

FARNHAM ROAD CLUB

NEWSLETTER MARCH 2009

FROM THE EDITOR: Once more the time has flown by and the start of the new season will be upon us as this newsletter arrives with you. I have been “Off the Road” for most of the winter but am now on the mend following surgery on my back. I hope to be on my feet enough to be at the start on the 7th March. Although I have not seen you out training, tales have reached me of those travelling to the southern hemisphere for warm weather training and a certain persons regular visits to the warmer shores of Lanzarote, should see him fit for the off. There is also talk of a new machine seen lurking in the hills above Farnham! The Christmas period saw a new venture in the running of a club Duathlon. A fine day and some surprisingly good running for cyclists. This was followed by the annual New Year’s Day 10, again a good morning out for all. Congratulations to Stuart Willis who managed to complete the gruelling off road duathlon Monster Man held on Weaver’s Down in between these events. The winner, Chris Birch, took 2hours in the run, bike, and run event. I hope this will be inspiration for us all in the coming months. The club welcomes some new members to its ranks this month as Matt Golden, a regular at the club events has joined from the New Forest CC and Stuart Morgan has become a first claim member enabling him to keep Richard on his toes and they will make a formidable two-up team also. Andy Sturt has signed on as a second claim to the club. I hope to see you all on the 7th March. **Colin.**

Transalptri

By Ian Howard

On the 1st July 2008, having taken a sabbatical from work at Siemens in Frimley, I set of on a mission to raise £10,000 for the Marie Curie Cancer Care charity. My challenge was to cycle, run and swim my way from “The med to the bled”, in a 2,000 mile triathlon across the Alps. Fifty two days, 2,308 miles and 241,377 feet of ascent later and I completed this “Transalpine Triathlon” (nearly all of which was actually cycling) with a total raised of nearly £18,000.



My route took me from Nice through the Maritime Alps on to Switzerland, through the Dolomites in Italy, then up to Austria and finally across to Slovenia. There was lots of zig zagging around because I wanted to take in the 12 highest passes in the Alps, all of which are more than 2,500 metres high: I cycled across each one and swam in the lakes I encountered along the way as well. The latter included Lake Geneva, Lake Annecy, and at the end Lake Bled. I ran or walked with Judith across a number of smaller passes too. I used no motorised transport for the duration of the trip. The highest point reached by road was at the foot of the Tiefenbach glacier in the Oetztal in Austria at just over 2,800 metres. The total height climbed on that day exceeded 4,000 metres – around 13,000 feet.

The altitude was never a problem as such, although even when I had improved my fitness levels considerably, short bursts out of the saddle over 8,000feet soon caused breathlessness. By the end of the first month I was down to around 70kg (11st5lbs) and cycling all day became fairly routine with no great discomfort. It was just a case of “keep feeding the quads”. Once or twice I ran out of carbs, but within half an hour of stuffing some food down I was away again. I had feared that my back might not hold up, and for the first ten days it was permanently sore but it actually got stronger and by the end I didn’t give it any thought. Even now it seems to be a bit better than it was before I went.

I took my two Serotta titanium bikes with me. The old one, (it is now over ten years old), a traditional road bike, was fitted with a compact chainset and was up to the steepest of gradients'. The Gavia Pass in Italy was one of the toughest tests – single track and with a gradient of over 25% on some short stretches, but it did me proud. The newer bike is my triathlon bike with aero handlebars and a steeper seat tube. This was great for less severe days, especially cruising down alpine valleys. On a couple of occasions I was able to free wheel downhill from our campsite for over twenty miles before expending any energy at all. This was not as good as it sounds though, as early morning temperatures were typically around freezing point.

The back up crew consisted of Judith and Rosie, our black labrador, and the camping van, affectionately known as Vanessa, which provided accommodation along the way. Judith had the unenviable task of guiding the van up and down extreme gradients and around numerous hairpin bends day after day and navigating at the same time. We had various friends joining us along the way some of whom were able to accompany me on various stages of the journey. Companions included Nick Baugniet (a former FRC member now living in Dorset), Dave and Janine Lodge from the Farnham Triathlon Club, and Gawie Nienaber too, who was busy looking after the CSC team in the Tour de France.

We had a great day with Gawie and Gillian watching the Tour go up Alp d'Huez. Dave and I both took well over an hour to cycle up the mountain, but Gawie mastered it in around 56 minutes.

On what was meant to be the penultimate day, we reached our intended destination at around 2pm and the camp site had long since closed down. So I thought "why not do tomorrow today?" so finally, after a 124 mile ride I reached Lake Bled about 8.00pm on Thursday, 21st August, a little weary, but very happy. I immediately jumped into the lake with Rosie in hot pursuit.

We had many adventures and experiences. These included crossing the Jaufen Pass in Austria in a severe thunderstorm on foot, and of course watching the Tour de France on Alp d'Huez with Gawie from the luxury of the CSC team's corporate hospitality marquee.

I chose to support Marie Curie Cancer Care after my mother died from cancer last year. The charity provides totally free nursing night care to terminally ill people who have made the choice of dying at home supported by their families.

We are now thinking about our next challenge. One lesson which really sunk in during the trip is that it is always most fun when you are with friends. Next time I shall try harder to persuade some more of you to join me!

For more information about what we did you can read the daily blogs at www.transalptri.com and should you care to make a donation please contact Ian.

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FOR SALE. Roval Padded Wheel Bag. New, unused wheel bag for a pair of wheels with inside zip pocket. 2 zippers, a shoulder strap and carry handle. £25-00. Contact Ian White 01252 850234 or e-mail jo.white6@virgin.net

HANDBOOKS: If you have had your handbook delivered you should send your money to the Treasurer Paul Barber, The Old Cottage, Well, Hook RG29 1TL. They cost £6-50 for the CTT and £4-50 for the London West. If you are still looking for one contact Jim Parker 01252 722861.

Isle of Wight 2009

By now you will all have been out training and building up muscle and endurance for the forthcoming season. If this doesn't sound like you, there is no need to panic just yet. You have a little over two months before we set sail for the Isle of Wight to take on the locals at the Vectis CC over some of the most challenging hills and terrain that you are likely to encounter all year.

As in previous years the Vectis have booked the first May Bank Holiday for the series of events. These comprise:-

A warm up event of 12 miles on Saturday 2nd May starting at 5pm

A 23 mile sprint on the Sunday morning and

A bargain 46 mile event on the Monday (where else can you get this amount of suffering for £6.50 less than 15p a mile – Max Moseley may be interested).

The entries have an early closure 21st April so make a note in your diary.

As in previous years there is a well supported randonnee for those sensible people who prefer to enjoy the countryside when out riding.

The events all start in Freshwater and for the past two years we have stayed in some lovely bungalows that have only recently been built called Island View in Colwell Bay. I have secured a discount on each bungalow that we book of £40 which reduces the cost for three nights to £200 or £66 per night. If I can fill each bungalow with four people the cost is only £50 per person for the three nights. You will need to book the ferry crossing or I will do this for you. Unlike the accommodation I have never been very successful in gaining a discount on this but I am going to speak to Des who organises the event in case he is has any influence. If you wanted to stay on for some days after the event to recover I can organise this at Colwell Bay or in Shanklin with Des and Linda who have brought a hotel to accommodate the Farnham Road Club on our tours.

Please let me know on the slip below if you are keen on coming and if so whether you are happy to share accommodation.

All that is left is for you to complete the slip below and send it to me within the next two weeks if you would like to come. Paul

To Paul Charman, 51 Liphook Road, Whitehill, Bordon, Hants. GU35 9DA

I would like to take advantage of the marvellous accommodation that the club has secured at Colwell Bay, IOW staying from Saturday 3rd of May and leaving on Tuesday 6th May. (Let me know if you want to stay longer).

Delete one of the following:

I would like to book a bungalow for ourselves at £60 per night £180 for the three nights.

I am happy to share and will pay our portion of the cost in due course.

I will make my own ferry booking.

Name :-_____

Address:_____
