

You want me to ride on what?...

Paris-Brest-Paris by Triplet



The North Bucks Road Club Newsletter
March-April 2006#9

www.northbucksroadclub.org.uk



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Not much!
(except club nights and reliability trials and jumble sales)

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Your editor pictured at the Port Talbot Wheelers 2-up '25' 3rd March 2006. Clearly he hasn't worked off the Xmas blubber. Mind you, it was really brass monkeys, and he was wearing alot of clothes! (That's his excuse, anyway!)

Editorial

Well, now that Steve Abraham has got a PC and moved into the modern era, there is no stopping him! This issue has what is probably the biggest article we've had - Steve's account of riding the Paris-Brest-Paris audax on a triplet. Come on guys - let's have some competition for Steve on the writing front!

We've started the racing season - the event reports here are those I have either

written or received - you'll note a near absence of road racing reports. Thanks to Warren Stokes for writing a report on his first junior road race.

As ever, I'm now calling for material for the newsletter. I'm particularly keen to receive photographs for the cover. That and some indication that we have a road racing squad!

Ramblings from the Chairman's Desk

By the time you read this the Club time trial season will be well under way. Good luck with your first event, and best wishes for creating new personal best times at all distances throughout the season.

And the road events will start soon afterwards in early April. See Gordon Batcock for details of what you can enter and how.

I was disappointed to see so few people attending the special club night intended to introduce newcomers to the sport to the black art of entry forms, open and association events, time trialling in general and the new exciting pastime (?) of road racing. Indeed, no newcomers attended at all! There is so much you

can learn about our sport by attending club nights. The sport is not just about club time trialling and I hope to see a better attendance at club nights in the run-up to the racing season.

Most of the work on rewriting the Club Rules has now been completed by the Club Rules Working Group. The next step is to put them before the full Committee for a final appraisal before calling a Special General Meeting for approval by the membership so that the new rules can come into force. Keep an eye on the newsletter for details of this meeting and other important announcements.

Don't forget, if you have not paid your 2006 subscriptions by the end

of March you will not be able to enter club events or wear club colours in any event! So be sure to see the treasurer/membership secretary or any other committee member with your completed application form and cash/cheque by 31 March.

Finally, Rob Saunders is always looking for articles for our newsletter. Fact, fiction, tales, jokes (fairly clean), cartoons etc will always be welcome. They may not be published immediately but they will find their way into the newsletter at some stage. So send them in.

Best wishes
Bryan March 2006

Warp Speed: Paris-Brest-Paris on a Triplet

by Steve Abraham

An Ordinary, that's what I'll do the next PBP on, yes, an ordinary I'm bound to be the only one. But after looking at the ordinaries at the York Rally, and having spoken to people that have ridden one, I decided that an ordinary wasn't the best choice of machine for PBP. No brakes effectively, and too prone to going head over handlebars. I probably wouldn't get it through the bike check. After Rocco's 600, I was preparing for a tour of Scotland to bring me to the start of the Daylight600. Late in

the day the phone rang. It was Drew Buck. "Hello Steve, it's Drew Buck here, are you doing PBP this year?" "Yes" I said. "What on fixed?" "Well I was hoping to get my Moulton going again for this one, but I'll probably end up doing it on my new Dave Yates fixed." "I don't suppose you'd want to do it on a triplet? That's a three seater tandem." After some serious consideration, carefully weighing up the pros and cons and logistics in comparison to

how much I wanted to do PBP on something different; about 0.001 seconds later I said "Yeeaaaarr" Drew then told me that he'd managed to borrow a triplet for the PBP from St Johns Street Cycles. He had one partner but was having trouble finding a third. Everyone seemed to think that it was a great idea at first, but when he asked, "will you do it then?" they all seemed to say "Oh nonononono, absolutely not, no way not me." Drew generally took this as a

possibly”.

Dave Pilbeam was interested but still not 100% sure. Drew still wasn't certain that he'd do it. My definite Yes!!! was just what he was after. (Exit Dave Pilbeam)

“So, was I the first person you asked?” I asked Drew. “No, I've been asking for a while, I was having trouble trying to think of anyone mad enough to do it”

I was a bit put out by that. He was looking for someone MAD enough to do it.

“How come you never asked me first?” I asked.

“Well, I rang up Tim Wainwright, saying we needed some nutter to come with us, and you were the first one he said.”

“That's more like it,” I thought

“But we didn't think you'd do it, we thought you were a dedicated fixer”

“Oh no, I was hoping to do it on my Moulton, this is one better, it should be a laugh”

So, the next week was spent touring the Scottish borders. Then at the start of the Daylight, we were talking about PBP. Rumour had already got round that I was on the triplet. But, Steve, have you entered yet? No, it's all right, I've got to the end of next week. Wrong, they should all be with Noel Simpson by Monday. (Oh *****) I know, I'll send it straight to Paris myself.

Tuesday, 1330hrs, arrive home from Daylight 600. Tuesday (same one) 1430hrs go to work. The following week, an alarm bell goes off. Noel Simpson rang me up. “I haven't got your PBP entry here, are you doing it?” Noel pointed out that he should have got my entry about two weeks ago and that if he didn't have it in two days time and sent it off to Paris, and then I'm out of the PBP.

The alarm bell was ringing in my head as I flew around Milton Keynes, gathering all the insurance, doctor's notes etc and treble cheeking everything was OK before I phoned Noel to make sure it was OK before I sent it to him. Any mistakes or anything left out and within two hours it was in an envelope on its way to Noel. Thanks to Noel, it was all correct when I sent it to him Noel says that they nearly always need something done to them before they go to France. So before I sent it, I went through it with Noel on the phone. If Noel never rang me up then I probably would have never gone to Paris, so I owe this PBP to Noel.

Well, dramas over, I've entered, and I have a machine to ride. But I've never actually ridden it yet. My previous experience of tandems was stoking a Pashley tandem trike, aged 13 to when I was 14. That's it really.

So one sunny day I rode 116 miles to Drew's house near Cheddar Gorge. I know where he lives because Shawn Shaw uses his house as a control on the Brimstone. (It was also used on the now obsolete Crackpot 1000) And just like on the Brimstone, I got a breakfast on arrival. After that and putting my pedals on the triplet, our driver, Nigel arrives.

Soon it's time to go. Nigel on the front, me in the middle and Drew on the back. It was horrible. It went all over the road all by itself. My hands were too far forward and I had to keep looking up to keep my head out of Nigel's arse. Within about 5 miles

we were descending a 1:6. It was frightening because I couldn't see because I was too close to Nigel's back. We kept leaning when I wasn't expecting it and as I started to lean with it we would go upright again. It seemed very uncoordinated. As I was just thinking, “I want to get off this bloody thing; can I change my entry form? No I can't, Nigel shouts “OH SHIT. PUNCTURE!!!”

So there we are all shitting ourselves descending a 1:6 going round a bend, violently wobbling with a car coming towards us predicting our doom. But Nigel did a good job of it and we were all unscathed. We all agreed that we didn't want another puncture on the front wheel again. So I decided to invest in some Specialized Armadillo tyres. These are probably the most indestructible tyres you can buy. I've certainly had the fewest amount of punctures with them by a good measure and they last about twice as long as most other tyres. They also have good thick sidewalls and make Continentals look flimsy.

At the end of our 30 mile ride I had doubts about whether we could do it or not. But they were smallish doubts. Comfort was my main concern. I was also worried about whether Nigel was going to start the ride too hard and be tired for most of the ride. Especially as he was the biggest of us and he hadn't ridden anything longer than a 600k earlier this year as a qualifier. But comfort was the biggest concern for all of us. Drew seemed quite happy. Nigel was worried about his botty. I was worried about my hands. I couldn't get on with the handlebars. There were quite a few positions which were uncomfortable, but I only needed one position, which didn't seem to exist; a comfortable one. As for the triplet, I wasn't worried about the frame. It did flex a hell of a lot. Nigel had a go in the middle, with me on the back. Nigel went flat out, the frame was flexing so much (about 8”) that it was impossible for me to pedal. The pedals were 45° out of phase to save the transmission. It was more like riding a space hopper than a bicycle. I'm not exaggerating; it really did flex that much. This wasn't helped by Nigel's “nodding” riding style.

But steel can flex a lot. The wheels looked up to it. I was a little concerned with the transmission and chain wear and also the tyres after our puncture. But thought that the Specialized tyres would eliminate that problem. It wasn't built for speed or for long rides, we couldn't use our normal riding positions, we would have to be a lot more upright because the triplet was on the short side. (It was actually only about 18” longer than a tandem) this made us wary about getting sore bums. I couldn't get on with the handlebars and didn't like the idea of being too upright to begin with but thought that I would get used to that. The brakes were perfectly OK and the drag brake seemed a necessary idea. I didn't like the idea of the pedals being 45° out of phase with the pedals of the person in front because it made starting very slow and difficult. When we had it as good as we got, it took us about a minute to go from the three of us straddling the triplet to actually moving. But I could see the sense in it. It was just going to take quite a lot

of getting used to.

So, I got back on my bike the next day to ride home and went all over the road to begin with. I had become accustomed to reacting with the flex in the frame and my hands were out of sequence with my feet. Within half a dozen miles I was almost back to normal.

On the way home I did wonder why Byron, Drew's son, who was going to be the youngest Brit on PBP, didn't want to do it on the triplet. Was it really that bad? Drew did say that it was more uncomfortable than the back of a tandem. Having ridden the triplet myself I couldn't really blame him. I noticed that they told me this after I had agreed to do it and had already sent off my entry.

Two weeks before PBP we had another go. This time we would do 100miles on my local roads. Nigel couldn't make it so Byron took his place. Drew, Byron and Nigel were already experienced at the triplet, but I'd still only done 30 uncomfortable miles on it so far.

I was much happier this time. I wasn't pushing too hard like when I first rode. Being on local roads helped me gauge my effort. The saddle was horrible and I was still having a job just actually sitting on it, never mind trying to pedal. We were navigating via a form of Chinese Whispers as I was the only one who knew the way.

We turned at Stratford on Avon, and then found a quiet lane for me to have a go on the front. I couldn't do it at first. I tried riding the triplet while Drew and Byron waited at the side of the road. I still needed to get used to the steering. It handled very different to anything else I've ever ridden. Once I'd mastered the steering it was much easier. I could now get it started. What made it difficult to start was that you had to hold two people up. I could only do this with both feet on the ground, mainly because the front was a bit too high for me, although Drew seemed to manage OK. The tricky bit was putting your foot on the pedal without losing balance, then starting off, still keeping balance. I could only just manage this but it took a hell of a lot of concentration. There was no way that I was ready to pilot in traffic. If we'd have stopped at red traffic lights, when they changed to green, it would take me so long to get going that by the time I did they would be red again. A lot of that was because I still wasn't used to the handling of the machine. Once it was moving, it was OK. You can't use your weight to balance it, not when there are two people to hold up, you have to steer upright and use the steering to keep your balance. This isn't easy if you're not used to the steering. Bear in mind that Drew, Nigel, myself and the triplet combined weigh quarter of a ton. I would have liked to have piloted us back home but thought it unwise because of the traffic.

25 miles before we got home we swapped positions again. I went in the middle to the comfy land of Brookes. Byron took the drivers seat, which left Drew with the space hopper at the back.

It was even better. I had a comfy saddle and I preferred Byron's driving. Drew seemed to keep changing gear when he was on the front. One minute we'd be spinning,

the next we'd be grinding. You don't want to be spinning on the back. Every time the pedals turn, the frame flexes. This means that you go sideways. This is made worse by the fact that the pedals are out of phase which put your upper body and hands out of phase with your pedal strokes. At a fast cadence it is very uncomfortable. My stomach muscles were aching for 2 days after this ride. A slow cadence is much easier.

Now that Drew was on the back, he realized what I meant and why I always wanted a big gear. So we were now using the bigger gears. Byron did a better job of keeping an even cadence and was also more confident at steering, which seemed to concern Drew a bit. "Slow down Byron!", "Watch out, sharp bend" he said on a few occasions. I wished that Byron was steering us round PBP. But he wasn't. But I reckoned that Drew would get better. I hoped that we did, or it was going to be a hard PBP. After Drew and Byron went home, I went for a little ride on my Dave Yates. The first time I rode it, it was great, it went as if it was on a rail. It held a perfect line without me having to think about it and was stable on cornering. Something was horribly wrong this time. It felt strange and I was having a job going in a straight line. But after 20 miles it was back to normal again.

"Where are you going on holiday, Steve?" asked someone at work.

"Paris," I said

"What, are you cycling there?"

"Yes, but I've got to go to Somerset first to meet the other two, we're all going on the same bike"

"When are you going, tomorrow?"

"No, as soon as I've finished here, we've got to catch the ferry tomorrow night, we need to be in Paris for Saturday night because we have to go to Brest and back to Paris, then we'll come home." (They know I do long rides at work but they are slowly learning what I really get up to on the weekends. Some know that I have odd sleeping habits and like eating, but none of them have seen me at my best, or should that be my worst)

And so, after work, I bashed down to Cirencester, averaging 19mph, had a chicken curry in Tesco's cafe, then continued to Drew's house for the night.

Before we set off, we had to do a photo shoot for the newspapers and for the local TV news. To me it was all a farce. We had to pose in the garden and on the road. Then ride up and down the road. As we approached a female photographer, she said hello, Drew on the front said hello, Nigel in the middle said hello. But there was nothing I could do about it, I had one coming, I belched and said, "Ooops." I also farted while the TV crew were testing their sound equipment. Drew was talking about that for the whole PBP.

They didn't like me for interviews either. They asked me something about mobile phones and I said, "Dunno, aint got one". In honesty I didn't want them putting a spin on my words as a cyclist verses motorist story. It was at the time when it was being decided to make driving while using a mobile phone illegal. Then he asked what reactions we get from people that see us on the triplet. I couldn't really answer that one either

having only done 130 miles of virtually deserted roads. I was more interested in getting on our way. It went on for too long. It took about 2 hours. Byron also got in some of the photos too.

We eventually got going with Byron sitting on our wheel. Drew was worried about us dropping him; we were usually doing evens; but Byron said that it was easy on our back wheel. We did have an upright position after all. Plus we had a huge saddlebag and a pair of panniers. One pannier for me and Drew, the other for all of Nigel's' clothes. We also had a spare chain, cassette and bottom bracket, courtesy of St John Street Cycles and a folding tyre, plus the usual tool kit and the rack pack was for food and waterproofs.

I was also amused by Nigel's' enormous padded saddle. It looked horrible to me. I personally avoid plastic saddles because they do not breathe which makes you very sweaty around that area. This is a recipe for saddle sore. But Nigel said he had a pot of nappy cream to counter act this and said that his saddle was actually very comfortable.

We arrived in Southampton where Drew's' daughter was expecting us for tea. Navigation isn't one of Drew's' strong points. Byron is much better, but Drew never listens to his son. We did about 20 miles around Southampton with Nigel sitting upright in the middle, me on the back trying to keep my nose off of Nigel's' back (I really hated it when he sat up like that) and Drew on the front saying, "What? Where? Is it left? Eh?" Meanwhile Byron was saying "It's this way dad," shortly followed by, "NO, this way, oh dad". Drew still wasn't paying him any attention. He should have done though.

After a good feed we made our way to the ferry in Portsmouth. We went a bit wrong again and rode through a housing estate to get back on the right road. The new Specialized tyres really were loud. You could hear them echoing from the houses. It sounded like an air raid siren. People looked around to see what was making the noise, to be greeted with a triplet doing evens with a young lad hanging onto its back wheel.

So, we got on the ferry. Then we had to find our recliner seats. Drew led us to the "Club Class" lounge.

"We can't go in here", I thought, "this is the posh bit, I'm not posh."

But, in we went.

We sat in the Lounge and were brought a glass of champagne each. "Do you know who I am?" I thought, "I'm Steve Abraham, I sleep in bus shelters and barns, I'm not posh. This is ridiculous" And with that thought I drank the champagne. I was amused with the idea of me drinking champagne, the day I'd had a photo shoot and filming session. The lounge was handy; I decided on sleeping there instead of the recliner seat. I lay down on a sofa as the others went to their seats. I'd rather have some floor space than one of those seats. I read in a book about sleep, that airline seats are the worst position to be in for a good sleep. It is also a recommended position to seat someone if you are going to torture them. So I lay snugly on a sofa. It was a bit chilly at night so I put on my clothes and waterproofs. I thought

that it was a bit hard on the civilised people though. It must have been horrible for some of them.

Meanwhile, Drew managed to find all the blankets and had a cosy night while everyone else went cold.

Up for breakfast. Free tea or coffee. There were also some packs of shortbread. I helped myself to about four packs, then returned for another coffee and scooped about a dozen more packs of biscuits for our rack pack. Then the other two emerged. I told them about the free tea and coffee and biscuits then proceeded to go up for another scoop. Nigel rushes up with the same idea as me and returns with biscuits for everyone. Shortly afterwards he realised that he could have got some biscuits for our rack pack and after his coffee, goes up for a second coffee and a scoop of biscuits. Then Drew gets some more for the rack pack to discover that we'd already done this. We were eating these until about Brest.

Byron, being a typical student type wasn't awake yet and Drew couldn't find him. After another search, Drew had found him and woke him up just in time for a cuppa before we left. We left the ferry with Stephen Oxley and co but we lost each other shortly afterwards. He was a better navigator than Drew.

Saturday was spent bumbling our way to the start of PBP, often stopping for map checks and refreshment. Nigel would usually disappear as soon as we stopped and would reappear ten minutes later with some food for everyone. Then before you'd eaten yours he'd have scoffed his and would be taking photos.

Nigel was already getting into the spirit of things by waving at anything that moved. Drew, wearing his "Superman" t-shirt was enjoying himself and so was I. Byron was OK too, enjoying the tow. He was quicker than us up hills, but if he didn't get back on the descent then he was gone. We almost got to the start when we got a bit muddled with the roads. We stopped at the top of a hill by a bus shelter and all ran into the woods for a pee. We were all a bit tired and looking forward to getting to the hotel. We were about to go but was waiting for Byron, who was looking for something.

"What are you looking for Byron?"

"My helmet", he replied.

Us 3 kids on the triplet couldn't help it. We all started laughing. Then Byron realized that he was wearing it, which made us laugh even more. We eventually arrived, and I mean eventually, at the Hotel Pavilion Bleu, which was full.

We left the triplet there and got a lift to another hotel which was actually much better. Then we had a good meal in the hotel. It really was a good meal too and we had good company to go with it. I wasn't going to bother myself but the others wanted to and I'm glad they did now.

Next day was the bike check, but first we had to cadge a lift back to the triplet, which we did. We finally started to see people we knew, all milling about, eating and getting ready for the bike check.

We got through the check then I brought some gloves to give me some extra padding on my hands. I still wasn't happy with the handlebars. I don't wear gloves; I prefer to have

hard hands covered in calluses. I've had track mitts before but I don't really like using them.

I was surprised to see Jim Hopper at the site. I was even more surprised to find that he had entered on the line. He could do this because it was his to be his sixth PBP. This makes him a star rider. I was glad that he got in.

After that we searched for the Willesden camp to say hello to Jack. We didn't find it and ended up chatting to Jason Clark instead. We also had a chat with a Nordic bloke with a recumbent that looked like the Beatles Yellow Submarine. There were two of them; one yellow, the other was orange. The one we saw was hoping to finish in 48 hours or so.

At the start there was also a recumbent which looked like the body of a one seater aeroplane, which I called Biggles. It even had a windscreen wiper and a periscope mirror for looking behind. Recumbents were in full force while the Americans and Canadians dominated the tandem scene. But we were the only triplet.

There was speculation about whether it had ever been done on a triplet before. A Canadian team had a go in '95, which I remember people talking about. ('95 was my first PBP) But they never made it. Nobody was sure if it had been done or tried before that.

Sunday evening was the usual meal night. Every country comes to the centre where there are a load of restaurants. Drew's steering was getting very good and he wasn't having any trouble using the cycle paths with their obligatory chicanes and sharp bends. (Why do all cycleways have these obstructions?)

We arrived in our usual way, with crowds looking at us, sometimes cheering. It was like being a film star or something. We had teamed up with John Curtins, the Pilbeams and Banana Bob, who was one of the first recumbent riders of PBP. He was on the posters which were all over the local area. He wasn't riding this time; he was just making a guest appearance.

As we threaded our way through the restaurants to find one with some seats, we were stopped by some Americans. Are you Canadian?" was the favourite first question. We had been given a Canadian flag by our admiring Canadian tandem fans. When we told them we were English they usually nodded and said, "Thought so." The second most common question was by people who saw us from the front first, Are you British?

After our brief chat with the Americans we continued our quest for food. As we went I heard one say, "See what I mean about those British?" We found a place which had been almost cleaned out by a previous mob. So we had all the leftovers, which was Pizza. Pam donated her leftovers to the Steve Abraham belly fund and I finished it off before John Curtins could get a look in. I was surprised that Nigel was eating less than me. Not only does he eat a lot, but he eats quickly too. Drew found our topic for discussion for the evening. So now I know how to light my farts. Dave Pilbeam wanted to move onto spontaneous internal combustion, but lighting your own farts was much more fun.

So after our feed it was back to the hotel. I had more to drink than I normally would because hey, I'm not driving am I. I was enjoying being on the back of the triplet now.

It rained in the night. The next day was the prologue. The overcast sky and threat of rain seemed to put off spectators and riders, so it was lacking the atmosphere it had in '99, but it helped pass the time. We got a free tee-shirt each too. We decided to do the prologue because we knew we could finish this ride. As for the main PBP, well that still remained to be seen.

Then it was back to the Hotel Pavilion Bleu for a leisurely day that went on for too long. I was entertained by Pete Gifford and Pat Kenny making their preparations. Pat Kenny was pretty much all ready to go. He just stood there waiting for Pete to decide what he needed and didn't need. They were riding a tandem trike which looked like it had done about 50000 miles but looked like a good machine. I like to see a machine that's been ridden rather than all these gleaming new bikes that get cleaned every few hundred miles. Bikes are for riding. Pete Marshal was telling us about recumbents. I've always fancied treating myself to a weekend away hiring a recumbent. Actually, I'd like to own one, but they don't seem to have got them reliable enough for my liking. Saying that, talking to Pete, they have come a very long way. I've been promising myself since 1993 to hire one and still haven't got round to it yet.

Eventually it was time for the pre ride meal. I wasn't having one so I waited outside for the other three and ate a cheese roll. Then it was time to say goodbye to Byron because we were in the odds and sods category. Drew gave him his best advice, "Don't start too quick," and off we went.

We joined the back of the queue, but an official told us to go to the front. As we made our way to the front, everyone started cheering us. We emerged into the stadium where they split us into groups of about 500. But we should have been on the road to start. So the crowd split in two and we marched down the middle while the whole lot clapped and cheered. Drew was really enjoying it now. Then came the obligatory speech from the officials etc. While this was going on we had to keep posing for photos while people in the crowds and other riders were taking pictures. We were surrounded by recumbents and tandems. It was good to be with the odd bunch.

Shortly, it was time to go. A recumbent fell off straight away before he had even got moving. He was on the start line, so everyone behind was delayed a few seconds. When I rode past, I was amused to find a banana skin in the near vicinity. I probably watched too much Tom and Jerry as a kid. Then I felt a hand on my shoulder, as some bloke on a scooter got a tow. But we weren't quick enough for him, so he scooted off and left us.

A few seconds later, Nigel says to Drew, "Look Drew, there's the scooter."

A few more seconds later, Drew says to Nigel, "Look, there's that scooter, did you see that Nigel?"

Then Nigel says, "Yes, did Steve see

it," then he turns around to me and says, "Steve, did you see the scooter?" I just said yes and nodded. It was just another typical triplet conversation to me. The crowds were in force as usual and they were extra pleased to see me. It wasn't until they saw me that they realized that we were on a triplet, which meant that I got to see the funny expressions on peoples faces. Nigel and I were on our official waving duties while Drew did all the steering and gear changes etc.

A few miles later Drew said, "We haven't caught that scooter yet." The scooter was going well. Just in sight. 3 scoots left leg then change. He was really quick down hills, which is where we thought we'd catch him. We reckoned that he was going to be one of the few finishers that weren't going to be complaining about a sore arse. But he might get sore feet. We caught him after about 5 miles but going down a hill we had to negotiate a switchback turn, where he flew past us and disappeared again.

The crowds eased off as we hit the rural roads and most of the funny bikes and tandems had left us behind. We re-caught the scooter because he had stopped, we asked if he was OK and he was, so we carried on.

We had decided to take it easy all the way round and stop every 30 miles for a rest. That was more to do with our worries of being uncomfortable than being tired. We were plenty fast enough when we got moving, comfort was the biggest factor on whether we would finish or not. I was pleased that Nigel was behaving himself and not going flat out.

After a short while the triplet start giving off strange noises. Mostly they came from the rear, but every now and then it came from the front or middle. The triplet was doing fine; it was flatulence that was to blame. So I decided to start the triplet farting championships. By the time I was winning 4-0-1 (Drew was in second place) it was time for our 30 mile stop. We'd already seen Rocco go by in the second bunch to pass us. He was covered in sweat and looked as if he were riding a 25 mile time trial. We sat down as hundreds of cyclists went by. We stopped for about 15 minutes. A recumbent stopped near us and as if in a panic, jumped off to rummage through his bags. He looked to be in a real hurry. I couldn't understand it; we had 90 hours, what difference does a few minutes matter. You can lose half an hour queuing at a control. Drew and I scored a few extra points and as we got going, Nigel put himself in the game. I started getting cocky because I was now on 7-1-3, so I said I'd take both of them on. And they still couldn't beat me. But we lost interest after the first control.

We stopped outside the first feed control and ate our cheese rolls, then went on our way. As day broke we started catching people up. We caught Jack just before we stopped in a lay-by for one of our 30 mile stops. There was a Canadian tandem mending a puncture in the lay-by. They were having trouble but they left about a minute before we did.

But something was beginning to happen to me about now. I was learning how to pedal. Before, I was just sitting there, letting my legs go round. I was putting pressure on the pedals, but not like I usually do. I was

getting used to the unusual position and was really starting to put some power into it. I was actually pedalling harder than I would do normally. This was because of our agreement to stop every 30 miles. Drew even said that he did notice quite a difference in our speed. Nigel seemed OK right from the start and was quite happy as he was.

It was also around this point that Drew had a similar experience with his steering. He was good enough at it, but now it was starting to come naturally. This was good news because Nigel didn't really want to go on the front because it gave him back trouble. I didn't mind going on the front, but I had about a mile of practice and wasn't sure how good I'd be at learning to steer. Especially if I was tired after a few hundred miles. We had originally planned to swap places. Nigel could only go on the front or middle because he was too big to go on the back. I was originally going to practise on the front before the ride, but we never got round to it, and Drew wasn't sure that he could stay on the front for the whole ride.

I think that Drew and I "clicking" made the ride for us. Even I noticed our difference in speed from my improvement and I doubt that Drew could have pedalled as hard as me, Superman tee shirt or not. He had just about got over a nasty fall from last year. This time last year his leg was in a frame to re-set his broken leg and he wasn't even sure that he'd be doing PBP this time. On the other hand I doubted that I would get my steering up to Drew's standard, especially if I was tired. It seemed that we were all in the ideal position from when we left in England.

We went into the first control, got our cards done then went for some food. We spent quite a long time in the control before we got going again. I didn't really like that idea too much and was more interested in getting further up the road to get a good night's sleep. But I went along with the other two. After all we were on holiday and I didn't want to start any arguing. That was another of our worries of the ride. I only knew Drew as a controller on the Brimstone and Crackpot. This was the second time that I had ever met Nigel. We didn't want to end up arguing with each other, although it would have looked hilarious to anyone watching us.

So, on we went to Forgeres. Our tyres making their whine with our new found speed. Now we were catching people very quickly. Where everybody else had got tired and slowed down, we started slowly and were feeling fresh and were going better than we ever had. Going down hills, Drew said that he had to concentrate quite hard because we were passing people so quickly. Even tandems went by as a blur. Going uphill was good too. We had so much momentum that we often flew up the other side or at least three quarters of the way up. Sometimes people would try and get on our wheel going up hill but they often decided that we were too slow and overtook us. This was their downfall because they would just start descending when we were coming over the top of the hill. Once we were going down the hill we were just too fast for them to get back on again. That was in spite of the fact that we were great to sit behind.

With three of us pedalling we couldn't be matched for brute strength.

But then we came across Jez. I don't know his real name, but we'll call him Jez. He wore a "California" jersey, but he didn't really need to. You could tell he was Californian because he was a nutter. Not in a bad way, more of a hedonistic sense of the word. The sort of nutter who rides down steep hills shouting "Yahoo", or something to that effect. OK, so he didn't actually do that, but you could tell that was what he was thinking when he got on our wheel. He managed to stay with us the longest; he really had the knack for wheelsucking. I'm pretty sure that he got on my wheel last PBP, when I was on my fixed. After a few hills he said that we were too quick for him and left us behind going up a hill. We passed him on the way down and never saw him again.

We didn't stop long at Forgeres, not by our standards anyway. Nigel was practising his disappearing act. Drew and I were standing by the triplet, posing for photos, while Nigel was wandering about. Then when Nigel met us again, it was time to go.

"Oh, hang on, have we done the bottles?" Nigel asks.

Drew and I had already taken care of things like this, while we were waiting for Nigel. So, off we went again. The usual departure. Drew straddles the front, then Nigel and I get on the saddles.

"Pedal," shouts Drew. That's our cue to bring the pedals in Drew's starting position, while we are doing this we would be surrounded by a gathering crowd. Then Nigel and I are back on official waving duties as Drew gets us started, leaving behind another cheering crowd.

Drew was doing a good job following the arrows through Fourgeres but before we got out of town we stopped again at an outdoor cafe. After that, we got going again. We'd all agreed to stop for sleep at the next control in Loudeac.

Our agreements were done by a distorted form of democracy. Nigel and I had one vote each. But because Drew was steering, he seemed to have two votes. This meant that if one of us agreed with Drew, that's what we did. If both of us disagreed with Drew then we had a recount/rethink.

We were passing people very quickly now. People were getting tired but we were still feeling OK. Nobody was as keen to get on our wheel now. We were even starting to catch people going up hill. There seemed to be fewer people on the road on this section. We were in the no-man's-land between the fast riders and the plodders.

We reached Loudeac in time for a 4 hour sleep and a brief feed. At breakfast we met Derek and Sarah Slann looking worse for wear. They had to sleep on the floor of the restaurant because all the beds were full when they arrived. It didn't look as if they'd slept very well. After breakfast we left in the early morning before the control closed. We were grateful for the long gradual climb which kept us warm, and to our surprise, we were catching people at a pretty good rate.

After a few hours, still in the dark, we came across a secret control, which was very welcome indeed. We had another leisurely rest and very

welcome warm drinks, then got on our way again. Day soon broke and a little later we were at Chiarax. Drew was trying to find out if Byron was all right. He was now in front of us because he had less sleep than us.

On the way to the turn at Brest, the riders coming the other way were coming thick and fast. It was a constant stream and I was looking out for people I recognised. Nigel and I were back on official waving duties.

We saw our friend in his yellow submarine whiz down a hill. He wasn't going to do it in 48 hours. Then along came a Dutch (I think) team. These are the PBPs answer to the Russian pursuit team. Everything is synchronised and they do everything as one. Drink, pee, eat, sleep and even probably even blink at the same time. They saw us coming towards them and when they realized that we were the triplet, as one they looked at their watches. The speculation of whether we would get round the ride was obviously still going around. There was still talk of the Canadian triplet of '95.

But we were all confident now. If anything we were more confident than when we started. Although we could have learned a lot from our Dutch? friends about being synchronised. Nigel was getting concerned about the infamous hill of the ride, the Col de Roc. Drew and I had told him that it wasn't really worth worrying about and he accepted that. When we got to the top, "you know when you're there because you'll see the beacon" we told him, He still even said, "Was that it, are we at the top now?"

We were, and it was all, well nearly, down hill from here. So after a few miles of cruising at about 35-40mph we were more or less in Brest. Nigel seemed to be surprised how easy it had been so far. Not that he wasn't doing his share of the work though. He was doing well.

A few miles before the control we caught up with Byron, who was also going very well. He looked a lot better than most people around him. He had taken it steady from the start and was pacing himself a lot better than most.

Nigel wanted to do more than his share of the work up one steepish hill. He was using his nodding pedalling style and was making me uncomfortable because of the flex in the frame. Drew was having trouble keeping us on the road. I just gave up even trying to put any pressure on the pedals. I was having enough of a job just sitting on the gyrating saddle which was somewhere underneath my bum. I tried to tell him that I couldn't pedal if he rode like that and Drew tried to tell him that he was nearly going off the road, but Nigel just carried on. I don't think that he realized how bad he'd made it for us two, and was just getting a bit enthusiastic and probably trying to make our lives easier. But all he was doing was helping the old lady back to the wrong side of the road.

I decided that I'd just try and stay on and start pedalling again when he got tired, which he didn't.

But we were soon at the control and could relax now because we had well over 50 hours to get back to Paris. Drew had a chat with Byron to make sure that he was OK. Nigel was wandering around, at least I suspect he was, he'd disappeared again, and I

was looking to see who was about. Back on the road again, there were still people coming towards Brest as we headed for Paris. Some were looking like zombies already. We started catching people again. On the way out of Brest we caught an American lady wearing standard triathlete attire, very little. She went by again. Nigel and I noted that she was the best looking lady we'd seen on the event, and it wasn't long before we caught her up. But we kept Drew level with her. Drew said that he was embarrassed that we'd caught her up again and that the triplet team had nominated her as the "babe" of the PBP. She seemed pleased with this and then said that she'd seen Drew before.

"You were in the '99 video on that odd bike weren't you? I remember that hat"

She recognised him from the '99 PBP video when he rode his Dursley Pederson. Then she dropped the bombshell, "You were stunning" she said.

We had a bit of a chat with her but we lost her on a descent.

"Did you hear that?" Drew boasted, "I'm STUNNING! I am" "What about you Nigel, are you STUNNING? What did she say about you?" "Nothing," replied Nigel.

"What about you Steve, are you STUNNING!?" "Nah, not me," I answered.

"Well I am, I'm STUNNING, did you know that," persisted Drew.

It wasn't long before we reached the bottom of the Col de Roc which was where Nigel blew up.

Drew decided that we should stop at the top of the hill for something to eat. There were drinks at the top on the way out. It didn't make sense to me though, I'd have thought it better to stop and eat now, plus I wanted a pee. In fact I was a bit peed off at the moment so I took it out on the pedals. I could do this now that Nigel wasn't throwing me around.

At a roundabout near the top, I saw a gap in the traffic and before Drew could even think of stopping I thrashed it one.

Drew and Nigel didn't know what hit them. We lurched forward. Even I was a bit surprised that I could push two people as hard as I did. "What was that? Drew said in surprise, "was that Steve?"

"Yes, I think it was," said Nigel, who also sounded surprised.

I gave it a bit extra now that we were near the top and I was looking forward to having a pee. The drinks had all gone so we just stopped and fed Nigel while I watered the flowers.

We got going and Nigel started to feel better.

Nigel noticed that we were near the back of the event. "Don't worry," I said, "We're gunna start catchin' 'em now. They're all gettin' tired now. They'll start slowing down a lot but we'll keep this speed up to the finish. Most of this lot here are going to struggle to get back; a lot of these people haven't had much or any sleep."

Drew was admiring the view. "Look at the STUNNING view, isn't it STUNNING. I'm STUNNING I am."

"Isn't the weather good, it's STUNNING isn't it."

Nigel and I were learning from our Dutch? friends, "All right Drew,"

The remaining miles to Ciahrax were a little hilly and the riders were more strung out so we didn't pass as many as we usually did. We arrived at Chiarax at around midday to our usual reception of points, stares cameras and cheers. Then did the usual routine. Cards first so we don't forget and leave. Then food, rest if needed regroup by the triplet. Then wait for Nigel who had usually gone walkabout. Ah, there he is.

Are the bottles done?

Yes

Off we go then. Drew had to manoeuvre the triplet through the control as another crowd would gather for photos, talks and general clapping and cheering.

Back on the road again we seemed to be going better than we'd ever done. Drew's steering was getting very good. He was becoming much more confident and was becoming comfortable riding out of the saddle. Nigel was not rocking around as much; in fact he was becoming pretty steady and was still doing at least his share of the pedalling. I remember thinking to myself that the back seat of this is beginning to feel like home now. I was starting to dislike our 30 mile breaks because I was enjoying the ride so much. I never said anything though. I didn't know if Drew and Nigel needed to rest or not. Drew said that he had to concentrate a lot because we were passing people very quickly and Nigel was really enjoying himself. I didn't want to spoil it for him. I would have preferred to have spent less time on these little breaks and more time in a bed, but we were well on schedule for an easy finish with four hours sleep a night and it was working, so I went along with it.

Darkness began to fall and Drew started reflecting on the day. He had forgotten what the American lady said.

"Oh what was that word?"

Nigel and I had also forgotten. We rode along racking our brains, and then I remembered. If it wasn't for Drew's show off nature, I'd have told him that the word he was after was "Stunning." But I didn't want to start him off again, so I kept quiet. Luckily, Nigel couldn't remember. I'm sure Nigel would have told him and set him off again. I did enjoy telling Drew that I remembered what the magic word was and that I wasn't going to tell him. We probably did another 20 miles with Drew shouting out different complimentary words and me saying, "No," while Nigel was laughing and sometimes trying to help Drew out. Eventually, Drew gave up. (Phew!)

Again, Loudeac was our next sleeper control. We were aware that it was going to be a very popular sleeping control as we flew into darkness. I think I was more aware than the others as I said that every rider we passed was another bed. On a fast descent, I felt my glasses jump out of my pocket. (I wear them to help my eyes from turning bright red and to help stop my nose running too much. I can now breathe through my nose after 200 miles.)

"Shit, lost me glasses" I shouted.

"What was that?" asked Drew "Steve's lost his glasses" said Nigel.

"Shall we go and look for them?" hollered Drew.

By that time, bearing in mind we were doing well over 30mph in the dark and

it would take a few more meters to stop, I said

"No, we'll never find them; they must be nearly half a mile behind us by now."

We carried on until the place which was the secret control on the way out. They were doing coffee and a few snacks. We stopped for longer than I'd liked. Nigel was really enjoying himself as Drew was messing about and talking to people while I sat down and had a coffee. I kept looking at my watch when they weren't looking thinking, "Come on the beds are going past. I want some sleep tonight," I thought to myself.

We were again on the road. Mostly down hill to Loudeac and we recaptured some beds.

Cards first. Never mind food, there's a queue for the beds. We'll eat in the morning. Later on then, it's already morning. We joined the queue and waited about ten minutes. Then we were told twelve beds available in half an hour. We counted from the front of the queue.

We'd timed it the absolute limit because Drew, who was behind Nigel and I in the queue, was number twelve.

Those standing behind Drew slowly decided what to do and dispersed. We waited a while as a few French riders went in. Some of us had the impression that there was some favouritism here. But, we were soon on our way to the merry land of Nod. We were led to vacant beds by torchlight.

After we awoke, we regrouped by the door and made our way to the eatery. On our way there we'd heard that where we were walking was littered with sleeping bodies during the night. They were the beds that I had been so keen on passing. They must have had a bad night as it wasn't the warmest night for sleeping outside. A good number had struggled on without sleep.

As we went into the restaurant part of the control, there were still people on the floor looking as if they hadn't had a good sleep.

As we ate we got reports of other riders. Ian and Lorraine Hunt didn't make the first control because their rear hub went pear shaped. Mark Brooking also had the same trouble as he was using the same rear hub. They were two tandems which would have almost definitely got round in time. Derek and Sarah on the "Slanddem" were also out, which came as a surprise. They had both ridden the tougher LEL in 2001. Although we saw them on the way out and they looked shattered. But they looked like that on the LEL so I thought they'd make it.

On the other hand, our youngest rider, Drew's son Byron was doing well and was a good few miles in front and showing signs that he was still going steady and hadn't started to slow down.

After a breakfast we left on the edge of daybreak for another days ride. Drew was still forgetting what his American fan had said. "Marvellous?"

"No"

"Wonderful?"

"No"

"Fantastic?"

No,

"Ohhh, go on, tell us what it was"

"No, shant"

"It began with S, super"

No

"Err, err, sensational?"

"Oh, I give up"

After a while we had a stop for a call of nature. While Nigel watered the greenery, I ran into a nearby corn field clutching a toilet roll.

When we got going again, we started to wind it up to quite a speed. Nigel wasn't nodding anymore so I could pedal hard as well. I noticed that we slowed down a little then Drew announces, "We're only doing 27 now," (This is miles, not kilometres an hour)

We were enjoying ourselves and often chuckled at how fast we were passing people. Drew mentioned that he had to concentrate quite hard, otherwise we'd kebab someone. We ended up in a duel with a Frenchman who was very fast. We weren't sure if he was on the PBP or not. He would catch and pass us on the up hills, but we left him behind on the downhill. He never got on our wheel on the descents. I'm not sure if it was because we were too fast, or he was just giving us a sporting chance. Our moment came on a dip in the road which we could fly down the hill at about 40 odd mph and I would guess that we went over the top of the other side at over 30 mph. We all chuckled to ourselves at that and we knew that we wouldn't see our Frenchman again. I looked over my shoulder when we were at the top of the next hill and he still wasn't in sight.

Mercifully, we arrived at a secret control, which also tallied with our 30 mile stop. I said that I was glad and confessed to Drew that I couldn't keep that up all the way to Paris. Nigel agreed. We were full of the last 30 miles at this control and were in very high spirits. All three of us were relishing in telling people that if we were doing 27 mph then we were going slow. Sometimes riders that we'd overtaken came into the control and joined in our laughter at how quick we were. They all got the impression that riding the triplet was a lot of fun. They were right.

On a sadder note, we heard that some of our friends had packed. Jack Eason was out, which came as a surprise to me. The two tandems, Mark Brooking and the Hunts were out with the same hub trouble. John Curtins was out as well as a few others that I would have bet on finishing. There were a few surprises in the DNF list and I thought that Britain was having a bad PBP but it turned out it was just a lot of people that I know not getting round. We actually had our usual success rate.

We didn't let it dampen our spirits. We were enjoying ourselves too much, so we set off at a more sensible pace to the next control. On the way, Drew tried to remember what his American fan had said and unfortunately, after a few attempts, he remembered.

"STUNNING," he shouted, "That's it, STUNNING, I'm STUNNING, I remember, it's STUNNING."

I confirmed his re-discovery and prepared myself for another barrage of things that Drew could comment on as being STU, oh sorry, stunning. And of course, he did.

We had a long stop at Tintineac, the next control, although I don't think that Drew wanted to hang around as long as we did. But I told him that if I

had a good rest now, then I wouldn't need much for the rest of the day.

I was a bit shocked at the prices at this control. 3 euros for a drink of Cola. I marched out of the control in disgust to the petrol garage. On the way back I bumped into Nigel, who was on his way to Mc Donald's for a milkshake. He also agreed with me about the pricing policy. I kicked myself, a milkshake, why didn't I think of that. I saw the golden arches and kept clear, but I forgot about the milkshakes. Good call Nigel.

When I returned, I had a sleep in the hot sun. After that we sort of split up and spent a few hours either sleeping or wandering around looking for the other two. Then it was the usual departure routine. Drew and I next to the triplet. "Where's Nigel?" Nigel turns up with his usual grin, Drew starts to manoeuvre as a crowd gathers etc, etc.

Next was a short stage to Fogeres at a steady speed. We didn't stop in between this section as it was only just over 30 miles. We only got our cards stamped and had a meal.

While in the queue behind Drew, the French lady said something to us in French. (My guess is that she said, "Take a tray and take what you want." Tray in hand, the first thing Drew does is to point at the lady's breasts. She looks embarrassed and covers up her cleavage while Drew tries to explain in his very limited French and sign language that he was commenting on her sunburn and didn't mean to be rude. We didn't hang around too long because we were well rested from Tintineac.

Next control was Villaines la Juhel. We'd regained a good few hours and arrived before dark. We passed the red baron on the way in and left him standing. The red baron was the name I'd given to a large American on a red recumbent with a fairing made of red fabric of some sort. We watched him get on and off his machine. It looked like a lot of mucking about to me, but he was in a good position for finishing the ride, and I presume he did.

The stop at Villaines was pretty brief by our standards too. We wanted a bed at Mortagne au Perche. We left another cheering crowd in twilight, wearing our night gear. We made good progress but the roads were pretty lonely. Riders were passed in ones and twos. We caught one large bunch. A triplet isn't the best machine in a large bunch and they were a bit on the slow side by the triplet's standard. They seemed to have a good rhythm going and we left them cheering us on in our wake.

Further up the road, Drew started riding out of the saddle on the climbs more and more. It really did make a difference too. Sitting on the back seat, I noticed something that made me laugh. When Drew was riding out of the saddle, all I could see behind Nigel was Nigel, with a floppy hat going up and down above his head. I said that Drew was like a big piston going up and down on the front. (You had to be on the back seat to get the real comic effect) We were riding along with fits of the giggles. Whenever we came to a climb, Drew would get out of the saddle and start bobbing up and down. I started doing a mock Superhero theme tune and announced, "Piston Man." and we got the giggles again. This continued for

several miles and we often had trouble climbing hills because we were laughing so much. On one climb, Drew nearly took us off the road because he was laughing.

About half way to Mortagne, we caught our American friend. I don't know what happened, but we ended up in a conversation and we slowed down for him. He was great company and was saying that we'd saved his life because we let him sit on our wheel. We did too; we waited for him a bit. He was good to have with us too. It was nice for all three of us to have someone else to talk to. He was enjoying our messing about and was adding to it. He was amazed that it was me who was shouting out which way the arrows pointed, seeing that I was at the back. He thought we were a real crazy bunch and he was probably right. We looked after him and we kept each other entertained.

Soon we had a short biscuit stop and got on our way again. Then about twenty miles from Mortagne, we caught another small group. As we went past at a slower than our usual whiz, someone else got on our wheel.

"Hallo, I am Anna from Sweden."

Anna, from Sweden was a pretty fit young lady. She'd done quite a bit of racing and was not too tired. She was a bit quicker than our American friend and we all preferred the idea of riding with a pretty Swedish lady than a friendly male yank. They were equally good company but she was much better looking. Although I was the only one who got any sort of glimpse of what she actually looked like. We looked after her well too. But she had a good turn of speed when she wanted it and we didn't have to wait very long for her to rejoin our wheel, which she only needed on the descents and flat. We got a conversation going which in itself is a game when it's between three on one bike and one on another. The miles soon passed and all too quickly we got to the control.

There was a short steepish climb on the way in which turned into a rather surreal sprint between three Brits on a triplet and a Swedish lady. Drew put us in a low gear and we were spinning like mad and catching up with Anna. As we drew level, Drew had a change of tactics and put us in a huge gear with a great crunching of the gears. Anna started edging forward so we forced round the pedals as we neared the top of the climb and narrowly took victory, and started laughing. Then as we made our way into the control she disappeared, never to be seen again. (Shame)

We went straight to bed with the giggles and high spirits. We were like three kids, laughing and chatting as we were led to the beds and told to shush. We had a job to stop laughing. I ended up in the bed next to Nigel and we had to look away from each other to stop ourselves from laughing again. But after that I soon got to sleep.

Today was the last days ride. It was just becoming light and we had an easy 140 km to the finish. We had about ten hours to do 90 miles. It was pretty much in the bag now, so, like many others we treated it as more of a celebration ride than a final last slog.

Drew was happy that Byron was well on his way to being our youngest

finisher, a good few hours in front of us. He'd rode very well and not started too quick, which is one of the hardest things about PBP. Most people start far too quick and pay for it for the rest of the ride. I've done track racing before I was an Audaxer. I know that a few laps of a velodrome can finish me off for the day. Starting steady is even harder to stick to on PBP because of the atmosphere which carries you on and entices you to push



that bit harder. I give respect to anyone who can take it steady among all this excitement, especially on their first ride of this distance. Byron reckoned that he spent the same time going to Brest as he did on his return to Paris. To me, he did a perfect ride, which is more than can be said for some of our more "experienced" AUKs. Back on the road again we were doing a good trade as a taxi for a bunch of Willesden riders, led by Tracy Horsham. (If you are ever on an event where Tracy is running a control, then you are one lucky devil. He does almost impossible sized portions, but you've got to eat it all because it tastes so gooooood). We were not in any hurry and were much more accommodating with our back wheel. Only a select few could stay with us because it was really that good a ride. If you were on the wheel of someone on our wheel, then you weren't getting the same advantage and for people who were three or four places behind, it was too much to hang on. We were getting favourable reports all round from the benefits of being behind us. I kept making sure we didn't loose them as we crested dips and summits with our big bag of momentum.

"Don't lose Tracy," I said, "He looks after us on events, he might remember us for this, and believe me, you want to be in his good books if he's running a control. He's the best there is"

Drew and Nigel were obliging and after an hour or two Tracy rewarded us three with a coffee each as a kind of taxi fare. It was all very civilised, what a gent he is. But we split after that because in spite of our slowing down, we were just too quick for a tired peleton to take full advantage of.

So we were back to our leisurely plod in the mid 20's. (That's miles per hour, not kilometres)

Before we knew it we were at our last stop at Nugent la Roi. There was a bit of a mixture of riders here. Some were like us and had had a night's sleep and treating the end as a celebratory last few miles. But there were the heroes too, who had very little, or no sleep and were looking shattered, they wouldn't give up now

they were this close. They were over the worst of it. We had passed two using devices made of inner tubes and coat hangers to hold their heads up; their necks had given up on them. All they had to do was to keep plodding on to the finish. I bet a good few were counting every mile from here to Paris. Inside the control, the Willesden were doing their usual assembly but it wasn't as it usually was. One of the main instigators of the team assembly wasn't his usual self. He was one of those who were in the second group to pass us on the very first night, almost bang on schedule of my prediction of an hour into the event. After we brought our food we got a table not far from Rocco. He looked very different to when he passed us, looking as if he were in a 25. He was in a right state really.

"I don't thin' I c'n keep wi' you lot," he slurred, "I'll probly 'ave t' le' ygo." This was most unlike the Rocco that I'd heard of at the last control of PBP. Normally it would be right you lot, don't go until we're all here. Order in the peleton, come on now get in line. And so, the Willesden never finished in their usual formation. They came in small bunches mostly.

Pat Kenny was looking very well and tucking in to his feed while his stoker sat away at the side of the room on the floor, using his clothes as a seat and eating a banana with a grin on his face. Pat didn't seem to know what to make of it and as usual seemed itching to be on the road. Looking at Pete Gifford eating his banana, with that grin on his face, I couldn't help but think of him as Pat's pet monkey.

We had a leisurely stop because we only needed to do less than ten mile an hour for a finish and we were usually doing double that without any

effort.

We did our usual routine and before we left, Nigel used up the very last bit of his nappy cream. What fantastic judgement.

There was a gradual climb out of Nogent and we were surprised that we were actually catching someone pretty quickly. We were a bit surprised because we didn't get a run at this climb and climbing without our huge bag of momentum wasn't what we did best.

It turned out to be Rocco. Poor old sod. If he were a dog he'd have been shot. But we knew that he wouldn't give up and we could count on him to finish.

It seemed a little strange on board the triplet. We were still passing people, but not as quickly as we were. After a while we caught the Kenny/Gifford, tandem trike. Drew in all cockiness said that if he put our drag brake on then they might be able to stay with us. Pat didn't care, he was happy to be getting some more miles in. But we were puzzled at our speed, or lack of it. Why were we only doing 13 on the flat? OK, it was into a light headwind, and possibly very slightly up hill. But 13. We didn't know. We were taxiing a much bigger bunch of about seven now. We lost a few as we entered the last few hills of the ride. Only about 30 miles to the finish now. Our bag of momentum was losing the more tired riders on the climbs. They were also having trouble staying with us on the descents.

We soon picked up a very sprightly Lucy Rutter who we would lose a bit on the descent, but re-capture us on the climbs as our bag of momentum ran empty. Then halfway up a climb Drew makes an announcement.

"Oh shit. Sorry, I left the drag brake on." and with that he switched it off. We surged forward instantly and I looked over my shoulder to see Lucy shrink into a grinning spec on the horizon.

We were talking about what people were saying about the triplet and a lot of people were asking us if we had a pet name for it. They tried to think of ideas which weren't very good. We had a little think too, just for fun. I decided on "Warp Speed" because it went pretty fast and the frame flexed quite a lot, hence the "warp."

Before we got to the finish we stopped for a tin of beer each to consume as you wish on the roundabout. This was where the crowd gathers to give you your last clap of the PBP. It was Drew's idea and he really wanted champagne, but there was a shortage of shops in the last 30 miles, so beer it was. Drew and Nigel half drank and half sprayed theirs as we emerged into the cheering crowd. I just gulped mine down, I do hate waste. Of course, one lap wasn't enough. We did two just to milk all the applause. It also gave me time to finish my beer. When we stopped, Drew still had a bit left because he had to juggle steering, braking and gears while trying to consume his beer.

And so, another one done, card stamped, ride over.

We met up with Byron, who'd been there a few hours, then went to the English camp, run by Banana Bob, who was buying crates of champagne from the local cash and carry. He brought so much that he was getting a discount. Then he was giving it to

anyone who had a cup in their hands. If they didn't have a cup, then he'd run and get you one. It was a shame there wasn't more of us really; it could have turned out to be a bit of a party. We lazed in the sun and mucked about as the last riders came in. I was getting a lot of enquiries about my rear end and got a bit bored with answering the same question. So I said it's OK really and dropped my shorts to show them. Nobody asked me after that.

Our friend on his scooter was there. He'd finished about four hours in front of us, which we found amusing. People were having a go and no one made it look easy, unlike the man who'd used it. He looked pretty natural at it.

John Curtins didn't seem one bit unhappy that he never finished the ride. He seemed to be enjoying himself more than most of the finishers. Maybe he'd have got round if he were on his fixed wheel? Pam Pilbeam was keeping an eye on the prize giving, which seemed to be 90% for the officials. But we were waiting, because Pam told us that there was on almighty bun fight afterwards, which only the officials seem to know about. All the tired and hungry riders have usually gone back to their hotels by now.

"Half hour to the bun fight" announces Pam. We all made our way in. Well, all but Byron who was asleep on the grass. We forgot all about him. A young lad was near us and he turned out to be the youngest rider. He wasn't much younger than Byron, so he won the lottery prize. But I agree with Drew that anyone under 21 should get a special prize because after all, what difference do a few months mean. It is only every four years, so not everyone can ride as an 18 or 19 year old.

In contrast, our oldest rider got a heroes welcome at the finish. Not surprising though. He'd crashed a good few times. He was covered in blood and scars. His jersey was ripped and torn. I sensed that the ceremony was near the end and tipped the wink to Nigel to make a move for the food. We crept our way towards the tables at the back of the sports hall. Occasionally we would glance round to make sure that we weren't arousing interest. I almost had my paws on a plate when we saw Drew on the stage. We made our way to the stage. We thought that we might be getting something for being the first triplet to do the PBP. We tried to listen to what was going on and we heard the name Gethin Butler mentioned. Drew was acting as Gethin Butler's double, still wearing his superman tee shirt, and floppy hat. The cameras flashed as Drew took centre stage and the announcer proclaimed Gethin Butler. And then, the bun fight.

Nigel and I got in quick and were walking away with a good plateful each before anyone had got near. We found a table, then more Brits came over with food.

Then, it was chaos at the food tables, a long queue and all that. I went for seconds with Nigel. I didn't fancy queuing and neither did Nigel so I showed Nigel what to do. We just stuck our arms through the crowd and pulled out whatever we happened to grab. Don't worry about what it is; we'll sort it out at the table.

Then other people just did as we did and the queue turned to a rabble. I liberated a bottle of Cola from under the drinks table and brought it over. I could see what Pam meant by a bun fight now. The food was good and we all had a good feed.

In the meantime, Byron had woken up outside and wondered where we had all gone. He sat down at the table and said sarcastically, "Thanks dad, I wondered where you all went, you could have woke me up and told me"

There was more than enough food though. If I'd known how much they were going to throw away, I'd have brought a bag with me. It breaks my heart when I see food go in the bin. I've been miles from anywhere and really hungry and hate how we take such a wonderful thing for granted. I once had to throw some ham away. I cried for a week.

After the bun fight we made our separate ways to our various hotels. Drew decided on a celebration ride of the locality to cheering crowds. It started at the finish of PBP and round the grounds of the finish. He thought it would be fun to negotiate a tight turn which ended up with me being dragged through a bush. "Ow, that's got prickles in," I said as Drew carried on, laughing. Then we took to the streets to find our way back to the hotel. Our journey was punctuated with Byron saying, "Dad, where are you going now? It's this way." Drew still wasn't listening though. Byron didn't care anymore and just followed.

We came to a roundabout with fountains in the middle. There was a bar adjacent to it. As we rode past we got a cheer. So Drew being Drew, did another lap. We got another cheer. Drew thought that this was fun, so he took us round again, with Byron cringing alongside. We didn't get much of a cheer this time. I think that if Drew would have taken us round again we'd have been in trouble. After a jolly ride we eventually got to the Hotel.

Drew intended the next day to be a rest day and had it in mind to ride to the ferry the day after. But I persuaded him that even if we only do 20 miles today, then it was 20 less to do tomorrow.

So we set off for a very easy ride with lots of stops. This was after we visited the campsite. I was hoping to see Jack Eason to see if he was OK. But he was long gone.

One of our ladies had a go on the back seat of the triplet in the campsite. She said it was horrible and didn't know how we did it.

She knows how I felt when I sat on it for the first time, having already sent off my entry, and that was before the 1:6 descent.

We left at around midday and did about 40 miles before we eventually found a Hotel which was open. We met Dave Lewis and co on the way purely by chance. All agreed with my plan of getting a few crafty miles done on our rest day. We had less than a hundred to go tomorrow. This turned out to be another easy day's ride.

In Le Havre, while waiting to board the ferry, we literally spent the last of our Euros in a restaurant. Then we made our way to the ferry. Drew remembered that he'd left something at the restaurant. Something trivial like our tickets. So we retraced, got

our tickets, re retraced and boarded the ferry.

Our cabin was claustrophobic and humid but we all had no trouble getting to sleep. But before we knew it we were docking in Portsmouth in the early morning. We sleepily made our way through the empty streets. We could have all done with a bit more sleep really. Byron was struggling a bit and ended up getting a lift from mum for the last hundred miles. I could see what he needed to do for the next few days. Eat then sleep, then eat, then sleep etc.

The last hundred miles was enjoyable. We relived the highlights of the last week. Drew reminded us every few miles that he was STUNNING, just in case we'd forgotten. We questioned who was in between Drew and me; because of all the photos we'd seen of us three you could never get to see Nigel. You'd get a glimpse of an elbow and his legs were often featured. This made us look like a pair of tandemists with six legs in some photos. But we never saw any with Nigel's' actual face. For most of the day we were giggling like kids and I was sorry that it had to end so soon. Drew showed Nigel a shortcut through a narrow passage which went up a steep hill. It was a giggle, and I don't know what the man in his garden thought as we pedalled past, spinning a low gear and laughing at ourselves. He had a funny look on his face though.

Back at Drew's house was the last treat. His daughter had prepared a great big dinner for all of us. She did a good job. I didn't really do it justice because I only managed about one plateful. I was pretty surprised.

But I soon had to make ready for the off again. I had to be at work tomorrow and it was getting on in the afternoon.

Drew offered to give me a lift for 50 miles or so to give me a head start. I wasn't interested. It was only about 200k for me to get home now. By my standards, I wasn't really tired. Ok, I was going to sleep well when I got home. But I wasn't having trouble staying awake now. 200k is nothing to me when I'm feeling fresh and have just finished a long ride a few days ago. To me, it's just like riding down the road. (Although, when I'm in a bad way, even 10 miles can be a small eternity)

So, after I'd got my pedals and saddle etc back, it was time for me to crawl back to under my stone.

It took me until just before Bath; about 30 miles; to be able to hold any sort of straight line. But I still had to think about it. Halfway, at Cirencester, I settled down again.

Nigel went home to his parents, Drew went home to his family and I went back to my empty flat. There's no celebration now. No one cheers anymore. I'm just the bloke down the road who's been out on his bike. I had my own little way of celebrating though.

Five days later, I set off in the early morning to Biggleswade on my Dave Yates. I rode the Icknield 12hr, then rode home afterwards. And, guess what; I finished that one too.

See you again in 4 years, maybe?

Letters

At a recent Club Committee meeting, the suggestion that huge wads of dosh had gone missing. The Editor has received the following:

Dear Sir

As a member of the North Bucks Road Club, I am most concerned about the reduction in club funds over the course of the last few years. Please can I receive a written explanation for this from the current committee. I think club subs should be doubled immediately and new fund-raising initiatives immediately instigated to redress this unacceptable situation. The fee for club events should be adjusted to £5 per rider. What do other members think about this?
A. Detailor.

Derek Taylor sent in two emails, which can be summarised as follows:

Can you ask the past and present members to let me have a list of all reasonable placings in all their open events over the past few years for T.T. Road Races Cyclo Cross and Track. We are hoping to publish the club history this year if possible so if they want their names in it can they please respond soon.

...Can you add this to my request for info regarding members past performances. All placings can be downloaded from British Cycling places in track and road races can be downloaded from their website by giving details and licence numbers to.
www.britishcycling.org.uk/web/site/bc/web/myhi story.asp

Many thanks. Derek.

Tony Farmborough forwarded this email he received from Tony Parks:

Hi Tony

How you doing getting the miles in ? I thought just let you know I wont be around for a while as a couple of weeks ago a tendon ruptured in the thumb on of my bad hand, the one which had a screw put in from big accident. Was in Stoke Mandaville hospital last Friday had operation Saturday and came home Sunday they moved Tendon from middle finger to thumb, have been back to hospital today (tuesday) to have drain tube moved from wound and some hand physio which was so

painfull as fingers and thumb are hardly moving.

They say it takes up takes 12 weeks to fully heal and have to be very carefull not to use hand so for time being Im staying with Sam and her Husband at Wyboston near black cat roundabout as I cant drive or do anything Im right handed and Its right hand damaged, oh you probly dont know Im not with Penny any more but thats another story tell you more when I see you.

So thats that for my season was feeling quite fit I might try going on turbo in 4 weeks when they take splint and bandages off my arm and put a velcro easy move thingy on my arm but I shall have to ride 1 arm or no arms !! I might try and get out to some eve events if I can get a lift out. Catch up with you sometime bye for now Tony.

I spoke to Tony P - sounds like the Hospital fairly mucked him about. It would be good to see him at club events, even if only spectating! Get well soon, Tony!

Since the Rhyll CC tragedy earlier this year, Dick Selley has the bit between his teeth regarding standing up for cyclists' rights - he's been faxing off letters to "Leighton Buzzard on Sunday" and the "Telegraph", responding to various anti-cyclist spoutings featured in opinion and letter columns. I don't know whether the letters were published or not.

His letter to the "Telegraph" read as follows:

Sir,

Thank you for your report (January 16) of the tribute ride for the 4 victims of the previous Sunday's fatal accident.

However your final paragraph referring to the police deciding whether or not to prosecute the driver and that he "was not at fault" begs the question "Is a driver who loses control of his vehicle, for whatever reason, at fault?" I suggest he is.

Richard Selley, North Bucks Road Club

I think we probably all agree with Dick on that one.

Race Reports

Warren Stokes recently rode his first road event as a Junior, and sent in this report...

Racing with the big lads....

Having the experience of few juvenile road races under my belt, I was looking forward to the Northampton Cycle Racing Association Handicap Road Race series. I was riding now on the open roads being a junior and I was quite nervous. I didn't really know what to expect only ever ridden with max of twenty juvenile riders, now being faced of riding with a full field of 60 riders consisting of 2nd, 3rd and 4th category riders, riding 4 laps of a fairly tough course, in total 30 miles of racing. While I was riding my Dad Ian Stokes would be marshalling in the cold so I had a bit of support with me.

When I got to the race I was among the unfamiliar faces of hardened road men. There were two other juniors riding and they were both 2nd category riders so I didn't really expect to keep up with them, Luke Marlow and Jason Crombie. Well anyway I signed on for my number and checked what handicap group, finding the new NBRC skin suit to be very comfy indeed compared to my old skin suit (in which I did some 25 mile time trials last year and had to walk awkwardly afterwards).

There were five different groups the 10 minute group 7 1/2, 5 which I was in 2 1/2 and the scratch group. As my group set off with significant pace I managed to slot in nicely behind the biggest man in the group. I was finding keeping in the group very tough due to the pace set by the front men. After completing the 1st lap I ended up with a few other people pulling off the back of my group going up the big hill on the course. I then took a breather at the top, not managing to keep up with the group which now had left us a fair bit behind. I formed a pair with another rider to try and pull ourselves back into the group. We never seem to be gaining much ground but not really losing ground either. Eventually the other rider gave up and was by myself onto the third lap. I didn't mind it as I was a time triallist used to setting my own pace. Two other guys who were working very efficiently together caught up with me I then clung on to the back of them. Heading up a short steep hill, I found myself being a time triallist, going past them up hill which I did instinctively by accident I then slotted behind them again and as one of let me know that "we should be working together not attacking at this stage". I felt fairly embarrassed but at the same time found it quite amusing. Anyway I was feeling very tired at this point and then not being able to cling on to those two on the fourth lap, the scratch group shot past me I tried to slot in but never really found a space I found myself heading further and further down the group after managing to stay with them for about

the whole of five minutes.

The race was nearing the end as I headed onto the fourth lap I decided to last person to actually bother to finish just over eleven minutes behind the winner. Overall it was a very exciting experience and I really enjoyed racing in it, hopefully doing better in the remaining three events of the series! I was quite disappointed with my result but it was good training and very good for my experience of road racing.

Port Talbot Wh 2-Up '25'

Robert went through to South Wales to ride his usual season starter on the "Cheaty" course - R25/3H with his regular 2-up team mate Gerry Oram (ex-NBRC, now Bynea CC)... On a ferociously cold morning including hail at the top of the hill and a strong headwind out to the turn, we were both up for a good work out. In previous years, we had finished with good placings. Unfortunately, Gerry had been doing some last minute tinkering with his bike the day before, and at about 10 minutes into the event, his cassette fell apart, leaving me to ride the rest of the event on my own. Still, I soldiered on to the end, finishing with a 57:53.

A5 Rangers '10'

A week after the extremely cold 2-up in Wales, Robert rode the A5 Rangers '10', with Tony Parks...

Possibly even colder than the Welsh event (it was windy, definitely several degrees below zero, and there were slight snow flurries, we were unfortunate enough to find ourselves battling through the rolling roads of the Silverstone Bypass. Not a particularly fast course at the best of times, this year we battled cold and wind to finish with 24:38 (Robert, 7th place) and 25:31 (Tony). The event was won by Michael Broadwith in 22:31. Tony's response was to fly to Majorca for some warm weather cycling!

Icknield RC 28k

Disaster struck Robert en route to this event... As usual, I set out to ride to this event, only to grind to a halt 1.5 miles from home with a 1cm gash in my front tub. Went home and drove to the event, only to discover my shoes were still at home. Ian, however, had better luck!

Astwood Club '10'

25/3/06

A warm, dry but very windy morning greeted the riders for the opening Club event round the Astwood circuit. Tony Farmborough reports...

Congratulations to Tim for winning this, the first of the NBRC visits to the Astwood course for 2006. I guess his

win should be of no surprise to us as Tim is/was a time trial champion of South Africa. There you are lads, didn't I tell you, NBRC club events are a bit like Piccadilly Circus, everybody shows up sooner or later! Jason Gurney (TeamMK) was only 11sec. off the pace which can't be a bad show of early season form. Simon was happy with his 3rd spot just getting away from our NBRC top man in 4th place, Rob Saunders.

In the mid field there was very mixed feelings as some of the competitors form showed through, (Chris Wood and Alan Lawson) and for others there were sighs of disappointment (Ian, James & Leigh) That's time trialling for you.

My vote of "Man of the Match" goes to Alan Lawson for a really fine effort. Commiserations to Darren Hayden, who went off course on his first ride on this course.

Results

1st Tim Carter (Private) 23.01
2nd Jason Gurney (Team MK) 23.12
3rd Simon Cannings (Team MK) 24.10
4th Robert Saunders (NBRC) 24.26
5th= Andy Sharman (45 Road Club) 25.04
= Ian Marshall (Team MK) 25.04
7th James Fox (Team MK) 25.14
8th Chris Wood (NBRC) 26.45
9th Gareth Richards (NBRC) 26.56
10th Leigh Smith (NBRC) 27.04
11th Geoff Smith (Team MK) 27.14
12th Gary Elliott (NBRC) 30.30
13th Alan Lawson (NBRC) 30.43
14th Lindz Barral (i-team.co.uk) 30.49
15th Chris Hartley (NBRC) 31.14
16th Eddie Page (NBRC) 33.42

Club '10' 1/4/06

Heavy showers didn't put off the 14 riders who turned out for the first event on the A5 of the 2006 series. We were blessed with bright sunny weather, though Tony's wellies turned out to be most appropriate for the swamp like verge he was standing on. Most times were dented by the strong and blustery wind. Tony Farmborough reports...

Congratulations to Tim for winning today's club event. Rob Saunders once again performed well to snatch second spot from the TeamMK leading rider, James Fox.

The strong head/cross wind out was to say the least, a challenge! But then, as always is the case, became an angel of speed on the way back. Most of you seemed to cross the line at 30mph plus! First time out this year, Phil Sinnett, Julian Hall and Brian Primett had a ride, as did a deflated Steve Holfeld. For the rest of the crew, well done for giving best and thanks for turning out to ride and support our club event.

As ever, thanks are due to Bryan Scarborough for pushing off and Derek Taylor and Nell for assisting.

Results

1st Tim Carter (Private) 21.49
2nd Rob Saunders (NBRC) 22.53
3rd James Fox (TeamMK) 23.07
4th Richard Wood (TeamMK) 24.10

5th Steve Holfeld (TeamMK) 24.41 (Punctured)
 6th Phil Sinnott (NBRC) 24.42
 7th Geoff Perry (TeamMK) 25.05
 8th Julian Hall (NBRC) 25.06
 9th Chris Wood (NBRC) 25.17
 10th Brian Primett (NBRC) 26.37
 11th Chris Hartley (NBRC) 27.42
 12th Gilbert Wheelwright (NBRC) 28.03
 13th Eddie Page (NBRC) 28.41
 14th Alan Lawson (NBRC) 28.55

Upcoming events

Road Racing

On 8th April, there is no club event. Our club is promoting a day of road racing at the MKbowl. Full details on the club website, under "Road Racing".

Offers of help, morning or afternoon, to Gordon Batcock, Tel No.01525 374035

Club Time Trials

On Saturday 15th April, it's back to Astwood for one lap of the F5v/10 course, starting at 09.00hrs.

The evening events start on Wednesday 19th April, on the F5a/10 course. This event is also first of our eight league counting events, so you can start amassing the points. Event HQ Harley Hall. First rider off at 19.00hrs.

Subsequent events, through to early June are:

Wed 26/04/06 19-00 F5u/10
(Stony Stratford)

Wed 03/05/06 19-00 F5v/10
(Astwood) - League rd # 2

Wed 10/05/06 19-00 F5a/10 (A5
(D)) - Interclub A5 Rangers

Wed 17/05/06 19-00 F5u/10
(Stony Stratford)

Wed 24/05/06 19-00 F5v/10
(Astwood) - League rd # 3

Wed 31/05/06 19-30 F5a/10 (A5
(D))

Wed 07/06/06 19-00 F5u/10
(Stony Stratford) - League rd # 4

Club clothing

Ian Stokes will be placing a final order with our current supplier around mid-April. If you are after a skinsuit, jersey, shorts or whatever, see the club website for items available and guide price.

Due to the high cost of these items, your order must be sent with full payment.

Delivery is anticipated 6 to 8 weeks after the order has been placed.

If you wish to place an order by e-mail initially, please do so via the website address.

Thanks,
Ian

For guidance, here are the 2005 prices. Pictures of some items are on the web site.

Item	Style	2005 Price
S/S SKINSUIT	N/A	£68.80
L/S SKINSUIT		£71.10
BIBSHORTS		£54.70
ARMWARMERS		£13.00
S/S ROAD JERSEY	NORM ZIP	£41.20
S/S ROAD JERSEY	FULL ZIP	£42.30
L/S ROAD JERSEY	FULL ZIP	£44.70
SLEEVELESS RAIN JKT (GILET)	FULL ZIP	£36.50
THERMAL TRAIN JKT	N/A	£55.90
TRACK MITTS	N/A	£12.40
RACE CAP		£5.30

What 's On

Club Nights - every Wednesday evening 7.30pm, Harley Hall.

I am reliably unformed that there will be a special meeting on 1st March, in which the intricacies of entering open Time Trials will be explained. I think we should also discuss Road Racing.

Club Runs - Our club runs depart from Harley Hall on Sundays. Meet in time for a 9am start. We have two runs. The slower run is more of a social run than the fats run, which is aimed at the road racers and others with an interest in racing. Most of the "social runs" involve a cafe stop for refuelling. Please remember this is a Club Run and is not meant to be a showcase for aggressive riding.

If you are wanting to go hard training or to show off, go on the faster run, organised by Gary Elliott, who has supplied this schedule of runs:

2nd April Chilterns 3hrs
9th April Harrold 3.5hrs
16th April Upper Stowe 3.5 hrs
23rd April Chilterns 3 hrs
30th April Claydons 2 hrs

N&DCA Series event & London North Millennium Series Round

Ian Stokes is promoting a round of the Northampton & District CA series this year, on Saturday 6 May, first rider off at 2.01 pm. Uniquely this is also a counting round of the London North Millennium series. As before, the course to be used is the F5/11, with the HQ being the East and Botolph Claydon village hall.

The usual request for marshals, pusher-offers, course markers etc goes to

all club members, or even non club members! In particular, we would like

one individual to manage the catering aspect in all respects, especially noting how hungry N & DCA riders usually are. It would be especially helpful if helpers can bring a mobile phone with them for use in the case of emergencies on the day - all call costs will be reimbursed.

Call Ian on 01234 240140 to offer your services.

FOR SALE

Lo Profile TT 56cm/22inch frame - Raleigh 653 hand built frame with Profile carbon forks re-sprayed in Sigma colours and with Cane Creek headset £100

Bars & Stems:

Bontrager black 0/S 11cm stem 1 1/8" - £10
Profile 11.5cm stem - £7
ITM black BigOne 11cm stem - £10
Alloy 11.5cm stem 1 1/8" - £7
Deda Magic black 11cm 0/S stem - £10



The North Bucks Road Club

meets each Wednesday evening at Harley Hall near the junction of V10 (Brickhill Street) and H9 (Grove way), close to the Open University campus in Milton Keynes.

email: nbrcwebsite-
membership@yahoo.co.uk
web:
www.northbucksroadclub.org.uk

The North Bucks Road Club was founded in 1952. We aim to foster all areas of cycling. We have regular club runs, and many members participate in club time trials (we hold a regular series of Wednesday evening events through the season), open time trials, and road racing. Members take part in audax events, reliability trials, mountain biking and tour by bicycle.

The Club is affiliated to British Cycling, Cycling Time Trials, and several local associations, including the Northampton and District CA, the Norlond Combine, the North Middlesex and Herts CA, Womens Cycle Racing Association and Sport MK.

