

ISSUE NUMBER 14  
AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 1988  
UK PRICE £1.00

# Making TRACKS

F O R T H E O F F - R O A D C Y C L I S T

## TRACKFAX

- Forest of Bowland

## MOULTON ATB

- First impressions

## EVENTS

- Reports & Round-up

## EVENTS LISTING

- over 90 Rides & Races

## ENTRY FORMS

- for 4 Events

## DOING IT MY WAY

## FREE-RANGE EGGS?

## EXAGE TRAIL

## ATB SPORT

- where are we going?

## CONTACTS

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**T**here are 120,000 miles of public rights of way in England and Wales. Many are popular and well-used, while others suffer from neglect and are quite unusable. As a first step towards improving this network of country paths, the Countryside Commission is encouraging local groups to undertake surveys of the footpaths, bridleways and byways in their area. The information from these surveys will provide a unique and valuable insight into this important recreational resource.

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Cover Illustration: Moira Chesmur  
ISSUE NUMBER 14  
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Published six times a year by the MakingTRACKS

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with special thanks to:

Elaine Apps	Karin Oakes
Ian Sheen	Eric Northwood
James Walters	

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Subscriptions:

Sue Hopkins	Subscription Rates:
55 Grafton Road	Six issues inc. P&P:
New Malden	United Kingdom — £6.00
Surrey	Europe — £7.50
KT3 3AA	Rest of World
	Surface — £9.00
	Air — £12.50

Advertising:

Adrian Hepworth	(0306) 886944
Robin Cottage	Products and services ad-
Stones Lane	vertised herein are NOT
Westcott, Surrey	necessarily endorsed by
RH4 3QH	MakingTRACKS

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Typeset by ACA, Yapton, West Sussex.  
Telephone: (0243) 553886.

Printed by APS, Unit E4&5, Rudford Industrial Estate, Ford, Arundel, West Sussex, BN18 0BS.  
Telephone: (0903) 730714.

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# Editorial

## TRAVELLING IN REAL TIME

Here we present, Dear Reader, our second issue in the A4 format; in these pages we feel an urge to address ourselves to the current state of our sport/pastime, which is at the height of its first real season, and focus your minds on what we are doing . . . where we are going.

Why is it that speed is so prevalent these days? Is it true that something done fast acquires an inherent quality which overrides all other criteria by which we judge the final outcome.

For example: The car is revered for its speed, never mind the enormous cost involved in sustaining such a wasteful transport system; never mind the eight and a half thousand innocent bystanders who are killed and maimed each year in the process; never mind the countless thousands more who are affected by these 'accidents', never mind the wholesale sacrifice of our landscape to worship of the god SPEED.

The same can be said of many fast foods. Where are all the dead and injured, what damage to our landscape? The farming methods necessary to sustain the supply of meat for this industry are destroying the cultures of peoples worldwide, they are dispossessed and starve; the landscape is irrevocably turned into desert after but a few years of grazing. All in worship of the god FAST.

What am I going on about? This has nothing to do with cycling.

You bechalife it has! Disregarding the affect that a higher regard for cycling could have on our society; in simple, personal terms, it can be an anecdote to that social pressure on all of us to go faster.

"Obvious!" you say.

You'd think so, but look again at the design of the mountain bike and the wording of many adverts for ATB's. The subliminal hints are all there; "... race bred..." "... high performance..." "... pro..." etc, etc. This is not to mention the visual hints. I trust you are aware of the things I talk of here; they are sometimes very subtle.

I daresay there are some folk reading this who are quite unaware of them. The subliminal effect this can have comes to light when we go out for a relaxing, enjoyable ride in the countryside. Unable to escape the tyranny of gods SPEED & FAST, we find ourselves relentlessly accelerating, being forced ahead by habit, around the next bend, over the next hill, always focusing our consciousness on the track ahead, that is just out of sight.

On a personal level, we should travel in real time; concentrate on where we are, what we are doing and why we are there. We must break loose of the pressure that forces us ever on.

**This is not to say that there is no place for going fast, but cycling fast should be only a part of the whole off-road cycling experience.**

On a broader level, we must take into account the newcomers to cross-country cycling, and ride *with* them, not *against* them. This I

have seen happen time and time again, and the result: we lose another potential adherent.

Now we come to another aspect of this pervading influence; ATB design development. If we are unimaginative in the development of our future sport and concentrate our efforts on long distance racing alone, we will have no choice in ATB design in the future. We will be able to buy a racing ATB, or a racing ATB with a carrier on the back (*touring ATB*), or a cheap racing ATB (*designed for lesser mortals*).

And the fact that off-road cycle sport is a new sport, means that we, *all of us*, can determine the direction we want it to go!

In our event reports we have concentrated on distilling the essence of an event from the point of view of an also-ran, leaving our colourful competitors to publish lists of winners.

*Crispin Sage* develops the theme of our sport, whilst *Brian Stokes* states the case for the majority of cross-country cyclists, who may be in danger of losing their freedom of choice in both where to ride and what kind of bikes are available.

... with love



# New Cyclist



A new, quarterly magazine written by cyclists for cyclists. Packed with good independent journalism from a wide range of writers and illustrators. Read Richard Ballantine on HPVs, David Wrath-Sharman on the new MTB-style Bickerton [exclusive]. In-depth features and exclusive news stories, with a radical slant. 60 pages of reading pleasure. Issue one is hot off the press.

New Cyclist is sold mainly by subscription, and is not available through newsagents. For a year's subscription send £6.00. For one issue only, send £1.75 (These prices are lower than originally advertised. The huge response so far has meant cost savings which we are delighted to pass on.)

New Cyclist will actively support and promote Making TRACKS.

Send your subscription to New Cyclist (MT), 14 St. Clement's Grove, York, YO2 1JZ. Tel [0904] 620606

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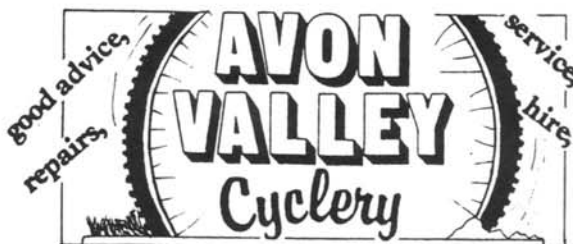
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# Trackfax

**LOCATION:**  
FOREST OF BOWLAND,  
LANCASHIRE

**START:**  
DUNSOP BRIDGE

**DISTANCE (APPROX):**  
OVERALL  
= 24 km / 15 miles  
ROAD  
= 5 km / 3 miles  
ROUGH  
= 19 km / 12 miles

**TERRAIN:**  
DEMANDING BUT WITH  
SUPERB VIEWS, VALLEY  
TRACKS AND HIGH MOOR,  
NO WOODLAND.

**GOING:**  
SURFACED ACCESS TRACKS,  
HILL PATHS AND OPEN  
MOORLAND, BOGGY IN  
PLACES - COMPASS  
RECOMMENDED

Start the ride at Dunsop Bridge, a small village at the confluence of the River Dunsop and River Hodder, the "Thorneyholme Hotel" on the far bank of the River Hodder is very nice and provides tea and scones at a reasonable price.

From Dunsop Bridge follow the road sign for the "Trough of Bowland". This is a minor road passing a primary school to the right, the road is unfenced and sheep are in abundance, as are cattle grids - no problem.

The road follows the trough along the course of Langden Beck, a pleasant stream - continue past two left turns (into Water Board property).

Pass a farm which spans the road and continue until you see a small barn on your right, next to this is a gate - the track is not signposted - through the gate and up the very rough stoney track, which climbs the hill and skirts a small mixed tree plantation; - follow this track through a small ruin to the point where it degenerates into rough pasture.

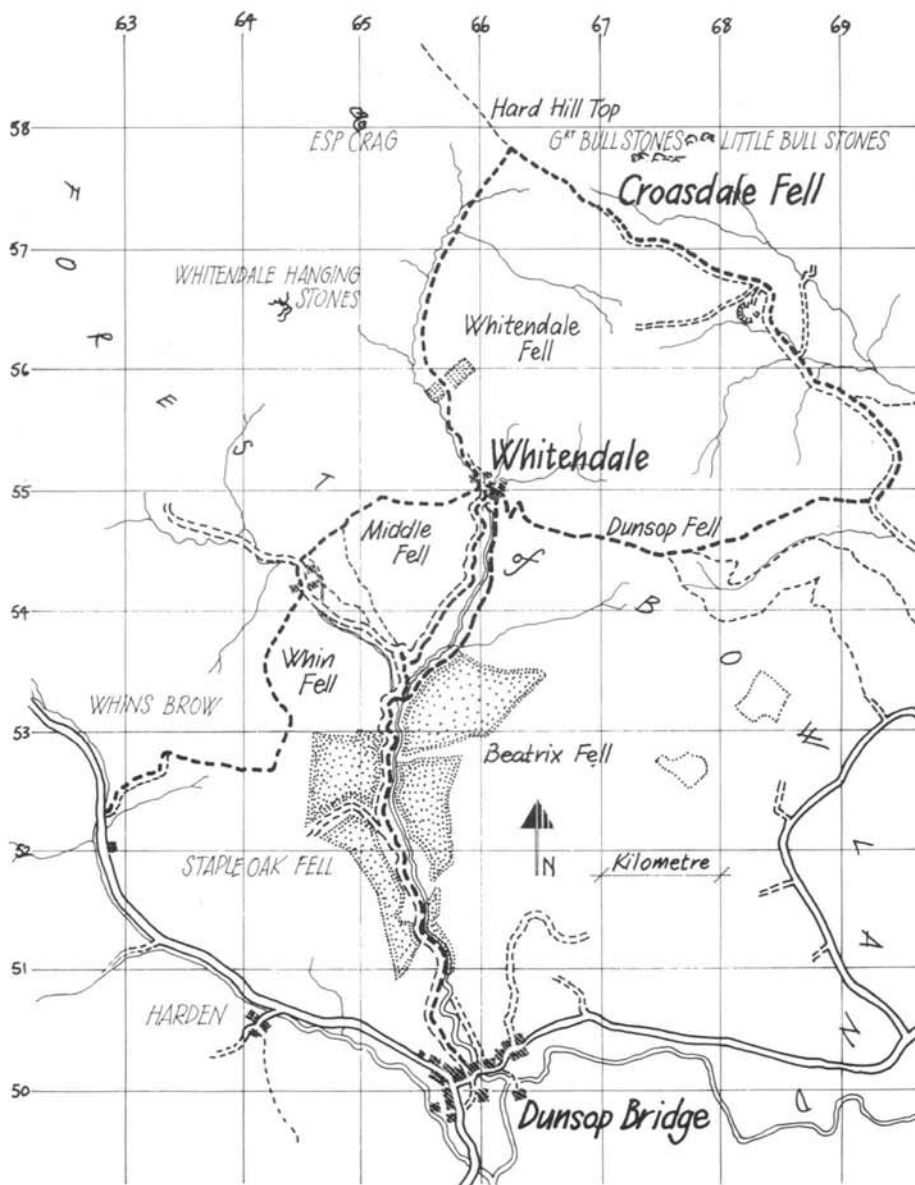
At this point, look up the hill to the east (compass!) and you can see, just, a stile - head towards it and, at the top, you are on a peat plateau called "Whin Fell" (476m high).

Check your bearings/OS map and cross the plateau; navigation is made easy by yellow-topped posts, which are sensibly placed - just far enough apart, if your map reading is lacking, you won't get lost, but not so obvious that you lose the feeling of remoteness. Here, on the tops, beware of peat hags (which will swallow your front wheel given half a chance); pick the right time of year and the top is covered with cotton grass in bloom.

As you reach the far side of the top, you get a breathtaking view across the valley of the Brennand River to Middle Knoll, a dome shaped hill 395m high. The path to take down this far side of Whin Fell is obvious and precarious, where the path has been washed away in scree; you may have to carry your bike for the first hundred yards or so - it is on the side of a very steep slope.

In the bottom of the valley, near Brennand Farm, you come back onto a farm road. After the first steep section, the descent is sublime, and all rideable. You have a choice: take the easy route on your right, down and around Middle Knoll anticlockwise, or take the more difficult and rewarding track on the left - through the farm - nice people - and up a steep rocky landrover track across a saddle between Middle Knoll of Brennand Fell. The track graduates to moorland at the summit, but pathfinding is easy.

Go over the crest of the hill and you will see a small community of houses; Whitendale, situated on the Whitendale River. The descent is interesting; it starts gently and gets more and more steep as you go down, made all the more interesting, as at the



REFER O/S MAP: LANDRANGER SHEET 103

bottom there is no run off; only a drop into the River.

Cross the river, using the footbridge is advisable (but perhaps slightly less exciting) and go left through a gate past the houses - follow the track across pasture and at the point where it changes to moorland, identify a gap in the coniferous plantation due north, and head for that.

Beyond the plantation, take the path which follows Whitendale River for approximately one mile. At the crossing of the second side tributary on the right, head up the hill north east up Hard Hill Top - you'll probably be pushing by now - about half way up, you'll come across a track following the contour of this hill.

Here, turn right and follow the track south east across Crossdale Fell - this is pleasantly rideable.

The track turns into a road after approximately 4.5km, at which point, depending on how you feel, you can follow the lanes which are pleasant and quiet, wander your way to Slaidburn for a pint and onto Dunsop Bridge, or you can follow the bridleway on your right, which leads west across the width of Dunsop Fell.

This route is rideable and culminates in a (tricky in parts) descent, back into Whitendale.

Now for the final part of the ride: check how your legs feel (you should have one on each side - Ed) can they stand a bit more off road? If so, take the track on the east bank of Whitendale River and

follow it downstream to the confluence of Whitendale and Brennand Rivers which together make the River Dunsop. Then cross the bridge and back onto a track, which is made up and belongs to the North West Water Authority. Back into Dunsop Bridge.

If you've had enough after the descent of Dunsop Fell, continue back into Whitendale and take the made up road, which follows the contour of Middle Knoll and later joins the NWWA track.

This area of England is generally bypassed by your average daytripper who prefers to head for the crowded Lake District. Whilst the Trough of Bowland area may not offer as much as the Lakes in dramatic scenery, it is a lot quieter, even on bank holidays and weekends, and offers cross-country riding challenges to compare with anywhere in Our Fair Country.

DAVE FLITCROFT

Whilst every effort is made to research the routes sent in by our readers, they are nevertheless published in good faith with regard to access and rights of way. MakingTRACKS cannot be held responsible for any trespass or irresponsible riding. We strongly suggest that you acquire the appropriate definitive Ordnance Survey map and satisfy yourself with regard to legitimacy, prior to embarking on any ride.

If you have a favourite route or tract of land you'd like to share with other XC'ers, then mark it out on a 1:25,000 O/S map and send it with your description (even in note form) to the Editorial Office.

# Clips

The reader news section; send us details of what you're up to, of any snippets you've picked up, or let us know if you're organising a club, holiday/expedition or special ride. Write, phone or fax by Friday August 28, please.

## PRODUCT FEEDBACK

Spotted down at the Quantock Quest a few weeks ago, two Shimano Engineers on a world fact finding mission (it's good to see a manufacturer doing this - well done Shimano). During the fun ride one of them quizzed the raving MT reporter about his thoughts on Shimano brakes, and the subject very soon turned to the topic of British winters. Mud, which clogs up bikes so severely that they can't even be pushed and need substantial post ride maintenance, was mentioned.

'Oh, no!' said the Engineer.

Then the bombshell; the mention of the joy of riding about in snow.

'Snow! Reary!'

Yes, snow. Of course, as anyone who was out on the Fun Ride will know, the day was hot, sunny and DRY AS A BONE. I can only hope that the wandering Shimano Engineers remember our conversation upon returning home. If they do, it could be good news. All this begs the question; do UK distributors for foreign manufacturers ever pass on information about UK riding conditions?

## FISHER SAYS

Gary Fisher has recently been quoted as saying "My American manufactured bikes are not suitable for European conditions". But UK importers and manufacturers don't care. It doesn't matter to them if ATB Fisher clones don't ride well, it's how they SELL that counts.

## HEAVY PETTING

The Mountain Bike Club still hasn't found a name for their Doggy Logo - and it doesn't even ride a bike!

## RIDING THE DESERT TRAIL

On Saturday 12th November Bettina Selby will be giving a slide show covering her extensive cycle tour of Africa including Uganda and Sudan. You've had plenty of warning, so you can get your tickets for this show at the New Village Hall, High Street, Orpington, Kent in good time and save 25p. £2.25 from Jean Tobin, "Wheeler", Stonehouse Road, Halstead, Sevenoaks, Kent. (0689) 52871.

## STOLEN BIKE ALERT

Unlucky Friday 13th May was unusually so for a reader in Aberdeen. Someone took a fancy to his Muddy Fox Courier, so, if offered one by a suspicious looking character in a kilt, and it has the early upswept handle bars, a Brooks B66 saddle and the frame number 0317980, grab him by the sporan, march him off to the nearest police station and phone Ken Clark on (0224) 485609.

## CLUB IN THE SOUTH MIDLANDS?

Anyone interested in forming a club in the Worcestershire/Warwickshire area should contact Jon Skinner 45, Chandlers Close, Crabbs Cross, Redditch B97 5HU (0527) 46148.

## NOT THE YORKSHIRE MTB CLUB

A new Club in Skipton, North Yorkshire has been started by Graham Atkinson of 7 Hawksworth Close, Menston, Ilkley, West Yorkshire LS29 6HR. Not to be confused with any other MTB club in the area, this one is called THE CRAVEN MTB CLUB. Their 4th newsletter so far includes tips on tyre pressures, ride reports, no less than 3 routes described and computer printed map of four of them linked into a circular route.

## AUTUMN HOLS

If you decided to miss out on your summer hols and are getting impatient for your winter skiing expedition, then why not join the CTC Autumn ATB Tour. Chris Juden has made plans to lead a group on a one week's circular route, starting at Tanners Hatch Youth Hostel on the evening of Friday 21st October. He hopes to take in some of the North Downs Way, most of the South Downs Way and heeps more unexplored bridleways in between.

Be prepared for some true exploration. For more information, itinerary and provisional route contact:

Chris Juden,  
7 Llanaway Close,  
Farncombe, Surrey  
GU7 3ED.

## INVASION ON SOUTH COAST

Whilst doing a bit of research for the reply to Mike Scobie's letter (see letters page) I spoke to Rayment Cycles of Brighton, who tell me that they have flogged off all their ordinary bikes and now sell only ATB's - there must be other bike shops around the country who have also done this - if so, please let us know. Moreover, they are happy to act as an information centre for local off-road cycling activities, and, of course, they'll be stocking MakingTRACKS.

In that same town, Nigel Farrow is a new contact. He is keen to set up a pubnight each week to chat about bikes, riding bikes, routes, bikes and riding, oh, and of course, bikes.

Steve Rowley, who likes to get his name into this Mag, is joining forces with Mike Carpenter to form the South Coast MBC, with fortnightly rides planned. Check his new address in our contacts listing.

Graham Halliday, of Regis Cycles, in Bognor, is in the process of setting up a club, and this will probably be on the XCC Club basis, with the main activity being a Regular Monthly Ride.

Sussex Windsurfing of Worthing organise a regular ride each Wednesday. With ATB's becoming something of a cuckoo-in-the-nest, they tell us they also will put you in touch with other riders along this part of the South Coast.

## ... AND THERE ARE STATISTICS

There was a little news item the other day, from the treasury, just a little item about the cost to the nation of road accidents; just four billion, with about five thousand killed and three thousand three hundred injured.

For the numerate that's either:

£4,000,000,000 or £4,000,000,000,000!

5000 killed on the road. Assuming a few families get wiped out, that must leave well over 4000 families in a state of crisis, distress.

3,300 injured means men, women and children with their bodies smashed, bits missing, metal bits holding them together...

And all for what?

For these peoples' sakes, make sure you drive f\*\*\*\*g carefully - and it's all the more reason to cycle off-road.

## ATB RIDERS GET 'CROSS

The British Cyclo-Cross Association have appointed a new Development Officer, and he's a man with his ear to the ground. While he had it there, an ATB fell out of a tree and hit him on the head.

The law of *Dynamic Dualism* had been discovered. This states that if two forms of bicycle are encouraged to race together, it probably won't make any difference to the results, but it probably will affect machine development, which, of course, is a good thing.

The BCCA, who, until this point, had thought about shunning ATB's altogether, are now preparing to welcome them into their well-planned race programme.

This is excellent news if you like to race, because you'll now have a choice of venue each week. It's a different matter if you like to win; it will probably be some years before courses are designed to equally test both ATB's and 'cross bikes.

Check National Contacts List for information address and Issue 15 will carry details of the race programme in the Events listing.

## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The first ever national survey of footpaths, bridleways and byways in England and Wales will be carried out with the help of volunteers over the next six months. This major survey is intended to check the state of all rights of way. 150 5km squares will be selected from the national grid and every right of way in these areas will have to be walked and bridleways surveyed by horseriders and cyclists. Volunteers should contact Stephen Rickard, Project Coordinator (National Rights of Way Survey) at Travers Morgan, 136 Long Acre, London WC2E 9AE. Tel: (01) 836 5474.

## Rights of way - part of our country heritage.



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# Bike Review

*Our bike reviews, usually produced by David Wrath-Sharman, are as objective as possible. We always include the views of owners/riders, these are, of necessity, subjective. Please write to us if any technical terms require explanation.*

With David Wrath-Sharman busy refurbishing an eleventy-century mill in the middle of Wales, we cannot expect miracles. Therefore, having been offered the Moulton ATB test machine for this issue, we decided to give you a preview - with a full review, in the *MakingTRACKS* tradition, in a future issue.

"You'll be impressed!" said Ron Miles, when I telephoned to arrange for delivery. We'll see, thought I.

I was.

You can't help it. It's looks so, so, so... unusual.

I am someone who appreciates *genuine* innovation. We are fed a diet of innovation in the cycling media, but when you come to analyse it out, you find it's, well, not quite innovation, more a sort of packaging job, you know, same thing, different wrapper.

When assessing a bicycle, it is necessary to cut through the packaging job and see the machine for what it really is. With the Moulton ATB, this is hard to do; all the normal parameters seem somewhat blurred.

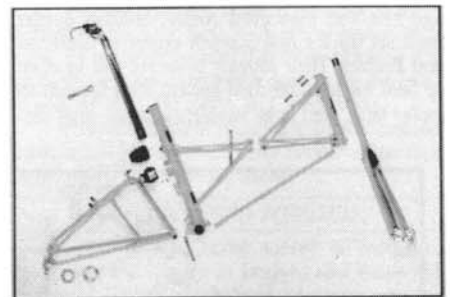
Suspension has to be the way forward for off-road bicycles. This I have always believed intuitively, but that notion has become more firm since I owned a pre-BMX 'Moto King' - a slug-heavy pedal powered imitation scramble Motorbike. Yes,

that was a good few years ago, I've learnt a lot about bicycle frame design since then and I've kept my ear to the ground in the matter of suspension for ATB's.

With the AM ATB, we have to consider two separate aspects; the frameset (*along with sundry extras necessary to this design*) and the specification of components applied by a particular supplier,



Adrian Hipworth



because Moulton are selling only framesets, leaving appointed dealers to fit appropriate components, which, of course, can be the customers own.

There was not sufficient time to research the Swifts Cycles specification; it is high-quality conventional mountain bike stuff with a slightly larger chainwheel to accommodate the 20" wheels.

In the short period that we had the AM ATB, the riding proved to be a new experience. It was used for day-to-day on/off-road utility trips of two or three miles, and a short off-road jaunt of about five. Nothing too excessive. Performance is excellent in these circumstances. The Moulton comes into its own on those dried-out bumpy bridleways - it smooths out the ride - and is very forgiving if you overcook on cornering.

We have made arrangements to give this innovative and worthy machine a full assessment before the production of our next issue, so, with the co-operation of Moultons, we will be able to give you considerably more information, the views of numerous riders/owners, the comments of Dr Alex Moulton himself and Swifts Cycles, who are responsible for the specification, and the usual detailed drawing, indicating all the appropriate dimensions.

However, if in the meantime you feel an overwhelming urge to buy an AM ATB - we're sure that if you're taken by its looks, you'll find it hard to resist and love its ride - please contact us with any views you have, as soon as possible.

GEOFFREY APPS



Adrian Hipworth



Adrian Hipworth



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# Books

Books on a variety of subjects can be of interest to cross-country cyclists. Here we announce new books that may be so; if you have read one such, send us your review along with ISBN number, Publisher, price etc.

## MOUNTAIN BIKING IN LAKELAND

'Mountain Biking in Lakeland', by Michael Hyde, is likely to be the first of many similar booklets aimed at saving the mountain bike explorer from riding an unknown track and, after a dull day out, wishing that the track had remained unknown. It contains twelve routes which are graded according to severity. Grade 1 would be a gentle day out with plenty of time for visiting places *en route*, while grade 5 would need a reasonable level of fitness and stamina, usually including some high altitude climbs with a long downhill to look forward to.

It is nicely written throughout and each route includes snippets of history and points of interest. Michael Hyde gives just the right amount of advice on Rights of Way and points out that "Mountain Bikers are still regarded by some as a nuisance", so readers are left in no doubt as to their responsibilities. A little reminder in the first route endorses these cautions.

Michael also shows his hand as a photographer and some excellent black and white photos help to give the book some atmosphere and a taste of what can be expected on some of the routes. The last photo of a colleague posing in a snow storm, could have come straight out of the Cranes' 'Bicycles Up Kilimanjaro', had it not been entitled 'The crossroads on Moor Divock'.

Each route is accompanied by well-drawn maps showing many features, so many, that I had to

continually refer to the legend at the beginning of the book to find out what the symbols described. My only disappointment was that I found these maps a little confusing. Being used to O.S. maps and others that use the convention of twin lines to represent roads and single lines to denote paths and bridleways, I found that the reverse was confusing. The cartographer, not credited, also makes no distinction between those tracks and roads that are on the route and all the little spurs and side turnings that are not. As nearly every truncated road or track and stream is finished with an arrow head pointing everywhere but around the route, my eye was always being distracted.

However, this is a small point and some of those arrow heads did serve the useful purpose of giving the direction of the next route or an extension for the more ambitious. Had the space been available, it would have been nice to have a map showing the relationships of all the routes, for those wanting to link them all together.

Although this is a handy sized A5 (the same as the old M.T.) paperback and it would be tempting to set off with just this in your pocket to guide you, the author does suggest taking the relevant 1:25000 Outdoor Leisure Maps with you.

Another final moan is that some of the landmarks mentioned in the text do not appear on the maps and vice versa and not all roads have been given their numbers. This would be helpful when

marking up your O.S. maps before setting off, but the descriptions are very detailed and I'm sure that all will become clear once you are out on the route.

Brief mention is made on spare clothing to take and the phone number for weather forecasts. All cycle shops and hire companies are named and shown on the maps, so help is at hand if your bike lets you down.

As the first of its kind, I'm sure this book will sell well and is a must for anyone planning some off-road cycling in the Lake District. It will become the standard against which others are judged . . .

Title:	Mountain Biking in Lakeland
Author:	Michael Hyde
Publisher:	The Dalesman Publishing Company Ltd
Price:	£2.25
ISBN:	0 85206 928 6

## MOUNTAIN BIKEWAYS IN MID-WHARFENDALE & CRAVEN

This must also be a landmark in mountain bike literature being as it is, published by a steam railway museum! Yup! The Yorkshire Dales Railway Museum Trust (a registered charity), in association with Mike Hogan Cycles, have put together 13 "off the road routes for the novice and rough-stuff enthusiast".

Compiled by the Cyclists' Touring Club Local Touring Adviser, John Keavey, it is the same format as our first review book, but appears at first glance to have been typed and photocopied. It is a low budget publication and whilst there is nothing wrong with that, it does not have any maps or photographs. It is illustrated with some poorly reproduced line drawings, that I suspect were once the fine work of Frank Patterson, the well-respected and admired illustrator of cycling magazines for

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many years.

The routes chosen are extremely short but, as the title suggests, they are intended for beginners. Each is given a short summary of type, length, direction of travel and, if appropriate, feet climbed and and the O.S. map number and name. They are then described in almost as few words as the summary and conclude with a description of the going, i.e. "Not too strenuous, satisfying, good views and solitude", or "... the route is mostly rideable except for the short but steep ascent of the escarpment...". This last description might be an enticement for the more experienced to prove the publishers wrong.

If you find yourself imagining how a route might be whilst looking at the map, then you'll probably find the same after reading some of the names to be met on route. How about 'Coniston Cold', 'Ten End' or 'Dead Man's Hill' for starters and finishing up on 'Pockstone Moor'. If your curiosity was roused by those names, you might like to seek out "Bargueste, the hound with eyes like flaming saucers" up on Trollers Gill. But then no-one has survived to tell the tale. I wonder how they knew about the eyes then?

For only 95p you couldn't do better if you find yourself in this area and want to get some fresh air in your lungs. It probably won't ever appear in your local W.H. Smiths but it does have an ISBN number and supposedly could be ordered.

ADRIAN HEPWORTH

Title:	Mountain Bikeways in Wharfedale and Craven
Author:	John Keavey
Publisher:	Yorkshire Dales Railway Museum Embsay Station Skipton, N. Yorks
Price:	95p + 13p postage
ISBN:	0 902426 03 6

## FREEWHEEL CATALOGUE 1988

Since it first appeared, this publication has always proved to be a fascinating read; this year is no exception.

For the off-road reader, first impressions are dubious - the cover features an immaculately kitted out man on an ATB riding down a ROAD! Stylised, agreed, but a road! Moreover, his riding position seems to indicate a recent hernia operation - probably why he's wearing those cool shades.

The Freewheel Catalogue has always presented a very positive image of cycling, and it is implicit in the quite stunning design design (sic) of this lavish publication, that, armed with it, and your Amex Gold, you too could step out of your Porsche, unhook your Ridgeback and take to the hills in real style.

There are some wonderful accessories for the off-roader, like the combined seat-pin/pump (seriously!) - you simply have to take the seat-pin out, remove your saddle, turn the handle round, push the connector on and there you are.

Featured also is an intriguing steering dampener, to keep you on the straight and narrow on bumpy downhills - as the accompanying photograph shows - it helps you hit the obstacles you would normally have to steer around.

The Ridgeback range of ATB's is artistically laid out, but the bikes themselves, when closely analysed, prove to be yet more Californian clones.

Freewheel is an arm of Madison PLC, who are the UK distributors for Shimano; it is, therefore, no surprise to find the full range laid before us, with almost pornographically-detailed specifications; but, predictably, a high degree of techno-crap, ie: everything seems to be the greatest scientific/technological/biological/ergonomic breakthrough since the last innovation, about nine months ago.



I am a fan of Biopace, and there is a very neat little explanation of the theory behind the design, however, even I had to concede that some of the statements seem a bit, well, you know, not quite plausible.

The clothing section is more fashion than use, rather expensive, too. Not much for the sensible off-roader, other than some pretty neat boots and a range of Gortex jackets. But, oh, can't they get some human models who at least look like they know what a bicycle is; maybe they do, but they don't look like it.

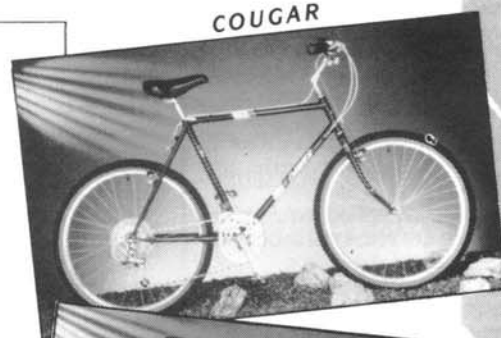
Despite all this, Errol Drew, the man behind Freewheel/Madison, must be congratulated for helping drag the cycle trade, kicking and screaming, into the post-war era, and much of the current interest in the bicycle can be credited to him.

It's a pity that knowledge, fitness, spare time and wisdom don't come on mail order...  
IAN SHEEN

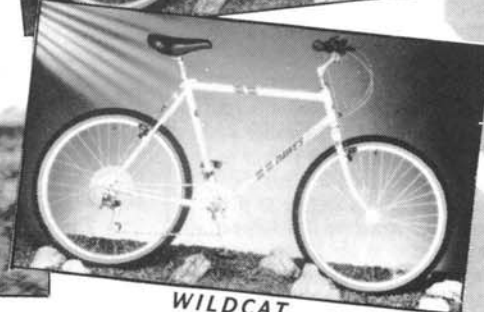
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# Letters

We always welcome your letters; they keep us in touch with the issues and problems being faced by our readers. We have to remember that MakingTRACKS is read as much by the 'novice' rider as by those who consider themselves 'experts'.

Dear MakingTRACKS

I was especially pleased to see David Wrath-Sharman coming clean about his very special prices, not to mention his bicycles. He is right in saying that in historical terms, bicycles of custom quality have never been cheaper. Given that they do the same things, essentially - with the same drawbacks - as those bikes made before the war, it is hardly surprising that they've got cheaper.

I feel that he serves his own cause - that of updating the criteria by which we measure the performance of our machines - rather badly by making this comparison.

It is this aspect of design and engineering that you should be concentrating upon; the entire industry seems set on convincing us that designer butcher bikes are just the thing, you must continue to remind the more alert - and therefore doubting - that there is life beyond Biopace?

Only when enough people demand hub brakes, and such like, will we get them - and it's up to sources of objective opinion, such as MakingTRACKS, to set the pace.

WILLIAM F D SILLER ICELAND

Dear MakingTRACKS

My wife and I have been subscribers to your excellent magazine since issue number two.

I awaited the issue 13 with special interest as it was to be A4 size and because it followed my subscription renewal.

It is my understanding that as such it should have contained a pair of "Mudstopper" mud flaps, but it did not and I was sorely disappointed!

However, I feel sure that this was an oversight, due to the pressure of all the good work that the team put in.

GARY DAWSON AYLESBURY

The free mudflaps offer ended on April 1 1988. However, there are some still to be sent out, and Gary is amongst these few.

MakingTRACKS Mudstoppers are now available to subscribers at £1.00 per pair. Use the form on page 34 to order yours.

GRAHAME WHITE

Dear MakingTRACKS

Are there any plans yet to formalise a proper ATB club? If off-road cycling is ever to be more than a fringe activity, then it needs some national structure with Officers willing to participate in the committee structure that helps to control and plan for access to the countryside. Perhaps something along the lines of the Trail Rider's Fellowship (for motorcycle green laners) is called for - a national club for individual members, but with local groups organising the weekend activities.

You won't get people joining and staying unless such an organisation is seen to do something for the Member - fighting for access rights, planning a balanced sport structure and programme, etc. Such a body is held together by its magazine - for individual members that is the only contact they may have.

Mountain biking is in danger of being a victim of its own success. It is easy to buy an

ATB but not so easy to get guidance on where, how and when to use it. There are already areas where mountain biking is classified as an undesirable activity.

Nobody is demanding licences to ride . . . yet. Access and conservation are hot and complicated issues. I attend many conferences and meetings representing both motor sport and green road users - I have yet to meet a mountain biker at one!

In case you think I am doing nothing but preach, I should like to offer my experience in rights of way matters to an organisation that takes up the initiatives that I suggest here.

ALAN KIND NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE  
What is a 'decent' ATB club? In what way is the Mountain Bike Club failing? They claim to be the national authority controlling and guiding our sport and pastime.

The Cross Country Cycling Club have made little progress over the past few years, but then they have no funding whatsoever - all the work they do and services they provide are free. Considering this, they are doing far more than the Mountain Bike Club.

MakingTRACKS, in its way, we hope, is helping to consolidate things at a grass roots (routes?) level - since the other magazines seem primarily concerned with the glamour, the razzmatazz . . .

What is needed, during this next winter, is for people to meet and discuss our future, people who care, people who will work, and, most important, people who will put money into the campaign.

We need two or three full time professionals to sort things out, and set up a new national body, learning from the past mistakes of other such bodies, and starting afresh with the new season next spring.

Anyway, we all have our time cut out just putting this magazine together, though getting it onto the bookshelves is a different matter all together!

This is a crucial matter, readers, take note, take pen, write, act, talk. Let's see what can be done!

TONY SILVER

Dear MakingTRACKS

Has anyone got details of the 3 Peaks (Yorkshire) Route? Anyone fancy doing it on a suitable date?

DAVE FLITCROFT BOLTON

The Three Peaks Route is, alas, not legally rideable, and a significant proportion is not rideable at all!

Special permission for the classic race (on September 25) is gained by the organiser, John Rawnsley, and entry for the event is restricted to experienced riders.

Since riding the route of the race would involve so much carrying, and there are quite a few miles of road as well, you may be better off to devise your own route and set up an ATB Enduro, or just a jaunt . . . or something.

If you're still keen, for details contact:

JOHN RAWNSLEY  
18 ASHFIELD AVENUE SHIPLEY  
WEST YORKSHIRE BD18 3AL

Dear MakingTRACKS

Ever been Framed?

I remember vividly the thrills I got from my first ATB, an '83 Ridgeback, and how sad I was upon its eventual demise.

I still experience those same emotions; and when last year I bought an ATB as a road bike to use alongside my HighPath (which I prefer to keep for off road only), I was very proud of it.

You can imagine my distress when, after only one month of road use (around London I admit) my frame developed some serious cracks, (Ain't all frame cracks serious? - Ed).

Credit to the Manufacturers; they believed my story and replaced the frame free of charge.

OK so far . . .

But, how would you feel if within a month the second frame did the same thing?

I was annoyed.

However, this time the Manufacturers showed no interest and have not replied to my letters.

Now, this experience has prompted me to consider the broader aspects of this problem; It is all too easy to lay the blame for all problems at the door of the Manufacturers.

Consider for a moment not only how much you paid for your precious bike, but if you paid full list price?

And those fancy new components, did you get a discount as a regular shop customer?

If you did (we all have done at some-time), then you are contributing to the general problem.

Manufacturers and dealers are often under pressure to sell bikes and parts at reduced prices; this filters back through the system, and can lead to "economies" being made.

In the end, they are passed on to us, the consumer.

Think about it.

I would like to hear from anyone else who has suffered similar problems with either frames or components.

After all, no matter what the reason, premature failure is bad enough, but, if many people are experiencing the same failure there should be action taken.

With the advent of the ATB, I believe that many manufacturers are entering an aspect of cycle design in which they have little or no experience. I feel sure that I am not alone in believing this; moreover, I am sure, too, that there are many riders who are unaware that their frame (or other components) may be set to break - any minute!

First I would ask you to check your bike thoroughly (giving it a good clean can kill two birds . . .) and then, if you find any suspicious minute, hairlines in the paintwork - write to me c/o MakingTRACKS and contact the shop where you bought it, they are responsible for handling such things.

So please write in, this campaign for better quality is a campaign that should benefit all!

JAMES WALTERS

BRISTOL

PS (In particular I would like to hear from the rider who I met on the QQ Fun Ride whose bike was suffering from a problem relating to the headstock).

When the larger manufacturers entered the ATB market, they did so for one reason - money. With that as their main criterion, there are bound to be problems.

It has been said that the products of one major ATB manufacturer are exceptionally functional - their function is to get sold! Beyond that, well . . .

Despite the consumer legislation of recent years, it seems that when buying an ATB, caviat emptor applies (buyer beware). This is

mainly because it is difficult, nay, impossible, to determine reasonable use of an ATB.

Anyway, you seem to have a substantial case, which would be reinforced by getting together with others suffering the same, or similar problems.

As I understand it, your primary aim is not to seek retribution, but to bring about a change in attitude within the cycle industry, that we may have the choice of some more appropriate machinery than is at present available: namely the ATB clone.

This change is long, long overdue.

GEOFF, IAN & TONY

Dear MakingTRACKS

The reason I am writing this letter is I would like to purchase some protective clothing of Gortex material. Since there is a wide choice mainly aimed at the walking fraternity, I wondered if there were any points that I should look for or any items that you could recommend.

I have read the magazine since issue 7 when clothing was mentioned in an article outlining general points. I find the magazine very interesting and look forward to reading each new issue.

D HILL SHEFFIELD

Firstly, don't restrict yourself to Gortex; there are quite a few materials on the market claiming similar properties (Aquatex, Pertex, Ventile - to name but three).

Secondly, go for a jacket specifically designed for cycling, rather than a general outdoors one, as this is more likely to have the features that cater for the cyclists needs - usefully located and sized pockets, extra long back, plenty of shoulder room, tight cuffs etc, etc.

You'll have to search through all the magazines and catalogues to see what is available, and make a shortlist from these.

In our experience, none of these materials works perfectly all the time, and some have drawbacks that worry one person, but not another.

We sympathise with your dilemma, all the members of the MakingTRACKS team have gone through this process, and each has come up with a solution that suits them, but no other member - its that personal.

TONY SILVER

Dear MakingTRACKS

I've been looking for a mountain bike club in my area for quite some time. I would like to meet fellow bikers and race my Muddy Fox Courier.

I would be very grateful if you could put me in touch with a contact. I am fourteen, and very keen.

MIKE SCOBIE BRIGHTON

There are quite a number of ATB'ers along the south coast, as you re probably aware. We contacted Rayment Cycles who will be happy to put you in touch with other riders.

There is also a XCC Club Regular Monthly Ride [RMR] going from Hickstead on the fourth Sunday of each month - check Events Listing for further details.

If you are in the same predicament as Mike, why not contact your local shop, see if they are ATB minded, and if they would become the local notice board.

Setting up a club can be a tedious process, with administration and formalities overriding jolly cycling and fun - well organised informality is probably the key for the next few years, after which there will have to be a degree of formality, but all in good time!

GEOFFREY APPS

Dear MakingTRACKS

In response to reader Frank Joyce's letter regarding off-road touring abroad, perhaps my recent experience could be of assistance.

Like Frank I was growing tired of carrying rucsacs and I bought an MTB 18 months ago and I am now completely hooked on off-road cycling.

Last year I did the Coast-to-Coast walk on an MTB and I have just returned from a two week mountain bike holiday in Crete. On both tours I used panniers on a rear rack together with a stuff sac. In Crete this arrangement worked very well because most of the riding was on unsurfaced roads or tracks with reasonable surfaces and fairly gentle inclines. The trip was mainly a recce for future visits to establish the scope for off-road riding, because of the absence of decent large scale maps. The conclusion; that Crete has a great potential for off-road touring and I plan to go back there in the autumn.

Back in the UK, on the Coast-to-Coast trip, the panniers proved to be a nuisance. On many tracks and bridleways, there are steep climbs, fences, stiles, locked gates etcetera, to negotiate, which often means that the bike has to be carried. With panniers the bike becomes heavy and difficult to handle in my usual way, with the seat tube across my shoulders. Furthermore, the weight of the panniers means that the bike becomes difficult to manage on downhill descents.

Halfway across on the Coast-to-Coast, I converted to a rucsac and I am now convinced that it is the best way to carry loads when off-road touring. It removes the load from the bike, which helps maintain the handling characteristics, allowing the rider to manoeuvre his body-weight to suit the ground conditions. Another advantage is that, when the bike has to be carried, the seat tube can sit comfortably on top of the sac.

In addition, on both tours, my Karrimor Aluminium rack broke and the Kalahari Mountain Pannier support bar kept bending. Both were replaced, but I have now dispensed with them.

So Frank, I would recommend that you stick with your rucsac, in combination with a small stuffsac or handlebar bag for items you need in a hurry.

I use a light skiing sac for day tours which sits close on the back and does not move around. For bigger loads a large capacity well-designed backpacking sac would be satisfactory.

As for travelling on an aeroplane; we experienced no problems when flying to Crete. All we did was to turn the handlebars straight, remove the pedals and let the air out of the tyres. No damage was done to the bikes apart from the odd scratch and the ground crew at Luton could not have been more helpful. I do not think that dismantling the bikes as much as you advise in issue 13 is necessary, and one has to bear in mind the time required to put the bike back together in the Customs hall.

So Frank should not hesitate to get a good bike and set off into the hills.

G LONGSTAFF STOCKTON ON TEES

PS I have been using the Elite Boot Carrier now for 6 months - only one problem; the foam pads on the feet creep and have to be repositioned.

Such a comprehensively written letter hardly requires comment, except to say that my suggestion for the packing of a bike for air transport is only that: a suggestion.

Nevertheless, it is not a bad idea to do it, because it covers for the worst situation, and may, in any case, be necessary for the transfer from airport to final destination. Also, with very little practice, the reassembly took about twenty minutes.

GEOFFREY APPS

Dear MakingTRACKS

I am grateful for the mention of my translation of "Pierre Michaux and his Sons" in Issue 13.

I found it a pity that the review of the work was unsigned. I should have liked to be able to ask the writer why he or she seemed to think that there was some doubt about the Michaux invention. I agree that Macmillan and Lefevre preceeded Michaux, but that is not even referred to by Jean Althuser.

It would be interesting, too, to know why the review said that the translation was by Roland Sauvaget and Derek Roberts. Although I naturally offered to produce the work as a joint effort Roland would not hear of it; he said that I had done the translating and he had merely made a few suggestions.

Anonymity in a reviewer is bad enough generally; when it is in the field of cycling history, where there are very few who are competent to pass judgment, it is even more unpleasant.

DEREK ROBERTS  
THE SOUTHERN VETERAN  
CYCLING CLUB  
THE FELLOWSHIP OF  
CYCLING OLD-TIMERS MITCHAM  
PS I see that the Country Cycling Club is still cross about something. I expect that the Rough-Stuff Fellowship is cross about being called rough.

That which appeared was not a 'review' - it was simply a statement of what is available (and may be suitable for review) containing no specific criticisms or comments on its content. The nature of our introduction serves to encourage readers of MakingTRACKS to consider purchase and possibly to send in a review - with a slant towards the cross country cyclist.

We look forward to receiving that review (a copy will be sent to you prior to publication) and apologise for any misunderstanding.

GEOFFREY APPS

MakingTRACKS

Thank you for reviewing the first Shimano Mountain Trail. Your correspondent obviously spent some time researching the story and we are particularly pleased that the Forestry Commission had fears allayed, and saw that mountain bikers are reasonable human beings.

Criticisms made in the review have been noted and are to be eliminated from future events.

For the record, and for the honour of the seniors who bust their guts to get round the Shimano Mountain Trail, can I correct the Veterans results list: 1 Mike Mackie; 2 Jim McIlwaine; 3 Trevor Boylan.

Congratulations on a bigger, better MakingTRACKS. See you all out there, somewhere.  
MAX GLASKIN TELFORD  
PS The Mountain Bike Club has a new phone number for all enquiries - 01-378 1944.

Dear MakingTRACKS

I would like to express my appreciation to staff at MakingTRACKS for providing an informative and comprehensive magazine.

Is there any chance of a collection of TRACKFAX routes published in booklet form?

I eagerly await the next issue of the magazine. WELL DONE MakingTRACKS!  
DOUG LONEY CHUDLEIGH

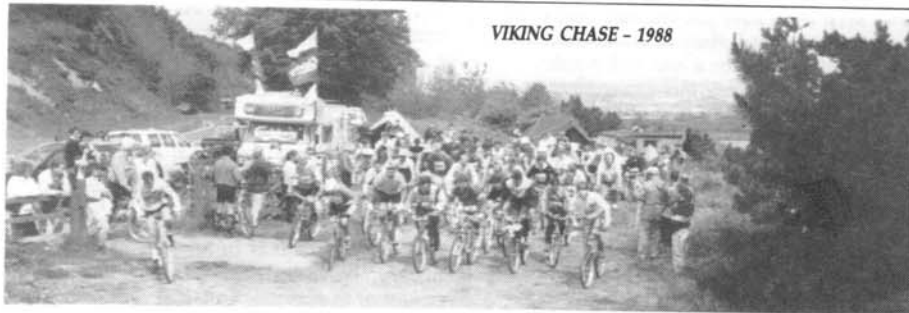
Thanks for your comments, Doug; there are, indeed, plans to publish our TRACKFAX in one volume, at some future date.

However, many of them are incorporated in The Off-Road Bicycle Book, published by Leading Edge - as advertised in last issue.

TONY SILVER

# Events

Reports on recent competitive events and a round-up of the major ones taking place over the next two months; and the most comprehensive events listing in the UK.



VIKING CHASE - 1988

Graham Longstaff

This year's Race went off very smoothly, helped, no doubt by good organisation and a limited entry.

After the mass start in Ingleby Forest, the course involved a variety of terrain, and the field quickly divided into two distinct groups; the racers and the funsters - the latter helping the former with running repairs.

There was only one casualty - Neil Craggs, and another competitor - Colin Armstrong completed more

than half the race with a punctured tyre. The eventual winner and second place were neck and neck until the final downhill, where Paul Dunn's local knowledge gave him the edge over Andy Stephenson.

Next Year? Same time, same place, and the entry list will be increased to 90!

Graham Longstaff



Chip Rimmer

**Can man outrun horse?** That was the challenge laid down in the Neuadd Arms in Llanwrtyd Wells, Powys, by two local drinkers discussing the relative merits of whether runner could beat horse over a course transverse the rigours of the Welsh terrain.

In 1982, the 22 mile course was amended slightly to offer a more even match between horse and runner and it was in that year that a runner came closest to beating the horse, just 4 minutes separated them. In 1985 mountain bikes were introduced into the argument to help spice matters up and Jacquie Phelan finished first in 2:07, beating the first runner by a minute, but sadly 27 minutes behind the horse Jenny!

William Hill, the bookmakers put up £10,000 to see if the horse could be beaten by either a runner or biker, (£6,000 on offer to runners and £4,000 to bikers), though on past performances, the likelihood of an athlete or a cyclist romping home with the money were pretty slim.

Llanwrtyd Wells is situated in one of the most picturesque parts of the country and the ambience of 'Britain's smallest town' is one of tranquility and friendliness for the most of the year, but in the first week of June the town comes alive, as spectators line the main square to watch the spectacle that this year was blessed with blue skies and warm winds. Experience has shown that the warmer the weather the better are the chances for the runners and cyclists, as horses begin to overheat and slow down when it is hot. Mountain bikers revelled in the conditions, confident that the going was near ideal. The runners were happy to chat away and discuss last week's performances.

The staggered start saw the 150 mountain bikers off first, followed by the runners and then, at 1 minute intervals, the much-despised horses who seem to generate little support from the spectators and actually get 'booed' by some as they ride off.

Watching the horses, riders and runners together

was quite a sight. Uphill, the runners would visibly slow down, whilst bikers would select their lowest gear and grind their way up, bobbing up and down, mud flying. The horses were so powerful; they'd gallop straight up the steepest hill - runners and bikers could only look in awe at the quadrupeds, whose breathing was often reminiscent of a poorly-maintained diesel engine with blocked injectors, such was the noise.

The majority of the field was made up of fun-runners and weekend mountain bikers out simply to finish and if possible beat one of the 20 or so horses. For many, just beating one horse would be sufficient to satisfy. However, only the very fit and skilled manage to do so; such are the natural and physical advantages horses possess.

The warm tranquil weather made thirsty work for many of the slower runners who were taking more than double the time of the eventual winner, Mark Croasdale. Although there were some retirements, the majority of the running field staggered to the finish, determined to complete the course. Some mountain bikers had trouble; those who carried no spares or tools were done for as soon as mechanical problems occurred, when the choice was one of carrying their bike for the remainder, or accepting defeat and cadging a lift back to the finish.

The post-race atmosphere was pretty subdued, as riders and runners flaked out under the afternoon sun, lapping up the ultra violet rays and soothing their tired and aching limbs. An informal prize-giving presented by Diadora Shoes (*who's she? - Ed*) and William Hill ensured a complete end to a unique event. Some were happy to wait until the pubs closed before MakingTRACKS home.

Preparations for next year's tenth anniversary race are currently underway. Demand for entries will be high and there is a limited number available.

Chip Rimmer



Eric Northwood

An ATB event in London may not raise as many eyebrows as you'd think. There have been at least 3 previous events in the Smoke - in fact, the first *Fat Tyre Five* race was held at Eastway - alongside an HPV race! - way back in late '84, it rained then as well. Nothing changes.

London has its advantages; there are more ATB's sold in London, there is a local Council with a record of sponsoring bike events and it's where I live.

Disadvantages; a lack of mountains, and reputation as a breeding ground for the *Fuddy Mox C\*\*\*\*r*. Eastway does, however, have a good cyclo-cross circuit, and it was upon this, with a few goodies thrown in, that the Bike UK London mountain bike Championship was arranged.

There were good prizes: first prize - Fisher HookieKokie 2000, plus designed by Mike Burrows; a brand-new BioPace, bent, twisted and generally scrunched into a real mess, polished, interwoven with a piece of "bloodstained" barbed wire, fitted so it revolved (*offset!*) on a piece of uncut slate and all mounted on polished wood. It looked brilliant!

The place was full; bikes and riders, all types, some pretty decent iron on show. The new *Moulton ATB* was being prodded by all. I signed on; checked out the course with Andy Pegg and Paul Hinton. A bad move.

As the start flag finally went down on the race I had entered, that old adrenalin surge came through and we were away. Racing along in a group of 80-off riders hammering down a track no more than 12 inches from the next rider takes a toll on your nerves when you realise that you are all heading for a gap at the top of a bank no more than 6 bikes wide. The sight of all those bikes flying in the air together was akin to those films of penguins leaping out of the water that you see on BBC documentaries. One rider fell and was run over so many times he is now a free-lance ATB tyre catalogue. Meanwhile Gould and co were already but a plume of dust and we'd only done about 800m.

The sun was now beaming, the track almost bone dry, and my body temperature already about the same as my race number - 81. We all came to the first big drop

For me, it's a five hour journey to Holford, the tiny village in Somerset, where the Quantock Quest is held each year.

I arrive in the nick of time, *TIRED*; but find the assembly enclosure crowded with cars and campers from the length and breadth of the country, how different from just a few years ago - the ATB scene is really taking off. The buzz of anticipation and excitement gets me going again, as if I'd come from just round the corner.

As usual, the course has been designed by the redoubtable *Tim Flocks*; the sadist (*and masochist too, he takes part himself*) of long-standing - he's very busy - telling everyone how difficult he's made it... thanks Tim.

Eventually, we all make our way to Holford Green, and to the start of the Quest. This year it is incorporated into the Shimano Mountain Trail Series, and, as in some previous races, a grid system is in operation; this time the 20 top riders (*based on someone's calculations - we weren't told whose*) were up the front, with the remaining 80 or so ranged behind, in order of registration. (*the MBC seem to be making things up as they go along!*), thus I find myself at the back of a very big crowd, no chance.

The temperature soars into the eighties, as the start approaches; it's the heat that will be the greatest obstacle today.

The flag falls and I leap forward, dodging the falling and fallen riders, weaving in and out of the sluggish starters, getting snarled up in bottlenecks, whilst the front-runners disappear over the horizon.

The first part is a gruelling climb, and now with the sun beating down. Up on the top of the hills, it is demanding, a landscape of baked sand and rocky outcrops, physically tough, mechanically tough; the sense of speed and cooling breeze, a delight.

followed immediately by a climb. We all shot down the one and up the other, in unison. We all stopped at the same level on the other side. Just as we got off to push, another wave of racers came over the top and charged down upon us. Who knows but they would have made it up the other side? They hit us instead! This sort of pattern continued until the field paced itself out and I took up my expected position towards the rear of the field. At this point I found sparkling wit was being showered upon me, several people were only inches away from the wrong end of a very spectacular mountain bike swallowing trick.

A flash of black and white; Tim Gould shot past, sure as punctures, he was followed in hot pursuit by Vince, Les, Andy and co. To be honest the rest of the race was pretty uneventful. Fast riders passed me, and I fell off, at regular intervals.

There were prizes for those in the top 30 and we were treated to the amusing sight of Vince Edwards 'Team Specialized' being presented with a Fisher race shirt. It was interesting to note the number of road racers amongst the top placings. A prejudiced lot we cyclists, and I was surprised that they could actually bring themselves to ride anything as nasty as a mountain bike.

It was a terrific day out in (eventually) good weather, and it also posed some interesting questions; the race was won by an experienced 'crosser, as opposed to a full-blooder ATBer. As to the course; was it too easy? Could there have been more obstacles (ie, logs etc). I wonder how a 'cross bike would have fared. More to the point; what would the organisers have done if someone had tried to enter on a 'cross bike? What *should* the organisers have done?

Greg Oxenham of Bike UK, had some words on the Mountain Bike Club.

"We sent the Club 6 press releases and plenty of complementary invitations, yet no-one turned up to represent the Club in an official capacity. We also asked for a copy of the club membership list to enable us to invite a lot more people. They refused to give us a copy."

This does seem a bit odd, considering that the MBC claim to be the major representing body for ATBers in the country. We might add here that MakingTRACKS was not invited nor informed. We had to do the legwork.

Apparently, Team Marin refused to take part; they felt the event was a "publicity stunt" for Bike UK. You may have your own opinions but they were the major sponsors. After all, Kelloggs don't sponsor the Tour of Britain because their chairman likes cycling. The programme dealt with this by saying it is hoped they will be consistent, and refuse to enter any Shimano or Specialised sponsored events.

They probably didn't ease the situation by referring to them as *Team Moron!*

Anyway, a most enjoyable day out and well done to all involved. Sorry to anyone who was held up by me plodding along in the narrow bits, but I'm getting a little old for this racing lark!

**Ian Sheen**

The last section of the course begins with a rather technical descent off a cliff and into woodland, along by a stream - some log-jumps - and, oh, relief, shelter from the burning sun, but flies, flies, flies! Picking up speed I find myself splashing across the stream in places, then, when the stream is swollen, towards the bottom, a twenty meter run right down the middle, brilliant, well done Tim!!

Out of the other side, down the track and we're back at Holford Green and the end of lap one.

**OH NO WE'RE NOT!**

Some kind soul has removed part of the course markings, half the field have taken the wrong route.

Nothing for it but to restart the race, and here the expertise of Jeremy Torr and co., comes into action. Even so, we manage to get under way again within the hour, and we've two laps to complete!

As the day draws on, and I'm doing the same long grind for the third time, I begin to wonder why I'm here; there *must* be pleasanter ways of competing on my bike on a sunny Sunday afternoon. And looking around, at the various bodies and bikes strewn about the course, I hazard that I'm not the only one thinking this way.

I grow weaker by the minute, but at last, here we go, down into the woods for a final time, and on into that section of stream, cooling, refreshing, ah!

Sunburnt, dehydrated, I cross the line thirty third.

A worthy event, well designed, fairly well organised, but some fairer method of starting must be found, soon!

**Geoff Ibison**



Graham Waller

"Have a go" they all said. "It's easy!" Not persuaded, in 1987 I stood and watched the antics of the trials riders, but by the end of a thoroughly enjoyable day, I was determined; next year I would have a go, it didn't look too difficult.

1988 Wendover Bash dawned very quickly, still with little trials experience between us, Tim and I arrived, rather early, to sign on.

"The only woman to sign on so far" an encouraging face told me. I knew I was a member of a rare breed - a female mountain biker - but I hadn't realised we were rapidly becoming extinct! Were trials events as easy as I had persuaded myself to believe? At that moment my confidence was entirely shattered by a rider impersonating a mad March hare, bunny hopping in every direction with the greatest control and ease! Was this what it was all about?

Onward to the bike check, all fine, but then I never was in any doubt about the bike.

We were handed our course cards for the qualifying round. Penalty points are given for dabbling, footing and looping, wonderful technical terms set out in the rules, what reading that was! Up to a maximum of 5 points for total failure, everyone was to aim for the big fat zero - the less you score, the better you are.

"Walk the course" the MakingTRACKS article had said, we were not too sure if this was a good idea... still better the devil you know than the one you don't.

Section 1 - a straightforward little section with a right angle turn uphill in the middle, nothing too tricky, things looking good.

Section 2 - what? Hop a log, sounds fairly easy, except this particularly slippery log was sitting at a hideously shallow angle to the path. No chance.

By Section 3 I had given up, and I was only walking the course. Even Tim agreed the sections looked "tricky" - a cool way of putting the situation.

Nothing for it but to go grab the bike and get on with it. On the way I spied another girl, good for her, the breed isn't dead yet (though it may be by the end of the afternoon).

Just before collecting our bikes we decided to have a quick look at the expert sections.

"You can't ride that" - "What, down there?" Rabbit holes - large, tree roots - very slippery, drop offs - very high - and that was just on one section. We both decided to stick to the novice sections.

With excellent organisation the event got underway, everyone disappearing into the trees to start at one or another of the sections and work their way round.

It's one thing to plough your way through a wood on a jaunt or in a race, but quite another to pick your way carefully without putting your feet down. I returned my card to the event control, knowing full well I was a novice; Tim on the other hand had scored the big fat 0 - guess where he ended up; with the experts.

A strong cup of tea was called for, all provided on site, and then back to the bike. After all I must be able to improve on that last score! I patted Tim on the back as he set off, bike on shoulder, up the 45 degree slope to the expert sections.

I stood and watched the various techniques being used, successful and unsuccessful, and at the variety of bikes and riders around me. Youngsters, oldsters, experienced, and inexperienced; bikes with little equipment, with everything including mudguards and panniers.

A voice from the trees shouts "Next!". Off I go, carefully picking my way around Section 1. No problem and a score 0 to prove it!

Section 2, the dreaded log was somewhat different as I found myself straddled across the log, maximum score.

The wood was alive with chatter, helpful hints coming from all directions.

"Take this line" "Go steady" "Watch out for that root!" "Course you can do it".

By the end of my third and final round I was feeling very pleased with myself, I had even cleared that impossible log!

I still had some time to stand in awe and wonder at the skill of the experts (one day perhaps) and watch the even madder antics of the uphill and downhill riders.

Unlike in racing events where a novice is quickly left behind, on trials the main competition is with yourself and your skill in handling your bike. With so much friendly advice flying around you can't help but improve your skills no matter how meagre!

A week later, the results arrived, Tim eagerly opened the letter, 10th in the experts (and he thought he was a novice!). And me, Julie Ann, 23rd in the novices, but not last. What an enjoyable challenge. There must be few sports where such relaxed pleasure can be had, so cheaply, yet providing considerable satisfaction in achievement, especially for women riders. I'll be back next year - the bug has bitten.

**Julie Anne Holmes**



Captain Chandler

Essex Cyclo-Trials Club  
Trial to be held on  
**September 18 1988**  
at Billericay, Essex

## ENTRY FORM

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date of birth (or over 21) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Make of bike \_\_\_\_\_

Class: Novice  Intermediate  Expert

Entry fee enclosed:

£1.80 members

£2.30 non-members

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Parent or Guardian \_\_\_\_\_

Date signed \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete and send, with your entry fee and two SAE's to: Mrs A Matthews, 4 Weald Road, Brentwood, Essex, CM14 4SX. (0277) 210284.

Venue details and indemnification will be sent on acceptance.

The Cross-Country Cycling Club  
Trial to be held on **October 09 1988**  
at Slindon, Arundel, West Sussex

## ENTRY FORM

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date of birth (or over 21) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Make of bike \_\_\_\_\_

Entry fee enclosed: £5.00

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Parent or Guardian \_\_\_\_\_

Date signed \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete and send, with your entry fee and two SAE's to: Geoff Apps, 5 Old Station Cottages, Ford, West Sussex, BN18 0BJ. (0243) 553404

Venue details and indemnification will be sent on acceptance. Entries close: September 25.

# Roundup

Here we take a look at some of the one-off and competitive events that you may be interested in. If you plan to go, then check our listing for info addresses. Would you like to send us your impressions? Please do. We are especially interested in the woman's point of view.

If the post does its stuff you should get this issue just in time to take it with you to the mega mountain bike event of 1988; **Bicycle Action DIRTY WEEKEND**, set in mildly undulating parkland, on **July 30/31** they are offering two days of **races** at Rudding Park, near **Harrogate**.

Mountain Bike Club members will be making for Swaledale in **Yorkshire** for Round Five of the Shimano **MOUNTAIN TRAIL** over weekend **August 06/07**. To make things simple, the MBC have one big **race**.

That same weekend, on Sunday **August 07** is Round Three of the Specialized **ROCKHOPPER '88** Series, near **Edinburgh**. This is a one-day event and includes **racing & trials**.

Two weeks later, on **August 21** you can go north or south; because on that day the people at Keilder in **Northumberland** are staging an **enduro & jaunt** all round **THE KEILDER CIRCUIT** the country's largest reservoir. And there is the **London** Round Four of the Specialized **ROCKHOPPER '88**. As usual, they will be dishing up **racing & trials** in good measure.

How about a six-day **Enduro** in the **French Alps**? The second **TROPHEE DES ALPES** starts at Albertville on **August 14**.

Winning Club are staging their **WORLD ATB CHAMPIONSHIP** in the **Swiss Alps** on **August 21**, as well.

If you fancy an informal camping long weekend of **jaunts**, down in old **Wiltshire**, then you should join in the XCC Club's **SAVERNAKE SORTIE** which takes place over **August 27/29**.

**September 04** is a busy day down south: we have the Specialized **ROCKHOPPER '88** Round Five taking place in deepest mystical **Middlesex** with their incomparable mix of **racing & trials**.

As well on **September 04** we have a big do on the **South Downs Way**. It's all in aid of the Great Ormond Street Wishing Well Appeal. It's not a race, more a **fast jaunt** for the experts and is a merry fun **jaunt** for the majority.

Over in **Gloucestershire** over the long weekend of **September 09/10/11** the MBC have organised the final round of the Shimano **MOUNTAIN TRAIL** with some long distance **racing** for club members.

**Cornwall** MBR are staging their first **race** meeting near Liskeard on **September 17/18** and on **September 18** Essex Cyclo-Trials Club have one of their regular **trials** events.

Over the weekend of **September 24/25**, Clive Powell will be organising the **RHAYADER 1988 ENDURO**, based around this small town in **Powys**, it should prove to be a good event for allcomers.

Finally, on **September 25** is the classic **THREE PEAKS**, primarily intended for cyclo-crossers, this **race** always attracts a varied field to the area around Ribblesdale in **Yorkshire**.



# Event Listing

For those new to the *MakingTRACKS* Event Listing, here is a brief explanation of how it is laid out:

- 1/ In the first column is the date of the event. Where the event covers more than one day the start date is on top with the finishing date below.
- 2/ The second column shows, first the county in which the event is taking place in bold type, with locale printed in smaller type underneath.
- 3/ The third column shows the name of the organiser or organising club. This is followed by some keywords to help you see what kind of event it is, there are explained in detail below.
- 4/ The fourth column shows the contact name for information, and, under that is the info address.
- 5/ The fifth column has the STD dialling code in brackets, followed underneath by the telephone number of a person who can give you all the relevant information.
- 6/ Finally, column six carries any other details, such as the name of the event and/or entry closing date.

Don't forget to contact us with the dates of your rides if you want them published; please write, phone or fax us before September 05. Here is the glossary of the [key words] used in column three:

[jaunt]	- A non-competitive ride, of moderate distance and pace.
[race]	- Competitive racing.
[trials]	- Competitive observed trials.
[enduro]	- Competitive multi-skill long distance event.
[T&O]	- Competitive timed and/or observed event.
[course]	- Teaching or training in off-road riding skills.
[RMR]	- XCC Club Regular Monthly Ride - open to all, especially first-timers, moderate distance, easy pace, early finish.
[all]	- open to any rider, no need for club membership or expert status.
[club]	- restricted to club members only.
[exp]	- restricted to expert or experienced riders.
[£]	- entry fee payable.
[TBC]	- certain details 'to be confirmed'.

## J U L Y

Event Date	County Locale	Organiser Type	Contact Address	STD code Telephone	Details Information
<b>30</b> <b>31</b>	<b>YORKSHIRE</b> Harrogate	Bicycle Action [race] [all] [£]	Rudding Park Rollifoot Yorkshire	01 997 8887	The 'Dirty' Weekend
<b>31</b>	<b>SURREY</b> to <b>SUSSEX</b>	XCC Club [jaunt] [all]	Jason Smith	01 888 4563	Downs Link Return by train
<b>31</b>	<b>WEST SUSSEX</b> Arundel	XCC Club [jaunt] [all] [RMR]	Geoffrey Apps 5 Old Station Cotts Ford Arundel BN18 0BJ	(0243) 553404	

## A U G U S T

Event Date	County Locale	Organiser Type	Contact Address	STD code Telephone	Details Information
<b>02</b>	<b>BUCKINGHAMSHIRE</b> High Wycombe	XCC Club [jaunt] [all]	David Walker 3 Plumer Road High Wycombe HP11 2SS	(0494) 20115	10 mile evening jaunt, ending at a Pub. Meet at 5pm.
<b>06</b> <b>07</b>	<b>YORKSHIRE</b> [TBC]	MBC [race] [club] [£]	MBC HQ 3 The Shrubbery Albert Street Telford TF2 9AS	(0952) 610158	Round Five 1988 Shimano Mountain Trail

Keilder Tourism Development Action Programme

Berghaus and Keilder Bikes

Event to be held on **August 21 1988**  
at Keilder Reservoir, Northumberland

## ENTRY FORM

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Category:  Elite  
 Novices  
 Team

Are you a member of a cycling organisation? If yes, please indicate \_\_\_\_\_

I would/would not like information about accommodation. \_\_\_\_\_

Please enclose £3.00 to cover individual entry and an additional £1.00 if you are entering as part of a team. All cheques payable to 'Help the Aged' and sent **with a stamped addressed envelope** to: Help the Aged, Rutland House, 38/42 Call Lane, Leeds LS6 6DT.

Venue details and sponsor sheet will be sent on acceptance.

## The Mountain Bike Club THE GREAT ORMOND STREET CHALLENGE

Along the South Downs Way  
on **September 04 1988**

## ENTRY FORM (abridged)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date of birth (or over 21) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Entry fee enclosed: £5.00 members  
£25.00 teams

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete and send, with your entry fee to: GOSH, On Your Bike, 52/54 Tooley Street, London Bridge, London SE1.

Full details, application form, sponsor sheet and indemnification will be sent on acceptance.



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**26 Hamilton Place, Edinburgh**  
**EH3 0EU**

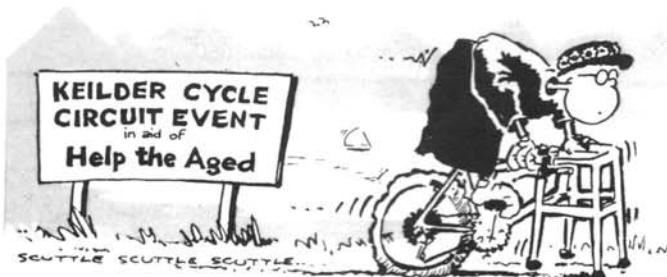
## Event Listing

cont . . .

### AUGUST

cont . . .

Event Date	County Locale	Organiser Type	Contact Address	STD code Telephone	Details Information
07	SCOTLAND Edinburgh	Caratt Sport (trials) (race) (all) [E]	Matt Mills Unit 49 Waverly Road Beeches Ind Estate Yate Bristol BS17 5QZ	(0454) 273733	Round Three: Specialized Rockhopper '88 Series
07	BUCKINGHAMSHIRE Wendover	XCC Club (jaunt) (all) [RMR]	Chris Morgan 69 Stoke Road Aylesbury Bucks HP21 8BL	(0296) 86650	The longest running regular ride in the UK
07	LANCASHIRE Tochales	XCC Club (jaunt) (all) [RMR]	Steve Wilde 32 Lord Street Mall Blackburn Lancs BB2 3QJ	(0254) 54230	
09	BUCKINGHAMSHIRE High Wycombe	XCC Club (jaunt) (all)	David Walker 3 Plumer Road High Wycombe HP11 2SS	(0494) 20115	10 mile evening jaunt, ending at a Pub. Meet at 7pm.
14 20	FRANCE Albertville to Val d'Isere	FLASE (enduro) [E] (all)	3 Villa des Sablons 92200 Neuilly sur Seine FRANCE	010 331 46 24 49 12	1988 Thophee des Alpes 6 day rally
14	SURREY Guildford	XCC Club (jaunt) (all) [RMR]	James Tatlow	(0483) 69574	Meet: 11am Britannia Pub Car Park
14	WORCESTERSHIRE Malvern	XCC Club (jaunt) (all) [RMR]	Adrian Ashmore-Price Little Cot 2 Narrow Walk Whittington WR5 ???	(0905) 360309	
14	GLOUCESTERSHIRE Forest of Dean	XCC Club (jaunt) (all) [RMR]	Chris Croft 407 Soundwell Road Kingswood Bristol BS15 1JW	(0272) 607757	
14	CUMBRIA Ulverston	XCC Club (jaunt) (all) [RMR]	Julian Dyson 5 Duke Street Gleaston Ulverston Cumbria LA12 0QF	(0229) 88621	
14	GLOUCESTERSHIRE Tetbury	XCC Club (jaunt) (all) [RMR]	Mervyn Phipps 10 Cookspool Tetbury Glos GL8 8RF	(0666) 53727	
14	SURREY Guildford	XCC Club (jaunt) (all)	Jason Smith	01 688 4563	Meet: 09.45am Railway Station
14	DERBYSHIRE Chesterfield	YMC (jaunt) (club)	John Stevenson	(0532) 456867	Linacre Reservoir and the moor
16	BUCKINGHAMSHIRE High Wycombe	XCC Club (jaunt) (all)	David Walker 3 Plumer Road High Wycombe HP11 2SS	(0494) 20115	10 mile evening jaunt, ending at a Pub. Meet at 7pm.
21	NORTHUMBERLAND Keilder	KTDAP (enduro) (jaunt) (all)	Jule Nelson Bellingham Northumberland NE48 2BQ	(0660) 20643	Charity Event in aid of Help the Aged.
21	LONDON Eastway	Caratt Sport (trials) (race) (all) [E]	Matt Mills Unit 49 Waverly Road Beeches Ind Estate Yate Bristol BS17 5QZ	(0454) 273733	Round Four: Specialized Rockhopper '88 Series
21	HAMPSHIRE New Forest	XCC Club (jaunt) (all) [RMR]	Mike Carpenter Aurora New Inn Road Bartley SO4 2LR	(0703) 813474	
21	DERBYSHIRE Hayfield	XCC Club (jaunt) (all) [RMR]	John Summerscales 68 Bolshaw Road Heald Green Cheshire SK8 3PD	061 437 8500	
21	BEDFORDSHIRE Luton	XCC Club (jaunt) (all) [RMR]	Mark Cottle 37 Capron Road Luton Beds LU4 9BU	(0582) 596557	
21	SWITZERLAND	Winning Club (race) (trials) (event) [E]	11 Well Lane East Sheen London SW14 7AE	01 392 1537	ATB World Championships Final Round



# Event Listing

cont . . .

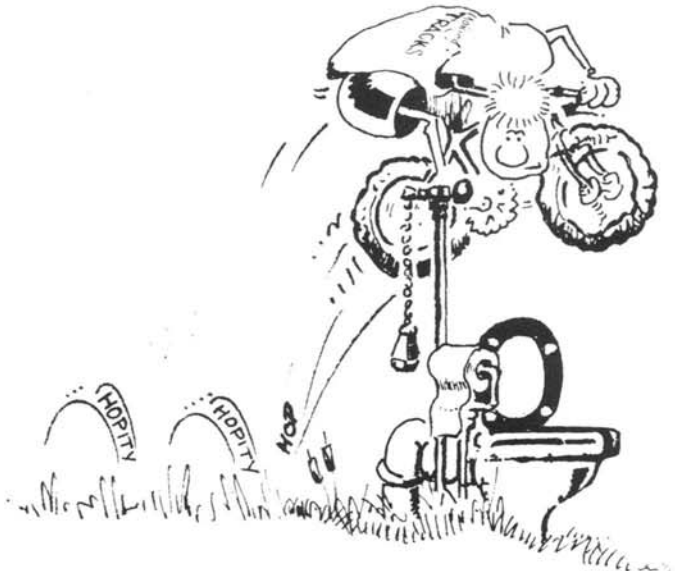
## AUGUST

cont . . .

Event Date	County Locale	Organiser Type	Contact Address	STD code Telephone	Details Information
23	BUCKINGHAMSHIRE High Wycombe	XCC Club [jaunt] [all]	David Walker 3 Plumer Road High Wycombe HP11 2SS	(0494) 20115	10 mile evening jaunt, ending at a Pub. Meet at 5pm.
27	WILTSHIRE Savernake Forest	XCC Club [jaunt] [all]	Graham Wallace 16 Beaumont Court Graham Park Colindale NW9 5FR	01 205 4743	Camping and Cycling Weekend
27	SHROPSHIRE Telford	MBC [course] [£]	MBC HQ 3 The Shrubbery Albert Street Telford TF2 9AS	(0952) 610158	Training Course

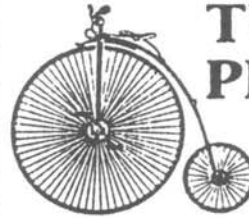


28	BUCKINGHAMSHIRE High Wycombe	XCC Club [jaunt] [all] [RMR]	Paul Joseph	01 459 6060	
28	NORTHUMBERLAND Hexham	XCC Club [jaunt] [all] [RMR]	Alan Kind 45 The Fairway Bruton Park Gosforth Newcastle NE3 5AQ	(0632) 364082	
28	SURREY Box Hill	XCC Club [jaunt] [all] [RMR]	Jason Smith	01 688 4563	Meet: 11am Westhumble Railway Station
28	SUSSEX Hickstead	XCC Club [jaunt] [all] [RMR]	Malcolm Singleton Bramblings Henfield Common Henfield BN5 9RS	(0273) 494195	
28	YORKSHIRE Denby Dale	Yorks MBC [jaunt] [club]	John Stevenson	(0532) 456867	
29	POWYS Llanwrtyd Wells	Red Kite [race] [all] [£]	Rhodri Thomas Red Kite Centre Llanwrtyd Wells Powys LD6 4RB	(05913) 266	1988 Bog Leaping Point-to-Point



## SEPTEMBER

Event Date	County Locale	Organiser Type	Contact Address	STD code Telephone	Details Information
04	MIDDLESEX [TBC]	Caratti Sport [trials] [race] [all] [£]	Matt Mills Unit 49 Waverly Road Beeches Ind Estate Yate Bristol BS17 5QZ	(0454) 273733	Round Five: Specialized Rockhopper 88 Series
04	SUSSEX South Downs Way	MBC [jaunt] [club] [£]	MBC HQ 3 The Shrubbery Albert Street Telford TF2 9AS	(0952) 610158	Charity Ride



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## Event Listing

cont . . .

### S E P T E M B E R

cont . . .

Event Date	County Locale	Organiser Type	Contact Address	STD code Telephone	Details Information
04	BUCKINGHAMSHIRE Wendover	XCC Club [jaunt] [all] [RMR]	Chris Morgan 69 Stoke Road Aylesbury Bucks HP21 8BL	(0296) 86650	The longest running regular ride in the UK
04	LANCASHIRE Tchholes	XCC Club [jaunt] [all] [RMR]	Steve Wild 32 Lord Street Mall Blackburn Lancs BB2 3QJ	(0254) 54230	
05	COPYDATE for Events Calendar Issue 16	Send info to:	The Editor 5 Old Station Cottages Ford Arundel West Sussex BN18 0BJ	(0243) 553404 FAX: (0903) 730715	Help keep the best UK events listing up to date
06	BUCKINGHAMSHIRE High Wycombe	XCC Club [jaunt] [all]	David Walker 3 Plumer Road High Wycombe HP11 2SS	(0494) 20115	10 mile even- ing jaunt, end- ing at a Pub. Meet at Stn 7pm.
09 11	GLOUCESTERSHIRE [TBC]	MBC [race] [£] [club]	MBC HQ 3 The Shrubbery Albert Street Telford TF2 9AS	(0952) 610158	Round Six 1988 Shumano Mountain Trail
11	SURREY Guildford	XCC Club [jaunt] [all] [RMR]	James Tallow	(0483) 69574	Meet 11am Britannia Pub Car Park
11	WORCESTERSHIRE Malvern	XCC Club [jaunt] [all] [RMR]	Adrian Ashmore-Price Little Cot 2 Narrow Walk Whittington WR5 ???	(0905) 360309	
11	YORKSHIRE ??	YMC [jaunt] [club]	Michael Sender	(0924) 400217	Mystery Ride!
11	GLOUCESTERSHIRE Forest of Dean	XCC Club [jaunt] [all] [RMR]	Chris Croft 407 Soundwell Road Kingswood Bristol BS15 1JW	(0272) 607757	
11	YORKSHIRE North York Moors	Cleveland SRT [jaunt] [all]	Graham Longstaff 6 Rushmere Heath Eaglescliff Stockton on Tees Cleveland TS16 9HA	(0642) 787944	Viking Chase re-union
11	CUMBRIA Ulverston	XCC Club [jaunt] [all] [RMR]	Julian Dyson 5 Duke Street Cleaton Ulverston Cumbria LA12 0QF	(0229) 88621	
11	GLOUCESTERSHIRE Tetbury	XCC Club [jaunt] [all] [RMR]	Mervyn Phipps 10 Cookswood Tetbury Glos GL8 8RF	(0666) 53727	
11	SURREY Guildford	XCC Club [jaunt] [all] [RMR]	Jason Smith	01 688 4563	Meet: 09.45am Railway Station
13	BUCKINGHAMSHIRE High Wycombe	XCC Club [jaunt] [all]	David Walker 3 Plumer Road High Wycombe HP11 2SS	(0494) 20115	10 mile even- ing jaunt, end- ing at a Pub. Meet at Stn 7pm.
17 18	CORNWALL Liskeard	Cornwall MBC [race] [£] [club]	Steve Ford	(0579) 43882	
18	ESSEX Billericay	ECTC [trial] [all] [£]	Mrs A Matthews 4 Weald Road Brentwood Essex CM14 4SX	(0277) 210284	
18	HAMPSHIRE New Forest	XCC Club [jaunt] [all] [RMR]	Mike Carpenter Aurora New Inn Road Bartley SO4 2LR	(0703) 813474	
18	DERBYSHIRE Hayfield	XCC Club [jaunt] [all] [RMR]	John Summerscales 58 Bolshaw Road Heald Green Cheshire SK8 3PD	061 437 8500	
18	BEDFORDSHIRE Luton	XCC Club [jaunt] [all] [RMR]	Mark Cottle 37 Capron Road Luton Beds LU4 9BU	(0582) 596557	
20	BUCKINGHAMSHIRE High Wycombe	XCC Club [jaunt] [all]	David Walker 3 Plumer Road High Wycombe HP11 2SS	(0494) 20115	10 mile even- ing jaunt, end at a Pub.
24 25	POWYS Rhayader	XCC Club [enduro] [all] [£]	Clive Powell The Mount East Street Rhayader LD6 5DN	(0597) 810585	Entry Closing Date: Sept 19
25	BUCKINGHAMSHIRE High Wycombe	XCC Club [jaunt] [all] [RMR]	Paul Joseph	01 459 6060	
25	NORTHUMBERLAND Hexham	XCC Club [jaunt] [all] [RMR]	Alan Kind 45 The Fairway Bruton Park Gosforth Newcastle NE3 5AQ	(0632) 364082	
25	SURREY Box Hill	XCC Club [jaunt] [all] [RMR]	Jason Smith	01 688 4563	Meet: 11am Westhumble Railway Station

# Event Listing

cont . . .

## S E P T E M B E R

cont . . .

Event Date	County Locale	Organiser Type	Contact Address	STD code Telephone	Details Information
25	YORKSHIRE Horton-in-Ribblesdale	Bradford RCC [race] [exp] [£]	John Rawnsley 18 Ashfield Avenue Shipley West Yorkshire BD18 3AL	No Phone	The 1988 Three Peaks Cyclo-Cross Classic Entry closing Date: Sept 04
25	SUSSEX Hickstead	XCC Klub [jaunt] [all] [RMR]	Malcolm Singleton Bramblings Henfield Common Henfield BN5 9RS	(0273) 494195	



26	OUT NOW! Issue 16		Sue Hopkins 85 Grafton Road New Malden Surrey KT3 3AA		Be sure of your copy - take out a subscription!
27	BUCKINGHAMSHIRE High Wycombe	XCC Club [jaunt] [all]	David Walker 3 Plumer Road High Wycombe HP11 2SS	(0494) 20115	10 mile even- ing jaunt, end- ing at a Pub. Meet at Stn 7pm.

## O C T O B E R

Event Date	County Locale	Organiser Type	Contact Address	STD code Telephone	Details Information
01	YORKSHIRE Kilnsey	Yorks MBC [jaunt] [club]	John Stevenson	(0532) 456867	Masties Lane Challenge
01 02	CUMBRIA Grizedale Forest	XCC Club [jaunt] [race] [all] [£]	Julian Dyson 5 Duke Street Gleaston Ulverston Cumbria LA12 0QF	(0229) 88621	
01 02	TBC TBC	MBC [race] [club] [£]	MBC HQ 3 The Strubbery Albert Street Telford TF2 9AS	(0952) 610158	Euro-champs Race
02	ESSEX Brentwood	ECTC [trial] [all] [£]	Mrs A Matthews 4 Weald Road Brentwood Essex CM14 4SX	(0277) 210284	
02	BUCKINGHAMSHIRE Wendover	XCC Club [jaunt] [all] [RMR]	Chris Morgan 69 Stoke Road Aylesbury Bucks HP21 8BL	(0296) 86650	The longest running regular ride in the UK
02	LANCASHIRE Tochales	XCC Club [jaunt] [all] [RMR]	Steve Wilde 32 Lord Street Mall Blackburn Lancs BB2 3QJ	(0254) 54230	
08	KENT Bluebell Line	Bike Events [jaunt] [£]	P O Box 75 Bath BA1 1EX	No phone	Steam Train Special (wot a hoot!)
09	WEST SUSSEX Arundel	XCC Club [trials] [£] [all]	Entries Secretary 5 Old Station Cottages Ford Arundel West Sussex BN18 0BJ	(0243) 553404	Observed Trials Championship Entry Closing Date: Sept 25
09	SURREY Guildford	XCC Club [jaunt] [all] [RMR]	James Tatlow	(0483) 69574	Meet: 11am Britannia Pub Car Park
09	WORCESTERSHIRE Malvern	XCC Club [jaunt] [all] [RMR]	Adrian Ashmore-Price Little Cot 2 Narrow Walk Whittington WR5 ???	(0905) 360309	
09	GLOUCESTERSHIRE Forest of Dean	XCC Club [jaunt] [all] [RMR]	Chris Croft 407 Soundwell Road Kingswood Bristol BS15 1JW	(0272) 607757	
09	CUMBRIA Ulverston	XCC Club [jaunt] [all] [RMR]	Julian Dyson 5 Duke Street Gleaston Ulverston Cumbria LA12 0QF	(0229) 88621	
09	GLOUCESTERSHIRE Tetbury	XCC Club [jaunt] [all] [RMR]	Mervyn Phipps 10 Cooks Pool Tetbury Glos GL8 8RF	(0666) 53727	
09	SURREY Guildford	XCC Club [jaunt] [all]	Jason Smith	01 688 4563	Meet: 09.45am Railway Station
10 14	LONDON Earls Court	Exhibition [£]			

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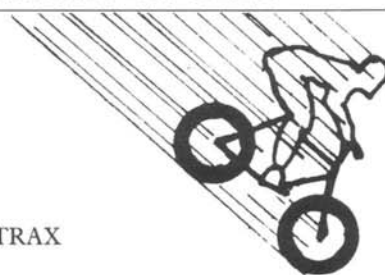
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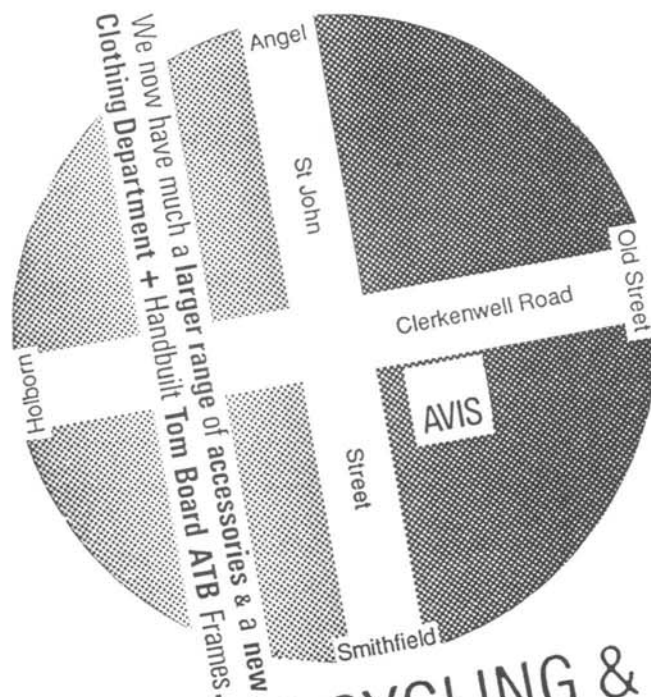
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# Event Listing

cont...

## OCTOBER

cont...

Event Date	County Locale	Organiser Type	Contact Address	STD code Telephone	Details Information
16	NORTH YORKSHIRE Hebden	YMC [jaunt] [club]	John Stevenson	(0532) 456867	
16	HAMPSHIRE New Forest	XCC Club [jaunt] [all] [RMR]	Mike Carpenter Aurora New Inn Road Bartley SO4 2LR	(0703) 813474	
16	DERBYSHIRE Hayfield	XCC Club [jaunt] [all] [RMR]	John Summerscales 88 Bolshaw Road Heald Green Cheshire SK8 3PD	061 437 8500	
16	BEDFORDSHIRE Luton	XCC Club [jaunt] [all] [RMR]	Mark Conle 37 Capron Road Luton Beds LU4 9BU	(0582) 596657	
23	BUCKINGHAMSHIRE High Wycombe	XCC Club [jaunt] [all] [RMR]	Paul Joseph	01 459 6060	
23	NORTHUMBERLAND Hexham	XCC Club [jaunt] [all] [RMR]	Alan Kind 45 The Fairway Bruton Park Cosforth Newcastle NE3 5AQ	(0632) 364082	
23	SURREY Box Hill	XCC Club [jaunt] [all] [RMR]	Jason Smith	01 688 4563	Meet: 11am Westhumble Railway Station
23	SUSSEX Hickstead	XCC Club [jaunt] [all] [RMR]	Malcolm Singleton Bramblings Hentfield Common Hentfield BN5 9RB	(0273) 494195	
29	SURREY and SUSSEX	CTC [jaunt] [all] [£]	Chris Juden 7 Lianaway Close Parncombe Surrey GU7 3ED	(04868) 25794	CTC Autumn ATB Tour
30	SURREY Caterham	De Laune CC [race] [£]	Francis Thurmer 181 Lower Clapton Rd London E8 8ER	01 986 2065	North Downs Bash '88
30	WEST SUSSEX Arundel	XCC Club [jaunt] [all]	Geoffrey Appes 5 Old Station Cottages Ford Arundel West Sussex BN18 0BJ	(0243) 533404	FAX: (0903) 730715
31	COPYDATE for Events Calendar Issue 17	Send info to:	The Editor 5 Old Station Cottages Ford Arundel West Sussex BN18 0BJ	(0243) 533404 FAX: (0903) 730715	Help keep the best UK events listing up to date

## NOVEMBER

Event Date	County Locale	Organiser Type	Contact Address	STD code Telephone	Details Information
XCC Club [RMR]'s continue as usual					
05	DEVON Onery St Mary	MBC [jaunt] [£] [club]	MBC HQ 3 The Shrubbery Albert Street Telford TF2 9AS	(0952) 610158	Burning Barrel ride
06	DERBYSHIRE Bakewell	YBC [jaunt] [club]	Stefan Tbkarski	(0532) 550010	
20	WEST YORKSHIRE Meltham	YBC [jaunt] [club]	John Stevenson	(0532) 456867	
21	OUT NOW! Issue 17	Send info to:	Sue Hopkins 55 Grafton Road New Malden Surrey KT3 3AA		Be sure of your copy - take out a subscription!

## DECEMBER

Event Date	County Locale	Organiser Type	Contact Address	STD code Telephone	Details Information
04	BUCKINGHAMSHIRE Wendover	XCC Club [jaunt] [all] [RMR]	Chris Morgan 89 Stoke Road Aylesbury Bucks HP21 8BL	(0296) 86650	Birthday Special - with tea & cake party afterwards £3.25 for food
11	NORTH YORKSHIRE Ripley	YBC [jaunt] [club]	Stephan Tbkarski	(0532) 550010	
19	COPYDATE for Events Calendar Issue 18	Send info to:	The Editor 5 Old Station Cottages Ford Arundel West Sussex BN18 0BJ	(0243) 533404 FAX: (0903) 730715	Help keep the best UK events listing up to date

Dear MakingTRACKS,  
 I'm cycling to the shops with  
 my friend next Thursday. Please  
 enter this on your events  
 Listing.. Yours etc **MAX**



# Another Letter....

Dear MakingTRACKS

I would like to make two points which arise from the contents of issue 13:

1) Surely it would have been possible to find someone unconnected with HighPath to review the Highlight.

I, and several friends, found it rather surprising that the article was written by the designer/builder, and was not limited to an objective statement of the bike's design/construction etcetera.

Instead it included glowing praise of its performance, perhaps best left to owners/riders.

Can we expect to see Muddy Foxes reviewed by their Public Relations Person?

If not - why not?

2) Adrian Hepworth says in his response to "Another Letter . . ." that publishing the name of an errant company " . . . serves no [useful] purpose in demonstrating the error of their ways . . .".

Is there a connection between this and the small ad for a libel expert for MakingTRACKS?

All those I have spoken to want names named! Apart from meeting the 'victims', how are we to learn from their bad experiences?

Apart from these moans, you produce an excellent magazine - please keep up the standards.

BRIAN MORRIS &  
STEPHANIE KEY

SKIPTON

Our inclusion of a review of a HighPath Highlight was by reader demand; who better to describe it than the designer/builder?

I have just re-read the article very carefully, and David's input is plain statement of fact, 99.9999% objective.

The comments given by owners were subjective in the extreme, mainly because the bikes were made specifically for them; we make no apology for this, whatsoever.

The work being done by David, and other bike designers and builders, is setting standards for the future of the ATB. I can tell you that no fortunes are made here, just lots and lots and lots of damn hard work. What is not needed are the pathetic whinings of twerps.

The kind of rubbish turned out by 'Public Relations Persons' was one of the prime reasons for the creation of MakingTRACKS; to incorporate such material would be a step backwards, a worthless exercise.

Are you two trying to send MakingTRACKS right down the pan?? Libel suits run into hundreds of thousands, if you and your chums want to risk it, get out there and name names. For everyone else, there is always a cryptic clue to the identity of the offending business, look at the appropriate page again.

GEOFFREY APPS

OK, so that's what you think; this is what I think, and I'm not looking through rose tinted spectacles, but I am going to cut through all the hype that the invasion of ATB clones has brought with it.

Back in the days when Bicycle Action was first launched, I, too, was carried away with the then new-wave of cycling that came to be known as Mountain Biking.

Mountain bikes, I was told, were invented in the USA and " . . . are now available in the UK" . . . well almost. The price was sky-high by the standards of the day - on a par with a top racing machine, for what appeared to be not much more than a very basic tough tourer.

I was enthused. So keen, in fact, that I badgered F W Evans at Kingston, until I secured a test ride on the very first Mountain Bike to cross their threshold. They had to stamp the frame number - 001 - before I could take it for my 24 hour spin.

This mountain bike, for me, promised a new lease of cycling life! Alas, fat tyres and low gears were not enough, I quickly realised there was more to successfully cycling, once

you ventured off road, than this. It failed its test on a number of points.

- 1) Uncomfortable:  
When off-road I wanted to hold my body upright, but I found the flat, stretched out position put a strain on my lower back, forced my head back, resulting in both neck and wrist strain.
- 2) Ground Clearance:  
Although this bike had a relatively high bottom bracket, I was, nevertheless, grounding the pedals, and hitting tree roots and rocks with them.
- 3) Poor Braking:  
Cantilevers were raved about, but they still didn't have the reliability and braking character that I required off-road.
- 4) Poor frame clearances:  
Not only did mud build up and clog around the forks and stays, but the chain line in bottom gear was far too close to the rear tyre. This in turn collected mud from the tyre and generally distributed it all over the transmission and gear system.
- 5) No mudguards:  
And insufficient clearance to fit them, and keep the wheels turning in mud.
- 6) Poor Grip:  
The tyres were of the ubiquitous skinwall type; as soon as you let some air out to improve traction, the sidewalls collapsed, and the ride became very wobbly.

I soon afterwards discovered the Cleland bikes - designed in England, built for this muddy country of ours - and was amazed; they had solved all these problems, their design work was clearly well in advance of the mountain bike.

I bought one!

Typical of British initiative, Cleland were unable to secure sufficient funding to continue production, and when further production problems came to light, Cleland cycles had to throw in the towel, stand aside and let the wave of Californian/Japanese machinery receive all the hype, the praise, the media coverage . . .

Someone else who bought a Cleland was the aforementioned David Wrath-Sharman. A matter of days and he set to work improving on the machine, refining the already well-developed Cleland.

But still the cycling world shunned the ideas, the design.

The result is that HighPath was formed to build the new Clelands, to an uncompromising quality. If a part does not exist, then it is designed, made, tested and finished by hand. VERY expensive, VERY time-consuming, but always taking a step towards the perfect cross-country bicycle.

But still no megabucks, no hype, no large scale production. So the work continues, but numbers are VERY limited.

I said at the beginning of the reply that I would cut through the hype, but in regard to HighPath bikes, there is no hype. HighPath has one goal; to create the ultimate cross-country bicycle. This implies that each machine created is something of a prototype, and not a fully developed bicycle.

To give you an idea of the developments going on, here are a few:

- A) Fully enclosed transmission system which is mounted outside the frame for ease of maintenance etc., and gears which can be changed whether pedalling forwards or backwards!
- B) Front suspension, fully damped, with a correcting geometry to allow for wheelbase/trail dimension stability, and incorporating an anti-dive mechanism.
- C) Hub brakes so lightweight that they are lighter than 'U' brakes (lighter than cantilevers is a tall order!). A prototype set has already been made, and future development could include a dynamo.
- D) Folding frame, but with large wheels.

All this development work is going on without any financial backing whatsoever; to be at the leading edge of a new sport/pastime is exciting, expensive and often frustrating - people like Muddy Fox will, in days to come, be cashing-in on this hard work, but they won't have had to do the graft, foot the bills.

It is also exciting, expensive and often frustrating if you are supporting this development by purchasing one of said machines; if you speak to any owner of a HighPath, you can be sure that they are very happy with what they have got for their money. However, they are more than likely to criticise the design/build turnaround and the after-sales service both of which are inordinately slow.

What more can you expect from one man alone, working from a garden workshop, developing ATB's that are three generations away; to quote the many who have borrowed my HighPath,

"One day, all off-road bikes will be designed like this".

GRAHAME WHITE

I'll start at the end and thank you for your comment there.

Working backwards through your letter, I agree with Adrian, mainly because if we did name the company involved, it would pinpoint the source of the problem. We hope, that by not naming names, all cycle shops and businesses who read it, will be put on their toes. Its all too easy to point the finger, and ignore the shortcomings closer to home.

Personally I am perplexed by your feelings over the Highpath review; you seem to have overlooked the fact that it was divided into sections. The first was an objective description of the design and construction by David Wrath-Sharman. This was followed by three separate reports from owners/riders. Each one was 'signed' by its author.

It is also our usual practice to send a copy of our review to the manufacturer concerned, prior to publication. If they respond in time, we publish that as well; sometimes this is the work of a 'Public Relations Person'.

I could hardly apply that description to David Wrath-Sharman . . . he would *explode* at the suggestion!

TONY SILVER

# Doing It My Way!

Brian Stokes of Romsey, in Hampshire, states the case for the vast majority of cross-country cyclists through his own experience. Let's hope this amusing article strikes a chord, and reinforces the feelings of many; we must make sure that we break loose from the tyranny of the fit enthusiast - let normal people dominate the off-road cycling scene!

## THE PRIDE:

Pride goes before a fall. Even as a very ordinary off-road cyclist, I do feel immensely superior to those who ride nothing but tarmac.

In fact, I felt pretty superior about it generally.

## THE FALL (first):

I mentioned oh-so-casually in the Rohan shop that I wanted a pair of Bags for mountain biking.

A mistake.

They fetched their resident Mountain Biker for advice. He appraised my 44-year-old physique (or lack of it) and described himself as "a real head-banger; bike-anywhere, up-anything . . .". He obviously wasn't posing. He had a bike to match and tried hard to be kind about Muddy Fox Couriers. I purchased a pair of blue Bags with a bright gold belt and retreated.

## THE FALL (Second):

A couple of weeks later. A new issue of MakingTRACKS arrives.

As usual, I pounce on it and rush to a small, quiet room to read it cover-to-cover (takes about 45 minutes, if I'm lucky, undisturbed by my wife and kids).

My ego, still deflated, is positively shattered by descriptions of balletic (no less) feats at Wendover, technical dissertations upon esoteric components, and terribly, terribly serious exchanges on "Wither the Sport . . .".

All a bit much for someone who simply likes to get out there and pedal.

## THE REACTION (to hell with experts!):

Buy why should I feel suddenly inferior? My kind of biking may not be that hi-tech and macho, but maybe it represents a silent group of ATBers who do it for fun and to enjoy the outdoors. Maybe someone should speak for this minority, or is it a minority of one?

## MY WAY:

Let me describe a typical ride, then you can judge; criticise, make constructive comment or simply snigger.

It's a Sunday morning.

I'm an hour's drive from home to the village of Berwick St John, east of Shaftesbury, with my Courier in the back of the estate car.

The mild autumn weather promises rain. From the OS 1:50,000 map (Sheet 184) I've devised a circular route, no idea what it's going to be like but it's based on:-

- about 20km total (my physical limit)
- as much off-road as possible (about 40%)
- all legal rights of way

- Mostly tracks used as bridleways (these are generally clearly defined and rideable)
- starts at the lowest altitude (so I finish downhill)
- most uphill on road (easier) and most downhill off road (more fun)
- if a strong wind is forecast, the last leg to windward.

(I heard those sniggers!)

Yes, OK; so I'm middle-aged and not very fit, but how do you keep fit between rides acceptably unboringly and without damaging yourself?

Rule out exercise bikes and jogging hard pavements for a start.

## THE UPHILL BIT (1):

This ride begins with 4km on-road (SU957223) and includes a 1 in 5 hill (975243).

Should be easy, but it demonstrates my power delivery/weight distribution is poor; front wheel lifts and bike is all over road. (Now do I need Biopace or more practice?)

Also, this bit requires several stops for excruciating pain in the thighs to diminish.

On the ridge of the Down, the rain starts to fall, the wind blows head-on and, though the slope has eased, I'm certain that either the brakes are on or I'm pulling an unseen weight.



I stop several times to check. Finally, I make the top and turn off along a track (965250).

## THE INVASION:

A solid flock of chattering Ramblers fills the track entrance, their cars everywhere. I detest those who invade the countryside in large groups, whether by motor, horse, foot - or bike. Public rights of way derive from long-ago practical use by

local country people. Would you welcome a hundred rambblers or 20 ATBers charging across your back-garden just because of an ancient right?

However, I weave my way gently in and out of the Barbours, smiling and wishing a couple of "good mornings", but seemingly hardly noticed.

## THE LYRICAL BIT:

The firm, easy track climbs steadily along the ridge of White Sheet Hill, the rain increases but the expanding view on both sides more than compensates.

The scenery is unique: not the bleakness of Yorkshire Moor, nor the softness of Worcestershire Hills.

It's superb.

Peace and beauty, despite the rain.

## THE RUDE AWAKENING:

Just when I'm lulled into dreaminess, the track drops off the edge of the Down and - HELP!

I'm speeding downhill.

Instinctively I stand, bent-kneed on the pedals, three fingers on levers, thumb-index finger gripping the bars, but I fail to read the route ahead, and am forced into an awkward crossing of a rain-water gully - and I've lost it!

Brakes lock, back wheel lifts and I stop, clumsily astraddle the gully. Nearly fell off, but saved by the Diacompes (Do I need Shimano roller-cams or Wrath-Sharman hub brakes - or just more concentration?)

## THE UPHILL BIT (2):

Next the A30 (933240): an interesting road to drive but . . . I take a 'C' road south west (924234) and head for Win Green.

100m climb.



Funny how one needs to stop to shed one's anorak, stop for a squirt of orange, stop to check the carrier bungy, stop to check the wind direction, stop to comb one's hair, stop for a . . .

Hmmm, or is it the rasping breath, the eyes coming out on stalks or, the exquisite agony in my legs?

On the steepest bit I concentrate hard on the slow-moving verge: that small green and yellow snail, that tatty leftover buttercup, those salt crystals in the grit piles.

But, on the other side the view unrolls spec-



tacularly, repaying the effort.

At the top, a left turn goes off-road along a stoney track (917203), where the strong cross-wind flutters the MT mud-flap against the tyre.

Yes, mudguards and mud-flaps.

Macho? Not very, but my feet and legs stay relatively clean and dry (as does the transmission). Never had problems of mud-clogged guards either - those Panaracers seem to spin off excess mud.

#### THE SERIOUS BIT:

Now its slippery chalk track and I get serious (by my standards); I lower the saddle an inch, drop to 40psi in the tyres.

Concentrate.

Take it steady, try to anticipate the right gear, to change clean and quiet.

Funny how often you need to be in a lower gear isn't it? Surprising how the bike does go where it's pointed, and forgives most of my mistakes.

#### THE SPEEDY BIT:

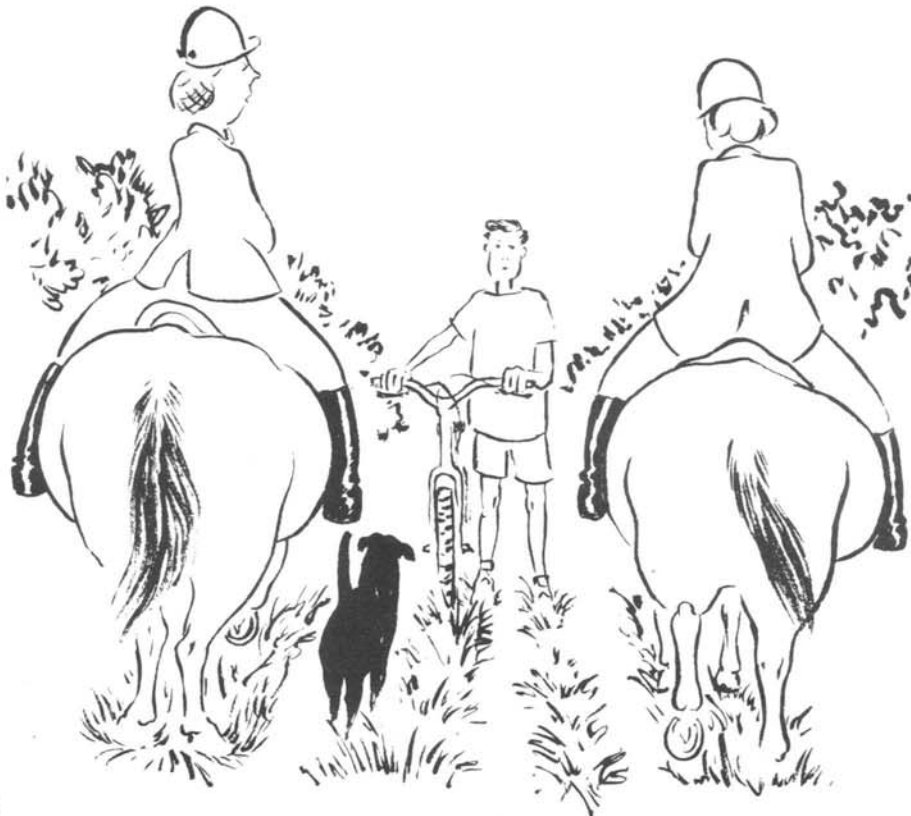
Back on road (938207) again. Now I've got a tailwind and a slight downhill.

It's like an invisible hand, gently pushing. The knobblies hum like a pair of bees on a motorway, the bike goes faster than I can pedal. I half-raise the bum, anking, and pulling against the bars. The bees move into the fast lane, they become intoxicated by the sound, the speed. So do I.

#### THE EQUESTRIANS:

One and a half kilometres later, and slower, I turn off-road at the Ox-drove (953207); a mud and grass track, slippery and rutted.

Two girls approach on horse-back, complete with dogs.



Very "Country Life".

I pull over and stop.

I ask politely if the horses may be spooked by the bike (hell's teeth, what a right little goody goody I am!).

I get a pair of condescending glances, a vague gesture; "I thay Chlaritha, what a pothitively dreadful little man!", and they pass on.

To be fair, most riders are less posho, more appreciative. Some have too much bother controlling their mounts to notice you. None I've met seem to recognise the bike as a potential major user of bridleway. Perhaps they're right.

Who knows what the average off-road mileage of ATB's in the UK is?

Who knows what the average off-road kilometrage of ATB's in the UK will be!!

#### THE DANGERS:

Now I've got one eye for the track, coping and planning ahead and one eye for my person.

The potential damage by overhanging branches, thorns and brambles, to eyes, face and hands frightens me far more than falling off, mechanical failure or punctures.

For the latter, I carry a repair kit, a spare inner tube, a tiny pump (350 strokes to reach 40psi) and pin my faith in Muddy Seal. I don't wear a helmet, they may be sensible but their image is motor-bike.

Wrong image.

#### THE RUTTING:

Why can't I keep the bike on the narrow grassy bit between the ruts?

Why is it inextricably drawn into the depths?

Why do I then lose balance, have to stop and lift back to the middle?

And frequently.

Ruts are my bete-noire, what is the right technique? One is faced with the dilemma of keeping the bum out of the saddle to absorb the bumps, yet keeping the weight over the rear wheel to maintain the traction that this soft surface demands.

I need several stops before I finally turn downhill (963212), and return to the car.



#### THE CONCLUSIONS:

Seventeen and a half kilometers and 105 minutes later.

I AM KNACKERED.

But, I've had a typical, enjoyable outing. Having established a viable route, I'll try to include more off-road next time round.

So, that's my kind of off-road biking. Tame, it would seem by many riders' standards.

Alright, it's not rock-hopping down a 45 degree Welsh hillside, but it beats walking. It's fun, away-from-it-all, suits me and hasn't upset anyone or anything else. I've left nothing behind except the occasional tyre print, which has probably less effect than a pair of walking boots and certainly less than a farmer's Landrover or, hooves carrying a ton of horse and rider.

#### THE INVITE:

Criticise/comment/support/offer advice as you think fit. Surely there are others doing it simply, non-competitively, quietly this way?

#### THE DIRE WARNING:

Note my route was LEGAL. Keep your routes legal. I want to keep on ATBing until senility sets in. I don't want to be legislated against because of others' cowboy riding exploits.

#### THE BAGS:

Oh, and the Rohan Bags? I didn't wear them. They're very nice. Smart. Couldn't bear to dirty them with mud and LPS.

#### THE END.

# Products

To be reviewed on these pages, new products, and sometimes old, don't have to be good; we need warnings as much about the bad. Perhaps, too, we could have your ideas on items that have not yet been invented!

## FREE-RANGE EGGS?

Do you remember the last time you mangled a chainring?

Or the last time you decided that perhaps a forty-one tooth chainring would be better than your current forty-six?

OK, down to the bike shop;

"What cranks do you have? And you want a 41 tooth? You must be joking. Ere Sid, chap in the shop's asked for a 41 chainring for his Ofsunolo cranks, ha, ha, ha !!!"

"Can't Get 'Em, SIR. World Shortage Of Haluminium, SIR. And Besides Which, SIR, I Don'T Like Stocking 'Undrurds and 'Undrurds er Chainrings, SIR. Takes Up Too Much Valu-Able Shelf Space, Y'see, SIR?"

"Certainly Sir, I can get you one, it'll take about eight to fifteen weeks, that's if there aren't any dock-strikes, or if the lorry don't break down."

"I've got a fortyTHREE for your crank, and a 41 for a Strontimano, Luvly bitta work. If y'really wanna fitta 41, why not upgrade ya whole chainset, I'll let you have it, complete wiv bottum brakitor, for well, 75 quid."

I am being unfair to bike shops, but you get my drift? Chainrings can be damn difficult to get sometimes.

One of the my transmission fantasies for many years, has been to fit a twenty tooth elliptical inner ring to my TA cyclotouriste chainset. You see what I mean, the stuff of real FANTASY.



"... CHAINRING FANTASIES"

Geoffrey Apps

Here we have two situations; one, a more or less everyday problem, and the other, a real whacko.

And now there is a magician who can wave a wand, poke some buttons with it, and make our dreams come true, and all the dreams in between, and some beyond . . .

You can have your 41 to fit an Ofsunolo and I can have my 20 tooth elliptical for my TA five-pin - at a price.

And not a bad price, either.

I've got my 20 tooth elliptical, it is a beauty, and I think it's £45 well spent, and your 41 tooth will cost you £71.70.

WHAAAAAT?????

Well, think. It's going to cost around £30 off the shelf, if you can get it. But if you have to go from shop to shop, town to town, to get it, and then wait some weeks, how about the cost of petrol and/or the value of your time?

Moreover, with this magician, you know what you're going to get, you know it's going to fit; you know it's going to be made of high grade heat-treated aerospace alloy, (some branded chainrings are made of rather iffy alloys) and you know it's going to be custom milled to very close tolerances, whereas most chainrings are stamped out.

Now comes the mindboggling bit: he can make you a chainring:

- with any number of teeth
- to any degree of ovality
- any orientation
- with cut-outs or solid
- to fit your crank, whatever the make

There's more!

If you want an elliptical chainring, but you're not sure if you want to use the Biopace or the proper orientation, he can supply one that has mounting holes all round, so you can set it to any orientation you fancy, and go on experimenting to your heart's content.

If that weren't enough. You may be feeling a bit outrageous, or security conscious - because the next feature is an excellent aid to deterring the tealeaf; you can have any shape cut-outs you care for, be it your name, postcode, snowflake type pattern, whatever, (price on application - he's not THAT good a magician).

Here, I've found something else; they can be made for 3/32" or 1/8" chains.

What Now?

I don't believe it!

Yes, you've guessed. Any colour, well more or less. The alloy can be polyester-coated in any one of a range of colours, before milling.

# OVERBURY'S MOUNTAIN BIKES

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138 ASHLEY RD · BRISTOL · TEL 557924

And he'll get it to you in about a fortnight. What we are coming down to is this: Chris Bell Cycle Transmissions will be launching their *Eggrings* on July 2, at the York Rally.

If you can't get to York you'd better write to Chris for the gen. It makes fascinating reading AND you've got an order form ready when you need it.

Chris Bell (Cycle Transmissions)  
162 Bloomfield Rd  
Brislington  
Bristol BS4 3QX (0272) 770626

### SHIMANO EXAGE TRAIL GROUPSET

Shimano introduced the Exage TRAIL groupset in early 1988 to fill a perceived gap in the market for a relatively cheap, but nevertheless efficient and up-to-date component set.

By the time you read this, all the components should be available from the official importers Madison, who are well-known for their optimism about delivery dates.

The rear mech is a new version of the unusual *Light Action* derailleur - unusual in that the control cable is clamped not directly, but to a spring, which is attached to the parallelogram, the resultant effect is the supposed ability to preset a gearchange whilst stationary; tensioning the spring which will cause the derailleur to shift as soon as you start moving. This feature, combined with indexing can be easy to use in some hands. The mech is capable of handling 13-34T with a 34T total capacity. Sensible features include spoke deflectors on the steel inner cage plate and an integral cable adjuster.

The front derailleur is, in shape, a copy of the excellent New Deore; shifting very well on chaining differences of up to 24 teeth - it will shift on differences of 28T given a sub-71° seat angle and round rings. The mech has an alloy pivot body/clamp and a steel chain cage.

The combination brake and gear levers are of resin construction on a steel skeleton. The brake levers are reach-adjustable - their normal position relative to the bars can be altered allowing for differing hand sizes - and have cable tension adjusters built in. These adjusters are protected from off-road filth by hoods. The cable nipple mounts in a swivelling bracket reducing wear on the cable and thus, risk of breaking.

The angle of the gear shifters is adjustable, but the bracket which joins them to the brake lever body seems to be a point of weakness, and potential failure. The right hand/rear lever is indexed but can be set as a friction type shifter, and the left hand/front lever has a click-stop for the granny ring. These units look safe, with no protrusions likely to remove chunks of rider during trips over the bars etc.

The chainset has attractive (*ever known Shimano to make anything UN-attractive? - Ed*) alloy 170mm cranks/110mm fixing, with steel Biopace rings; steel being more resistant to close encounters with logs and rocks than most aluminium ones, will probably wear less fast.

The brakes are cantilever, front and rear - just as effective but less prone to clogging than U-brakes - they, too, are made of steel/resin combination, are very rigid and work superbly.

A single-ended straddle cable is used allowing riders to alter the mechanical advantage of the brakes to suit their personal taste.

These cantilevers are unusual in that they accept standard road type brake blocks with eccentric washers for adjustment. This seems sensible, as they are far more widely available. Those supplied are a cheaper version of the Deore XT's and work excellently in all conditions.

One point worth noting; these brakes are unsuitable for narrow rims because the arms rise at too steep an angle to be effective.

A small niggle is the plastic covers used on the

cable bridges, which prevent anything other than a pair of socket spanners being used to adjust cable length, however, these are easily ditched. Sensible touches in the design of the arms include fully enclosed springs and a spring tension adjuster for easy-centering.

The pedals have resin bodies, steel end caps and bearing cups. They have O-ring seals, and can be fitted, albeit awkwardly, with toe clips and straps.

The headset is steel - zinc plated to help prevent corrosion, finished in black and also fitted with rather ineffective looking plastic O-rings.

The components work adequately as a groupset or individually. They appear to be quite durable, but we are unable to state at this stage how long it will be before these components show signs of excessive wear - the results of lubrication in the ubiquitous mixture of water, grease and grit.

It is well-known that most Japanese components will never have any kind of spares backup, so in these cases, once worn, it's into the bin with them. However, this very notion makes Exage an apparently wise purchase, since in terms of pure cosmetics, it offers as much as any other component set.

On this first appraisal, we consider this groupset to be excellent value for money. Individual prices, including VAT, are:-

Rear derailleur	£18.95
Front derailleur	£11.90
Combination levers	£29.95
Chainset	£39.95
Brakes	£8.95
Pedals	£11.95
Headset	£8.95
The above, plus a pair of Exage "Mountain" Freehubs, as a groupset:	£139.95

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# ATB Sport, Our future?

*With the advent of the ATB, we have a chance to shape a new range of cycling sport, geared to make it accessible to the average rider. Decisions made, or not made, in the next year will probably be with us for a long time to come. Here Crispin Sage of Ashill, in Devon, looks at the sport today, and gazes into the crystal ball to see the different way things could go . . .*

Over the last fifteen years or so, we, as a society, have been beleaguered with ever increasing sporting excellence, via mainly the TV screen, and following the TV lead, the media in general, and our attitudes have changed.

The upshot of this highly refined diet has led to sporting constipation.

Potential amateur sportsmen and women have the urge to participate, but when it comes to it, they *do* nothing – they are overwhelmed by the sheer professionalism, the overbearing competitive spirit, and the necessity of entering a regime of sustained fitness that will, all too frequently, impinge on what they regard as a normal lifestyle.

The advent of the ATB has presented us with a reasonably practical machine; not only practical, but capable of a variety of sporting pursuits. With sensible planning we could have a single machine that would be useful in our everyday lives, yet, with it we could partake of a little, or a lot of, the cycling sport of our choice; be it observed trials, short circuit racing, long distance racing or any other form of cycling sport that *could* emerge in the near future. Moreover we could indulge in one or all of these sports, and this is not to mention the enormous potential this kind of bicycle has for leisure riding, be it a half-hour on the local common, or an intercontinental tour.

The way I see it, we should be looking at ways of setting up off-road sport in such a way that the common man (or woman) will be able to take part on a casual basis; it must be accessible, and the skills required must not be restricted to racing alone.

One thing that has to be given very careful consideration is how to categorise and classify bikes and riders; should we do it by type of machine (*MTB-v-cross*), status of rider (*Novice-v-Pro*), a mixture of both, or perhaps something more imaginative?

I feel strongly that we should be looking to set up a system that gives status to the all-rounder, someone who doesn't necessarily excel at any one particular sport, and what is more important, they must use the same bike for all aspects.

Looking at the potential categories of sport, I see in this magazine one that could fulfil this role of an all-round sport; I'm talking of the *Enduro*, which is defined as "a long distance, multi-skill, competitive event".

It takes only a little imagination to envisage an event of, say twenty to thirty miles, involving numerous tests along the route: brake control and reaction, machine



handling skills, speed and timing, orienteering, mechanical knowledge, survival . . . the list goes on.

In this system (that gives status to the all-rounder) competitors could be categorised not by skill level nor by machine type, but by motive. We would see two groupings with classifications looking something like this:

#### Amateur:

- novice
- intermediate
- expert

#### Professional:

- Semi-pro
- Pro
- Elite Pro

Each sport in turn would have its own pure competitions with specialist champions, riding specialised machinery.

It may be that a cyclo-cross bike (or a hybrid very like it) turns out to be the best racing machine, and the small wheeled BMX style bikes turn out to be the best observed trials machines. However, it is more than likely that a bike very similar to

what we currently recognise as a *mountain bike* would turn out to be the best all-rounder competition machine.

Cycling sport (in common with some other sports) has a history of very strong resistance to change; in terms of both the type of competition and machine design. Sometimes, when a new design or innovation comes along, (*something that may ultimately be of benefit to all cyclists, providing it is allowed to be developed through use in competition*) it is banned in the interests of 'fairness'. The philosophy for this is that any innovation worth its salt must (and usually does) cost a bomb. This, it is felt, would give those with the most money an unfair advantage. Therefore, in banning many an innovation, the authorities feel that they are successfully keeping their sport in an egalitarian state, opening it out to potentially wider participation.

The fact is that the opposite occurs; it becomes entrenched in its own esoterica, we have seen this happen in the past. Moreover, it is possible that an innovation introduced to the competitive scene may provide an unfair advantage for a while, but one of two things will happen; if it is good, it gets taken up and becomes available to all; if its bad, it simply disappears, eventually.

Who suffers because of these banings? We all do, the manufacturers, the participants, the spectators. Resistance to change affects the whole cycling market potential. It was not many years ago that if you wanted a good-quality machine, you had to buy a road-racer of some sort (*some people may dispute this statement – I am of the opinion that the conventional 'touring' bike is a racing bike, modified for touring use*). Now the ATB, we can see the enormous market that the industry said did not exist; begging, buying, borrowing, hiring, stealing the type of bike that the cycle industry claimed the market did not want.

We know from relatively recent history that the rules that are established at the birth of a new sport, will usually stay with it for many, many years. Sometimes it is impossible for a sport to shake off an image established in its early days, or change a rule made that did not take into account the changing nature of our world.

It is axiomatic that each current type of cycle sport has its very particular machine. With the British Cyclo-Cross Association set to offer mountain bikers

the opportunity to take part in their race programme, we have to look carefully at how we determine what is a fair race.

Whilst the BCCA can offer a structure to the growing off-road cycle sporting scene, it has to be remembered that they are set up for cyclo-cross. It would clearly be of great benefit to both sports to amalgamate, but there is a very real danger that, if those who claim to be in control of our sport do not negotiate new rules wisely, and competitors do not join in the amalgamation wholeheartedly, ATB racing may become the cinderella sport. It may turn out the other way round, of course.

What we really do not want is for ATB's to simply replace the cyclo-cross bike, and then for things to carry on as before. That would achieve nothing.

I gather from the Cross Country Cycling Club, that they are already having discussions with the BCCA on an informal basis, and both seem aware of this danger.

We can see from this just how important it is to get the right accent in our sport, for the health of cycling as a whole. If positive action is taken soon, history may not repeat itself. If it is allowed to, in a few years the current bike boom will have burnt itself out, and rising from the ashes will be our inheritance for the future – the racing ATB, the racing mountain bike, standing alongside all the other race bred bikes in the shops.

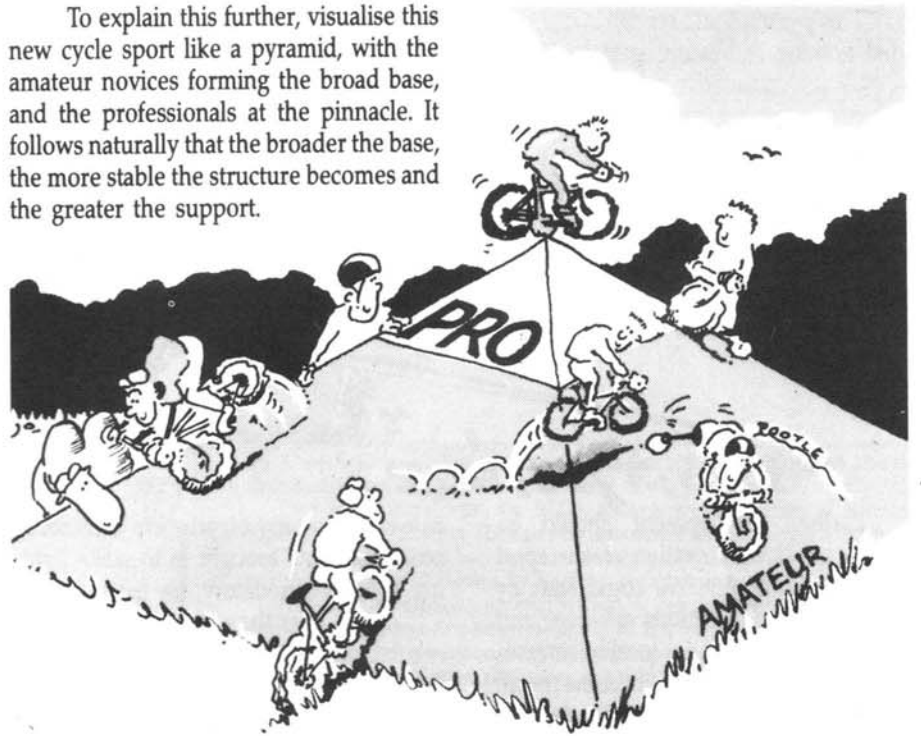
If enduros are given the status they deserve, the major demand would be for that kind of machine; manufacturers would, one assumes, meet the demand. It is reasonable to suppose that this design of bike would be proven to be the most practical for touring, going to work, or having a bit of a loon about, discretely, on the local common.

This alternative is to develop, by careful regulation and control, a strong amateur sport, where there is great emphasis placed on encouragement at the very lowest level; when people are just involved as novices. A sport where there are no cash prizes, only cups and trophies.

Running partly alongside of this, and then rising to higher levels would be the professional sport, where cash prizes would be obligatory.

The critical factor here is the balance; for every cash prize awarded in the professional sport, an equal amount would go towards the development of the amateur sport. In turn the amateur sport would provide a training ground for the professional sport.

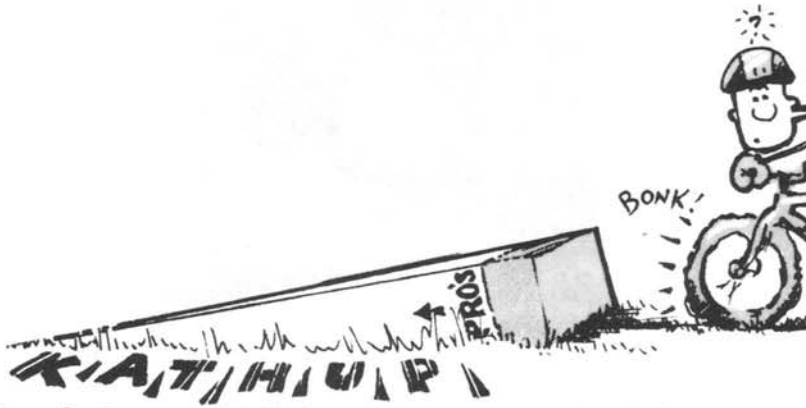
To explain this further, visualise this new cycle sport like a pyramid, with the amateur novices forming the broad base, and the professionals at the pinnacle. It follows naturally that the broader the base, the more stable the structure becomes and the greater the support.



What we currently have is a tall, thin pyramid; all the focus is placed on developing the professional racing, leaving the amateurs and novices to get on with it.



This pyramid will remain stable provided nothing comes up against it!



Further development should be towards positive integration of our sport with our community. We could start by holding small competitions at village and school fetes, we could get local businesses to field teams, we could become more involved with other sports, with the disabled (how about wheelchair towing races!), at the professional level we could have indoor events. The possibilities are limitless for the imaginative amongst us.

true cross country bicycle. We then could see regulations brought in to make lighting systems mandatory, for example.

I can hear the cry go up; "not more regulations!" But think for a moment of the effect this would have; proper, lightweight, efficient, integral lighting systems would be developed, they would become more readily available, and could even start to appear as standard fittings on some competition ATB's. This could also



There has even been a suggestion of city-centre multi-terrain racing. Imagine it! Multi-story car parks, steps, building sites, waste land, into and out of buildings, etc, all in the same course, open to competitors on any kind of machine, be it BMX, 'cross, ATB or whatever.

Let's return to enduros and take a closer look at the kind of impact that giving high status to them could have:

If you want a decent lighting system for your off-road machine at the moment, it is, at best, tacked on as an afterthought by you or the shop where you bought it, and if you're not satisfied, then you have to make one up yourself.

Since some enduros could be 24 hour events, we would be looking at the development of a very sophisticated off-road machine indeed, one that would be a

apply to sophisticated locking systems, mudguards, enclosed transmissions - in fact anything that would improve the general capability of the machine for the average punter and the competitive *all-rounder*.

With the current ATB, we are so near to a bike with general appeal for general use. Nevertheless, the influence of racing design can be clearly seen.

Whilst reading through a recent edition of *Mountain Biking*, the occasional newsletter of the MBC, I came across a letter asking them if they are working out some guidelines for the sport they claim to control and guide;

"... in order that a more coherent sport may be established . . ." the writer suggested.

In reply they state:

"... the MBC does not impose rules. Once mountain biking gets tied down by regulations it will be dead as a dodo."

Is this really our national representative body talking here? Is it a really true statement? Have other sports suffered from the imposition of regulations?

This, I repeat, is our controlling body, and as such, they are leaving our sport wide open to the worst kind of regulations possible - those imposed from outside.

If one looks at the Cross-Country Cycling Club, although they remain an informal grouping, they couldn't be more different to the MBC. It seems a strange irony that it is the informal of the two predominant clubs in the UK that is getting to grips with the inevitability of regulation - apart from the discussions with the BCCA, they have already put together some basic rules for observed trials.

From the previously mentioned quote, it appears that the MBC would not be interested in any form of regulation, and it must be assumed that they are unimpressed with the BCCA or any kind of structure.

Sure as ostrich eggs is ostrich eggs, regulations *will* come, and if we don't face this fact *now*, ourselves, we will see off-road cycling sport becoming as elitist, esoteric, fetishistic, cranky, cliquey, as cycle sport can be today.

Cycling is unique in that it is more practical than any other sport I can think of. Ever tried going to work on skis? Ever tried going for a quick half-hour outing on a windsurfer - it usually takes more time than that simply to get to the water.

How often does the public see posters for cycling events, how often do they see cycling on TV, and, most importantly, how often do they get the chance to 'have a go'? All these things should be instigated by the governing body.

It is vital that we grasp the nettle now, because what happens this and next year, will inevitably affect our sport for many years to come, we will be stuck with it. Let's make sure it's good.

When all is said and done, the cycle sport we get, will be the cycle sport we deserve.

*This is a very important issue; you **must write** to us, so that we can gauge opinion. Armed with it we can start making representations to steer **our** sport the way **you** want it to go. Without your support, we will be unable to act and you will all have to be content to continue racing around on your racing bikes - Ed.*

# National Clubs

**The British Cyclo Cross Association**  
208 Ecclesall Road  
Sheffield  
S11 8JD



The BCCA was formed in 1954 to control Cyclo-cross racing in England and Wales, to raise the standard and expand the number of events.

They are now keen to welcome ATB racers into their racing programme which runs from September to February, with about 200 races.

The BCCA supports a British Team and encourages Continental riders to visit this country. With the support of the Sports Council they stage an event where a minimum of six continental teams compete in the racing.

A National League Competition is held each year for Pro/Am, Veterans, Juniors and Juveniles.

**The Cross Country Cycling Club**  
5 Old Station Cottages  
Ford  
Arundel  
West Sussex  
BN18 0BJ



The Cross Country Cycling Club is an informal grouping of active riders who are dedicated to working to protect the future of our sport/pastime.

They are working with the BCCA towards the production of standard regulations for ATB racing. They are also responsible for sanctioning ATB Observed Trials in the UK, and have produced standing regulations. They are currently establishing the ground-rules for Enduros in this country.

They have established a national network of Regular Monthly Rides, [RMR] intended to introduce first-timers, who will be assured of a short dayride under the guidance of an experienced leader, and the pace is set by the slowest rider. There are fifteen such rides taking place each month around the UK, with more to be announced soon.

They are also keen to instigate positive action to encourage women and families to participate in both competition and jaunts, with the provision of co-operative childcare and women only training and skill development tutorials.

**The Rough Stuff Fellowship**  
9 Liverpool Avenue  
Southport  
Merseyside  
PR8 3NE



The Rough Stuff Fellowship is the most experienced and longest established organisation for cyclists who prefer byways and tracks.

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If writing to them please enclose a stamp and envelope, and don't always expect an immediate reply - some of them are very busy folk.

If phoning, be sure to pick a sensible time of day!

If you are on our contact list, please check that we have your correct address/telephone number. Should it be incorrect, kindly do let us know before the next copy date.

Please contact us as soon as possible if you wish to be entered onto the contacts list, especially if you live in an area not already covered.

Thank you.

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SLT 5HA  
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RG14 5JW  
(0635) 36490

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69 Stoke Road  
Aylesbury  
HP21 8BL  
(0296) 866550

Dave Walker  
3 Plumer Road  
High Wycombe  
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(0494) 20115

## CAMBRIDGESHIRE

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If you live in  
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Cheadle  
SK8 3PD  
(061 437) 8500

## CLEVELAND

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6 Rushmere Heath  
Eaglescliffe  
Stockton  
TS16 9HA  
(0642) 787844

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(096 67) 370

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TQ13 7TB

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New Brancepeth  
DH7 7H6

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Hove  
BN3 6QN  
(0273) 506082

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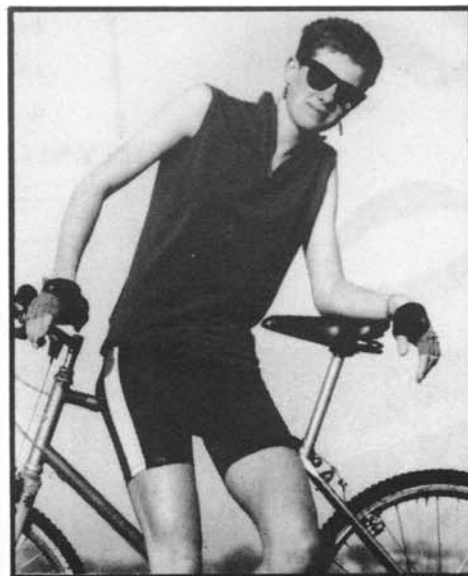
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either Columbus or Reynolds.

--- And if your taste and pocket don't extend  
to the esoteric then browse and choose from  
all the well known names --- Specialized ---  
we'll have all their range as soon as they  
arrive --- phone for the latest expected  
arrival dates --- Fisher --- having chatted to  
the man himself, we're stocking the range ---  
arrival times around June.

--- So, what have we in stock . . . ?

**HOO-KOO-E-KOO** --- still one of our best selling  
bikes --- lots of class & very fast --- the 16½"  
with sloping top tube is a dream . . .

**ROCKHOPPER COMP** --- Specialized getting  
to grips with the paint pot --- tho' the  
graphics seem to offend --- Shimano of  
course . . .

**CANNONDALE 400** --- Budget priced aluminium  
bike in white only --- We tend to favour the  
smaller sizes 'cos they handle better & look  
wonderful!

**ANONYMOUS** --- We've pulled in some of our own  
--- word has it the spec. is Exage Mountain -  
--- Biopace --- butted frame --- tight angles  
--- etc. etc. --- No fancy names but a  
brilliant machine --- limited number ---  
phone for details and price.

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01 226 8841  
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