course in Mechelen, and they let me have a look round their building and workshop. But not much different from looking at all the Ruxley's in your garage, Mike!" Ian*

### Len's Walks

The March walk was an 8 mile one from Wrotham Heath through the grounds of West Malling Golf Club, then the fields of Comp Farm, alongside Great Leybourne Wood before turning to visit Offham and its historical aspects, across the fields to Addington Park and another golf course grounds before picking up the Wealdway again and back to Wrotham Heath. 9 and a dog made the walk, but alas the dog did not make the rewards and conviviality of the hostelry afterwards!

April's walk, led by Pete Lloyd, was an essentially flat 6.5 miler based on East Malling, attended by 9 erstwhile walkers in glorious weather. We passed a horse-training race course, a first I think, quarries, a large water tower that had been converted to a house and then abandoned to finally rest and take refreshment in the King and Queen in the village. Another thoroughly enjoyable outing.

The programme of Len's Walks now lapses until the restart in October.

**SUBS NOW DUE - £15**

## Gravesend CC at the Isle of Wight - Easter in the 1950s - Jackie Lewis

The above event was for all club cyclists throughout the UK. For the GCC members it was an early start as we had to cycle down to Portsmouth to catch the ferry to Ryde – approximately 60+ miles for those of us that lived in Sidcup. Thankfully the roads were not so congested as they are today although I cannot recall that part of the trip at all.

What I do remember when reaching the ferry area were the number of people plus bikes – everywhere. It was, for those who are unaware of such an event, the cyclists edition of the motor cyclists' Isle of Man weekend. The only difference our machines were quieter (.....& slower? Ed).

On reaching Ryde we gathered ourselves together to cycle the final nine miles, approximately, to Sandown where we had booked in for the weekend. This was at 49 St John's Rd, called *Attavia*, one of several Victorian three storied properties.

The lady of the house soon sorted us out. Maureen Peckham, Jenny Way and myself were shown into a large 1<sup>st</sup> floor front bedroom with a large bed – it needed to be as we all shared it!!! Peter Chubb, Roger Wilkins and whoever else there was were shown into one or more of the back bedrooms. It was a three storied building so enough room for all.

The memory wavers here but I feel sure it would have been a wash and brush up before a cup of tea and a rest in the downstairs front room. The evening meal was served later in the dining room at the back of the house. I assume all our bikes were put in the garage area. Everyone would have been somewhat tired so it may have been a short stroll around the area before falling into bed somewhat shattered. However, when we tried to get into our own very large bed someone had thought it a good idea to re-make it into an *appie-pie* edition!!! No names mentioned but Wilkins and Chubb come to mind! Did we get our own back? I do not remember. Hopefully we did.

One incident I recall about Roger was when he knocked out one of the three ducks off the wall when going upstairs! Did he ever find another 'set'? They are a collector's item today and not cheap. (**\*see addition at end of article**)

The best event for me, apart from the visit to the miniature village, was the Saturday evening at the theatre on the Pier. Peter and I sat next to each other in the stalls on the right, quite near the front. Fatal, as we are both inclined to giggle. A very large middle-aged man came onto the stage first (well known at the time but whose name I now forget!). He bowed politely to us all and then sat down carefully on the piano stool to play the grand piano. He was excellent and received much applause. Those in the balcony area had warmed up to show their own personal appreciation of his performance by throwing – not streamers but the larger edition – ie white toilet rolls, stolen from their accommodation I would guess, plus an encore of one or two notes blown into a trumpet or trumpets. A far cry from the Eddie Calvert performance.

The star of the show followed – Petula Clarke.

She began by apologizing for her voice due to a sore throat. This was only evident when she had to do a trill of Ah! Ah! Ah's! By this time Peter and I had gone into uncontrollable giggles which had begun earlier when observing the size of the piano seat and the pianist's somewhat oversized bottom!! The trouble began when Peter kept making humorous remarks to which I would respond. We were both uncontrollable. The tears were running down my cheeks

The final song, I would guess, was 'Down Town' but she had many hits of course. Everyone enjoyed the singing and no doubt joined in of course...well at least Pete and I did.

We all filed out after a wonderful evening. I concluded my mischievous behaviour by swapping all the garden labels that were outside a garden centre nursery.

My conclusion: one of the best weekends ever.

**\*\* Beswick Ducks = 3, set sold for £380 at the auction rooms at Honiton recently!!**

*Does anybody else remember this weekend? Does anyone know what year the Easter weekend finished? Does anyone have any photos? Peter – did we ever get that one and a half to Wapping ticket?*

## OLD EQUIPMENT MOUNTAINS: 2 *by Roger Stevens*

Don's article struck a chord, and provoked some further random thoughts. Where are these "old equipment mountains" - some still hiding in dusty corners of old cycle shops. Sometimes little hoards can be found forgotten in the back of a shed, or come to light if someone dies. Much has found its way to dealers or private collectors. I know people who have sheds with 50, 60 or more old bikes, 1960s back to the Edwardian era, as well as boxes full of old bits and pieces. Just wish they'd bring some of it to jumbles and put it back into circulation.

Increasingly the jumbles seem very good for stuff from the 1980s and later - there are many bargains to be had. Earlier stuff of 1950s and earlier is harder to find - but it's out there somewhere!

Steel road frames of the 1970s are popular with the cycle couriers. They are robust, not obviously nickable, and the long rear drop-outs make them ideal to turn into "fixies."

Returning to the guys with 60+ old bikes. In some cases the long-suffering wife has managed to keep the stuff at bay - outside the house. Sometimes she has lost the battle and bike bits have crept into every corner of the house. And you racing types think it's difficult to justify the ownership of three or four bikes to your loved ones!

Some encouraging thoughts for those contemplating a clear-out [at the next GCC jumble perhaps?]. One member asked if I could help him clear a time-trial frame - forward sloping top tube, with matching small front wheel. It was rapidly snapped up.

Also a rather worn 1960s Campag pedal - yes, just the one!

Another member has a similar t.t bike - the sloping top tube has is elegantly curved.

He removed the Campag. 'Delta' brakes and sold them on e-bay for £200.

Can anyone help complete my current project - I need a pair of brake levers for a 1922 French racer. No?? Well, I'm sure they're out there somewhere!

**NB** *A little later Roger emailed me with this!!*

Can you amend the last sentence of my 'Equipment Mountain' article? I have just purchased, via French e-bay, a pair of 'new old stock' levers. No one else bid for them, so I got them for E10-00 + postage. I'm not always this lucky!!

*Nice one Roger - ever the optimist and willing to persevere. If you have time to spare and nothing better to do you are welcome to route around in all my old cr..... in the garage!!*

## Captain's Log *by Runs Captain Keith Ward*

### 31/3/10 - A break from riding a bike.

You might notice a gap between this and my last entry in the previous Newsletter. Well I did it again. On Jan 18<sup>th</sup> while out with 3 other riders, I took another tumble and broke my collarbone **again**. So for the last 8 weeks, I haven't been out on the bike at all! But the waiting is over and last Sunday I tried a short ride and managed 16 miles without too much discomfort, so I might try the next Sunday Club run on Easter Sunday - could be eggciting?

And to spice it up a bit - I have just bought a new bike on the firm's Cycle2work scheme - a good old retro fixie, but brand-new. I have decided that I am just going too fast on my geared bike, so hopefully this will slow me down and help me stay upright.

## Some Antipodean Biking *by Brian Perry*

### Inspiration

Segorbe is a small, ancient and picturesque town on the river Palencia some 50 km north of Valencia. On Sunday June 14<sup>th</sup> 2009 I was there to ride the annual 100km sportive in the 'Alto Palencia'. My dozen or so riding companions were all attached to Ciclo Costa Blanca, based in Denia on the coast. This ride would introduce us to Spanish terrain in preparation for the UCI's Golden Bike sportive, 'Quebrantahuesos' the following weekend. At 10, about 150 riders departed the little 'Plaza de Agua Limpia' with its fountain and set off on a 40 km fast jaunt through the hills along closed roads behind a leading car. We then returned to the outskirts and halted for a relaxing breakfast buffet at a riverside walk.

I noticed a young woman rider with a 'Lake Taupo' sportive jersey, and I recalled this was a place in New Zealand I'd visited 2 years ago. After 30 minutes the car led us to the foot of a big hill and sped off. I never saw the car or young woman again until the end; both were faster than me. Also faster than me was Ron Pyne, part of the Costa Blanca group, but unfortunately he had an accident near a junction when another rider attempted a risky manoeuvre. See footnote. I spoke to the 'Taupo' lady, (also fastest lady), a New Zealander, now based in Valencia, and also entered for the Quebrantahuesos.

The following weekend, lined up with 8 000 riders in the starting avenue at Sabiñánigo, who should be standing just a few feet in front of me, but the same lady, this time in her Valencia club colours. She finished the sportive ( 'marcha' in Spain) streets ahead of me. I thought perhaps I might one day ride the 'Lake Taupo', and do some biking in New Zealand.

Back in the UK, and at the beginning of August I was notified my job role would be redundant. So I found myself with both sufficient redundancy money for an air fare and time to go to New Zealand, in good time for the November Lake Taupo event.

### Perspiration

I intended taking my bike with me, but after booking a Qantas flight, discovered that sports equipment now counted as part of luggage allowance. A bike and a box would add up to 21Kg; quite near the limit, and excess baggage is exceptionally expensive. I eschewed the suggestion of taking clothes by dressing like 'Michelin Man', and bought a bike on line. R&R Sports sold me an entry level bike in their end of year sale - a Giant Defy. Unfortunately, I discovered within minutes of making the purchase that I'd ordered the wrong size. Within a couple of hours I'd spoken to the shop and sorted out a different bike – the Trek 1200, but slightly more expensive. To my annoyance, the credit card transaction involved a credit for the mistaken purchase – but at a markedly disadvantageous rate for me. I complained to the credit card company – but to no avail. The bike itself was fine, my only reservation being the forks were quite uncomfortable for bumpy New Zealand roads.



The 'Lake Taupo Cycle Challenge' is in effect several events on the same day, and sponsorship supports children with heart disease. Mountain and road bikes, with relay races, are all centred on a circuit of the lake which is 100 miles. There's also an audax type 'Enduro' of 2 laps and 'Maxi Enduro' which is 4 circuits. The solo is most popular at just one circuit, with up to 6 000 riders.

I arrived in New Zealand 1 week before the event, and managed to get some 200km of riding in before the day. I stayed with my aunt near Lower Hutt at the north end of Wellington Harbour. I enjoyed a 'good' cycling diet. My aunt likes cake, so that's that. Luckily my cousin Jannette lived nearby and, as a keen triathlete was in a road relay team for the Challenge, contributing two 25 mile legs along the solo course. We would share transport and accommodation.

We had a day long drive to Lake Taupo, and included a stop for 10kg of cheap 'off cuts' at a liquorice allsort factory – not recommended for consumption during a ride.

At Taupo, Jannette's 2 team members, a young man and woman ex colleagues were relatively new to biking, so I put myself to good use getting the bikes in proper readiness for a sportive!

*Brian on the ride*

We stayed with some very kind relatives fairly close to the start, so I could ride directly to my starting pen. Pens were ordered according to riders' estimated circuit time and I noticed the average girth of the riders' waists increasing as I homed in on the '7 hour pen'. The profile looked pretty lumpy for the first 100 km, but I had not much idea of the severity of the climbs, so with the on-line entry I'd plumped for about 7 hours.

The morning was quite sunny but chilly, and with a delayed start I was glad to get moving. The weather got greyer and started to drizzle, but I kept up a good pace on the closed roads and hilly sections, managing to join in several small groups for a while before moving up again.

I noticed at one stage almost all the riders around me were women – quite unexpected. Later I checked the results listing and discovered about 20% of the riders were female, I guess the popularity of triathlete sport has contributed to this welcome increase.

All the Challenge rides are only supported by water at refreshment stops, and I stopped as planned at the second one. An alarming surprise awaited me, the rough road surface had shaken loose a set screw from my left Shimano cleat. I gamely twisted my foot to release it, but it just did a sort of 'sashay' on the pedal. I unstrapped the shoe and hopped across the muddy, gritty ground in my new Assos socks to get some water. Back riding and eventually the other screw came adrift. As luck would have it, this screw was trapped in the pedal. With 20 minutes or so of brute force and multi-tool, I prised out the screw and re-fixed it very tightly indeed.



The spectacular Rimutaka Road

From the 100 km mark on, it was mostly flat, and I overtook many riders. As I 'steamed' along the lakeside there was a loud tyre puncture. Not to thank goodness, but another rider drew alongside to say the 'train' I'd just been pulling for 10km had lost a wagon. We worked together and the next time I looked back there were no other riders with us.

The last climb, 'Hatepe Hill', 20km from the finish and a bit of a drag, but the organisers had provided sound systems with 'encouraging music' to assist our efforts. By now I was stuffing in the energy gels, and found them quite effective.

The final straight found me in a group of about 20 riders. I sprinted, but my earlier efforts had taken their toll. My time was 5 hours 56 min. Fastest solo rider was 4 hours 9 min. A Wellington MP, known for his pro-cycling stance was an hour quicker than me.

Jannette had a comfortable ride, but not as fast as she'd done previously, though the rest of her team had an exciting time.

### **Riding around the 'Windy Wellington' area**

There are some good rides in the area, but I found it difficult to get much variety, as many roads follow a valley to its head or the coast, and then stop. The scenery is good and on the whole road surfaces are firm but can be bumpy. The rules of the road have one major exception compared with the UK, and that's their rules which give priority to the road user on the right at junctions. In one ride I encountered 2 SMIDSYS, and I went back to the junctions in each case to see if I'd got it wrong, but no, I'd been correct in each case.

The terrain means that some major roads can be squashed into quite narrow spaces, and this I found quite daunting if there are overtaking cars and lorries. In particular, descending Haywards Hill to the north is steep, gravel strewn, busy with traffic, and narrows markedly near the foot of the hill. I remarked on this to Cheryl my cousin's wife; she rides down that hill frequently, and the only safe way she has devised is to stay out in the middle of the road and let the traffic wait behind her.

There's a notable amount of roadside and bus borne notices advising motorists to give cyclists space on the road. One, or one and a half metres clearance is often quoted, and it's a subject given prominence on cycling websites.

I enjoyed all of my rides, so here's some routes. Good maps are not always easy to find, but there's a good selection in the government bookshop near parliament.

1. 1. The Akatarawa road. It's a long valley road, north from Upper Hutt, with a useful cafe at a wild life sanctuary near the valley top called 'Staglands'. On this road I noticed numbered roadside marker posts outside the 'few and far between' houses. House numbers – not quite, but serve the same purpose. Each records the distance in decametres from the end of the road. So the postman knows what he is in for! Descending the other side of the valley and returning along the coast road is very scenic, but the bike lane next to the north bound carriageway is the safest option.
2. Whiteman Valley, and Mangaroa Valley starts with a 2.3km climb from Silverstream to Blue Mountains, then down in to the valley road. Quite a few cyclists use this road and it's nearly always windy. There's a good cafe, the 'Short Straw' at the southern end.
3. The Wellington Bays ride. There must be at least a dozen bays, and cycling them involves frequent changes of direction and 'windward/leeward' changes. From Oriental Bay there's a road to the top of Mount Victoria 196 m. I passed a unicyclist resting on lamp-post on my way to the top. At the summit there were more unicyclists, must be tricky descending. The bay road goes through a tunnel under the airport runway and the wind nearly blew me backwards in that tunnel. Cycling north, harbourside, from Wellington city I found problematic – it's not signed that the main road turns in to a motorway.
4. The Makara Loop. Starting from the city centre and going uphill for a long way! The city hills are steep, and the descent though countryside around Makara is scenic – it's almost Alpine. There's just one road through to the north which passes through a small gorge, and on to Johnsonville. I cycled this route with cousin Daniel and his wife Cheryl, who is a fit triathlete. She seemed to bounce up the hills!
5. The Rimataka Road. This is like a European mountain pass, several kilometres long at a fairly consistent gradient and sharp bends. It's State Highway 2 so there's plenty of heavy lorries, and I noticed traffic police touring the road constantly. There are steep drops at the side along some sections and not much in the way of barriers. When I got to the top, where there is a large deep layby I made the mistake of stopping near the middle of the hard area – only to realise that large vehicles nearly always pull over at speed to allow following cars to pass. I never saw another cyclist on the road, and I felt distinctly at risk descending with strong winds.

In early January I was scheduled to leave New Zealand, and managed to sell the bike to another relative. All in all a good time on the bike. Over 1 000 km and not one puncture!

Footnote:

I did not realise at the time that I'd passed Ron as he was being attended to, and waiting for an ambulance. Later that day, several of us were on the main street, enjoying drinks at tables under parasols outside a bar. A car pulled up and out stepped Ron. He was pretty well bandaged up after release from hospital. He sat down, looking a bit shaken but nonetheless able to join in the banter. Then a gust of wind caught a parasol and lifted it out of the housing with the pointed end turning and arcing violently back down - just missing Ron! What a day for him. He seemed quite cool about this last escape. Later, in Denia he returned to hospital for a more thorough examination and treatment

*Ed: Derek Wright - is this anywhere near where your go? Any pictures or information about the riding you did/do when in NZ?*



**GRAVESEND CYCLING CLUB**  
**CLUB EVENTS 2010**  
*\*\*\*[Proposed schedule/draft]\*\*\**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Distance</b>	<b>Course</b>	<b>Start</b>
March 6	14*	QS/9**	1400
20	14	QS/9	1400
<b>April 11</b>	<b>25(Champ/Eldridge)</b>	<b>Q25/8(KCA)</b>	<b>0700</b>
13	14	QS/9	1830
20	14	QS/9	1845
27	14	QS/9	1845
May 4	10	Q10/9	1845
11	10	Q10/9	1900
<b>16</b>	<b>25(Champ)</b>	<b>Q25/8 (Medway Velo)</b>	<b>0700</b>
18	10	Q10/9	1915
25	10	Q10/9	1915
June 1	10	Q10/9	1915
<b>6</b>	<b>50(Champ)</b>	<b>Q50/11(KCA)</b>	<b>0600</b>
8	10	Q10/9	1915
15	10	Q10/9	1915
<b>20</b>	<b>100(Champ)</b>	<b>Q100/5(KCA)</b>	<b>0600</b>
22	10	Q10/9	1915
29	10	Q10/9	1915
July 6	10	Q10/9	1915
13	10	Q10/9	1915
<b>18</b>	<b>25(Champ)</b>	<b>Q25/20(Gravesend)</b>	<b>0600</b>
20	10	Q10/9	1915
27	10	Q10/9	1915
August 3	10	Q10/9	1900
10	10	Q10/9	1900
<b>15</b>	<b>50(Champ)</b>		