

WHEELER'S DIGEST

Events | Guidance | Club Updates

Welcome...

Welcome to the July edition of the Wheeler's Digest.

Without your stories and news this would be a very brief newsletter so please send me anything cycling related, preferably with some photos as well, to webmaster@wellesbourne-wheelers.org.uk

Next issue at the end of August.

Steve Kirk - Editor

Diary Dates

3 Aug - 100 mile/km club ride.
RL Dave Thomas. Meet / start tbc.

27 Aug - Tommy Godwin Audax ride

Tommy Godwin Audax Ride - 27th August

The Tommy Godwin Challenge is going back to basics this year and simply wants to get people out on their bikes, having fun and raising money for a good cause - we are thrilled that they have chosen to support CFC!

The event will be run as an Audax, i.e. no timing chips, no bureaucracy, no refreshments, no signage, no marshals, no dependency on a big car park etc. Just a GPX route, the Warwickshire countryside, a limited number of riders, and a lot of fun.

There are a 100km and 50km route to choose from both starting and finishing at Dynamic Rides in Hockley Heath where you will collect your brevet card.

For more info and to sign up go to [The Tommy Godwin Challenge](#).

Team CFC

GTC in '23 Update

July has been an active month so lots to catch up with in this edition of the Digest.

A call for help please. The Club has booked a pitch at **Wellesbourne Village Fayre** on **Saturday 9th September** and we are looking for members to cover, in pairs, one



hour slots between 11 am to 4 pm. The role is to share our enthusiasm for cycling and inviting interested people to a taster ride. We will also be handing out an A5 flier that will have the rides and contact details for them.

Can someone co-ordinate this important showcase please? If you can help, please contact me on 07766 014016 or chairman@wellesbourne-wheelers.org.uk.



Finally, a big thank you to organisers of the Steve Bates memorial ride and summer BBQ

Good cycling

Philip - Chairman

Steve Bates Memorial Ride and Wheelers Summer BBQ

On Sunday 16th July there was a bigger attendance than normal. It was the Memorial Ride for Steve Bates, founder WW Club Secretary and all his immediate family were invited to come to the ride start for a group photo.



This was to let them see what Steve, with the founding group, had started. More so, to let them see it continues to flourish. Thank you, Steve and co. A group photo of Sunday Club and Casual combined about 30 wheelers photographed under the new banner in WB Sports Club. Following lots of banter and posing the two groups parted company to partake in the different agendas of Club and Casual riders.

The BBQ was set for 2pm at Wellesbourne Bowls Club. Over 40 came along including the Bates family. Very nice tributes were made by John Sulley and Trevor Shaw to Steve's bike and personal character, followed by thanks conveyed by Liz Bates. It was a

very relaxed, chatty afternoon with a good spread from the grill and cake corner. Later that afternoon many tried their hand at bowls. Certainly, some better than others but I'm confident club numbers will be maintained!

Olwen Kelly - Secretary



Cyprus Club Trip

Just over two months now before a group of WW members across all ability levels fly out to Cyprus for a week long cycling holiday in the sun.

Gary Gristwood and Les Oakshott have put a fantastic itinerary together ([itinerary attached](#)) and it's still not too late if you want to join them and the rest of the group.

They fly out with Jet2 on Thursday 12th October from Birmingham Airport and Gary has negotiated an excellent accommodation package at the Svetlos Hotel in Oroklini near Larnaca.

If after reading the itinerary you'd now like to consider making the trip, then please e-mail [Gary](mailto:Gary.gristwood54@outlook.com) (garygristwood54@outlook.com) to confirm your interest and to get further details

It's not too late for you to join us!

Gary Gristwood

WW Time Trial

As mentioned in the last edition of the Digest, the club 10 mile TT route has been resurrected and after Gary set an early target of 28:00 mins, Sunday Club had an attempt at beating his time. Not surprisingly, in the absence of the 'quicks', we didn't succeed but it was fun trying. Here's the current 'leader board':

1	Gary Gristwood	28:00
2	Steve Kirk	29:51
3	Mike Massey	29:54
4	Ashley Sherren	30:22
5	Peter Dewis	31:00
6	David Godefroy	32:35
7	Paul Markwick	33:29

If you want to have a go, the route is on the [website](#) (Welles-00). After completing the TT, email me with a link to your Connect/Strava ride for verification and then I'll add you to the board

Steve Kirk - Editor

Broughton Castle Sportive - It's Four in a Row!

Early morning drizzle didn't exactly see us set off from Broughton Castle with a sunny disposition, but the rain stopped within 5 miles of the start of our team event - the 49 mile Presidents Cup - and it did eventually prove to be a nice sunny morning for at least the second half of the ride!

Anyway, enough talk about the weather - time to focus on the actual event. We were seeking our 4th victory in a row and the team we beat into second place last year - Coventry based Apache Brave Racing - were in the field seeking to turn the tables on us. We let them begin in the start wave before us as part of the psychological battle and, ultimately, it proved to be a good move

Climbing was a key feature of the event and it began immediately we left the castle as we headed for Shutford. It was on to Epwell and then the descent down Lady Elizabeth hill into Tysoe before heading for Whatcote. Shipston was next via Honnington and then Ilmington, before the first major climb of the day - Larkstoke.

After grinding it out up to the TV mast, we all enjoyed the relief brought by the long, sweeping descent into Ebrington. From there, we made our way to Draycott and the second major climb of the day near Aston Magna, which we also ground out! After another exhilarating descent, we then successfully negotiated the busy traffic through Moreton in Marsh, before passing the feed station at Revolution Cafe (no stopping if we wanted the win!).

It was then on through The Wolfords, Cherington and Stourton (resisting the attraction of a large slice of cake at Cotswold Distillery), before we tackled the final big ascent of the day out of Whichford where we knew that, once at the top, we had a mainly flat final dash to the conclusion at Broughton Castle.

We crossed the finishing line in 2hrs 45mins chip time and our thoughts immediately turned to Apache Brave Racing and how they had done. They weren't around at the finish so, on the basis that we started after them and finished before them, we thought we must have won. They then arrived at the finish and it seems they stopped briefly at the feed station and we must have passed them whilst they were there, as we didn't actually see them at any point on the road. Their time was 2hrs 58mins, so we'd won by 13 minutes (not bad for a team where three of us are in our sixties).

Last year, my "ride hero" was Kevin McFall. This year it was Paul Meade who had only just returned from a spell in the Bahamas as part of a yacht crew. He hadn't actually ridden his bike for around three weeks, but had no intention of letting us down. He told me that he had to "max out" for almost the whole ride and, with only four in our team (ABR had 6 and it was the time of the fourth rider that counted), we needed him - like Kevin last year - to keep pushing all the way to the end.

Well done also to our two other riders - Andrew Marcroft and Martin Nuttall - who both spent plenty of time at the front, which was absolutely vital to our overall effort.

Riders

- Gary Gristwood (Team Captain)
- Paul Meade
- Andrew Marcroft
- Martin Nuttall (guest rider)

Ascent - 3,159ft

Average Speed - 17.8mph

Gary Gristwood

Isle of Wight Club Trip

The Isle of Wight holds a special attraction for Wellesbourne Wheelers.



This year's ride was led by IOW veteran Simon Hamilton-Smith. "The Island" met expectations, a Mediterranean coffee stop on the beach at Bembridge, riding into the teeth of a westerly wind on the Military Road and visiting the historic Newtown Hall.

The party of four (John Tuck, Mike Wallace, John Sulley, Simon H-S) just beat the rain to relax on the Southampton ferry, mulling over the days 66 miles and 4,900 feet climb!

John Tuck - Sunday Casual GO

Peter Dewis' Trip to Flanders

Like many of us, I am a regular follower of TV cycling coverage. The Spring Classics are a particular highlight and I have a special fascination with those held in the Flanders Region of Belgium and especially the Tour of Flanders with its variety of cobbled climbs. I have seen the

professionals struggling up these and not infrequently being brought to a standstill. I have often wondered what it would be like to experience them myself – to see which one was the steepest, which one had the most irregular surface and which ones were the real beasts.

I was therefore really pleased to be invited to join a group of old friends from my old cycling club in Surrey (the South Western Road Club) for a few days riding in Flanders in early July this year. Eight of us set out from Surrey in three cars carrying our own bikes, making our way through the channel tunnel and across northern France to a large Airbnb in Brakel, a small town in Flanders not far from Ghent and Oudenaarde.

We had three rides planned and the order we rode them was determined by the weather forecast. The first day involved a round trip to and from Ghent over about

60 miles. This was a good introduction to the pleasant rolling Flanders countryside, which even without the prospect of its cobbles is a joy to ride. The ride did however take in the Mur van Geraardsbergen, a famous climb which until very recently had been a regular feature of the Tour of Flanders. The cobbled climb winds up through the town square and then takes a route out of the town over gradients approaching 20% to a hilltop finish near a small chapel.

The second day involved a shorter route of just under 50 miles, but which again took in the Mur. Learning from my experience from the day before, I decided that the best way to negotiate the steepest part was to ride that section on the footpath!

The first two days were however just a prelude to the main event on day three – 65 miles and 4500 feet of climbing taking in several cobbled climbs including Oude Kwaremont, Paterberg, Koppenberg, Oude Kruisberg and Molenberg. Three of these need special mention. The Oude Kwaremont was the longest at little over a mile and a half but with a maximum gradient of about 12%. The secret was to try and maintain a steady momentum but to avoid getting out of the saddle at all costs. The Paterberg was shorter getting up to about 20%, but the cobbles were quite smooth and we all successfully got to the top without stopping.

Have successfully negotiated these two, I thought I had got them worked out, but I hadn't reckoned on the Koppenberg. This was the real beast – just under half a mile long but with a maximum gradient of 22%. Also, the cobbles were so rough and irregular that it was very difficult to maintain straight line momentum. On the steepest section, the cobbles diverted me into the verge and brought me to a standstill. I was then forced to walk until the gradient slackened enough for me to get going again.

I realise that this may seem like hell to many riders, but it is possible to do a lot of riding in Flanders without encountering any cobbles and much of this is a real delight. The attractive countryside is rolling and the roads are quiet and generally of good quality, even those laid as concrete slabs. Moreover, Belgium is the most cycle friendly country I have ridden in. Most towns and main roads have good quality bike lanes or paths, and at most junctions, bikes have priority. We didn't encounter a single episode of white van man behaviour, with oncoming cars frequently pulling over on to the verge to let us pass. It was a thoroughly enjoyable experience and I can really recommend spending some time riding there, whether or not you are partial to the cobbles.

Peter Dewis

