



SEPTEMBER 2012

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As I write this Laura Trott and Sir Chris Hoy have just won Gold and Victoria Pendleton Silver. Cycling's great isn't it? A phenomenal Olympics for us cyclists and a huge increase in numbers participating in our sport. Will it be sustained for years to come? I don't know, we're still a minority sport and judging by the animosity of two car drivers telling me that "you cyclists don't own the road you know" in the last week, I doubt we'll be mainstream any time soon. Just about to choose a new bike on the Bike to Work scheme, excited? You betcha! Olympics have gone, Paralympics are in progress, Tour of Britain in Ipswich on Sunday, Euro Cyclocross in Ipswich in November... Bring.. It... On... What a year!

Gran Fondo Giordana 2012

Formerly the Gran Fondo Marco Pantani, the Giordana aims to celebrate some of the key climbs that Pantani used to destroy his rivals in the Giro, namely the Gavia, Mortirolo, Santa Cristina and Aprica passes in the eastern Italian Alps.

At half 7 in the morning with the Sun low over the start line 3000 riders, including 2400 Italians but only 30 Brits, set off all at once from the summit of the Aprica pass for a manic 17km descent

- the Italians really know how to do these things properly! Despite the odd car defying the closed road and diversions around tunnel repairs lots of shouting and sudden braking seemed to get everyone down just about in one piece before the long climb up the Gavia to 2630m began.



recognised Badger and El Presidente forcing their way through in one car, but no, can't have been (since found out they *were* driving it on the same day!) The early morning sunshine disappeared as we neared the summit and I resigned to myself that the spectacular panoramic view the organisers

had promised would be lost in the clouds. With 500m to go I could just make out through the fog the inflatable banner marking the summit but as I continued to the line was amazed to see the clouds just blow away and show off the Gavia and it's still frozen over

lake in all it's glory.

Once over the top, the road at last seemed to be properly closed so we were able to make full use of the road width on the descent. It turns out this was needed as the turns are sharp and with a steep drop-off on one side. Unfortunately several guys had overcooked it and gone over the edge as we could see police & ambulance crews climbing down over road-edge barriers with stretcher-boards at more than one location but at least we made it OK.

Eventually the road straightened and widened enough for a 50mph run in to Bormio before a 20 mile spin down the valley to the foot of the Mortirolo. This should've been the time to eat & drink as much possible ready for the next challenge but instead there was too much fun to be had getting into a train of 100



Once the road begins to climb out of the valley it soon narrows to a single lane which was fine as the riders were starting to string out a

bit, except that more cars seemed to think it was OK to ignore the closed roads and try and force a way through the riders. Even though we

112 miles and 11 punctures!

Sunday 5th August started with about 20 riders congregating in the Crown car park to enjoy a sociable ride in the summer sun. John Adams had planned an interesting but slightly complicated 100 mile route. We headed west towards Lavenham, before turning right and heading round the top of Bury St Edmunds. Group size presented a challenge when transferring directions from John to the front. At one point I thought I'd be helpful and pass forward the command 'turn left' only to hear one of our more vocal club members shout 'what the f**k did you turn left for?' Apparently the command had been 'keep left', not 'turn left'. I'll keep quiet in future.

At about 40 miles, with the summer sun still shining, Rennie and Stu announced they had other commitments, so turned round to head for home. We all took the p*** at the time but I think they must have seen some cows lying down (or is it standing up? I never know which they're supposed to do). West Stow Anglo Saxon village provided a café stop between Bury and Mildenhall. It was lovely sitting in the sun with a cup of tea and slice of carrot cake. It looked like summer had finally arrived. Little did we know. Jason had encountered a puncture just before the café. It was not to be the last! Soon after lunch there were another one or two. Not much further down the road Justin got one. I stood on the verge with him (near a recently trimmed hedge) as he mended it. Within 50m of moving off I had a puncture too – look where you're

standing next time Mark!

There seemed to be a black cloud forming to our left, so we accelerated to get ahead if it. Didn't get far because someone had a puncture. And it rained. It rained hard, thunder echoed around, and lightning struck. We mended a puncture and got VERY WET. Off we went but, yes you guessed it, I got another puncture. As I mended it, Mossy noticed he had one too (I think he was just feeling left out because he was one of the few who hadn't had one so far. We tried to forget the rain by racing to change tubes. I can't remember who won, which probably means it wasn't me. (It was me, no tyre levers required! —Ed)

Soon after this, Duncan got his second puncture of the day. Spare tubes were now at a premium. I still owe one to a chap I don't know from Ipswich club (I think). Fortunately, we all got home before the tubes were fully used. Two punctures each for Jason, Duncan and I, plus five other riders with one each.

I usually enjoy the annual 100 mile club ride. This year's event was certainly the most memorable, if not the most enjoyable. Yogi, Mark Ormond.

(8 hours to do a 5 1/2 hour ride! I'd told my wife I'd be home around 2:30pm! We did finally split up somewhere around Shimpling and I had a cracking ride back with Justin Fisk and Ben Caisey; we averaged around 22mph for the last 15 miles—Ed)

Upcoming Events

Road

9th Sep—Victoria RR
16th Sep—Shaftesbury CC RR
30th Sep—Last Chance Points Grabber
7th Oct—Maldon CC Road Races

MTB

6/7th Oct—Dusk Til Dawn
4th Nov—Thetford WS1
2nd Dec—Thetford WS2

Time Trial

8th Sep—Norwich ABC 10
16th Sep—CC Breckland 50
22nd Sep—EACC 10
23rd Sep—CC Breckland 25
6th Oct—Norwich ABC 10
7th Oct—Norwich ABC 25
4th Nov—CC Sudbury Hill Climb

Gran Fondo Giordana 2012

riders and charging along despite a strong headwind. The roads on this section of the ride weren't closed but police were at every junction stopping the traffic and allowing us to jump red lights and use both sides of roundabouts at speeds of up to 40mph... can't see that happening on the Dragon Ride! Not even a 1 mile section of dirt-road to avoid a land slip on the main road slowed us down - the dust blown up by the peloton into the face and lungs just added to the overall spectacle of the event.

All too soon, the base of the Mortirolo arrived, along with the realisation that I probably should've tried to get more food down. The Mortirolo is 12km, with an average gradient of 10.8% and 32 hairpins. The organisers kindly placed km markers on the climb indicating the average gradient for the next km. Great, but not when one sign after another reports 18%! After a seemingly never ending climb I allowed myself time to stop for a photo-opp at the Pantani memorial about 2/3rds the way up. Even standing there for a few seconds you got a feel for the respect held by the Italians as each rider who passed the memorial muttered "Ciao Pantani" as they gasped for breath.



Finally at the top the route follows a ridge for several miles and the view opens out. It is only at this point that you get to appreciate the scale of the Mortirolo climb in that you can see straight down to the base of the valley from where you started climbing, now a full 1 mile directly below you. Eventually the road crosses the ridge to the other side of the range and begins another superb winding descent down to the original starting point on top of the Aprica pass. At this point you can finish the event, or you can continue for the final loop, which includes a short 6km climb over the Santa Cristina.

Buoyed by getting over the Mortirolo and buzzing from the descent there was no way I was not going to do the Cristina, and at first hitting the foot of the slope felt good. The first couple of k's went quickly despite an average gradient of 14% which almost felt easy after the previous climb. I was

convinced the climb would ease up in a bit but 2km later the gradient hadn't and all my energy reserves had completely vanished. Even if you initially think you have conquered the Mortirolo, it then comes back to bite you on the next climb - I had only one more mile of climbing left yet I could barely turn the pedals or gulp in enough air to keep going and there was still no break in the gradient. Even suffered the indignation of an ambulance driving beside me as if they were waiting for me to fall off. But finally, after an eternity, the summit appeared and then began the final 5km flourish back down to the Aprica pass - even managing to summon up a bit of sprint for the final drag up to the finish line. Phil finishing the 174km in 322nd place and Graham in a superb 186th and 1st Brit! A fantastic event, love to do it again but really not sure about the Mortirolo...

PS: First day in the Alps and two days before the Gran Fondo we decided that we needed to do a gentle climb to help acclimatise - a double ascent of the Stelvio it is then! On the way up the 2nd time, from the eastern side,

it wasn't long before we were caught by a rider with a team car. He flew past us and then more riders, each with their own support car, came up and past - we soon realised we were caught up in the Race Across The Alps! These riders were on their first climb of the event which covers 532km and 14,000m of climbing - non stop. I could see Graham was itching to take on some of

the riders and the final straw nearly came when a Swiss female rider past us, but we decided we would let her go when we noticed the chainring tattoo on her arm and the words "Race Across America Finisher" emblazoned across the back of her support car. Of course we needed to take it easy, we didn't want to overdo it before the Giordana ;-). This was mid-afternoon - by 10pm we were sat outside a bar in Aprica having a few recovery, er, beers watching the competitors come past after they had taken on the Gavia, Aprica, Mortirolo and Aprica again. As they descended into the dark they headed off towards Switzerland for St Moritz & Davos before coming back to Italy for a final climb over the Stelvio and then off to the finish in Austria. Apparently the winner completed the distance in just over 21 hours to collect his 3000 euro prize. Maybe next year we could enter a Stow team?

Graham Bacon & Phil Davis

Axat and the Pyrenees

My lovely wife Becky has recently had a career change which has involved her going back to Uni. So to celebrate the end of her first year we decided to drive through France incorporating a few days stop at a friend's riverside cottage in the small Pyrenees village of Axat, about 40 mins outside of Carcassonne. The weather forecast for the week was sun, so Becky could relax worshipping the sun and reading all day and I could head off out on the bike into the nearby hills.

The plan was to take my bike with us but as space in the car was a premium I looked about for a local bike hire company. It was then that our friend who owned the property we were going to stay in informed me of a couple who had recently moved to Axat. They had purchased an old run down hotel in the village and totally refurbished it and were now offering accommodation and cycling packages to Brits. After a few e-mails back and forth I was told a bike would be ready for collection when we arrived.

We've stayed in the cottage a few times now, but not since I'd rediscovered my love for cycling, so I was chomping at the bit to collect my bike when we arrived and head off out into the beautiful scenery. I was offered a choice of a full race carbon machine or a bike more geared to the local mountains. I went for the hill climber which was brand new and a perfectly comfortable ride. Graham the owner of the business made sure I was fully kitted out providing all the normal bike parts/spares along with a selection of maps and routes of the local area.

On the first afternoon I told Becky I'd only be going down to the next town for a quick spin, 1 hour tops, so I left Becky sipping on a glass of Rose engrossed in a Zombie novel and headed out of the village. Instead of heading for the town I decided to head up the mountain I'd driven so many times before to the small ski resort of Andorra at the top. It's not the steepest of climbs in the area but it does go on for miles and miles along side the river though picturesque little villages and ghost hotels used by rich Parisians in the 1800's to 'take in the waters' (now long been abandoned). The sun had disappeared behind the mountain and it was starting to get a bit chilly, it was then that I realised the time had flown and I had been out for hours! I looked at my phone and thought I really should head back down as my hour ride had turned in about 5! As the

road started to fall away and corner after corner came and went it hit home just how far I gone. Needless to say Becky was worried to death at my whereabouts when I returned but soon relaxed once the next bottle of wine was flowing.

The next day we headed to the beautiful medieval walled city of Carcassonne. The city is amazing and so worth a visit with its little shops and restaurants sharing the tight cobbled pathways through the ramparts.

The following day I woke up with a sore head brought on by the late night drinking the night before so decided to try the shortest route from the maps provided by Graham. So I headed out down towards Limoux taking the first left at Quillan on a hilly 40 miler taking in some of climbs on this year's Tour De France. What a great day. One of the reasons I love cycling is when you're on a bike nothing else matters, all that counts is right there at that moment. You get a real sense of being alive, feeling your heart beat and taking in the stunning views.

For the last day a beautifully hot day I decided to take on the big one. A route which took me along the Aude river up to the Col Du Pradel pass which promised spectacular views of the Pyrenees and across into Spain. I set out a steady pace and soon joined a group of French riders. Apart from bonjour, we didn't understand a word we were saying to each other, but they seemed happy for me to tag along for a while. After a few miles the group branched off and I continued up the mountain ticking off the kilometres and taking in the views. The sun was hitting the side of the mountain I was climbing hard. With 11k of climbing to go my water bottle was empty. With 6k to go I was suffering. With 3k to go I was in a world of pain. My legs were burning and mouth so dry I was almost

considering drinking from the stream. As I hit the 1k to go I'd slowed to a snails pace and was drying. It was as I turned the last corner and came to the top the view I was treated to was just awe-inspiring and wiped away the pain suffered from the climb. I was also lucky enough to meet a cow herder and his wife who topped my water bottle up for the descent home, real life savers!

If you haven't experienced riding in France I can't recommend it enough. As well as glass smooth roads cycling is the national sport, so you're given priority on the roads by other vehicles.



If you fancy a trip to Axat and the Pyrenees, Graham and Sandra can deal with any size parties, collection from local airports and offer a wide range of packages including a rider/non rider package offering rides round the local area for the riders and shopping/site-seeing for the non riders. Their contact details are as follows:

Echappee Chambre d'hotes

Tel: 0033 (0)468 740483

Website: www.axatbandb.com

Website: www.hireandhigher.eu/

E-mail: axatbandb@gmail.com

Race for Jase

We have a charity bike ride coming up, it's for a friend of a friend, it's a worthwhile cause. He's a guy from Felixstowe and a young father of two who has unfortunately been moved into St Elizabeths Hospice for his final days due to a brain tumour.

I have been asked to pass this around so we can get as many people involved as possible, there are three routes, a 50 mile road ride, a 20 mile road ride and 30 mile MTB ride so all can join in, there is also a hog roast in the afternoon. It's on September 15th so if anyone is free and would like to join in please feel free to.

<http://www.raceforjase.co.uk>



We actually have two Facebook pages. One which is open for public access and is linked from the website and a group called [SDCC Mates](#) which you have to be added to. If you're on Facebook let me know and I'll add you, we could get quite a community of Stowmartians!

TT Round Up

SPOCO East

Chris and Andy Leggett are tied on 811 points with Chris leading the Vets competition and 2nd overall and Andy sitting 2nd in the seniors and 3rd overall. Peter Beard is 5th in the vets and Paul Moss sitting 7th. Emma Beard is 2nd lady and John Adams 3rd in the super vets.

ICA Evening Time Trials has now finished for the season with 1 result still to be published. Dave Clark is sitting 2nd in the seniors, Chris Leggett is top of the vets, Kev Norman 3rd and Paul Moss 5th. Miriam Edwards is 3rd lady and Emma Beard 4th. Rob Ormond is top of the juniors. The time trials have been well attended as usual even though the weather has been mostly rubbish.

SPOCO South East is the competition for the Essex and North London area. Chris Leggett is 6th overall and leading vet.

Stowmarket District Cycling Club

Presents:

The 2012 Annual Awards Evening



Date: Saturday November 10th 2012

Venue: Fynn Valley Golf Club, Westerfield

Tickets: £22 per person

(Tickets include 3 course dinner and disco)

Contact: Joe on 07740 878833 or

joealexander@btinternet.com for tickets

Tickets sold out last year so book early to avoid disappointment

Mid Suffolk Road Race

The weather was perfect on the day, 54 riders started, with riders coming from all over East Anglia & London and even coming down from Nottingham. 3 attempts of break-away's got up to 30 seconds gaps but all got pulled back. There were no incidents or accidents and after 48 miles, James Fairbank was a clear winner, with David Page & Dale Johnson sprinting it out for 2nd & 3rd place. I think that's the best placing for a Stow rider in our own race so well done David and hopefully 2nd Cat license soon.



El Presidente Alan Rouse being wined and dined with the Swiss team and enjoying the finish at the Olympic Road Race



Paul Wright at the Olympic Road Race but where or what is he doing with his right hand?



And so it begins, Cyclocross 2012/13

Cyclocross is nearly here. First race is the Essex Roads Cross on the 8th September near Basildon. Myself and Rob Smith are already signed up to the league, one more rider and we have a team!

As I've said before, cross is the easiest, hardest, friendliest, most exciting form of cycle sport to get into to. You can use any old bike as long as it's got clearance for mud but generally this means a MTB or a cross bike. Races last an hour for juniors, seniors and "Elite" vets and 40 minutes for

ladies and veterans. Children can race pretty much as soon as they can ride.

The European Cyclo Cross championships will be coming to Chantry Park, Ipswich on the 3rd November. Come and see the best cyclo cross riders in the world.

Sat 8 Sep 2012	1	<u>Essex Roads Cross</u>	B	Essex Roads CC
Sun 16 Sep 2012	2	<u>Springfield Cross</u>	B	Chelmsford Youth CC
Sat 22 Sep 2012	3	<u>Hoggenberg Cross</u>	B	Lee Valley Youth CC
Sat 29 Sep 2012	4	<u>CC Ashwell Cross</u>	B	CC Ashwell
Sun 30 Sep 2012		<u>3 Peaks Challenge</u>		
Sat 6 Oct 2012	5	<u>Welwyn Cross</u>	B	Welwyn Wheelers CC
Sun 14 Oct 2012	6	<u>Amis Velo Hillyfields Supacross</u>	B	Amis Velo RT - Solo Scaffolding
Sun 14 Oct 2012		<u>National Trophy Round 1 - Abergavenny</u>		
Sun 21 Oct 2012	7	<u>Davy Down Cross</u>	B	Ford CC
Sun 28 Oct 2012	8	<u>Colchester Rovers Mistley Cross</u>	B	Colchester Rovers CC

Tour Of Britain comes to Ipswich as the

Grand Depart leaves the Ipswich Waterfront on the 9th Sept. Looks like being a fabulous weekend of cycling. Don't miss it.

Event - Tour of Britain Pre Event Roadshow

Day - Friday 7th Sept

Time - 11am – 7pm

Location - University Campus Suffolk Plaza, Neptune

Event - Tour of Britain build up and start

Day - Sunday 9th Sept

Time - 8am-10am

Location - Neptune and Orwell Quay

Opportunity - Soak up the atmosphere, spot the riders, get some autographs and watch the preparations.

Notes - Visitors please avoid driving to the area. A bicycle park will be located at the University to aid your spectating experience.

Event - Tour of Britain lead out

Day - Sunday 9th Sept

Time - 9.50am - 10am

Location - Neptune and Orwell Quay

Opportunity - Local clubs can gather their members and ride the start section ahead of the Tour.

Notes - Expressions of interest are sought from clubs where members can attend and represent in their club kit/colours.

Event - Tour of Britain

Day - Sunday 9th Sept

Time - 10am – 10.15am

Location - Along the route

Opportunity - Watch and cheer on the pro's as they start the 2012 Tour of Britain

Notes - Route details available from www.tourofbritain.com

The start at the Ipswich Waterfront is expected to be extremely busy with Christchurch Park providing another fantastic bike friendly focal point in Ipswich.

Event - Sky Ride 2012

Day - Sunday 9th Sept

Time - 11am – 3.00pm

Location - Central Ipswich

Opportunity - Promotional and attendance opportunity.

Notes - Expressions of interest are sought from clubs and organisations wish to host a stand during the event.

Clubs offering activities for u16's in particular are encouraged to be involved with have a go opportunities supported by British Cycling. An activity area will be provided along with some equipment enabling clubs to attend and concentrate on promoting their activities.

Please consider splitting the day into shifts allowing members to enjoy the day and share time on the stand.

Also consider organising a rendezvous for your club and riding the Sky Ride route together.

Further event details available from <http://www.goskyride.com/IpswichSkyRide>

Sky Ride Locals are already underway in and around Ipswich. Look out for the new Ride Strong+ and Off Road rides great opportunities for new members and their families. <http://www.goskyride.com/Ipswich>

Secs Report

Since the last newsletter in June we have had quite a few new members.

July..... James Cole, Leon Townes, Andy Herriott, Gareth Turner and David Crisp (2nd claim)

August..... Jason Battle, Paul Smith, Kieren Hynard (junior) and John Parkes (2nd claim)

This brings the total number of SDCC members to 112. This does include 6 honorary and 7 2nd claim members but the rest are hopefully all active cyclists, some time-trialists, road racers, triathletes or most just enjoying their cycling in this country and sometimes abroad. We also have now 8 lady riders in the club, when in the past only 1 or 2, and also some young members, if anybody can spare an hour here and there it would be quite nice if we had a list to draw off to help out these teenagers starting out in their cycling!!

Not more injuries!

Andy Leggett is recovering from a broken collar bone after coming off his bike on a training ride (went a bit too hard around a RAB that he suspects must have been a bit greasy!).

"Just to wave the flag of importance of wearing a helmet, this RAB was well known to me which is situated about 1 mile from my home, quarter of a mile from my parents home where I also grew up and about half a mile from work, so as you can see, I certainly knew the RAB and it goes to show you can have an accident almost anywhere. I believe the Police have statistics saying most accidents occur close to home and this is put down to being in familiar surroundings and the driver slipping into an "auto pilot" mode.
BE SAFE, WEAR A HELMET!

I'm hoping to be able to do a couple of late season TT so I have been on the turbo a few times now to keep the legs spinning.

Andy"

B Natural—Bildeston

I'm one of the organisers of B Natural, the new music festival in Bildeston which is now in its second year. Last year, we had around 1,600 to our weekend-long event – much of which is free, in the main square, under the Clock Tower. This year, we're organising a Musical Brunch on Sunday 9th September from 10.30am onwards, and thought it might make a good destination for local cycle clubs: there'll be lots of music, plus breakfast served by the Bildeston Crown in the Square, with croissants, and homemade jam, bacon sarnies, and a special VW coffee van called Campercino. Anyway, we'd love to see you, and as I say, it's free (up until the first mouthful!).

Just a thought...

All the best, Jocelyn

PS Here's a link...

<http://bnatural.bildeston.org/>

Jocelyn Targett
Black Type Ltd
Bildeston Hall
Duke Street
Bildeston
Suffolk IP7 7EW

Get well soon Andy and hope to see you smashing it in the last few TT's of the year.

Rumour has it that Laura Sampson is on the mend. Hope to see you out soon Laura!

To anyone else out there with injuries or illness, get well soon, summer's coming!



I would imagine using this image is breaching copyright but I guess they won't mind if I'm asking you all to consider giving some blood. I've only just started giving blood, I've done 5 now. I could

have been giving blood for an extra 15 years, why didn't I? Scared, simple as that. Scared of dying (doesn't happen, trust me), scared of what might happen afterwards (nothing; honestly), scared of affecting performance (football, badminton, cycling), probably a little scared of the needle and lastly, simply procrastination, couldn't be bothered, couldn't find the time.

Just do it, you know it makes sense. You won't die and nothing will happen afterwards. It possibly affects time trial performance for a couple of weeks so don't do it in a peak period but otherwise surely 2 weeks sub optimal performance is worth it? Needles? It's a scratch, come on! We all procrastinate about some things, don't do it for this.

I know it's not for some people and I'm not going to persuade you all but please, it's a good feeling to know you've done it.

There, that's my evangelist bit done :-)