

Cycling answers

Your technical, legal and health questions answered by CTC's experts

THE EXPERTS



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STEMS OBSOLESCENT QUILLS

Q It serves no useful purpose for Chris Juden to refer to bicycles fitted with a quill stem as cheap and heavy bicycles, which is absolute nonsense.

Mr JA Watson, Stanmore, Middx

A I agree, that would be nonsense and serves no useful purpose. What I actually wrote is that quill stems are made only for cheap and heavy bikes. That is true and serves several useful purposes.

It tips off you, me and many more CTC members who own fine lightweight bicycles equipped with quill stems: that if we want a different extension – and a nice one – we'd better get it right away! For whilst the likes of Cinelli and 3TTT no longer have anything with a quill in their catalogue, there's still a chance of old new stock or good-as-new second-hand.

It warns us not to specify a threaded fork when ordering a new frame, since then we'd have to scratch around for a corresponding quality of stem – or make do with something cheap and heavy.

And it updates those experienced cyclists to whom novices turn for advice. (It's generally better if such advice corresponds with what can be found in the shops, rather than what you have in your shed!)

Chris Juden

NAVIGATION GPS (GENERALLY PERPLEXING SOFTWARE!)

Q Would you be able to advise me as to which software I should buy for my GPS. I have a Garmin eTrex Vista Cx. I have in the past bought the City Navigator NT (at some expense) and can a plan a route but cannot get it onto the machine. I emailed Garmin so many times with no result that I gave up over a year ago, but now I really do want to do some touring and it seems ridiculous to have the instrument and not use it.

I am prepared to pay more money for idiot-proof software that I can use without totally losing my rag in frustration. Have you any information on such a product, that is produced in England (not the US) and with a good telephone helpline.

E Rose Crane, Wickham, Hants

A It's hard to escape the fact that GPS is a very complex technology – unless you're a motorist or the sort of cyclist who's content to ride the sort of road routes delivered by a motoring sat-

nav system like Tom-Tom. Anyone who wishes to navigate away from roads, or needs more control over which roads they use, will have to work from maps and deal with a certain amount of complexity.

It sounds to me like your Garmin mapping/navigating software has not been registered for use with your GPS unit. Once registered, that software becomes tied to that particular GPS unit and will not talk to any other, which is why I think you have a registration problem. You need a local GPS-savvy computer whizz to help you sort out this issue.

The most annoying aspect of this technology is the way providers of software (i.e. maps etc.) and hardware (i.e. GPS units) tie things up with secret codes to guard against illicit copying and to make you buy both from them. Even public agencies such as our Ordnance Survey tie up 'their' data (that we paid to collect) like this, so you have to shell out all over again for a whole new set of maps, should you get a different piece of hardware! Anyway, you've got a

Garmin eTrex, like the Edge reviewed in this issue, for which there's nothing OS and only thing that works is Garmin's own mapping. So you have no alternative but to get to grips with their far from idiot-proof procedures for making one talk to the other, via your PC.

When I got my Garmin eTrex Legend HCx I also bought their City Navigator Europe,



Right: Dave Barber



■ HEALTH
NUMB FEET

Q After cycling for only a few hours in fairly mild weather I have been suffering from extremely cold feet and occasionally numbness. The bike is comfortable, I spin with light pressure on the pedals, the shoes are a good fit with room for fairly thick socks and none of my clothing is tight. As you can see from the enclosed photograph, taken approximately 20 minutes after returning from a very pleasant ride, my feet have several white spots on the toes and heels. Could you please advise on the cause of the discomfort and potential remedies?

Susan Ward, Desborough, Kettering

A Cold or numb feet are not uncommon to cyclists and are often caused by cold weather, insufficient foot insulation, poorly-fitting footwear or incorrect cycling position. Occasionally, however, they may be due to an underlying medical condition – for instance, one related to the nerves (pressure on, or damage to, a nerve) or circulation (such as a narrowing of the arteries). Sometimes medication (e.g. beta-blockers) can cause cold peripheries as a side-effect.

It's always worth trying some simple adjustments. Ensure shoes are not too tight and socks are adequate. Check saddle height, pedal clips and cycling position are correct. It sounds like you have already considered many of these, so I would advise you to see your GP. They can enquire about other symptoms (such as pins and needles or pain) and will examine the feet, including the nerves and blood vessels.

The skin problem you mention may not be directly related to your cold numb feet, but would also be worth mentioning to your doctor. If you don't have the white spots when you attend, take the photo with you. One possible cause is pitted keratolysis, although I cannot be sure from your photo. This causes white, punched-out pits on the soles of the feet, particularly when sweaty after being in enclosed footwear for long periods. It is caused by a bacterium and is worse when the feet are wet. Topical or oral antibiotics are used but it will quickly recur unless the feet are kept dry. Wear enclosed shoes for as short a period as possible and wash feet with soap or antiseptic solution at least daily. Ensure shoes dry thoroughly between wearing and consider waterproof, breathable inner socks.

Dr Matt Brooks

so I could use it overseas, plus Topo GB, so as to have more detailed mapping whilst at home: with contours, off-road tracks and paths. In practice Topo-GB is whimsically random: depicting paths that invite my trespasses in local woods but omitting many obvious and legal tracks – even parts of National Trails! It's not entirely random: missing sections tend to be drives to isolated properties. I suspect that the whole Garmin Topo GB enterprise has been done from aerial photos as the data is very circumspect around landowners but includes non-bridleway paths in

less inhabited areas.

The other thing you can do is get one of the OS maps for PC reviewed in last Cycle, plan routes by mouse-clicking over them, save as .gpx files and upload those routes to your GPS unit. That won't put a useful map on the screen of your GPS, but it will depict a wiggly line that you'll be able to see whether you're straying from or not.

If you want an actual OS map on that screen, you need to buy a whole new different GPS unit, e.g. the Satmap Active 10 reviewed this issue – and the maps to go with it.

Chris Juden

Opposite page: GPS devices will communicate with your PC but it can be tricky to set up

Above this page: Cold or numb feet when cycling can have many different causes

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LEGAL SLIP ROAD SAFETY

Q I have been reading the first edition of *Cyclecraft* by John Franklin and was wondering where I would stand legally if I were to have an accident on a dual carriageway slip road were I to have been cycling as advised in his book on pages 111 to 112?

Danny Stevenson, by email

A At pages 111 to 112 of that edition of *Cyclecraft*, John Franklin provides good practical advice as to how to minimise the risk of injury when crossing slip roads on trunk and principal roads. Mr Franklin states that cyclists going ahead on the main road 'are at great risk at such junctions, and when crashes do occur they tend to be serious, with a 1 in 20 chance of a fatality.'

At an entry slip road Mr Franklin points out it is not just the speed of traffic which causes problems but also drivers concentrating their attention to the right when looking for a gap in traffic. This means that drivers often fail to notice cyclists who are straight ahead of them even

CONSUMER RIGHTS KEEP YOUR RECEIPTS

Q In 2003 I bought a Cannondale F3000 Bike from a well known cycle chain. The frame is guaranteed for the lifetime of the original purchaser, but recently I was advised by an acquaintance and bike technician that it appeared to be corroding.

I returned the bike to the shop where I was advised it would be returned to Cannondale for inspection. Two weeks later I received a phone call from the shop, saying Cannondale had been difficult to contact and were asserting that it was 'just a paint problem'. I wondered how they could inspect a frame by telephone and insisted it be properly checked.

It took the shop another fortnight and many phone calls from me to decide that without the original receipt they either couldn't or wouldn't, after all, send the bike to Cannondale. This is despite my having used the shop's Credit Account services to fund the purchase of the bike. By contacting Barclays, the shop's Financial Partners, I was able to obtain proof that I really did buy the F3000 from them, but five weeks without my bike and with no further response from either the shop or Cannondale, I'm wishing I had kept my original receipt. **Be warned!**

Paul Nelson, Coulsdon Surrey

Update: Paul nevertheless persisted and the last we heard (three months on) the frame was with Cannondale being re-sprayed.



though the cyclist has right of way.

To minimise the risk of injury when crossing a slip road, Mr Franklin recommends crossing the slip road as close as possible to where it meets the main carriageway. This would involve cycling across the hatch markings as quickly as possible at about an angle of 45 degrees to the direction of travel. In my experience as a cyclist, I would certainly agree that this would reduce the risk of being struck by a motor vehicle emerging from a slip road onto the main road. It should however be remembered that when proceeding across the slip road it is important to ensure that there is a sufficient gap in the traffic before carrying out this manoeuvre. When cutting across a slip road it is important that cyclists do give way to traffic proceeding along it. If a cyclist misjudges the speed of a vehicle in the slip road then a motorist may be able to escape liability.

At exit slip roads, Mr Franklin states there are fewer collisions but that they can still be hazardous for cyclists. He recommends riding onto the slip road then when you are about 20 metres from the junction nose you should signal right and cross when safe to do so – see figure 6.9b (shown here).

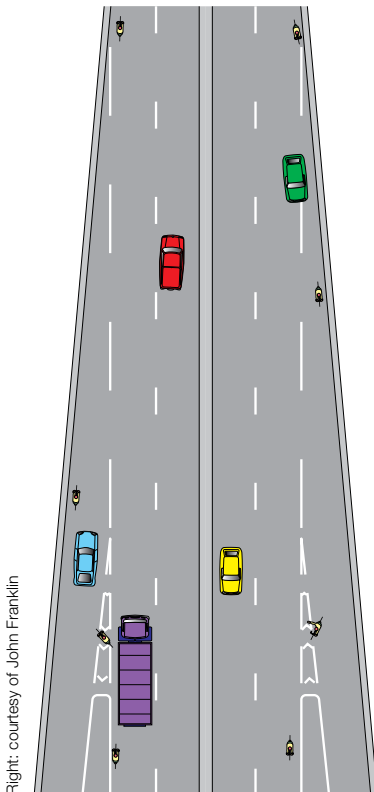
A cyclist who chooses to ignore

the advice in *Cyclecraft* and continues with the main flow of traffic is in my view at a much greater risk of being hit by a vehicle emerging from or exiting to a slip road. Safety must always be of paramount consideration and I would therefore strongly recommend crossing slip roads using the methods advocated by Mr Franklin in order to minimise the risk of a collision.

Paul Kitson

Dan Joyce adds: *Cyclecraft* has been updated and revised (though it still contains this sensible advice). It costs £12.50 and its ISBN is 978-0-11-703740-3. See www.cyclecraft.co.uk for more information. A version for North America is about to be released and would be useful reading for touring cyclists heading to the United States or Canada.

Crossing a slip road entry or exit like this (left) reduces the risk of collision with cars



Right: courtesy of John Franklin

CONTACTING THE EXPERTS

Send health and legal questions to the Editor (details on p79). We regret that *Cycle* magazine cannot answer unpublished health and legal queries. Technical and general enquiries are a CTC membership service. Contact the CTC Information Office, tel: 0844 736 8450, cycling@ctc.org.uk (general enquiries) or Chris Juden, technical@ctc.org.uk (technical enquiries). You can also write to: CTC, Parklands, Railton Road, Guildford, GU2 7JX. And don't forget that CTC operates a free-to-members advice line for personal injury claims, tel: 0844 736 8452.