



NEWSLETTER

Hours of leisure
Miles of pleasure

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WHEN DID GCC LAST SEE...

...a Result Page with GCC competitors in time-trials, road racing, mountain bike racing, triathlons, lady hill climbers, plus so many cycling in France and all being so successful.



..... four handsome 'lads' at the top of the Tourmalet in the Pyrenee's?!?! In the last N/letter there were 2 handsome lads and their chaperone, but now 4!
From l-r – Steve Harrington, Mike Coulter, Jason Tibbs, Luke Harrington. Matching kit too! Smart!
In addition Richard Bettaney was in the Pyrenees on his mountain bike, but a little further east.

... a very recent first year member, Dan Woodrow, winning the Hill Climb on a five gear bike with a pannier rack – and there were 7 GCC competitors. Nice one Dan.a lady hill climber who 'won' the ladies section and set a female record into the bargain! Nice one Kate



..... a member mountain bike racing? Richard Bettaney was racing in the National Points Series race at Langdon in Essex. Interestingly, for those who remember Mark Simmonds he was in the same race as Richard. Richard is really excelling at both road racing and mountain bike racing this season.
(Richard is 3rd rider from left – black helmet, yellow/white jersey)

Results

Time Trial

21/8/12	GCC 10 (9.65)	Q10/24
J Tibbs		22.49
G Terry		23.58
S Harrington		26.10
K Ward		27.16
M Coulter		29.02
C Bramley		29.24
B Cooper (Jnr)		32.02
28/8/12	GCC 10 (9.65)	Q10/24
N Harrigan		22.49
J Tibbs		22.59
S Harrington		25.01
L Harrington		25.57
K Ward		27.07
L Gower		28.17
16/9/12	KCA 25	Q25/10
A Gibson		1.03.42(cpb)
6/10/12	VTTA 30	E2/30
A Gibson		1.12.35
7/10/12	VTTA 15	Q15/20
J Tibbs		37.37
N Harrigan		39.29
G Terry		39.58
14/10/12	GCC H/c	QHC1
D Woodrow		4.08
L Sandy		4.14
J Tibbs		4.19
K Savage		5.00
G Terry		5.19
T Jacobs		5.34
(K Ward		6.40)

Mountain Bike

National Masters series – Essex

R Bettaney 11th

Road Racing

Cyclopark series 1/2nd Cats

R Bettaney 14th & 9th

(Overall in 3/4Cat races Richard finished 3rd)

Jeff Schils Memorial RR – 147km

(top amateurs & pros)

R Bettaney bunch

Triathlon

22-23/9/12 London Triathlon

S Hunter 2hrs 28mins 8th in age group (200/50-55)

Swim	1.5k	27 mins
Cycle	40k	65 mins
Run	10k	48 mins

L Harrington 2hrs 40 mins 22 secs

Swim	1.5k	39.31
Cycle	40k	68.18
Run	10k	52.33

S Harrington

Swim	1.5k	37.31
Cycle	40k	31.00 1 st

lap but punctured 2nd lap

This & That

Welcome to new members **Stephen Jones, Dan Woodrow and Leon Gower.** We hope they find riding with us enjoyable and our company sociable.

Well done to **Roger Stevens** for his work on keeping the membership details up-to-date

Thanks to **Dave Abbotts** for timing the Hill Climb

Went on an afternoon ride today, Saturday, after writing up the 'France' section of the Newsletter. Not pleasant. Police closed the Wrotham Rd because of an accident; maniac speed of drivers along the Pilgrims Way; intermittent showers whereas it had been fine until I went out; continuous traffic on the Wrotham Rd - less hassle on the turbo in the garage!!!!!! At least on a Saturday pm. The thought of those French roads!

Richard Dennison writes '*I just wanted to mention the Strava app that I downloaded onto my phone so I can map my rides. If you have not heard of this and want a decent app to track your rides then this is fantastic - and free.*

I can now see the times I manage for different section of my ride which I am using to help with a bit of interval training. You get a leaderboard listing so you can see how you compare with fellow cyclists who have ridden the same roads as yourself which is super for the competitive spirit in us all'.

Len's Walks

Every first Sunday of the month, at 10am, there is a social walk for those wishing a less energetic way of spending a Sunday morning. Usually it is a 2-3hour walk but **always** ending in a suitable hostelry. All are welcome - partners, wives (but only bring 1 at a time to avoid potentially embarrassing scenes), pets, friends.

October 6 Colin & Mo Pearson
 November 4 Len Brown
 December 9 Graeme Moir
 January 6 Mike Hickie
 February 3 Mike Coulter
 March 3 Pete Lloyd

October's walk was from Upchurch, initially inland and then looping back to follow the Medway back along the river bank to Upchurch. 3 hours of leisurely walking in what ended as really warm weather; then the convivial atmosphere of the pub. Perfect.

When did GCC last see (II)



.....our riders being top draws in another sport? Remember Don wrote about his wrestling 'activities' in a previous Newsletter – here is the public proof

..... one of GCC's active racing members as a co-driver/navigator with his brother in saloon car racing at Brands?



...have you worked out who our co-driver is yet? (And it is not a race school where you pay to drive a car round under instruction). He's a regular GCC award winner.

... not a *see* but a *hear* – amusing but at the same time enough to give some cause for thought. Well – our own GCC photographer was 'visited' by the Special Branch who wanted to know what he was up to after one of his sessions at a 10 on the Isle of Grain. When shown the 'evidence' they were amused – allegedly.

Competitors' tales

Richard Bettaney..... has had a really successful season at both mountain biking and road racing. In the road racing he finished 3rd overall in the Cyclopark Thursday evening series (Billie-Jo Wyman from Northfleet won) and then in the three races he rode at Cyclopark with his 2nd Cat licence he finished 14th & 11th and 9th. He then rode a Kent League r/r for senior cat licence holders but had to pack - 'it was hard' he said. Then to cap it all he rode the Jef Schils Memorial r/r of 147 km for top amateur and pros, with riders from Belgium, Sweden, Ireland, Holland, Latvia and Poland - he said that was hard too, with an average speed of 26.5mph, but he managed to stay with the bunch.

Then with the mountain bike racing he rode the Vets National Points series race at Langdon in Essex and finished 11th and overall in the series he finished 14th.

Steve Hunter

The London Triathlon hosted 15000 athletes over weekend of 22nd and 23rd of September. This was later than previous years and moved from the first weekend of August due to the Olympic and Paralympic Games. The weekend weather was very much different on Saturday from Sunday - sunny and dry to storms and rain. I initially griped about my 06:30 swim (3:30 wake up call!) start but in the end this was by far the best time to get away.

The 1500m swim was a deep water mass start with some 300 swimmers in the wave and a water temperature of 15°C. I had a good swim without many battles and exited the water in a time of 27 minutes to wrestle out of my wetsuit and trop off to T1 (transition 1) to trial my new speed mounting on to the bike section. Shoes pre-clipped in and held up with elastic bands I could run across the transition exit mat and mount the bike on the move. Well that was the plan! Due to road route and cold hands it took me 5 mins to get my feet into the shoes. The air temperature was cold and it took me while to get up to temperature, but I enjoy the bike and soon pushing the TT bike along the course picking off the people who passed me while trying to get my shoes on. The 40km course was out to Westminster and back and fairly flat with roundabouts. My bike time was over in 1h 05mins and I racked my bike into T2 with very few bikes back - in my mind I was sure I'd cut the course short due to lack of other bikes!

On my own for 2km of the run and apologising to marshals as I was sure I'd cut the bike course and would be disqualified when I saw a few others ahead at the turn point.

I crossed the line about 8th to 10th in my age grouped wave start in 2h 28mins total race time. There were nearly 200 in my age 50-55 group category and my time place me 8th about 5 mins behind the group winner.

My reflection on the race is I was lucky to get the morning start and if I'd pushed the run in the first 2-4km I would have finished much higher - perhaps next year!

(Steve is aiming for the New Zealand Ironman in March 2013)

AGM update

- 9 members in attendance including new member Steven Jones

- non change with officials – Mike Coulter Secretary, Andy Sangster Asst Sec, Ian Stone Treasurer, Patrick McMaster Social Secretary; Roger Stevens now becomes an auditor.

- the Treasurer's report was only for 11 months, the AGM being earlier this year, but it was accepted as it was **to be reviewed at the next Committee meeting for the full 12 months.**

- there was discussion over the Evening 10 racing programme – i) to put back the hill climb to an October date and decide whether it would be best on a Saturday as at present or the Sunday as it will be this year, ii) to come up with a better way of organizing the timing and admin at the start of the 10 to support Ian and Mike and iii) to include the Xmas Lane rdbt in the police notice so create some leeway if there are roadworks

- Gravesend CC Open 10 has been dropped for 2013 through lack of an organizer.

- there was discussion about the social programme in particular a cycle jumble – Tony Mack to investigate Cyclopark as a venue and Patrick to look at potential dates and sites

- Tony Mack spoke about Friday evening Youth Racing at Cyclopark from April 2013 which he is organizing supported by local cycling clubs and BC. Each club contributes £50 + funds from BC and helps to organize one of the races. Gravesend signed up for this. Well done to Tony.

- Club runs have continued although numbers have fluctuated during the summer because of the racing programme. There does appear to be a regular core now though. Thanks to Jason for overseeing this.

- the issue of links with VC Cambrai and town twinning was raised. Although GCC wished to maintain links with the Cambrai cycling club it did not want to affiliate to the town twinning association

- ideas were raised as to how best to mark GCC's 90th anniversary in 2013 – barbecue, sit down meal, 90k ride. Samples of a proposed 90th commemorative badge were shown to the meeting and suggestions as to how it could be improved sought.

France - with Alan Teale

Every year towards the end of June the village of Villié-Morgon in Beaujolais holds a weekend of sportives.

If you're having difficulty pinpointing this famous wine-producing area, it lies just to the northwest of Lyons about halfway down the map of France. Though the mountains of Beaujolais cannot in any way be compared with those of the Alps or the Pyrenees their highest cols do in fact rise to over 2000 feet and offer some challenging cycling routes on relatively traffic-free country roads. It's been my habit now for a number of years to spend a few days cycling in this area either in late spring or early summer but it was only this year that I managed to synchronise my holiday dates with those of the Villié-Morgon weekend.

There were 4 rides on offer on the Saturday ranging from 60km to 130km and I chose the third longest at 105km with a total climb of 1890 meters. Quite enough I thought for a first-timer on a hot day on possibly unknown roads.

The basic entry fee was 10 euros but in the event my membership of GCC cut my outlay to an even more reasonable 8 euros. I had seen that there was a reduction for licensed club members but since GCC doesn't aspire to this level of sophistication I didn't think I had any means of proving club membership until I remembered that I was wearing GCC arm warmers; and this was proof enough – even if the consensus of opinion of those at the signing-on desk was that Gravesend was, possibly, somewhere in Belgium.

Once on the road I soon found myself alone (late arrival at the start as usual): found myself more or less lost after about 15km and was forced to attempt to retrace my steps. But luck was on my side as I shortly came across a Frenchman who had also taken a wrong turning but who claimed that he knew how to get back on course. I placed my trust in him – I had no choice really – even though somewhat to my alarm he readily admitted that he had already gone some 25km out of his way. But a few km up the road we came across a welcoming orange arrow. I was back on the right track.

Thereafter all went well - I even passed a couple of other competitors on a hill - but I was more than glad to arrive back in Villié-Morgon. It had been a scorching hot day and there had not been a bit of flat ground on the second half of the course. No official times were recorded and no prize for coming first. It was not unlike our own annual ride except that we were offered a good selection of food and drink en route and each rider received a bottle of Beaujolais Village at the finish. Oh, and it isn't held in January.

As I left I saw that the village hall was full of cyclists and their families tucking into a well-earned meal supplemented by the statutory bottles of wine. They were enjoying a typical French day out. It's something they do so well. All very matter of fact and low-key and full of the sense of local community and country tradition.

No wonder I like this part of the country so much. And the sportive wasn't half bad either. You can try it so long as you're prepared to do the 900 mile round trip! Just go to www.weekend-beaujolais.org for details. If anyone is interested I can recommend an excellent campsite or hotel in the area.

France – with Mike Coulter

After the Cambrai visit a number of us had thought of going over for the Paris-Cambrai event, not necessarily to ride the whole route but do one of the sections and perhaps some other rides, or just for the day and do part of the ride. This event has been running for 30 years. In the event this all fell through when I found out a couple of months beforehand that Eurotunnel was booked solid – the whole 24hrs- the day of the P-C! So no day trip and no possibility of getting back for the Monday for those who work. In the end I went on the Saturday and came back on the Monday.

For those not in the know Gravesend is town-twinning with Cambrai and in the past there had been a lot of cycling club exchanges. That had lapsed until this year when after Tony Mack's efforts a group from V C Cambrai and the Cambrai town twinning association came over for the official opening of Cyclopark.

I was not going to ride the whole 215km of P-C, intending to ride the last 40km section, which with the ride out to that town would have made 80 leisurely kilometers. When I got to Cambrai and linked up with the organizer he had friends doing the 100k section so why don't I put my bike in their van and go with them? 20k difference and I don't have the hassle of taking a map and finding my way there. Ok. The couple, French man and Dutch wife, intended to swap the riding and driving. The van route there was circuitous enough so what the bike route would be? The French are good though in painting coloured arrows on the road, not like here where you have a route map and directions and invariably have to keep stopping to find out where to go. There you just need to be vigilant and have faith!!!

There was quite a large group starting the 100km section and I started steadily enough. Then after a while you either get in with a group or see someone up the road and work to catch them, so the speed gradually builds up. Our group did go off route once, adding maybe a couple of miles, but otherwise it was quite straightforward. I have to learn the French word or phrase for 'wheel-sucker' as I came across one of same but I did manage to get rid of him and I'm not sure who was most surprised – on the hills. The latter part of the route was continuously undulating – despite Len Brown who had ridden the whole course 7 times, I think, assuring me it was flat – but the new compact chainset worked a treat. Next time I saw him was at the finish – content cordiale at its best! 100km in 3hr 17 was more than the intended leisurely ride in the end.

The whole of the square in the centre of Cambrai had been closed off for the finish activities and entertainment – there were singers, entertainers, cafes, finish reception etc. It transpired one of the riders was a 100yr old who had ridden the same 100km section, and regularly rides part of the P-C. He of course was feted. He recently set a world record for the 100km by a 100 yr old of 4hrs 17 at 14.5mph!.

In the evening there was a meal, principally for the V C Cambrai club and the organizers and helpers in the town hall. Super meal and then one of the lady singers from the afternoon returned and soon there was singing and dancing until quite late. A tremendous atmosphere.