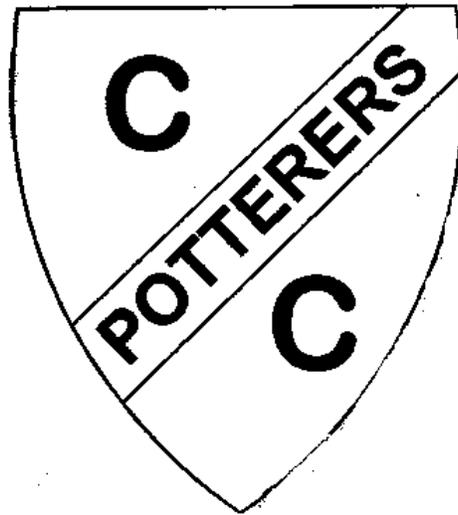


POTTERING AROUND

June 2019

Founded



1971

Usque Ad Mortem Bibendum

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2019 Potterers AGM Raffle Prize Winners & Ticket Numbers

	COLOUR	WINNER		NUMBER	COLOUR	WINNER
135	WHITE	KEITH		980	GREEN	PETA
980	YELLOW	DEREK		652	BLUE	PAUL
170	WHITE	JEAN		54	ORANGE	SIMON
445	WHITE	PAT		995	GREEN	PAUL
371	WHITE	PETA		150	GREEN	DAVE G
972	GREEN	PETER S		119	GREEN	DAVE R
367	WHITE	SUE		957	YELLOW	DEREK
449	WHITE	PAT		502	WHITE	HUGH
962	GREEN	PETER S		784	GREY	SALLY
753	GREY	BRIAN		777	GREY	BRIAN
41	ORANGE	MARTIN		33	ORANGE	SUE
119	WHITE	DOT		366	WHITE	SUE
460	WHITE	PAT		2	ORANGE	SALLY
977	YELLOW	DEREK		665	GREY	PAUL

The raffle made	£69			Thanks to all who bought ticket &		four sellers

My First Mail Order Bike

Christmas is the best time of year to pick up a mail order bike at a discounted price. This is because bike manufacturers make their new ranges available from October each year so distributors need to clear any unsold stock from the previous year to make room for the new arrivals. A further Christmas sale reduction is normally applied by retailers, on top of the October discount to clear the remaining bikes they've been trying to sell for the last twelve months. As with any sale popular frame sizes or particular bikes are not likely to be available. Bikes with smaller frames tend to feature in the sales rather than average or larger ones. This year the new bike business seems to have slowed down so the discounts available through on-line internet stores were up to 50%.

The main drawback of a mail order purchase is you are not able to try the bike for size before purchase but have to rely on manufacturers frame geometry measurements. It's a similar problem to buying clothing or shoes without trying them on first, everyone seems to be using a different tape measure for the same size. Other possible problems with mail order are issues with how well your new bike is packed in its cardboard box, what happens if there is a serious problem with the bike or if it's damaged in transit, both of which may require the bike to be returned to the supplier. There may be a final small issue with fully assembling a new bike but that is not likely to be a major difficulty.

Looking at the internet just after Christmas I saw a bike that I'd fancied for the last few years was for sale on the Merlin Cycles site in my size, with a 50% discount so I decided to take a chance and go ahead with the purchase. In common with most internet retailers Merlin cycles hold frames in stock but mount all the components after they receive an order so there was a week's delay before my bike was delivered.

My new bike arrived in a very large cardboard box, resting on its rear wheel with an anti-crush spacer fitted into the front fork. The front wheel minus quick release skewer was positioned alongside the front fork. All the main tubes were covered by foam pipe lagging while the front forks and rear stays had lots of bubble wrap wound around them. The seat post and saddle were also a separate package bound up in bubble wrap. Bubble wrapped handlebars were attached to their gear and brake cables but placed alongside the frame, not attached to the bike stem, to minimise the bike box width. The tyres were fully inflated to 80lb/square inch. Other items included in the box were a bottle cage and colour coded bottle, grip paste to help keep the seat post slipping, a chain catcher designed to stop the chain demounting onto the chain stays, a spacer for use with a 10 speed Shimano cassette block, a sheet of clear sticky back plastic frame protector, a bell and basic lights. No pedals were included as most customers use clipless types that come in a variety of systems with matching shoes having different sole cleat mounting drillings.

After attaching my own Shimano SPD pedals, clamping the handlebars to the stem central face plate, inserting the seat post, fitting the bottle cage and positioning the chain catcher the bike was ready for a very short test ride. The carbon seat post needed a coating of grip paste and the seat post external clamp had to be done up with a torque wrench. Cable tension for both front and rear derailleurs and brakes had already been set up by Merlin Cycles so the bike gearing and braking was ready to use. As a result of the test ride I found one significant problem that I'd overlooked. This was the bike came

supplied with an immensely long, virtually flat (7 degree) 130mm stem towards the bottom of a stack of steering tube spacers. I had to go to professional bike mechanic to get the stem changed to a 100mm long model with 17 degree rise and get the stem stacked as close to the top cap as possible to bring the stem forward and high enough to suit my reach. This resulted in more cost than just changing the stem as the expensive low friction gear cables were not long enough to reach the new position of the Shimano STI gear/brake control levers and had to be replaced with new cables. Bike companies specify longer stems and wider handlebars as bike frame sizes increase from small to large but I forgot to check the stem length and angle before ordering my bike. It may have been possible to ask for a shorter more angled stem if I'd realised the potential problem in advance but the cost saving over buying a bike from a local bike shop was still massive.

New bikes have been fitted with threadless headsets for many years. The headsets and stems are held in place with Allen key bolts that don't require large spanners to adjust them but stem height can only be increased by juggling the order of spacers and stem on the fork steerer tube and by fitting a more angled stem. Stems with angles of 7,17 and 25 degrees are available.

Despite problems with my new bike stem I've been pleased with my internet purchase. I'd have never afforded the original asking price so buying in the sale was the right thing to do. Bargains in your size and model are only available for a relatively short time, if at all, so you have to make your mind up on a potential purchase relatively quickly. Local bike shops will always be required for servicing work on increasingly complicated mechanical or electrically operated derailleur systems and full hydraulic disc brakes that have become popular in recent times. Unfortunately local bike shop prices for parts, cycle clothing or complete bikes are not competitive with internet suppliers. Local shops used to stock the same bike in a number of sizes but that became too expensive so they normally display only a few 54cm or 56cm frame

sized bikes. The bike I bought has a 59cm frame that I'd be highly unlikely to find in a local cycle shop.

C.W

Amsterdam: Where Two Wheels Is The Solution Not The Problem

Visit the city of Amsterdam for the first time and you are in for a shock. Bicycles rule. They get priority on the roads, with cars, vans and lorries very much in second place. At first the road network is bewildering to car-obsessed British visitors with many junctions without traffic lights and roads divided up between trams, cars and bicycles.

We had arrived in Amsterdam to deliver our daughter to Amsterdam University, where she was doing a year abroad from her home university, Birmingham. Two more different cities in terms of cycling cannot be imagined. Katie refuses to cycle in Birmingham, but in Amsterdam it was a top priority to get her a bike.

When Katie signed in at the university, I had never seen so many bikes in one bike park. How on earth does anyone find their bike after lectures, when they are all parked on top of each other? Somehow students do...

So the first thing to do was find Katie a bike. That was when the fun began. Bicycles have such value in Amsterdam that they do not come cheap. We went to the recommended second hand dealer in the West of the city and I have rarely seen such a mish-mash of rusting wrecks. When we tried to haggle, the owner was having none of it – he knew another customer would be along soon enough. In the end we chose a 'British-style' bike with brake levers for front and back and a simple derailleur. The local bikes have few gears and a rear brake activated by back peddling. Next thing was to get it back to her digs in East Amsterdam in our little Skoda Fabia, with no roof bars or bike rack.

I never cease to be amazed by the Fabia swallowing awkward, bulky loads.

Of course the bike was far from perfect, but I tried to bite my lip, as it was the best of a sorry selection and it was still £80. The front tyre had about 10 miles left (and sure enough she had punctures within a week). The bank of Mum and Dad has paid to have the bike properly serviced with new tyres etc. But anything for peace of mind.

Katie loves cycling in Amsterdam, but it is certainly mad. Just as in London, there are loads of lunatics jumping lights and cutting you up. Bike theft is off the scale, so we bought the best lock we could for her. So far, so good.

It is so liberating to be in a cycling city. It turns everything on its head. Dramatically reduced air pollution, people of all ages, shapes and sizes cycling and improving their health, the general clutter of cars reduced. There are lots of delivery vans servicing the shops but far less cars than London.

Will things go the same way here? With our current governments there is precious little chance. The halcyon days of Sustrans investment have been replaced by austerity patched up with local voluntary effort.

Why Amsterdam is so refreshing is that there is a vision for cycling. In the UK we can find reasons for not doing things, for not making things happen. Yes it costs money but just look at all the benefits. I fear we have a few more years to wait before we follow the Cycling Revolution of The Netherlands.

Martin Prestage

29er* To Gassin

Having decided to take my Cannondale 29er to Gassin near St Tropez in the South of France, where my wife and I have a mobile home on the same site as Peta M, I had to decide on the best way to do it.

Initially I thought one of the major carriers like DHL, Hermes or UPS would be worth a try. The cheapest company I could find to do the job was DHL but they offered poor insurance cover and wanted to charge £170.

My next thought was to go down with my bike on the train. After a lot of research that turned out to be not much cheaper and a lot more complex. So as a last resort I decided to strip it down and take it down to Gassin in my wife's Volkswagen Polo along with our cat and much other paraphernalia.

To achieve a small enough package to fit the car a total stripdown including removal of handlebars, fork, wheels and cranks was necessary. The whole works! The only items I left intact were the hydraulic brakes, fortunately the brake lines were run externally enabling me to remove the brake levers and callipers, still connected by the brake lines. I protected the frame with foam pipe lagging and packed the whole shooting match into a very crowded Polo.

Two days after our arrival at Gassin I started the re-assembly, a golden opportunity to give the bike a good clean and service, plus fitting a factory supplied, steering head upgrade. The worst bit of the job was cleaning the Shimano XTR cassette. That was a mucky old job but it had to be done! After a quick wiz around the site and sorting out the drivetrain calibration (gear indexing), I felt I had a new bike.

I decided to bring my mountain bike to the South of France rather than my road bike as I am not getting any younger and prefer to ride in good weather, which we get more at Gassin than in the UK.

Ian Ewers

Editor's Note: 29er refers to a mountain bike with large 29 inches wheel diameter that has better rolling performance than the former 26 inches standard mountain bike wheel.

Personal Review Of The Latest Shimano Ultegra 8000 11 Speed Road Groupset

For the last few months I've been riding a bike fitted with the latest generation of Shimano Ultegra transmission and braking components. Ultegra has always been Shimano's second highest quality range of design co-ordinated products. Dura Ace is the ultimate Shimano groupset* used by professional racing teams, whilst 105 is the next tier down below Ultegra. Dura Ace, Ultegra and 105 are all 11 speed systems (their cassette blocks all have 11 sprockets). Since the early years of the 21st century the way bike gearing is described has changed from multiplying the number of chainrings by the number of sprockets to just meaning the number of rear sprockets. The 3 top Shimano groupsets have the same technical specifications so components are interchangeable but Dura Ace is considerably lighter than 105. Ultegra sits halfway between the other 2 groups of equipment and is said to be the choice of enthusiasts who have to pay for their own machinery.

I've ridden Dura Ace 9 speed double and triple chainset systems that have exposed gear cables since 2000. For the last few years I've used the first generation of concealed gear cable, 7800 10 speed Ultegra equipment. The latest 8000 Ultegra dual pivot SLR EV rim brakes offer a real improvement in power and feel over all the earlier series models. Dura Ace 9 speed dual pivot brakes lack outright stopping power on steep descents and 7800 Ultegra 10 speed brakes have an incredibly wooden feel. New Ultegra 8000 performance is due to revised pivot positioning that allows completely symmetrical brake arms to be used that go through exactly the same arc when the brake is applied. If you look at earlier dual pivot brakes it's easy to see the

brake arms are of unequal length. The revised pivots position allows clearance for a 25mm wide tyre with mudguard to be fitted under the brake arms or a 28mm tyre without mudguards. Previous rim brakes could only take 25mm tyres without mudguards. The final braking improvement lies in the revised cartridge brake pad compound.

Ultegra 8000 mechanical 11 speed gearing (with concealed gear cables) offers a nicer feel to actual gear change operation than previous equipment. Ten speed Ultegra 7800 has a wooden, switch like sense to gear changing rather than the smooth, precision, slick meshing of components you get with the latest Ultegra 8000 system. Ultegra 8000 has larger inner shift paddles than older Shimano STI changers possessed. Paddles initiate shifts to a smaller sprocket or smaller chain ring. Bigger paddles are easier to operate, especially if you are wearing bulky winter gloves.

Ultegra 8000 offers a rear cassette block with maximum of 34 teeth while 9 speed Dura Ace was limited to a 27 tooth largest rear sprocket and Ultegra 7800 10 speed allowed 32 tooth sprockets to be used. The larger 34 rear sprocket means Shimano consider triple chainsets with a small 30 tooth chain ring are not necessary for the type of lighter bike and fitter rider who would use an Ultegra 8000 equipped machine. One very annoying feature of 11 speed blocks compared to 9 or especially 10 speed 7800 Ultegra is their extra width. This means it's essential to trim the front derailleur position much more frequently to avoid chain rub on the sides of the front derailleur, as you select different sprockets. Ten speed Ultegra only needs to be trimmed when the chain is on the largest rear sprocket. Eleven speed Ultegra needs trimming each time you move to or from the upper or lower half of the cassette block especially if the chain is under climbing tension.

Much to my surprise I've found that 10 speed Ultegra chainset rings and chains are more durable than 9 speed versions even though

10 speed chains and sprockets are narrower. Dura Ace 9 speed chainrings are coated in a wear resisting material according to Shimano, but this simply doesn't appear to work for me! A possible explanation is the 10 speed bike is lighter than the 9 and I've been able to ride in the 50 tooth large chainring most of the time rather than the smaller 39 tooth middle chainring on the heavier 9 speed bike. Larger chainrings distribute wear over a larger number of teeth.

There are some useful design changes to Ultegra 8000 derailleurs. Front and rear derailleurs use 2mm Allen key head adjustment screws rather than cross head types (Phillips head) found on previous models. Road riders normally carry an Allen key multi-tool that usually only contains a single cross head driver. It's a miracle if the driver fits the adjustment screws, so you are normally better off with Allen headed screws.

The 8000 Ultegra front derailleur incorporates a fine-tuning adjustment mechanism for the shift cable inner wire. Steel bikes used to have downtube mounted adjustment barrels on the cable stops where the shift cables changed from an inner and outer cable to just a bare inner cable. Modern bikes have ports on the downtube where complete gear cables disappear into the frame. Concealed cable stops are fitted in the bottom bracket area instead. You can't fit barrel adjusters in this position so the only way of adjusting cable tension on carbon frames has been to fit in line cable adjusters. For bike manufacturers this adds to the number of processes and components that are required to build a bike so they don't always include in line adjusters.

Ultegra 8000 rear derailleurs use a shadow design originally used in mountain biking so the derailleur sits further inboard around the cassette block. The idea is to tuck the rear mechanism out of the way to reduce damage to the derailleur or to the derailleur frame mounting tab, in the event of a crash.

Many of the features described above featured for the first time on the Shimano Dura Ace groupset, introduced 3 years ago. These ideas trickled down to Ultegra 8000 that has been around for 18 months. A final bit of good news is the new Shimano 105 7000 set of components that became available 9 months ago share most of the Dura Ace and Ultegra updates but 105 is quite a bit cheaper. Extra weight is the only down side, function is pretty much identical. C.W



Irish Cycle Awareness Sign, Spotted By Chris Harrington



New Design Shimano SLR EV Dual Pivot Brakes



Older Style Of Shimano Dual Pivot Brake With Uneven Arm Length



Peter Smith's Steel Raleigh Bike from The Early 1950's



Refreshment Facilities On Ronde Van Vlanderen



Ian Ewers, Peta's Mobile Site Friend, With His Cannondale 29er



Shimano Ultegra 8000 Series Front Derailleur With Tension Adjuster

*Groupset: a family of transmission and braking components with matching styling and finish all designed to have the same price versus performance ratio.

C.W

Nostalgia

I've had an old photograph pinned for many years to my study wall. Hidden in plain view. It is a photo of my first proper bicycle which was handed down to me by my father. It was nothing special. A steel diamond frame Raleigh. Circa 1950 ????

The other day I found this photo on the floor. Probably loosed after I left the window open after dusting. (NB, best time to dust – a very windy day, open windows, face mask on and armed with a feather duster.) I sat down and looked at it, properly. I'd love to say that the memories came flooding back. More like a trickle after too many beers across too many years! Nevertheless, I was overcome by this feeling of nostalgia. I even noticed our dog sitting on the grass beside the tree, and that brought a lump to my throat.

My memory has never been good. I may have been allowed out riding this bike when I was 13. Its longest tour was when I was 15 or 16. My home was near Southampton and I attended a boarding school near Reading. One of my chums, Ian, lived in Woking. We were keen aircraft spotters and decided upon a cycle tour of airports and aerodromes around SE England in the forthcoming holidays.

We planned to meet at Lasham airfield, near Basingstoke. Roughly half way twixt our homes. The plan was then to cycle back to my house and commence our tour the next day. I do remember it being a very wet grey day and repairing a puncture in someone's garage after she took pity on me. Anyway, I got to the rendezvous late to find Ian in the pub, with his father! As it was wet his father had taken pity on him and given him and his bike a lift. I think his dad bought us lunch. I really can't recall whether he ferried us to my parents' house.

I remember being fitter and more athletic than my friend, however he had a lighter more modern cycle that had Huret operated Disraeli gears.

I cannot remember our precise itinerary or route. We stayed in Youth Hostels. I wish I still had the YHA booklet showing where we stayed. I'm sure we overnighted at Alfriston, near Newhaven and we must have gone to Shoreham airport. We headed East along the coast as far as Lympne airport and we stayed in the hostel in Canterbury. We probably did Rochester and Gatwick airports and definitely stayed in the hostel at Doddington. (I recall looking up at the stars through the hole in the dormitory roof.) Another hostel we stayed at was Kemsing, near Sevenoaks. And so we headed back Westwards to Ian's home in Woking....

Then I looked at its obverse and read what I had written in pencil those many years ago:-

“FOR SALE.

Men's black Raleigh Bicycle. Good condition.

Selling without carrier, saddle bag, back or front lights.

Selling with black pump, bell, red mudguards optional.

3 gears, 26x1 ½ tyres with one new inner tube & front tyre, comfortable saddle for long journeys. Brakes & brake blocks in good working order. New black gear cable. New drop handlebars with brown grips. No spokes missing. Brake cables in good condition.

£5”

It's sad that I have no idea what happened to the old black Raleigh. Maybe I did sell it for a fiver. Maybe I abandoned it at boarding school after I bought a Viking sports bike from another student. And maybe nostalgia isn't what it used to be, but I would give £105 to have it back.

New Electronic 12 Speed Gear Changing Has Arrived

Campagnolo and Sram have recently introduced new 12 speed (12 speed cassette block) electronic gear changing systems. Electronic gear shifting uses battery powered electric motors to move derailleurs to the required position to carry out a gear change. Gear changes are initiated by electric switches rather than mechanical cable connected to shifting levers. Campagnolo marketed the first mechanical (conventional wire gear change cables) 12 speed Record and Super Record last year. Electronic Campagnolo Super Record EPS 12 uses similar chainring sizes (50/34, 52/36 and 53/39) and cassette ranges (11-29 and 11-32) to standard 11 speed systems. It does have the advantage that a 12 speed cassette will fit the same hub body as an 11 speed Campagnolo block so you don't need new wheels or a new hub body to convert to 12 speed.

Campagnolo have also announced their first 12 speed Chorus mechanical groupset. Chorus lies one step below Record in the Campagnolo hierarchy. Chorus mechanical wire cable shifting with rim brakes is priced at a very similar level to Shimano Ultegra with rim brakes. The hydraulic disc brake version of Chorus is £498 dearer than the Shimano Ultegra equivalent. Campagnolo are offering the widest range rear cassette block (11-34) they have ever produced as an option with the 12 speed Chorus equipment. This block can also be used with electronic or mechanical Super Record or mechanical Record.

Sram have just launched 12 speed Force and Red eTap AXS electronic (electric motor-powered derailleurs plus electric switch gear selection) systems. In contrast to Shimano and Campagnolo operating practise, Sram use wireless transmission between shift levers and derailleurs instead of a wiring loom and single seat tube concealed battery. Sram Red is top of their range while Force is aimed at competing with Shimano Ultegra Di2. The new Sram equipment uses small chainring

sizes (50/37,48/35 and 46/33) with 10-28 or 1033 cassettes. Sram have produced a strange looking flat topped 12 speed chain for these new systems. An AXS smartphone App allows detailed customisation of gear shifting behaviour that is not possible with the current 11 speed, Sram eTap, electronic shifting. Sram AXS offers a wider gear range than Campagnolo but requires a new XDR cassette hub or new 12 speed compatible wheels to allow for the 10 teeth small sprocket.

All these systems are amazingly expensive but the German mail order bike company Rose offer their Endurance racer with Sram Force eTap AXS gearing for virtually the same price as after-market, standalone Sram Force or the same price range as 11 speed Shimano Ultegra Di2 electronic equipped bikes. Shimano don't produce any 12 speed shifting systems at the present time.

Electronic shifting has 2 significant advantages over mechanical cable operation. Electronic shift systems automatically trim front derailleurs and they allow Garmin or Wahoo GPS head units to display in schematic or numerical form, the front chainring and rear sprocket you've selected, which is very useful when hill climbing. All but the very cheapest modern integrated gear and brake control levers give no physical indication of which gear has been selected as they return to a neutral position immediately after each gear change.

Cutting edge 12 speed gear systems may seem remote from everyday riding but cycling technology tends to trickle down to affordable products very quickly. This year's Shimano Dura Ace becomes next season's Ultegra with 105 following closely behind. The next decent quality bike you buy may well have 12 rear sprockets rather than 5 that was typical in the 1980's or 9 in the early 2000's.

C.W

[A Day At The Ronde Van Vlanderen-07/04/19](#)

Pete and I travelled over to our caravan in East Flanders at the beginning of April, as the Ronde Van Vlanderen passes right through our campsite now since they changed the start in Bruges to Antwerp, a couple of years ago. The tour of Flanders is one of the five, one day monuments in the racing calendar. Each of the monuments are a tough 250km plus race and include Milan San Remo, Paris Roubaix, Liege Bastogne liege and Lombardia. It is THE race that every Flemish racer dreams of winning, and the whole of Flanders turns out en masse to hope that is indeed the case. Every village and town decks itself in flags, bunting and cycling road art, with marquees, bars and cafes doing a roaring trade-what's not to like?

Our village of Donkmeer was dressed in it's Sunday best, with banners proclaiming the local big hitting riders including Oliver Naesen and Greg Van Avermaet, who is already a winner of Paris Roubaix which is nicknamed "The Hell of the North". The boatman on the lake had done a splendid job of positioning his electric boats, and tying some together in two circles to illustrate a moving bicycle, the race helicopter got a great shot of it.

We headed to the roundabout where the race would have to take a tight left turn, and it gave a clear view down the road from where they would appear. We saw two people actually on it and decided to join them. It transpired they were the parents of Gijs Van Hoecke from the CCC Team and was Greg Van Avermaet's team mate. They told us their son was riding for him today and his job was to stay with him as long as he could, so it was unlikely he would be in the breakaway. Our position was on the first part of the course about 40km from Antwerp and very, very flat, so my hopes of picking up a discarded bidon from one of the teams as they rode by was somewhat diminished, as they probably hadn't even worked up a thirst yet! Stewards, motorbikes and police turned up on an assortment with an assortment of whistles and flags, and there was soon a crowd of people by the barriers and on the roundabout. The anticipation was palpable and before long the

breakaway hove into view accompanied by a raucous amount of clapping, shouting and flag waving. They had been allowed to get about a 10 minutes advantage by the peleton, so it wasn't long before the chaos of the actual race stormed past in a riot of colour and noise. You could hear the swish of wheels and gearchanging as the Belgian Champion Yves Lampaert bunny-hopped the road furniture and raced right in front of us, sporting his distinctive black, red and yellow racing kit. It's an amazing feeling to be that close and makes you wonder how on earth they manage to stay upright. We had a great pole position and the camera motorbike got quite a closeup of Pete dressed in a gilet-jaune. The downside was that we were trapped on the roundabout until all the race paraphernalia, team cars etc had all gone past, along with the unleashed waiting traffic, but a small price to pay for such an experience.

We then went to get our bikes and ride down to the next village en route where the church green was covered with tents, refreshment vans and a marquee with a huge TV screen broadcasting the race. We rode past Fietsen Aster, the local bike shop where I had purchased my Sparta electric bike 2 years ago. I would have popped in to say hello but the shop was shut, and I hope Mr Aster was having a deserved day off and enjoying the race somewhere, as I am more than pleased with my purchase. By the time we got to Berlare, the peleton had long gone obviously, and were heading out to the rough cobbled climbs to the south which are called "Hellingen". I was time for refreshments so we entered the marquee and found a couple of empty seats and table close enough to the TV, and I volunteered to go hunter gathering- bad move, as it was more complicated than I thought. I was kindly guided through the process of buying some vouchers that were in multiples of 60 cents, as were all the drinks and food, and proceeded to swop them for coffees, cheese rolls and sticky buns by some helpful Belgians in a combination of pigeon Flemish and English. Feeling replete and enjoying the race, the giant TV screen then decided to pack up and

there were people tinkering with it and on mobile phones, so we left them to it and repaired to a local bar which again supplied a TV and seats for us. It was a bar we had used many times before called “Het Klaverblad”-the cloverleaf-and they made us so welcome we stayed there for the conclusion of the race. For us and the Belgians it was a slight disappointment that Alberto Bettiol got to the finish line first in Oudenaarde, an Italian from the EF Drapac Team who although undoubtedly a great strong rider, precious few of us had heard of him, and Greg Van Avermaet was once again thwarted in his pursuit of victory in this auspicious event.

Discovering we had a couple of vouchers left, Pete went back for a last Belgian sticky bun before we made our way back to the caravan, albeit not at racing speed! What a great fun, action-packed day it had been, all played out in brilliant sunshine and temperatures of 24 degrees Celsius. Can't wait to come back, as the Tour de France starts in Brussels this year, and the second stage comes within about 4050km from us-perhaps we'll get to see that too!

Sue King



Martin Noticed This Dog Being Transported By Bike In Amsterdam

Why Cycling Really Is For All In Germany

I have just spent a week in Borken, Germany – the twin town with Whitstable. Visiting our ‘twins’ in Europe points up both the many similarities but also the contrasts: aspects we could learn a lot from in the UK. And high up the list is cycle-friendly streets.

Borken’s pavements are clearly divided between pedestrians and cyclists, with contrasting brown cycle routes. This happens town-wide, not just on one or two streets. Woe betide that you walk on the brown routes, as cyclists take no prisoners! When you need to cross a main road there are dedicated cycle traffic lights. Finger sign posts are everywhere signing you on to routes to neighbouring towns or for leisure cycling. The result? People of all ages are cycling, for shopping, getting to work, or taking exercise.

I know what you might say – “British streets and pavements are often much older and narrower and cycle paths would not be feasible”. Yes, arguably in some cases, like Whitstable High Street or the centre of Canterbury, but in many places, say on Herne Bay High Street pavement space and even some road space could be claimed to make cycle paths. To be honest even with more difficult roads, like in Whitstable, you just widen the pavements and reduce traffic to one-way.

So why doesn’t it happen here? My view is that the Brits do not have the planning vision or courage of our European counterparts. For much of Europe too, they had the chance after the devastation of WW2 to plan their cities. But of course it does take money

and will, and I cannot see Kent County Council offering much of either. And as for national government it is not even on the agenda.

The number of cyclists on our roads, of all ages and abilities would increase hugely if they were given safe space to get from A to B. Sustrans and the National Cycle Routes do a great job in encouraging cycling and providing safer routes and we do have some cycle lanes in our towns and cities but what I am arguing for is different. It is dedicated shared pavements with investment to back it up.

To my mind, the French, German or Spanish dare to pose the questions and then spend public money to make things happen. Look at the TGV rail network across France, or the Spanish equivalent. We try to do anything like that, HS2 or Crossrail and it all gets bogged down in rival interest groups. It's the same with provision for cyclists. We need some big ideas and someone brave enough to turn them from dreams to reality.

Martin Prestage

Faversham Wednesday Meets For Jun, Jul & Aug 2019

<u>Jun</u>	5 th	The Alma, Painters Forstal	01795 533835
	12 th	The Black Lion, Lynsted	01795 521229
	19 th	The White Horse Inn, Boughton Street	01227 751343
	26 th	The Three Horseshoes, Staplestreet	01227 750842
<u>Jul</u>	3 rd	The Rose & Crown, Perry Wood	01227 752214
	10 th	The Castle Inn, Oare	01795 533674
	17 th	Peta's Beach Hut Meeting Beach Hut 381, Hampton Pier, Herne Bay (In Front Of Yacht Club)	07894466455
	24 th	The Alma, Painters Forstal	01795 533835
	31 st	The Black Lion, Lynsted	01795 521229
<u>Aug</u>	7 th	The Chequers, Doddington	01795 886366

	14 th	Railway Hotel, Preston Street, Faversham Committee Meeting. Members Please Gather In The Bar.	01795 533173
	21 st	The Castle Inn, Oare	01795 533674
	28 th	The Three Horseshoes, Staplestreet	01227 750842



Irish Close Pass Sign Spotted By Chris Harrington

Thanet Thursday Section Meets For Jun, Jul & Aug 2019

<u>Jun</u>	6 th	The Red Cow, Sandwich	01304 613399
	13 th	The Gate Inn, Marshside	01227 860498
	20 th	The Rose Inn, Wickhambreaux	01227 721763
	27 th	The Huntsman & Horn, Broomfield	01227 370965
<u>Jul</u>	4 th	The Bell, St Nicholas At Wade	01843 847250
	11 th	The Black Pig, Barnsole/Staple	01304 813723

	WED 17 th	Peta's Beach Hut 381 Meet, In Front Of Yacht Club, Hampton Pier, Herne Bay)	07894466455
	18 th	The Red Cow, Sandwich	01304 613399
	25 th	King Ethelbert, Reculver	01227 374368
<u>Aug</u>	1 st	The Rose Inn, Wickhambreaux	01227 721763
	8 th	The Crown Inn, Finglesham	01304 612555
	15 th	The Haywain, Bramling	01227 720676
	22 nd	The Bell, St Nicholas At Wade	01843 847250
	29 th	The Crispin Inn, Worth	01304 612081



New Ultegra 8000 Rear Derailleur

Thanet Section Sunday Meets for Jun, Jul & Aug 2019

<u>Jun</u>	2 nd	Rose In Bloom, Whitstable, TR098657	01227 276502
	9 th	The New Inn, Minster	01843 826142

	16 th	The Anchor Inn, Wingham	01227 720392
	23 rd	The Black Pig, Barnsole/Staple	01304 813723
	30 th	The Five Bells Eastry	01304 611188
<u>Jul</u>	7 th	Rose In Bloom, Whitstable, TR098657	01227 276502
	14 th	The Anchor Inn, Wingham	01227 720392
	21 st	The New Inn, Minster	01843 826142
	28 th	The Half Moon & Seven Stars, Preston	01227 722299
<u>Aug</u>	4 th	Rose In Bloom, Whitstable, TR098657	01227 276502
	11 th	The Black Pig, Barnsole/Staple	01304 813723
	18 th	The Five Bells Eastry	01304 611188
	25 th	The Anchor Inn, Wingham	01227 720392



Borken Cycle Routes Signage from Martin's German Trip