

The Crooked Wheel

The occasional newsletter of The Fenland Clarion Cycling Club

2008 : Issue 1 : January

Welcome

Welcome to this edition of the slightly revamped *Crooked Wheel*, the occasional newsletter of The Fenland Clarion Cycling Club. Some of you may not be familiar with the title as it has been a little bit too "occasional" for some time now. It is our intention to produce a newsletter on a more regular basis in the future, but this will rely on your input.

We'd encourage all members to contribute by sending pictures, stories, features or amusing anecdotes to *The Crooked Wheel* at the contact details below.

In future, we hope to circulate to as many members as possible by email. We'll send out a message with a link so you can download a new copy.

Don't worry if you don't have email. We'll send out hard copies to anyone who doesn't have an email address logged with us.

Happy reading
James I. Paul

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Beer and six and chips and deryn

By Paul Frost

Many of you will have seen Ian Clarke's email suggesting a group raid on Belgium for the Ghent 6, an annual pilgrimage for a number of our members. Shirl, James and I added our names to the list this year for our first venture into the world of 6 day racing and what a fantastic weekend we had!

11 of us made the trip and Steve, Lindsay and John Royle even rode in from Ostend. Ghent is a beautiful city with plenty of inexpensive hotels, great food, lots to see and do and a wonderfully laid back, friendly atmosphere. It's also only half an hour from Bruges where we spent a day on Saturday.



The Kuipke velodrome has an atmosphere that other sports would give their right arm for. The short track makes it a tight, intimate place, and the building's slightly worn out appearance adds to the charm. Then there's the smell – a mixture of hot dogs, onions, beer, sweat and deryn bike fumes. The fans turn out in their thousands to pack the

arena and spend a noisy, boozy night cheering on their favourite riders.



We had Bradley Wiggins and Mark Cavendish to cheer on against some of the best in the sport. Local hero Iljo Kisse and German Robert Bartko won the overall event from World Champs Bruno Risi and Franco Marvulli.



Kisse's parents own a bar two streets from the velodrome and the crowd went berserk every time he got out of the saddle to sprint ahead.

Although Brad and Cav eventually finished a disappointing tenth overall, both took individual events along the way. The highlight for me was the deryn racing.



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Brad won his race on Friday night and Cav took his on Saturday with some great showmanship along the way from both him and his derny pacer as each shouted and gestured to the other to go faster. No coincidence that it was the "King of the Derny Riders" Joop Zijlaard on his golden derny bike.



The real King of Belgium made an appearance on Friday night when the announcer informed us that Mr Eddy Merckx was in the building. All eyes went to the stand and watched as he waved and took his seat. Was it just me or did everyone seem to be standing for him?

A big thanks to Ian Clarke for organising the tickets and encouraging us to go. It was an unforgettable weekend and one that I would really recommend. Will we be back next year? You bet we will!

The King & I

By James Frost aged 12

Hello everyone, I am the lucky person that got to meet the best cyclist ever, Eddy Merckx. We were standing in the middle of the velodrome during the break when my dad said

"There's Eddy Merckx!" He walked up the tunnel and straight to the beer stand right next to us. I was so shocked I could barely move. Once I got a grip of myself I grabbed a pen and ran over to him.

I asked for an autograph on my Clarion sweatshirt and for a photo. He smiled, said OK and was really friendly. Here's the photo my Dad took.



The next day, I got Brad and Mark's autographs too on the same sweatshirt. So if you notice something smelly on the Heath next year, it's me in my unwashed sweatshirt.

I would recommend a trip to Ghent to anyone. It was one of the best weekends of my life.

Awards Dinner

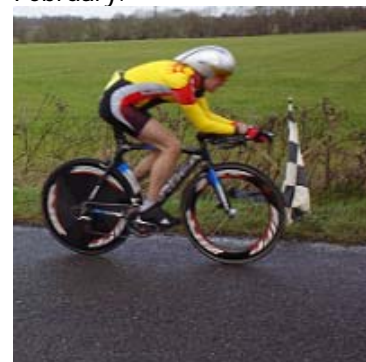
By James Warrener

Top British cycling professional Tony Gibb (front row third left) was on hand to present the Fenland Clarion Cycling Club prize winners with their awards at the clubs annual Dinner at The Milton Golf Club. Gibb, a member of the Plowman Craven/Evans Cycles team who has recently competed in the

Tour of Britain and is a top winter track rider, was on hand for an after dinner question and answer session to give Clarion members an insight into the world of pro cycling.



The prizes were dominated by Ian Waddilove, seen here winning the club place to place at Folksworth back in February.



Ian collected 7 wins during the season and was rightly club champion. His notable victories included the big three distances, 10, 25 and 50 miles. Paul Lilley was another to collect a large haul with runners up placings in the Place to Place and Helpston Classic amongst others. Simon Pitchford and Malcolm Jacklin both had productive seasons with great results.

The clubs current crop of youngsters led by Simon Jacklin and Jordan Wilson will look

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back on this season as a launch pad in their fledgling cycling careers.

AGM

The Club will hold its Annual General Meeting on Monday 28th January 2008 at The Eye Community Centre at 8.00pm prompt.

Nominations for Officers will be accepted in advance of the meeting, but please first obtain the willingness to stand from the nominee and the names of their proposer and seconder.

Nominations should be sent to Paul Frost, Assistant General Secretary at the address on the front page and must be received by Friday January 11th 2008.

The Frostbite 10



The traditional "Frostbite 10" will take place on New Year's Day at 11.00am over the regular Bluebell course. Why not blow away the cobwebs with the first event of the year? If you don't feel up to riding any help with marshalling would be very welcome. Don't forget, if you want to ride you'll need to have renewed your membership beforehand!

Easter Meet.

By Paul Frost

The first National Clarion Easter Meet took place at Ashbourne in 1895. The event gives members the opportunity to socialise with fellow members from the many other Clarion Sections around the country.

For the last few years, the event has been organised by Jayne and Ian Clarke on behalf of the National Clarion and has visited Scarborough, Hereford and Ironbridge as well as returning to Asbourne some 110 years after the first visit.



The National Committee has encouraged local sections to take on the running of future events and, as the largest Section, we will kick things off in 2008 in Stamford.

From Friday March 21st to Monday March 24th, our club will host the 2008 National Clarion CC Easter Meet at The Lady Anne's Hotel in Stamford. The event will start with The Mayor's Reception on Friday evening and racing starts on Saturday with an 11.2 mile Time Trial at Essendine.

On Saturday evening there will be a dance and buffet at the hotel.

Sunday is sportive day with distances of 31 miles, 62 or 100 miles. If you have never tried a sportive why not give it a go?

Sunday afternoon retire to a local pub to watch an early season classic from Belgium. Sunday evening is the Annual Dinner and Prize Presentation.



Traditionally, a commemorative beer is produced and a very collectible commemorative ribbon issued to each member attending. In 2005 the beer featured the excellent label pictured above. Our beer has already been arranged with Ufford Ales, so anyone hoping to be put forward at the AGM as Beer Tasting Secretary will unfortunately be disappointed.

The Lady Anne's are offering rooms at a discounted rate of £240 for three nights for a double room with breakfast.

Winter Training

If you are struggling to get motivated for winter training, why not give spinning classes or circuit training a try? At just £3.00, Club sessions are held at

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Stanground Leisure Centre.
Circuit Training on Tuesdays
8:30 to 9:30, Spinning on
Thursdays 7:30 to 8:30.
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Group Rides

Do you have a regular ride that other members could join up with? If so, please send in details of where you meet, what time, how far you go and at what pace. We'll publish any group ride details in the next issue. Contact details on the front page.
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2008 Calendar

A full programme of events will appear in a future edition and on the Club's website. Until then, here are some provisional dates taken from the CTT website: (please check to verify that these dates are confirmed before making any commitments).

Our own Open events:

Open 10 – 17th May
Open 25 – 7th September

N&DCA Series:

Rnd 1 – 10mils – 29th March
Rnd 2 – 20mils – 19th April
Rnd 3 – 10mils – 10th May
Rnd 4 – 21mils – 31st May
Rnd 5 – 10mils – 14th June
Rnd 6 – 22mils – 29th June
Rnd 7 – 15mils – 19th July
Rnd 8 – 31mils – 2nd August
Rnd 9 – 11mils – 16th August
Rnd 10 – 25mils – 13th Sept

Some popular local opens:

Bourne Hard Riders – 9th Mar
St Ives 10 – 26th Apr

Kings Lynn 10 – 3rd May
Wisbech 25 – 11th May
P'boro 25 – 24th May
Rockingham 10 – 12th Jul
Sleaford 25 – 13th Jul
Kings Lynn 25 – 16th Aug
P'boro 10 – 30th Aug
Rockingham 25 – 6th Sept
Kettering 10 – 6th Sept
Icknield Charity 10 – 14th Sept
Rockingham 10 – 20th Sept
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Around the 'net

By James Warrener

Being a highly technological sport, us cyclists are in the main very au fait with the ways of the Internet. But unless you spend a little bit of time surfing you cannot imagine how many sites relating to our sport there are. To help save you all a bit of time, I have had a quick look round and summarised some of the better ones you should be pointing your mouse at.

www.fenlandclarion.co.uk

is always worth having as your first point of call for club news and results.

If you want to look a little further a field but keep a local viewpoint I would recommend **www.veloriders.co.uk**. A natty little website with an active forum and regularly updated news. In fact they were one of the first media outlets to start taking our new look press releases this time last year so many thanks to them!

www.roadcyclinguk.com

is a great looking site with a brilliant gallery feature, which lets you upload pictures of your

bike and let others vote for it. If you search well enough you will find mine (but please make sure you give it 5 stars won't you?!).

For more information on the top level of the pro scene I cannot speak highly enough of **www.cyclingnews.com**. It is certainly very comprehensive and wordy so make sure you have a cup of tea handy as you will need to invest some time in this one.

If you are in more of a hurry, **www.bikeradar.com** is probably more for you. From the publishers of Pro Cycling and Cycling Plus, it has all the news, blogs and forums you would ever need along with product reviews and ride details.

All of these are ace, but my personal favourite is the British Cycling backed **www.everydaycycling.com**. There are more complex sites out there for recording your mileage and performance, but this one is quick and easy and tells me the basics about my cycling this year.
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That's all folks.

Well we hope you've enjoyed this edition. If you have any comments, suggestions or if there's anything you don't like then please let us know. And please remember, this is *YOUR* newsletter. It will not survive without contributions and ideas from you.