

## Your opinions

## LETTERS

**THIS MONTH** CYCLING AFTER A STROKE, OLD PHOTOGRAPHS, THE PROS AND CONS OF BIGGER TYRES, NINJA CYCLISTS, AND MORE



Letter of the month



Left: Tim Fenn, eco2h2ouse.blogspot.co.uk

## Inclusive cycling

## POWER TO YOUR PEDALS

**A**FTER SUFFERING a stroke and losing my sense of balance some years ago, I bought two recumbent trikes: an ICE NT and a well-used Hase Lepus. Both have been extremely good and kept me mobile. Now my limited walking ability has further deteriorated, as has my ability to keep up with other cyclists. My age has not helped; I turn 86 in a few months time. So I decided that auxiliary power would be useful for my longer cycling days. I have had an electric motor installed on my ICE trike, which has given me sufficient power to avoid being left behind. It only takes a few hours to recharge, then I'm ready to go again. For town cycling, shopping etc, the Hase Lepus is wonderful. The turning abilities are superb and it's excellent at carrying shopping. I do not know how I would manage without it. Do not let age be a hindrance to happy cycling.

Barry Lovius

Great stuff, Barry. As you've shown, barriers to cycling can be overcome. To any members with friends or relatives who would like to cycle but think they can't, show them [cyclinguk.org/ride/inclusive-cycling](http://cyclinguk.org/ride/inclusive-cycling).

For more about these innovative bottle/bikepacking cages – and many other products – go online to [cyclemiles.co.uk](http://cyclemiles.co.uk)

## Write to Cycle

**EMAIL:** [editor@cyclinguk.org](mailto:editor@cyclinguk.org) or **WRITE TO:** Cycle, PO Box 313, Scarborough, YO12 6WZ. The letter of the month wins a Gorilla Cage or a Monkii Cage plus extra Monkii cleats – your choice. Each is worth £20.



This photo was probably taken between the wars

shows a group of CTC members in the 1950s. The bike at the front reminded me of the very first bike I ever bought, when I left school in 1957: a Phillips Jaguar in black, with red mudguards and a white section halfway down. Can any member verify that this is the same bike, or let me know what it is?

Bernard J Gilbert

## SINCE 1878

The big photo introducing Tony Upfold's piece in the April/May issue of Cycle may show a chap on an ordinary bicycle, but it was definitely not taken in the late 19th Century. Look at the bloke on the bike: he's wearing a short-sleeve shirt and baggy shorts of distinctly military cut, and has a prominent wristwatch. No Victorian CTC member would have ridden so attired, and they couldn't have worn a wristwatch as these things, for men, were a by-product of the First World War.

I suspect that the photo was taken between the wars, quite possibly in 1928, the 50th anniversary of the CTC's foundation. The cyclist's clothing is almost more suggestive of 1938 and the 60th anniversary but the background group would, I think, be more typical of the '20s than the '30s. Either way, it's definitely not Victorian.

Richard Ellam

The 'Since 1878' article was brilliant. But I have a query. The picture at the top of page 19

## PRESSURE DROP

I've just read the interesting article by Richard Hallett (April/May 2016) on the advantages of fatter, lower pressure tyres for everyday cycling. However, he doesn't mention the clear disadvantages of these tyres on climbing. Weight penalty and increased hysteresis with the physical effort required for climbing make these tyres much harder work. Any schoolboy will tell you that the toughest thing to do on a bicycle is to go uphill, and it's the time that you need the least resistance to pedalling on any ride.

Max Davison



Wider tyres: what goes down must go up again

Left: Robert Thomson

Richard Hallett's Pressure Drop article in the April/May Cycle was very interesting, but I think he has neglected one important parameter in rolling resistance: that is the diameter of the wheel. Other things being equal, a larger diameter wheel has a lower rolling resistance than a smaller one.

Also, larger diameter wheels roll over unevenness (rough surfaces and bumps etc) with less energy absorption than smaller wheels. In the days of horse-drawn vehicles with wooden wheels and steel rims, the vehicles were fitted with the largest practicable diameter wheels: they gave a better ride. The traditional Dutch roadster has large wheels, and we can all experience this difference in rolling resistance on group rides. When freewheeling downhill, the bikes with 622 wheels roll far ahead of the Bromptons and others with little 349 wheels.

**Mike Lenton**

**There are trade-offs; it's up to you what you want to prioritise. The bike I've got that's best at hill-climbing is the one I'd least want to go any distance on. As for wheel diameter: a 42-584 tyre is essentially the same, externally, as a 23-622. And mark well that phrase 'other things being equal'. A small-wheeled Moulton with suspension and nice tyres can keep pace with a 700C bike.**

## NINJA CYCLISTS

I find the caption for the photo of a dark top on the Letters pages – 'If cyclists shouldn't wear black, what about pedestrians or dark coloured cars?' – totally out of place. Pedestrians only come into conflict with cars when crossing the road. A dark coloured car is a block, and much harder not to see than a bike.

There is an argument for wearing normal clothes for urban cycling – I do myself. However, cycling-specific



Left: ThaqeLa, Flickr Creative Commons

**Ninjas: fine in kung-fu films or games, but not on the road**

clothing in black is often advertised, and worn, by road cyclists on A and B roads out of town. The closing speed of a car to the bike is higher than in town, with less time for the driver to notice the cyclist.

**Bernard Goodman**

## DROPPING DROPS

I am considering buying a new touring bike. I've always ridden drop-bar bikes, but then I got thinking: how much time do I actually spend down on the drops? Probably 0.005%. Most of my ride is done holding the brake hoods or the top of the bar. Am I alone in riding that way? I checked out the April/May issue of Cycle. On the front cover are ten bikes with drop handlebars and not one rider is down on the drops. Looking through the magazine, the only people riding on the drops are in a staged photoshoot for an advertisement, a photo of a race, and an advertisement for Ride London. I will order a new tourer but one thing is certain: it won't have a drop handlebar.

**Alan Harding**

**A drop bar isn't the only option for touring bikes**



## Obituaries

### GEORGE W HUGILL

**Died 31/1/16, aged 81, while cycling. A lifelong, daily cyclist and CTC member, George was a competitive club rider and time triallist; he was the veteran 24-hour champion in 1995. He toured extensively, riding the End to End both ways in one ride. He had ridden 654,000 miles at the time of his death, placing him 6th in the 300,000 Miles Club. He lost his wife Doreen in a cycling accident in 1993.**

– **Burt Clayton**

### JOHN HUTTON

**Died 8/2/16, aged 82, after several years of ill health. John was a long-standing member of Reading CTC. From Colchester, he was a wartime evacuee to Canada. After National Service, John's career took him to Australia and East Africa, and he and his family returned to England in 1975. He became a lecturer at Henley Business School. John led many tours in France and Belgium visiting war cemeteries and memorials. He was a brilliant route finder.**

– **Peter Finch**

### CHARLES ALBERT CATCHPOLE

**Died peacefully 18/2/16, aged 102, just 12 days after the passing of his wife, Joyce. He joined the CTC in 1934 as a life member and will be remembered by many in the cycling community for his love of cycling and the countryside it enabled him to enjoy. He was for many years a stalwart of the Shropshire DA acting as club secretary, eventually 'retiring' as honorary life vice-president. CTC awarded him the Certificate of Merit for services to cycling.**

– **David Catchpole**

## Join the conversation

### CYCLING UK FORUM

Get immediate feedback from other Cycling UK members on the Cycling UK forum: [forum.cyclinguk.org](http://forum.cyclinguk.org). Here's an abridged extract from one popular thread (see [bit.ly/cyclinguk-lowestgear](http://bit.ly/cyclinguk-lowestgear)).



#### LOWEST GEAR FOR TOURING

**Annoying Twit:** Can I ask what gear ratios people are using for their lowest gear for touring, potentially including a trailer? This article ([bit.ly/cs-cycleuphills](http://bit.ly/cs-cycleuphills)) recommends a lowest gear of about 20 inches, which seems very low to me.

**andymiller:** The lowest you can get? The worst that can happen is that you have a few gears in hand, which is probably better than not having them.

**ossie:** I have 44-32-22 with an 11-32 cassette, giving me a gear under 18 inches. I use the full range carrying 20kg of panniers and tent.

**MrsHJ:** As above, the lowest gearing possible. Mountain bikes have a massive range. It's the place to start.

**Tigerbiten:** My silly low first gear is only 9.5" but I am on a recumbent trike. I have a double-double on the front: twin chainrings (53-38) with a Schlumpf

High Speed Drive. I have a Rohloff in the rear built into a 20" wheel with a 21-tooth sprocket. That gives me 24 unique gears with around 14% step-up between each gear: 9.5"-172".

**Vorpal:** I think that 20" or below is a good aim, but for a round-the-world adventure, I would recommend even lower. There's a bigger challenge in getting an expedition load over the Himalayas than two panniers over the Pennines.

## How to contact Cycle

**LETTERS** are edited for space (if above 150 words), clarity and, if necessary, legality. Please note that if you have specific complaint or query about Cycling UK policy, you should address it to the relevant national office staff member. Letters & emails for the Aug/Sep issue must arrive by 30 June. Write to: [editor@cyclingsuk.org](mailto:editor@cyclingsuk.org) or **Cycle Letters, PO Box 313, Scarborough, YO12 6WZ**

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