

Wheelers enjoy a weekend across the channel



Fourteen Wheelers travelled to Ardres, near Calais to ride the randonnées organised by the local club "Les Amis Cyclos de l'Ardresis".

We enjoyed beautiful scenery and long hills having, perhaps, anticipated something rather drab and flat. We were regally entertained by the organising club - support from the local council enabling them to offer all participants a free beer and baguette at the finish within the entry fee of €3.

The cycling was good and so was the social side with plenty of time to eat drink and chat on the ferry and in the restaurant.

Huge thanks then to Peter and Liz Walton for all the effort they put into organising the trip. They negotiated with the hotels, satisfying our varied rooming requirements, booked all the ferries and coordinated everyone's travel arrangements. They may or may not be pleased to learn that we would all be happy to repeat the event next year!

Impressions from some randonneurs:

From Richard Henderson

I thoroughly enjoyed the trip to Ardres. It was well-organised with Peter even collecting my bike on Friday evening to give me the extra time on Saturday morning to fulfil parental duties by taking the family to swimming lessons.

After we disembarked in Calais Peter led us the 10 miles to Ardres. One abiding memory will be 'Lord' Valdis cycling along in his casual attire (jeans and a black jacket) amongst the group of lycra-clad Wheelers. We met up with Graham, Sonia, Liz and Danny in a café by the lake in Ardres before heading to town to find the two hotels.



We checked in, freshened up then headed to the restaurant where we enjoyed a good meal; with Bruno, in particular, waxing lyrical over his t-bone steak that had only been shown the pan from the other side of the room. A great end to a good day with everyone looking forward to the next day's event.

I slept really well and after breakfast we headed to the start by the lake. I think the organisers

Hertfordshire Wheelers' Audax Rides

Sunday 4th July

Six Counties 200k	8:00 am	Four Counties 150k	9:00 am
Two Counties 100k	10:00 am	One County 50k	12:00 am

Entries -: £4.00 (£5.00 on the day)

J. Cannon, 131 Galleywood Rd, Gt. Baddow, Chelmsford, CM2 8DR

jandrcannon@blueyonder.org.uk

Further information and entry forms from

<http://www.herts-wheelers.org.uk/audax.htm>



were surprised that we turned up so "late" to do the 100k (8:30 am!) and, with some comments that the route was a bit hilly ringing in our ears, we set off (Danny, Rob, Peter, Barry, Valdis, Richard Jason and Rob).

The route was superbly marked (apparently it took the organisers 12 hours to spray paint the markings on the route the day before) and we left Ardres with a steady climb followed by a fast downhill and some hairpin bends. We followed a pleasant route through the countryside before hitting the first really steep hill, after which we were grateful to find the first refreshment stop (35 km).

The next bit of the course was fast with a following wind and a long fast downhill where most people hit 40 mph. Sadly this had to end and back we climbed (with a side wind) up a very long drag to the second pit stop (60km). The hosts informed us that there was only one more big hill after which it was downhill all the way home. After 70 km we hit the hill - brutal for the first section - and to top it off a 2-3 km gentle climb into the wind. Our group then rolled into the final refreshment stop (80km) and just before we left, Brian, who had set off about 30-45 mins after us from the start, caught us up. We left him eating chocolate and set off for home.

At the end we met up with the rest of the Wheelers and settled down to some superb local hospitality - beer, sandwiches, certificates, banter and even a song. We then rode back to Calais (into the wind again) and managed to get an earlier ferry than planned.

The whole weekend was a huge success and I would go again another year. Thanks and great credit should go to Peter first for his suggestion to go Ardres, and then for his planning and organisation.

From Brian Hill



An excellent weekend expertly organised by Peter. Due to a breakfast time difference, Steve and I started the 100K ride about 50 minutes after most of the others. By the time I reached the first two refreshment stops they had packed up and gone, but I eventually reached the final stop just in time to find most of the Wheelers finishing their drinks and ready to go. A quick hello and they promptly left me again. I finished the oranges and ate lots of chocolate before setting off in hot-pursuit to meet up at the end and find out we'd won the cup for "Best International Team".

From Jason Thorpe



My first cycling foray into foreign fields has left me wondering how long it will be before another is planned?

The trip included some wonderful hospitality, rolling French countryside, the occasional big hill and a taste of home with a nasty head wind. But alas not a pothole in sight!

I would like to thank Peter for all his hard work arranging the trip, which I feel was a huge success.

Herts. Wheelers 30

This Wheelers' promotion took place on the F1/30 course at Tempsford on the A1 on 23rd May.

Thanks to all riders who entered, especially those who rode. You had a fine warm morning with not much wind and I believe there were a few PBs.

Thanks also to everyone who helped to make this a successful event, especially the officials and marshals, several of whom positioned signs, and to my wife Janet for doing the catering single-handedly yet again.

Marshals, Pusher off, Cycle Event signs, Results, Catering:

John Cannon, Bruno Cartwright, John Clark, Tony Gilby, Danny Mason, Steve McCollum, Barry Page, Janet Pearson, Jane Pike, Merv Player, Jason Thorpe and Phil Young.

Scratch Times

Ian Cammish	1:03:24
John McClelland	1:04:13
Ken Platts	1:04:31
Simon Cannings	1:05:44

(See the website for full results)

JP

Wheelers' Social Event



Come and watch a key stage of the Tour at the club-house from noon on 20th July.

This is one of the most mountainous stages; from Bagnères-de-Luchon to Pau across the cols of Aubisque, Tourmalet, Aspin and Peyresoude.

Free Buffet

Partners and guests welcome

Racing

Tue 4th May - 6th Club 10

Poor weather meant just two riders! Riding the fast F20 course on the A10 they recorded their best times of the season.

Phil Young	21:58	
Peter Walton	22:57	BE

Wed 12th May VTTA London & Home Counties Group 10

Merv rode this on the Leighton Buzzard course on a very cold afternoon with a cross wind. He managed a 25:55 for First Vet. on Standard Award. MP

Sun 16th May Norlond TT Combine 50

This took place on the A1 near Sandy on a very cold morning with a rising south-west wind. Merv could only manage a 2:17:57 but it was sufficient to win the First Vet on Standard Award - making three firsts in three events! MP

Tue 18th May - 7th Club 10

Four riders this time, including the return of 2 early season racers; Brian Evans and Graham Knight. Their lack of racing showed. Phil Young finished a clear winner.

Phil Young	23:43	
Peter Walton	24:58	
Brian Evans	25:47 (219W Avg)	
Graham Knight	28:30	BE

Sat 22nd May - Eastern Counties 50

Merv rode this event on the A11/A14 course. On a very hot afternoon but with a cooling breeze he managed to record a 2:11:13 - only 5 seconds slower than his best time last year.

This time improved the East Anglian VTTA Group Age record for 77 year olds by two and a half minutes. So congratulations, once again, to Merv.

Club Run Schedule

	Date	Time	Start	Destination	Dist.	Pace	Lead
June							
13 th	09:30	Hert.		"Fourways", Hudnall Corner	55m	Med.	JF
	14:30	Hert.		Costello's Cafe, Stevenage	30m	Easy	PW
16 th	19:00	Ware		Around the Lanes	25m	Med.	GK
20 th	09:30	WGC		Stockgrove Country Park	70m	Med.	AP
	14:30	St Marg.		Village Tearooms, Hatfield Heath	30m	Easy	JP
23 rd	19:00	Hert		Around the Lanes	25m	Med.	BE
27 th	09:30	Much H.		Garden Tearoom, Writtle	55m	Med.	AC
	14:30	Hert.		T.B.A.	25m	Easy	PW
30 th	19:00	Ware		Around the Lanes	25m	Med.	JF

July

4 th	14:00	Bengeo		HWCC Audax 50km route	50km	Easy	JP
11 th	09:30	Ware		Off Road, Bring own food	30m	Med.	JF
	14:30	Ware		"Come and Try" Ride, Braughing	25m	Easy	JP

Leaders: Valdis Bellines (VB), Bruno Cartwright (BC), Andy Crawley (AC), Tim & Angela Dobson (TD, AD), Brian Evans (BE), John Farnham (JF), Brian Hill (BH), Graham Knight (GK), Barry Page (BP), John Pearson (JP), Alex Powell (AP), Peter Walton (PW), Sarah Wren (SW).

Start Locations:

Hertford: Hartham Common, recycling point
 Much Hadham: bus shelter north end of High Street
 Saint Margarets: station car-park
 Ware: Broadmeads car park near level crossing
 Welwyn Garden City: Campus West

Note that details are occasionally subject to change. See the website for the most up-to-date information.

Tue 25th May 8th Club 10

Three riders this time with Bruno Cartwright joining the fold. It was a little closer at the top but Phil was the winner again!

Phil Young	24:31	
Brian Evans	24:34 (229W Avg)	
Bruno Cartwright	33:14	BE

Wheelers' 10 League

Following the 8th League 10 the points position is as follows:-

Peter Walton	61
Phil Young	60
Steve Watson	45
Graham Knight	22
Brian Evans	17
Barry Page	16
Bruno Cartwright	8
Renato Davis	7
Richard Henderson	7
Chris Walker	6
Andy Crawley	6

Club Runs

Wed 12th May - Evening Ride

After seeing the small turnout for the two previous Wednesday rides, Brian H decided it was time for him to lead a little group. His shock at Ware when more and more turned up was apparent but he gallantly succeeded in marshalling fifteen riders safely around the lanes. PW

Sunday 16th May 9:00 am

Tim and Angela D, Cathy P, Sarah W, Andy C, Bill C, Josh T

Angela and Bill set off on a slower pace ride to Great Bardfield covering 57 miles. Tim led the remaining four out through Little Hadham, Rickling Green, Widdington, Wimbish, Radwinter, Ashton and Linton to a very quiet

Open Event Marshalling Duties

Volunteers required (especially from racing members)! Please contact secretary@herts-wheelers.org.uk. Many thanks to those who have already volunteered.

Time and Date	Event	No. Reqd.	Perf. by
07:30 25 th Apr	Norlond Comb. 10	3	JP, BC, PW
14:30 3 rd May	ECCA Festival 10	2	MP, CW
14:00 22 nd May	ECCA 50	2	SWa, BE
07:00 23 rd May	Herts Wheelers 30	8	See report
18:30 26 th Jun	Herts Wheelers 10	6	TBD

venue at the Comfort Café in Babraham.

The return ride was via Sawston and on to Sustrans route 11 to Arksden and then Berden and Little Hadham. Two possible new venues were spotted on the route out which will be explored further.

T&AD

Sunday 16th May 2:30pm

John P, Brian E (and Kyle), Bob B

With most of the recent club-runners taking to the continent for the weekend, there were only four riders out under a moody-sky - but all stayed dry. They rode out via the Welwyn Road and Tewin lanes to Burnham Green then Robbery Bottom to skirt the north edge of Welwyn to lower Kimpton lane. (They were accompanied for 2 miles by an enthusiastic rider from Tewin "looking for a club, but surrounded by 4 possibles" to whom Brian gave the hard sell). After Kimpton they went through Claggy Bottom then up the hill to Bendish to take what must be one of the best descents (long, easy and picturesque) to Whitwell.

Emily's tea-room was surprisingly quiet but had apparently been packed out earlier. The return ride took in the edge of Codicote, Drivers End, Knebworth, Swangleys Farm, Datchworth, Bulls Green and Bramfield then back to Hartham.

JP

Wed 19th May - Evening Ride

A good turnout of twelve on this evening ride.

PW

Sun 23rd May

Alex P, Peter W, Bob B, Richard H, Bruno C and Steve Mc

Six set out from Tempsford following a group sun-cream rubbing (an individual rather than a team event). Whilst Peter had already done the 30 mile time trial and leader Alex had cycled the 35 miles from home, the four volunteer marshals from the Club 30 looked more weary; having stood out in the sun since the crack of dawn, battling dehydration and brick-spraying lorries on the A1(M).

Therefore, understandably, the pace was moderate for the 20 miles in the increasingly ferocious (20°C+), sun-kissed, rolling countryside north of Bedford (Blunham, Great Barford, Wilden, Bledsoe and Risely). Also understandably, only a few other riders were seen, including two 26x2.5-equipped young women dragging their bikes up one of the hills. No doubt following this natural injection of testosterone, the pace picked up for the 10 miles down the B-road from Pertenhall through Kimbolton to the welcoming umbrellaed benches of the West Parry café at Graffham Water.

After hot food and cold drinks the riders briefly retraced their steps before turning off to go through the back lanes near Dillington. Here an outbreak of near slavish chivalry broke out when four 700x19-equipped young lady hikers required assistance to find the right path (footpath). We soon recovered and made our way as directly as possible to the start at

Tempsford (Little Staughton, Staploe, Bushmead, nr. Chawston, nr. Wyboston and Great Barford) covering 45 miles in total.

Everyone agreed that every club ride should have at least one women to keep some control. AP

Wed 26th May - Evening ride

Nine riders did 23 miles around the north of Ware on a fine, moderately warm Wednesday evening. PW

Sun 30th May

Brian E, Andy C, Josh T, Cathy P, John F, Peter W, Alex P, Jason T, Graham K, Patrick D



The ride set off on a familiar route north from Much Hadham to Brent Pelham then on a slightly less familiar route towards Barley. Less familiar at least to the leader who got lost. The planned route was re-joined at Great Chishill and followed on through Heydon and Elmdon to a brief photo session just north of Strethall (during which the leader lost his sun-glasses).

Pleas that the Mocha Café was just a couple of miles to the west were ignored and a scenic descent was taken north to Ickleton then back to Saffron Walden via the Chesterfords. Here the Mocha satisfied the Club's propensity for giant, all-day breakfasts.

The return route was due south to Widdington and Ugley, west to Rickling Green and then back through Manuden and Albury. The weather was occasionally sunny and often very windy giving some exciting cycling at times. GK

Wed 2nd Jun - Evening ride

Fourteen riders travelled the lanes on a fine, warm evening. Unfortunately only thirteen returned as one had snapped his chain and the rest did not notice. PW also managed to join the "Waterbabies" club at Barwick Ford. Reports of a tsunami reaching Ware proved premature, although the area is now constantly being monitored for aftershocks. PW

Sun 6th Jun - "Come and Try Ride"

Steve B, Bruno C, Nick C, Brian E, Peter H, Graham & Sonia K (tandem), John P, Jane P, Jason T, Peter W, Josh T, Michelle E

This took place on a warm, if mostly overcast day, with a gentle southerly breeze. The sky threatened heavy showers, which, fortunately, did not materialise.

13 riders (including one new recruit, Michelle, from the last Wednesday evening ride) sauntered out of Ware via the Watton Road. They hit the lanes at Chapmore End for Stonyhills, Sacombe Park, Dane End, Nasty to the tea room at Westmill. Andy and Lawrence had made their way out earlier to make a faster pace and in order to leave sooner. Though the tea room was busy, the service was quite quick. The return ride under some dark clouds took the group up the hill to Cherry Green and then a fairly rapid return to Dane End and a more gentle wheel along to Stonyhills and Bengoe. The last miles were along the newly-surfaced path at Hartham and the towpath back to Broadmeads. JP

Gary Brown's Racing

On the evening of Wednesday 19th May I rode my first race since fracturing two ribs a year ago. It was the same venue and same race series where I had my prang last year: the Lotus League, near Wymondham just south of Norwich. It was a scratch race with

a smattering of 1st cats at the front.

I finished in the bunch; we averaged about 25mph for the hour-long circuit race. A handful of 1st/2nd cats broke away at about the half way mark. I finished safely in the following bunch about 30 secs down on the leaders. A notable occasion for me, as it was my fourth ever race and the first one I've completed.

At 48 I was almost certainly one of the oldest, if not the oldest, in the race. Wearing a Hertfordshire Wheelers shirt in deepest Norfolk always gets either a wry look or equivalent comment. It's a pleasure to wear the shirt; it's good to keep a connection with Hertford. Incidentally, I went to school with Keith and Mark Flunder - isn't their father a former Herts Wheeler club member? GB

[Gary also reports that he has a contract with a publisher to write the biography of Eddie Soens. Soens coached a large number of successful cyclists for a 40 year period ending in 1985. Gary has been working on the book for about 16 months.]

Club Run Points

Points as at end May 2010:

Peter W	52
John F	42
Graham K	40
Alex P, Andy C	34
Jason T, Cathy P	28
Barry P, Jane P	26
Sarah W	23
Danny M	22
Tim D	19
Steve McC	18
Angela D	17
Bob B, Bruno C, Brian E	16
Valdis B, Lawrence U,	
Richard H	14
John P, Patrick D	10
Chris S, Peter H, Josh T	8
Bill C, Brian H	6
Sonia K	4
Steve Whipp	3
Steve Mendrys, Steve Ma,	
Simon E, Dennis B	2 JF

The Norwich 100

Richard H set off at 7:10 from Norwich cathedral on a fresh but dry morning for the Norwich 100 with a friend from the Norwich based Tri-Anglia triathlon club. The first 45 miles went at a fast pace (18-19 mph average speed) over roads with lots of dirt from the heavy overnight rain. After the 45 mile refreshment stop the course undulated along the coast into a gentle headwind during which Richard struggled a bit with an aching back and surprisingly low energy (pay-back for going too fast earlier). A 10-minute rest with back-stretches got him going again. This was closely followed by a puncture for his travelling companion and the obligatory June hail-storm and heavy down-pour forcing them to stop at the 75 mile feed station.

The route headed back inland for a fast final 25 miles, with a trailing wind back into Norwich at 2:30 pm, completing the 100 miles in 6 hours 10 mins of cycling time. RH

Club Kit

We are taking orders for club kit.



See the web page at <http://www.herts-wheelers.org.uk/activities/clothing.htm> for details.

Don't delay!

New Member

We welcome Michelle Erskine already a keen runner and now a very keen cyclist.

We hope she enjoys all her rides with us.

The Paris-Brest-Paris – Clubroom Talk

Jim Brown, known to many of us for his activities with Stevenage CTC, gave us a fascinating talk on his participation in this 1200km ultra-endurance event in the 1990s. The talk was illustrated by slides in a format (and using a projector) suited to the period. It was quite a revelation to see the scale of the event, the scope of international participation and the enthusiasm of the French public. The slides gave a good flavour of the ride with especially thorough coverage of attractive, female, Canadian entrants.



[Josh T was unwise enough to admit to an ambition to take part in the next PBP in 2011 – though not on his fixie. We will be watching him closely!]

GK

Name the Village

Four members correctly identified Little Berkhamstead last month. JP still leads, now with six points.

The occasional good weather has meant I have travelled a bit further than the North Road Hardriders course. So you will have to look a little further a-field for this one – a view towards a Herts hill-top village. GK



Proposed Technical Forum

24th June in the Clubroom



Nothing definite yet but we are hoping to run a session giving practical advice on bike maintenance and repair and, perhaps, training issues.

Watch the email and website for details. Contact mudflap@herts-wheelers.org with suggestions for what you would like to see covered.

Sat 19th
June

HTC
SMITHFIELD
NOCTURNE

Wheeler's will gather to watch this event. Racing begins at 5:30 pm and ends at 10:00pm. The final, elite, race should include some well-known riders. Last year Russ Downing won – now helping Bradley Wiggins at Team Sky.

Google "Smithfield Nocturne" for more details. Watch Wheeler's email and website for final arrangements.

Thu 22nd
July

de TOUR
FRANCE

Another gathering to watch the Tour. This stage starts in Pau and crosses the cols of Marie-Blanque and Soulor before a mountain-top finish at the Col du Tourmalet. It is the last and perhaps the decisive mountain stage.

Meet at the Saracen's Head in Ware (bring your own money).

Watch Wheeler's email and website for final arrangements.

Fri 23rd
July



Curry Night

Put the date in your diary!

Times and places are still to be decided but it will be somewhere in Hertford and preceded by a gathering in a pub.

Watch Wheeler's email and website for final arrangements.

Club Contacts

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