



Vegpatch

August 2010

*Newsletter of the
Vegetarian Cycling and Athletics Club*



Vegetarian Cycling & Athletics Club Annual General Meeting 2010

This year's AGM is scheduled to be held at *Moot Hall, Macintyre Centre, Haddon, Great Holm, Milton Keynes* on *Sunday 21st November 2010*. The venue will be open from 11:00 for refreshments, with the AGM itself scheduled for between midday and 16:00. All members welcome.

All agenda items should be notified to the General Secretary, Steve Coote (addresses and phone number in the address listings on previous page). These should arrive with him not less than four weeks before the date of the AGM to facilitate the preparation and distribution of the agenda. These will be distributed to all members. Other items may be brought up at the AGM for discussion and voting subject to the appropriate paragraphs of the constitution.

Due, in particular, to an unfortunate number of resignations from the committee this year there are many vacant posts to be filled, even aside from the right of any member to stand for any post irrespective of the incumbent's decision to stand or not. Nominations will be accepted at any time and the committee would be glad to hear from anyone interested in learning more about any of the posts.

Steve Coote
General Secretary

VC&AC Posts

Firstly many thanks to Paul Elliot for his work as both Membership and General Secretary.

To give members some insight into what some of the various club official's roles entail current, or recent, incumbents have submitted a description. As Steve has highlighted in his AGM summary above several posts have become vacant or will become so at the AGM. Please do consider standing for one of these positions and feel free to enquire about or stand for any that appear to be covered – new officers are always welcome.

Some positions are automatic committee positions, most require a brief annual report to be submitted to the AGM. There are also some General Committee posts available. Most committee business, apart from the AGM, is conducted via an email group. None of the posts are paid though legitimate expenses are met.

General Secretary – Committee (Steve Coote is willing to continue in this position)

As the name implies, the General Secretary has a fairly wide brief, some parts of which are more implied than specific.

The single most specific job relates to the AGM. In preparation, this involves making sure the hall is booked, notifying members of the date well in advance, and collating and distributing the agenda; during to take minutes; and afterwards to write up and distribute these along with the various secretaries reports.

On a more general level, the Gen Sec acts as a chair for the discussions that occur on committee's e-group, trying to bring discussions to an agreed close or calling a vote. It is necessary to try to then take decisions forward, either personally or through the relevant

secretary as there is little as frustrating as reaching a decision to have nothing result from it. He/she is often the initial contact point for the public and other organisations, though often these can be forwarded to the Membership Secretary or other relevant Secretary. My own take on it also assumes that if some action is required from a post for which there is no current occupant then the Gen Sec takes it upon him/herself to act in that role for as long as it takes to sort the immediate issue. Ultimately, enforcing the constitution on members, and on the club in relation to the membership, stops with the Gen Sec.

This all makes this role sound much grimmer than I have ever found it to be. A great deal of the club's business goes through the Gen Sec, and to be at the heart of trying to make things happen is always interesting and often rewarding. It's a difficult role to nail down, but I'm sure all who have been on the committee know when a good one is in place.

Athletic Secretary – Committee – VACANT

Given that the majority of our active members are active in athletics, in particular road and trail running, there is a lot of scope for this role to be central to what we do in terms of encouraging participation by members, club visibility at races and reporting of results.

Many ways have been tried by an assortment of secretaries to further these aims – club championship races, leagues, relays, regional organisers and targeting specific races to try to get a large contingent of the club together at once to name a few. Sometimes they work as intended, sometimes they sort of work, but the challenge is both to encourage and report on what people are doing in their own preferred events, whilst seeking ways to overcome the problem of getting members to take part in events they hadn't at least considered doing for themselves in order to highlight the club and cause.

An increasing strand of this role is to Liaise with the Membership Secretary in dealing with the governing body – UKA. This can be frustrating as there is often a feeling that generalised road running is very much the poor relation to high profile track events and the occasional event such as London or the Great North Run, but we nevertheless have to do all the administration and follow all the rules. It is, however, an essential part of our functioning as an affiliated club and a real service to one's fellow members, as is securing and allocating the club London Marathon place(s).

Membership Secretary - Committee – VACANT

1. Maintain
 - (i) the membership records in the existing Access database
 - (ii) relevant club forms / letters in Word
 - (iii) the members' Contacts List in Word
 - (iv) new member's questionnaire
2. Receive & process new membership applications including where appropriate registrations with England Athletics on their system.
3. Bank cheques either in branch or by post



Steve Coote has recently been spreading himself thin trying to cover several vacant posts

4. Liaise with the Treasurer regarding
 - (i) payment of England Athletics member registration fees
 - (ii) payments received by standing order
5. Inform the club committee of new members / resignations via the committee e-group
6. Committee vote on proposals / contribute to discussions on club issues
7. Produce standard report for the AGM



Peter Simpson has given much of his time to the club over the years but now plans to take a break from the committee

Treasurer - Committee

(Sharon Hammond is willing to stand for this position)

1. Maintain the club's bank account mandate
2. Pay club's annual affiliations and where relevant members' England Athletics registration fees
3. Pay for purchases of club clothing and committee members' expenses
4. For the AGM produce a report including an income / expenditure account
5. Liaise with the Clothing Secretary regarding an assets statement for the AGM and similarly the number of club badges from the Membership Secretary
6. Committee vote on proposals / contribute to discussions on club issues

Newsletter Editor - Committee (Nik Windle is willing to continue in this position)

The Newsletter Editor collects material for the club newsletter, produces the newsletter and distributes it to the membership in printed or electronic form. At present the plan is to produce the newsletter, Vegpatch, quarterly. Recently the Newsletter Editor has also taken on the job of updating the news section of the club website every few weeks.

The newsletter is both an important way for club officials to communicate to the membership and a chance for members to read and write about a great variety of athletic and cycling related activities. The more members who contribute material to the newsletter, and send snippets in for the website news, the richer the mix of content so please do send your reports, photos etc to me by post or email

Cycling Secretary - Committee (Noel Molland is willing to continue in this position)

The current post holder is Noel Molland, the local contact for Devon & Cornwall. Noel was coopted to the Secretarial post in 2009 when the previous post holder unexpectedly resigned. Traditionally the Cycling Secretary helps to organise Club races. However Noel does not come from a racing background and prefers to arrange leisure rides. If anyone would like to host a leisure ride please contact Noel who is happy to help in its organisation. Noel would also welcome assistance from anyone who is interested in organising any Club races.

Besides organising rides, Noel has also been trying to help raise the profile of the Club, particularly its cycling activities, and encourage non-Club members to get involved with

cycling. He has had limited success with this gaining mentions in a small animal rights newsletter and registering the Club with a couple of sports websites.

Noel, who likes to regard himself as an amateur journalist, has also provided European race reports to a new cycling website in return for their publishing the Clubs website at the bottom of their reports. For more information on the role or how you can get involved with the Clubs cycling activities contact

Multi-sport Secretary - VACANT

Those who regularly take part in multi-sports under our banner are few and far between, and this year alone two of our more prolific competitors have resigned from the club for reasons of their own. It remains, however, a part of the club that punches well above its weight in terms of raising the club profile and general publicity. We have been lucky to have had several members who have performed at the top end of their age groups, and as a result have even represented the national team.

One of the main challenges for anyone looking to up the numbers competing for the VCAC, and get beyond having the occasional outstanding individual, is the complete lack of local support; one needs to be a particular type of person to put in the hours of training in three disciplines by oneself, particularly given that one – swimming – is quite technical in nature. This, in itself, doesn't help in getting people together in competition. A recent route forward has been to try to get both active multi-sport members and those from individual disciplines to take part in relay events together. On the face of it, given that we are a cycling and athletic club, one would think that this shouldn't be too difficult and we did manage to have three teams entered for a duathlon a couple of years ago. But one suspects that in general the distances for some team members to travel and the relative expense of entry fees compared to running makes this something to organise occasionally, go for hard and feel well rewarded by when it does all comes together.

The British Triathlon Federation is a much more hands off body than United Kingdom Athletics, and the only real contact necessary is to register the club and so ensure we appear in the handbook.

Results Secretary (Keith Hammond is willing to continue in this position)

Involves contacting members quarterly for details of race results. The collated results are sent out quarterly to members, together with an annual summary of results at 'standard distances'. In addition a results to date schedule is put on the website each quarter.

Events Diary Secretary (Keith Hammond is willing to continue in this position)

Involves contacting members every four to six weeks with details of the latest events diary and to request any additions to the diary. The updated events diary is put on the website every four to six weeks.

Clothing Secretary - VACANT

1. Maintain details of stock levels, prices and related documents in Excel / Word
2. Order further stock as appropriate

3. Obtain approval from the committee regarding large or non-standard orders
4. Liaise with suppliers over changes to available clothing
5. Keep the committee informed of any supplier changes
6. Process orders / enquiries from members
7. Keep members informed of range of club clothing available
8. Bank cheques or liaise with Treasurer if payment by electronic transfer
9. Produce a clothing assets statement in advance for the Treasurer's AGM report

Website Manager (*Steve Coote is willing to continue in this position*)

The website is currently operated by two people, with additional input from the current Newsletter Editor. Max d'Ayala is the technical guru of the site, having initially set it up he knows it's ins and out better than anyone. The Website Manager is responsible for updating content on the site. This has become a more important/time sensitive matter as we have moved from our previously largely static site, that did it's job in acting as an archive and letting the public know how to contact us, to a more dynamic site designed to make it clear that we are an active club.

As I (*Steve*) am currently 'doing' websites I find it a satisfying (if occasionally deeply frustrating) thing to be involved with. On a wider level, the pleasure comes from helping to present our club to the public in as informative and interesting way as possible, and, from feedback, I think this helps do that.

Discounted Membership of British Cycling

British Cycling is offering discounted membership to any VC&AC member who wishes to take out a new membership. There are four levels of BC membership, Ride, Bronze, Silver and Gold.

Ride membership is for commuters, sportive riders and other non-racers and includes a range of discounts, advice & support if your involved in an accident, liability insurance of up to £10,000,000, a weekly e-newsletter, etc. Bronze to Gold membership is for people who race and carries a range of benefits depending on your membership level, but all contain a Provisional Racing License.

VC&AC members are being offered half price Ride membership, FREE Bronze membership or reduced Silver and Gold Membership.

Younger VC&AC members (born 1994 or later) can apply for FREE Silver membership AND a FREE Race License.

This discount offer lasts until 30/11/10. If you'd like to take advantage of the offer contact Noel, the Clubs Cycling Secretary who will send you a special BC membership application form.

Remember the Bronze membership is FREE for all new membership applications and as it includes getting a discount from Wiggle.co.uk this is an offer certainly worth taking up.

Prices of Non-Racewear – Impsport/Reynolds

The club is planning to order items from the company's leisure clothing range. Below are selected items that include shades of yellow but there maybe others from the comprehensive range that you would prefer. The on-line catalogue can be viewed at <http://white.clothingrange.co.uk/catalogue.asp> . Prices are not quoted on-line as they vary depending on quantity and screen printing requirements. The prices quoted below are for a combined order of different quantities including the club's basic nameprint on both sides but VAT is still to be added by the company and there are delivery costs.

The club will be ordering a stock of many of these items and we would like feedback from members for your preferences for possible future orders (minimum: code & size).

Code	Item Description	Colour	Sizes	Price Band 2	Price Band 1
101F	Jerzees Ladies Crew Neck Fitted T-shirt	Sunshine Yellow	S/M/L/XL	£7.40	£7.80
ZT180	Jerzees Classic T-Shirt (price varies for colour & size)	Yellow	XS/S/M/L / XL/XXL	£6.90	£8.40
EV81	High Visibility Enhanced T-shirt (size xxl may be more) 65% Polyester	Enhanced Yellow	S/M/L/ XL/XXL ...	£10.50	£11.80
ZT180B	Jerzees Child's T-shirt	Yellow / Citrus	20/22/26/ 30/32/34	£6.60	£6.80
575M	Jerzees Hooded Sweatshirt (50% polyester)	Gold	XS/S/M/L /XL/XXL	£16.80	£18.30
EV85	High Visibility Enhanced Visibility Hoodie Jerzees (88% polyester)	Enhanced Yellow	S/M/L/ XL/XXL	£24.00	£27.40
SS27M	Raglan Sweatshirt Fruit of loom sweatshirt (20% polyester)	Sunflower	S/M/L/ LA/XL/X XL	£13.90	£15.90
SS28M	Medium Weight T-Shirt (Men)	Yellow / Sunflower	S/M/L/ XL/XXL	£6.50	£6.70
SS79M	Medium Weight T-Shirt (Women)	Sunflower	XS/S/M /L/XL	£6.20	£6.50
SS28B	Medium Weight T-Shirt (Child's)	Yellow	20/21/22/ 26/ 30/32/34/ 36	£6.00	£6.20
SS25M	Polo Shirt Men's (35% polyester)	Sunflower	S/M/L /XL/XXL	£10.10	£10.70
SS92M	Polo Shirt Women's (35% polyester)	Sunflower	XS/S/M/L /XL/XXL	£9.80	£10.30
GD57	Heavyweight Hoodies – Adults (50% polyester)	Gold / Honey	S/M/L/ XL/XXL	£13.60	£14.50

Athletics Summary – Steve Coote

Following the big turn out at London this year it has been good to see plenty of other activity at a range of distances and on various surfaces. It always seems a little unfair to pick out individual performances with so much going on, but some highlights below. Please check Keith's results package for full results and don't forget Nik Windle's website blogs.

Several VCAC members took part in the Wycombe Half Marathon and 10km, with Keith Hammond first VCAC home in 1:28:38. Others taking part included Nicola Hatch, Mary Davis, Caroline Chapman, Peter Simpson and Sharon Hammond, quite a little team building up there. Keith has been flying again this year with a succession of PBs to rival those of another prolific and fast improving runner, James Cheseldine. James managed a PB of 37:59 at the Frampton 10km in June to go alongside two top 20 placings at the

Mallards Pike 5 and the Devils Chimney Chase.



James at the start of the Devils Chimney Chase

Amongst the ultra and marathon runners, Andy Jordan has completed the Fellsman – a very tough, hilly, 62 miles off road event – in under 19 hours, and the Compton 40 miles, gaining 13th out of 105 runners. Paul Horne, Keith Hammond, Robert Mottram Jones, Jeff Adams and Nik Windle have all completed marathons, though the prize must go

to Stuart Crispin who completed all seven of the maras in the Endurance Life Coastal trail Series, coming 1st of those who completed all 7 and 8th of those who just did enough to get an official placing. On a personal note, I was delighted to see that Robert Mottram Jones took part in the 12 Hour Track Race at Tipton, coming 2nd with over 95km.

Good to see that the club is spreading with two new members from the Czech Republic – Milos Bednar and Olga Bednarova . Both have been flying the flag in their VCAC vests at distances of 10km to Half Marathon.

Steve Wigglesworth continues his occasional reluctant forays into straight road running, doing the Askern 10km with Emma Smith in 38:58, though Richard Shelley's 35:58 at Poole is probably the fastest of the quarter.

Cycling News – Noel Molland

Audax/Sportive

On the 9th of May Nik Windle and Jane headed off for the New Forest. Jane had seen a 50km ride mentioned in the CTC

magazine and decided she could do this whilst Nik did the 200km New Forest Excursion. Staying in a lovely vegan

B&B in Ashurst Nik pedalled 18km out to Lymington and set off on his adventure. With 24 cattle grids and numerous fords in front of him Nik always knew that this was not going to be a “main road ride” and this was confirmed when the land became open, yellow gorse and wandering animals helped emphasise the beauty of the New Forest, even if animals wandering out in front of riders made for some interesting situations. At one point Nik was concerned about his overall speed, but this turned out to be a needless concern as he completed the course in 10h 35m.

In May Dominic Burford took on the 307km Dean audax through the Forest of Dean. The course was initially undulating with the added interest of deer running out into the road. In fact Dominic saw four deer at four different times! But towards the end of the ride there were a couple of big climbs, Broad Town to Broad Hinton and the Vale of the White Horse. Dominic has written an account of his ride which can be found online at <http://www.openzine.com/aspz/Zine.aspx?IssueID=9557> and described his ride as “a wonder ride” which he thoroughly enjoyed.

On the 19th of June Nik Windle and Jane decided to combine the 130k Avon Cycleway Audax and the 50k Castle Combe Caper. Nik did the Avon Cycleway whilst Jane did the Caper. On the ride Nik very quickly teamed up with another rider, Matt, who he had met before on some other rides and together they tackled the rolling hills of Somerset taking in such delights as the Chew Valley Lake. The ride, like all audax, was pleasant and perforated with regular tea stops and a chance to chat with other cyclists, even if one of the other cyclists proudly announced he was in training for a 1000 kilometre audax!!

Racing

On the 24th of April Steve Wigglesworth rode a 13 mile Time Trial organised by Clifton CC. The ride was on quiet country roads with lots of twists and turns and “relentless undulations”. A collection of tractors and horse riders to try and avoid made the course more interesting and Steve finished 6th overall.

Luton Marathon and Relay

The Luton Marathon and 3-stage relay is set for the first Sunday in December, 5/12/10 this year. The venue is the usual one at Lea Manor Recreation Centre, Northwell Drive, Luton.

The relay consists of teams of three with each member running one lap of the course, approximately 8.75 miles. Cost of entry is £35 per team, with a £2 surcharge payable on the day by any team members without a UKA competition licence, licence numbers must be provided on the day.

This is a race at which we had teams for several years up until a couple of years ago with the cancelled event of 2008, even gaining third place one year. It would be good to revive our participation, particularly since we usually have some individual runners to support.

Anyone wishing a place please contact the Athletics Secretary, Steve Coote, sometime soon so I can judge the level of interest and know how many team places to book. The marathon is usually full before race day and relay entries are limited to 200. No need to send money at this point.

Multi-Sport Report – Steve Coote

Leeds Triathlon 12th Sept 2010

For some time now we have been trailing our having at least one team in the relay event at the Leeds Triathlon. Paul Elliott was to be the runner for the team, and with his departure from the club we are a person short. Any offers to do the 10km run leg will be gratefully received; if there is more than one, and no chance of forming a second team, we will simply accept the person with the fastest current time, but our gratitude will be to all.

The entry fee is a bargain in triathlon terms at £10 per team member – usually £80 for a non-BTF team - the rest has already been paid. Please step up so we can really give it a go. Last time we had a team out – at the Belvoir Tri – we took first place.

News

Steve Wigglesworth, who will be the cycling member for the relay, has been hitting top form again after a relatively poor start to the season. The final event of three in the Midland Sprint Series at Lincoln saw him overcome a strong headwind on the bike to take first in his age group. This, combined with previous age group wins at the other two events – Woodhall Spa and the Southwell Sprint, both back in May – saw him finish first vet 44 in the series and in the top ten overall. Rumour has it that Steve's debut at middle distance at Newbiggin Bay was another success. *(Sure enough – a quick look at the results and I find Steve placed 13th of 108 top class finishers, 4:21:32 for this Half Ironman. Ed.)*

As a result of twelve weeks of continuous snow through the winter and family illnesses that have resulted in his having to do much travelling and severely curtailed his training, Jon Zigmond's triathlon year has been a mixed one. His times, he reports, have been poor, and getting worse, but notwithstanding all of that he has still completed three middle distance races – races that in any more sensible grading system would be called long since they are essentially Half-Ironman events. Jon is unlikely to race again this season but is looking forward to the challenge of moving into a new age group next year.

My only sally into tri to date this year was at the Chorlton X Tri. A strange one for me since I finished nearly halfway up the field on the swim, but made precious little further headway in the other two disciplines. 2/6 in my age group was some consolation for not quite getting into the top half overall. Suddenly realising I only had four weeks until this year's Swimtrek and eight until the Leeds relay, has since seen me cutting back the running in favour of 3-4 swims per week.

The BBC coverage of the London, Hyde Park tri on July 25th was another big plus for the sport, with a couple of cracking finishes to the races. Shame the courses for these events, driven by the need to make it easy for the cameras, are so often so anodyne. Seeing top triathletes competing in the surf at Perranporth, or on the hills in the Helvellyn tri would make for interesting viewing.

I am sure there must be more going on out there in the world of VCAC tri, but I can only report what I hear about. So come on people, give me some crumbs to feed off!

Stopsley Striders Ladies 5K - A Spectator's Perspective

Sharon decided to have a go at this low key local race in July. The venue was Wardown Park, Luton and having grown up in the town and visited the park as a child on sunny summer days, I imagined that the course would involve a couple of laps of the lake. However the lake wasn't quite as large as I remembered it (two laps would only be 1.9K). Instead the course involved two very convoluted and twisting laps (in fact the course looked as if it had been based on the more complex Scalextric, or Hornby Railway track plans that I always wanted to recreate, but never had enough floor space or pocket money to do so.)

The main advantage of the race route was that with a little bit of planning I could cheer on Sharon and take a series of photos from a number of vantage points. So after she had completed the first 100m I crossed over the lake, using the (30m long) suspension bridge to the 1K point. The front runners seemed to be coasting along with little effort and quite a few gaps had already opened up. Sharon was going well having settled in to 18th place.

Back over the bridge and to the edge of the park as the runners passed by, then a short walk to the 2K point, followed by another short walk across to 2.5K. What was noticeable at this stage was how very few place changes there had been, particularly amongst the leaders.

As the runners headed off towards Luton Museum and the municipal tennis courts, I again crossed over the bridge, to the 3K point and then back to the 4K marker, where Sharon re-entered the park on schedule for a PB.

At this point I could have waited at around 4.5K and perhaps run alongside Sharon (in the style of the supporters on a Pyrenean stage of the Tour de France) for the last 500m, but having done something similar at the Candleford Canter Ladies 10K, only to get some disapproving looks from the marshals, I decided on the more traditional approach of waiting by the finishing line.

Two young boys were giving out the medals and the slightly older one explained that those finishing in the top ten could be told their position and 'well done', but those outside the top ten would simply be told 'well done'. For some reason they had miscounted and mistakenly informed the runners in 6th to 12th that they were two places further up. (I'm not sure whether this was in accordance with some internationally recognised convention, but it is probably safe to assume that if the person at the finish of a race only says 'well done' you have finished outside the top ten and if they tell you your position, you are probably actually 12th).

As the clock ticked towards her previous PB of 28:06, Sharon finished with her watch showing a time of 27:39, but in most races we have run there always seem to be a couple of seconds added on (another international convention?), so we figured it would be 27:41 and indeed it was, and 19th out of 97 (so around about the same position she was after 1K).

Keith Hammond



Anthony Maynard Sportive – Nik Windle

I'd ridden this sportive last July and what with a puncture and a bungled tube swap I'd finished in 5hrs 28m - more of an audax time than a sportive one. That was my 1st ever sportive - this was my 2nd. The plan was minimise breaks and push hard so as to get under 5hrs for the 110k ride giving me a bronze for my age group.

Several hundred of us gathered at Theale and we were sent off in smallish groups, the 190k riders and the 110k mixed in together as you are allowed to swap route partway through if you want. I said hello to a couple of people from the Vegan Fitness forum and then set off with one of the earlier groups, swiping my time card on the way out. We soon picked up speed and my heart rate went with it, this was much too fast for me so dropped off the back of the bunch and found my own pace for what I knew to be quite a hilly first stage rolling up over the downs to Farnborough.

I climbed half familiar roads waiting for the next bunch to pass me but appreciating a slight but consistent tail wind. After a while I passed a couple who I guessed had hung on to the tow

too long and seemed to be paying the price, then another rider and a couple more. This was rather heartening and I'd reeled in at least 10 people before the frontrunner of the next group flew past me at what must have been 20mph uphill and reminded me of my place.



Nik rides the Anthony Maynard Sportive 110k

Somewhere near East Ilsey a Red Kite drifted on motionless wings just feet above the field on my right, magpie corpse dangling from her talons. One look at my VCAC shirt and she had an attack of conscience dropping her breakfast and drifting off empty clawed. (Or maybe she just realised that bit of roadkill was not at it's best.)

I hit 62kph on the descent over the Ridgeway and down Chain Hill into Wantage without quite needing a change of shorts. The wind seemed to shift and become part headwind during the couple of miles heading West before the climb up Hackpen Hill to the first checkpoint, this was fine by me as the checkpoint was the most Westerly point on the 110k route.

A banana, squash and some dried fruit for my pocket, a visit to the hedge, I was in and out of the checkpoint in less than the 10 mins I was allowing for. Downhill most of the way to Lambourn with the wind against me then the 2 routes split with the 110k heading East and the 190k West. A fastish run down the pleasant valley to Welford where we swung south again for a bit of a struggle through some lovely lanes, past the site of last years deflation, down to the 2nd checkpoint at Ball Hill. Banana and ready quartered orange went down a treat and I was off on the last leg with the wind behind me but sufficient route knowledge to know of lumps to come.

Sure enough we turned into the quiet lanes

paralleling the M4 and climbed the first of the notorious (notorious amongst a few knackered locals anyway) Boxford Alps. I misremembered this series of short climbs and was caught out by there being a 4th, still I was well on schedule for my 5hrs and the main thing now was to keep the aching legs turning rather than let that 'it's in

the bag' feeling be an excuse to relax.

We skirted Thatcham then more tailwind to assist most of the way back to Theale. Over Red Shute Hill, a last short climb just a couple of miles from the finish then an annoying 30 second wait to cross a busy road, we'd seen so little traffic all day this

came as a bit of a shock. Into the finish to swipe my chip and collect a certificate saying 4:38:28 Bronze.

I felt more like I'd just ridden a hilly 200k audax than just half the distance for the rest of Sunday but all in all a great day out and one of the very few sportives that gives ALL the profit to charity.

SwimSmooth – Steve Wigglesworth

I have grown to be a cynic, especially regarding run and cycle training advice. The number of times I've read utterly stupid training programmes in popular magazines hasn't helped. Suffice to say I'm not generally persuaded by 'fashionable' hints and tips.

This is not to say that I don't believe in general principles, I absolutely do. If you want to be a decent runner, then you have to train by running, at least some of the time anyway. If, at appropriate intervals, you run a bit further than you normally would, and, on another day, run a bit faster than you are comfortable with, you will reach something approaching your potential. Most other advice ends up, at best, resulting in slight improvement tied to the law of diminishing returns, and at worst is simply designed to fill column inches or earn somebody, somewhere, a decent income.

Swimming, though, is a bit different to the other triathlon disciplines. As I've learned, if your stroke isn't right, you can train all you like and all that will happen is that you end up with a permanently bad stroke. Your tee-shirts feel a bit tighter, but you will still be routinely outpaced by scraggy 13 year olds wearing massive

shorts. The water shows no respect to those with body-builder physiques and sub 35min 10Ks. Now this is no sensational revelation, and I realised this early on. I worked hard when I first took up triathlon to get my stroke right. I'd spoken to good swimmers, watched them, had them watch me, studied basic principles from internet research, been filmed and watched myself, shaved my forearms – the result? Tight tee-shirts and a rubbish freestyle. I needed help.

Surfing the internet / waiting for a miracle, I chanced upon a swim-coach company that are based in Australia but who operate in the UK and whose specialism is running a series of workshops aimed solely at improving freestyle. Incredibly, they were running workshops the length and breadth of Britain at the very time I was surfing, and even more incredibly, two days hence, they had one remaining space in the whole of the UK programme, and it was at a leisure centre only 40mins from my house! It seemed like a no-brainer.

And so, two days later I met two of the coaching team from SwimSmooth and eleven other swimmers of different ability all eager to go further, faster or both. A

couple of people were literally just starting out in freestyle and a couple more were already very accomplished swimmers. One fellow could already swim 400m in sub 5 minutes and the other was in the latter stages of preparation to swim the Channel.

The coaches had absolutely no problem in delivering exactly what was needed to each and every person there. Basically, the day consisted of some classroom based theory sessions, three separate visits to the pool (where each person was comprehensively filmed), feedback and analysis sessions, and the crucial identification of the areas in which to improve – complete with advice on how bring the required changes about. At the end of the session I was already going 1 second per length quicker and I felt, for the first time in about three years, that I might actually yet still further improve my swim speed.

Absolutely fundamental to the SwimSmooth method is the clear acknowledgement – contrary to conventional wisdom – that there is no one perfect freestyle stroke. Instead, they split swim styles into 6 fundamental groups, and then from this starting point, outline a pathway to optimising ability for each individual, based on their basic physiology and swimming style. Basically, they can tell at a glance what each individual, no matter how good / bad, or oddly shaped they are, needs to do to make the best of what they've got.

It sounds simple, so no doubt isn't. Even if the workshops aren't of interest, the company's website / downloads / forum are in themselves a fantastic resource. Be impressed at <http://www.swimsmooth.com/>

I was.

Devon & Cornwall Group Report – Noel Molland

At the start of the summer Noel & Sarah Molland decided to have a go at tandem riding. Tandem riding was apparently very popular during the Victorian times as it allowed young couples a chance to be alone and escape the eyes of the chaperone. In the 21st century tandem riding is seen more as a novelty and a good way to have an argument with someone. Happily Noel and Sarah managed to avoid any arguments but as they wobbled off down a traffic free cycle path people had to wonder if they'd actually survive the ride at all. Sarah described being on a tandem as like being on a treadmill where her feet just kept going round and round! Noel described the bike as being like a mad fully loaded tourer, with a fixed wheel that had a mad peddeleck motion every so often. The only way you could stop peddling was

through advance negotiation. However despite that, both enjoyed their day out and haven't fully rejected the idea of a second tandem ride.

Throughout the summer the Devon & Cornwall group have organized a number of small bike rides along the Tarka Trail from Great Torrington to Barnstaple and back (a round trip of 50k) which is a mainly flat route which follows the River Torridge before linking up with the Taw Estuary. The group likes this ride as it allows them to drop into the Owl Vegan Café in Barnstaple and sample their home cooking. However in mid July the group decided to organize something entirely different. Victoria Widdowson is sadly leaving the Devon & Cornwall group as she is heading off to firstly Wiltshire and then Surrey in pursuit of her career as a

qualified Doctor. However one thing Vic had never done was walk up Dartmoor's highest hill, Yes Tor and High Willhays. So one raining Saturday morning Noel Molland and Vic met up at the nearest car park to Yes Tor and traced their way across 3km of open moor land to the top of Yes Tor before doing another half a kilometre to High Willhays. Despite the distance only being short it was steep and

took approximately 2.5 hours in total to complete the full 7km round trip. Since the Devon & Cornwall group became active a few years ago Vic has been a key member of the group and last summer she initiated the weekly group cycle rides. The Devon & Cornwall group will very much miss Vic and we wish her all the best with her future career.

Brandon Half – Max d'Ayala

I haven't raced since early March and missed the last couple of events I had thought of doing due to my boys being ill with a cold, and then me probably catching the same cold. I entered this local event as its one I've wanted to do but it hasn't always fitted in with other race plans.

On the day things started off miserable and overcast, but the drizzle cleared away and conditions turned out to be perfect for running once things got underway. It's an off-road course, featuring two figure of eight loops along forest tracks. The start and finish are at the cross-over point of the

loops so it makes for a good spectator course as well. I noticed that Paul H was on the start list for the club but I don't think he was able to run this year.



Max races the Brandon Half

As for the race, I started well and tucked into the chasing group behind the early leaders for the first few miles, which was fun. This early exuberance was short lived and once I lost

contact I slowly drifted back. The last few miles were very hard work, and very slow, and it was a relief to get to the finish line. Overall position was 8th in 1:23:18. Several minutes quicker than my only half last year, so a positive to take away from the race to build on. I might try another half later in the year.

The race organisation was excellent, the goodybag was a useful little backpack, and the banana at the finish was devoured in a few seconds and kept me going 'till I got home. Recommended if you are anywhere in the East.

London Marathon - Glenn Chapman

I found the management of the event very good. The convenient bag drop, facilities and release at the start were flawless. My major gripe is that throughout the whole race I was baulked by slower runners.

I tried to stay with the Runners World 9 minute mile pace runner but even she was weaving around people who should have started further back in the pack. The energy wasted diving for gaps, left and right, mile after mile, in order to keep up with her was tremendous. When I

lost touch with her at 21 miles she only had an overall average of 9.20. Next time I will start nearer the 8 minute mile pacer, hoping to maintain an even 9 minute mile. I



Glenn & Keith at VLM

was overwhelmed by the support from the spectators, hardly a moment when someone wasn't shouting, "Go on Glenn" or "Love the hair", (My yellow wig in

bunches). This lifted me through the times when the end seemed impossibly distant.

Great to see the other club members and their impressive performances, my 4:09 looks leisurely in comparison.

The trip home was fraught, with closed Underground stations and a long walk on tired legs to find an open one, albeit with huge queues.

Roll on 2011, ballot bid submitted already!

The 1960 Michelin 15 – Ron Franklin

I have found out my time for the above race when the Midland Handicapper gave me a 20 minutes handicap mark in the Michelin 15 race - dates and time obtained from those doing a history of Tipton Harriers for their Centenary this year.

I let Ted Matley of Derby & County A.C. go into the finish in front of me as I was a certainty to win the handicap event which caused a stir when my winning handicap time was announced of 55m 41s with shouts of 'fiddle' and those listening having a go at the handicapper - who defended himself by saying, 'I did not know who he was, he was just entered in the Tipton team and I had never heard of him before.' Response from those listening was 'We had!'

It was my first long race, more than my initial first race for the club when I did the 2nd fastest time on the first leg for Tipton in the Harbourne relays where Colin Kemball set the fastest all time then. The legs were all 5.5 miles.

E-mail from the Tipton historian: 'Here is the entry I have regarding the Michelin 15 1960: 02/07/1960 Michelin A.C. 15 Mile Road Race. 4th R G Franklin, Tipton Harriers, 75m 41s, 6th Team with 49 Pts.AW (06/08/1960) Page 8'

This was my fastest 15 miler, over an officially measured course with a wheel and rev-counter, which the club did not have a note of before. I was 32 years and 6 months at the time.

The League International - Noel Molland

The name The League International conjures up an image of something out of a novel by Baroness Orczy. A band of merry souls risking life and limb to snatch a condemned person away from Madam Guillotine. However, happily, The League International undertake activities that are a little less bloody than Baroness Orczy's famous fictional characters. They are also a lot easier to find than "that damned elusive Pimpernell". (If you've no idea what I'm talking about just Google the name Baroness Orczy and all will be revealed).

The League International (more commonly known as TLI Cycling) was founded in 1982 by a group of riders who wanted to bring a system of cycle racing to Britain which uses age related categories.

Under British Cycling rules a rider is given an age Category (for example I fall into a "Senior - Master B" age group) but, unless otherwise stipulated, "All junior and senior license holders, male or female, irrespective of their age category into which they fall will be categorised by ability. Riders of the same ability category will continue to compete together in races irrespective of their age category, except in the case of events organised for specific age related groups" (British Cycling Handbook p.81).

The way you move up a British Cycling Category is you enter a race and you gain points, and as you gain points so your Category increases. 0-9 points "4th Category", 10-39 points "3rd Category", 40-199 points "2nd Category", 200+ points "1st Category". You also have an Elite Category, but I'll stop this over

simplification explanative of the BC Category system here.

So what does this all mean? Well it means, that despite being a male in my late 30s, if I race in a British Cycling officiated race I could find myself racing against people either younger or older than myself.

However TLI Cycling organises their races by age category so you race against people your own age. If you find your skill level is higher than your own age group you can ask to race against younger people, and likewise you can request to race against older people, but the main thing is your racing against people your own age.

To race in a TLI Cycling race you don't need to be a member of British Cycling with a BC Race License. TLI Cycling organise their own races and issues their own race licenses, which is all inclusive in your membership fee. Also TLI Cycling are affiliated to the International Cycling Federation, which organises age category races in Europe, so you can use a TLI Cycling card to enter ICF organised races in Europe. If your not a TLI Cycling member you can still enter their races by buying a one day race license.

Membership of TLI Cycling is £16 a year for a single adult (junior, family and 60+ membership rates also exist). For more information on TLI Cycling check out their website: <http://www.theleagueinternational.com/> or contact TLI Cycling, 24 Crescent Road, Hale, Altrincham, Cheshire, WA15 9NA, England.

Winners from the Archive – submitted by Peter Simpson

Published in 'The Vegetarian Messenger and Health Review' in 1910, a running report by A.G. Brown featuring Emil Voigt the former 1908 Olympic 5 miles champion:

In the Manchester AC Sports at Fallowfield, on 7 May, the feature was the 2 miles scratch race for the Hardy Cup. The Athletics News gives its summary report as follows: "Won cleverly and with some ease. Voigt lay third until the bell and then beat Owen all the way to the tape, winning by a dozen yards or more. Time 9 min 57.2 sec." The same paper remarks: "The conditions could hardly have been worse, for the wind cut one through like a knife and the track was slow, that the time was to be excused. It was a good race, for Owen stuck to his task and tried every way to justify those who believed he would beat Voigt but the latter always looked a confident runner. Lying

third to the bell, he ran with ease and a lap from home made his splendid effort. Then the race was over, for Voigt left Owen yards behind and had won easily when the second man ran in and gripped the victor's hand with a word of generous congratulation."



Emil Voigt, vegetarian

A.G. Bown also reports 'A Manchester Vegetarian's Success' in 1910:

On 30 April last, there took place on Cheshire roads, the 50 miles road time trial of the

Manchester Wheelers. Several of the riders including Mr Jack Hodges, a vegetarian, were under the care of my old friend and tutor Mr Fred Leeming (himself a vegetarian).

Frankly we did not expect Hodges to win the handicap. He had formidable opposition. But Hodges rode remarkably well over a trying course and in the teeth of a blustering wind, finishing in better physical condition than any other man in the race.

When the times were worked out, we were astonished to find that Jack had not only won the handicap but had accomplished the fastest time in the race, beating the scratch man by nearly 3 minutes.

This is Hodges' first race on a vegetarian diet. It should give outsiders "furiously to think".

London Olympics, Legacy or TV? – Steve Cootie

It's a strange thing that I've fallen for before, but whenever I hear someone enthusing about a sport, discussing the ins and outs of the coming season or whatever, I just naturally assume that they are participants at some level. I guess it's the years of running and triathlon that

have me make this leap; to be otherwise isn't to enjoy a sport, it's to enjoy sitting on your armchair being entertained, no different in my head to watching the trials and tribulations of soap opera characters.

To have put in the effort oneself, at no matter what the level of competition, sometimes in no matter what sport, seems to give one a connection to others in sport on a visceral level that no mere spectator can ever share.

These musings have been brought on by the recent fanfare over it being only two years until the London Olympics and the landing in my inbox of the first of no doubt many invitations to volunteer. My first slightly weary thought was along the lines of, 'yeah, and only four more until the one after that' – I do find the constant round of European, Commonwealth, World and Olympic championships, each one, according to the broadcaster more important than the last, does lessen their impact. The second, perhaps more worthy thought, is to wonder what if any legacy there will be for road running clubs.

Track athletics will get saturation coverage, cycling, swimming, sailing will get new or upgraded venues; other, lesser known sports will get more media coverage in a couple of weeks than they have had for years. Road running ... well fill in the blanks for yourselves. Perhaps as members who pay our £5 fees to EA on top of our club fees, and who will be asked to donate our time as well, we should as clubs and individuals be asking them that question.

All of which said, I have no doubt I shall be glued to the TV, cheering on all comers - I'm afraid all the flag waving and medal tables goes right over my head. And like the unfit, obscene fool on the football terraces when a Ronaldo has narrowly failed to pull off some impossible piece of trickery, an armchair expert on things I wouldn't have the vision to even dream of doing myself.

Alderney Half Marathon & 10km Race

This race is held on the first Saturday in September every year - on the 4th Sep this year. It starts at midday to give runners time to come from off-island without incurring overnight costs.

The race starts in the middle of the historic old town of St Anne then spews out on to the coast road for a downhill 6 miles to the finish of the 10km race. Half marathon runners continue for another lap of the island. Fantastic scenery, smooth empty roads and a small friendly field of runners.

After the race there is a great goody bag and a free sandwich lunch and hot drink for all finishers, then prize giving - all held at my house at the finish, where there are showers and changing facilities.

Now for the best bit - as the organiser I've ensured this race is veggie friendly and the lunch is vegetarian or vegan.

VC&AC and Vegan Runners are welcome to stay in the house - there are beds for 6 and then it's sleeping bags. You can see all the details of the house at www.alderneyholiday.co.uk and the race at www.alderney-half-marathon.org

I hope to see lots of green vests on September 4th!

Rod Paris

G.H.Briault Rides The North Road 24 Hour Time Trial



We know little about the photo above except that collector Dave Lee bought the original at an antiquarian book fare in Buxton and kindly forwarded a copy to VCAC. Handwritten on the back of the photo are the words ‘Briault on his 24hr ride (NR 24)’ – a search for ‘Briault’ on the web led Dave to the history page of our VCAC website.

G.H.Briault, assuming the cyclist depicted is indeed our Briault, was a member of the Vegetarian Cycling Club, VCAC's precursor, in the early 20th Century. From what little research I've managed it seems he set the London to Brighton and Back Tricycle record in 1908 with a time of 6hr 8m 25s and the same year won the North Road 24 Hour Time Trial with a time of 368.5 miles.