



Newsletter

Gravesend CC

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Welcome to the Newsletter and a successful and rather eventful trip to the GCC Amstel Gold.



Everyone had a thoroughly good time riding up some short steep climbs and some long roads up in the Ardenne regions of Holland, Belgium and Germany (albeit a very short part).

You will notice that our trip photo is taken in front of a sign with no road in sight. Our route took us down some interesting roads (Tracks) to give it that off-road feel. I'm glad that we didn't do this route on the Saturday as due to the weather it may have been a little wet.

Our trip started off in glorious weather on the Friday with a lovely ride into the countryside, which unfortunately was cut short after a local scooter rider decided to take out Steve Bushell causing him to sustain several injuries to his face arms and legs. I have to praise Mike here as he managed to converse in "a Language" and we got him fixed up so we could get back to the hotel. Then once all sorted we were changed and out for dinner before the main event the next day.

GCC Amstel Gold

Our unique created event of approx. 100 miles in the Ardenne, created by Steve Harrington. This route took us out of Maastricht and into the Dutch countryside to tackle the Cauberg 3 times and integrated some challenging climbs along the way. You should be able to see our route by copying the link below.

<https://www.relive.cc/view/2323486817>

We experienced all kinds of weathers from heavy showers to torrential downpours and hail, not to forget some beautiful sunshine too. I may have suffered a little bit but a little suffering is good for the soul they say.

Some of the route was challenging but as Steve pointed out some of the hills we ride in Kent are just as steep as some of these climbs. The route took us over some fairly long climbs too, especially up towards Vaal. Considering all the riding on Saturday with some un made roads we only suffered a couple of punctures and stopping for a drink in Valkenburg on the way back home at the end of the day

watched the locals trying to negotiate a tree trunk through the town on a handcart whilst watching John and Mark fix a puncture.

Alas we climbed the Cauberg for the last time (I think we all set our fastest time on the last ascent) and headed back to Maastricht and the comforts of the Kaboom Hotel, before massing in the foyer for our last night.

I would definitely come back to this part of Europe again, as I would love to explore some of the places that we rode through including Valkenburg and some of the forest trails near to Vaal. The scenery we rode through was stunning and I imagine that I will be riding some of that again.

Then on Sunday after a few bevvies the night before we headed towards Geraardsbergen. We started our ride in overcast weather some 15 km from our goal -



over the year and work out where we go next year.



For now we'll leave Belgium to return another day.

to ride the Oudeberg hill – De Kapelmuur of the tour of Flanders.

The iconic climb features cobbles all the way and some testing steep gradients of 23% in places. Our ride was cut short by some mechanicals and a lack of time but left us with some hills near to Oudenard for us to come back and explore at a later date. The trip finished with a discussion about maybe delaying the Spring trip by a few weeks to maybe get some better weather, but we will see

Special thanks to Steve Harrington – without his planning this trip would never have happened. Also thanks to Steve and John for getting us there.

News

You will have seen some photos of Jack Wade on our whatsapp platform of Jack in Team SKY kit, a full report on Jack will be out in next months' Newsletter.

Be advised – now that the clocks have gone forward – please wear your white summer kit for events and not the dark blue one, as you may find that your times or results might not count!

There will be a full results column in the next edition which will be out in approx. 3 weeks.

Some of the evening 10's have been well attended and there are some impressive times being set, Steve Harrington has been going strong so far this year with a 24:56 in the bank and Kate Savage already has a 27:24. Some riders have been pointing out that this is the time to set good times as the wind is generally lighter at this time of the year. So expect to see some good times in the next month.

Upcoming events:

Midlands Velo

12th May 2019

100 miles – I believe that quite a large contingent are taking part in this sportive as the participation was moved from the Velo South last year. I think we have John Milner, Jason Radmore, Steve Bushell and Dave Evans. Please take some pictures and forward to me for the next edition.



March 2019

Hours of Leisure, Miles of pleasure

SRAM has announced an affordable gateway into their game-changing AXS groupset system – Force e tap AXS.

no wires to swap over the brakes would be set up for the bike you are just changing the gearing. The possibilities are endless.

It is the first of SRAM's more budget-friendly groupsets to be overhauled with the wireless, electronically operated AXS technology. Launched by the US component manufacturer in February.

SRAM has already indicated that the MTB tech and Road bike Tech that uses this platform can be integrated accordingly so you will be able to incorporate the dropper post from the MTB into your cyclocross or gravel bike or road bike if you so wished. Also the powermetres linked to the road chainsets are also switchable on the new groupset.

The platform will go head to head with Ultegra Di2, there are no price differences as yet although there will be a hydraulic brake version and mechanical version launched side by side. Expect to see this in the cycling press shortly. All of the AXS components are compatible so you can use a RED rear mech with a Force Front mech, even switching to a single front chainring or the standard 2 effectively 1:11 & 2:11 or 1:12 & 2:12. This enables you to buy the shifters for two bikes and change the mechs on the bikes depending which ones you want to ride. I know that may sound expensive, but you could effectively use the rear mech on your road bike with the same technology as your MTB. As there's



Towels of Leisure trials of pleasure

So as my bike is going in to have a service (and a bespoke electric motor – just kidding) I think I will have the rims which just need the tape to be tubeless changed to this new style. This will not alleviate the puncture completely but it should limit the small ones from being an issue and with the large Devil looming on the horizon will make me feel a bit better too.

Ride safe everyone – I'm off to buy a GoPro.

There is a steady trend towards the tubeless tyre. I noticed that the punctures suffered on our last trip, me and Mark, took approx. 20 minutes to fix as we had to change the tube. I believe Robin fixed one at the lunch stop in Vaal by simply removing the wheel and shaking the tyre to move the latex in it before reflatting the tyre. My puncture took ages to fix as it took several attempts to seat the tyre properly on the rim. The puncture I had – a blackthorn would not have been a puncture on a tubeless tyre as the latex would have sealed the hole.