

## NORTH MIDLANDS

Well, after a protracted winter, our popular 18k Group event in March was cancelled. No, it wasn't the weather but road works.

The week after, the Doncaster Wheelers 10 suffered the same fate with road works on the O10/1 course at Hatfield Woodhouse. An alternative course is currently being used.

So, a stuttering start to the 2013 season for North Midlands riders. The next Group event will be a 25 on 15th of June.

Remember, entries for any 50, 100 and 12 hour event appearing in the CTT handbook will be accepted and incorporated into the Prestige Competition at the end of the season.

The new sprint competition sounds a good idea for riders who prefer to ride the shorter distances. As for the adjustments to the Standards, they are fairer and more realistic to riders in their twilight years. They do offer a chance of picking up a Standard prize to our older members competing in events. Having said that, I'm not sure the new Performance Awards suit the older rider at the moment. Speaking for myself aged 77, to claim a PA for a 10 I would have to clock 28:03; based on last year's claim. Ironically, that's pretty much the same as if the new 2012 Standards were applied. If the revised 2013 Standards were being used to claim a medal, I would only have to do 28:48. As for a 25, the last claim I made was in 2010 with a PB. That means I'd have to clock 1:10:29 with my allowance to claim a PA. For me, that's not going to happen. In contrast, the new Standards give me 1:18:26 for a 25. Probably, the incentive of trying to beat a previous actual time, with the yearly allowance, will be the future of the VTTA. It should give the younger members an incentive to improve as they hopefully have many years of racing to look forward to. It may not suit us oldies at the moment, but we must look to the future and it will probably work after a settling in period.

Unfortunately, this news missed the March issue deadline. The legendary George Steers celebrated his 90th birthday on the 18th of February this year. He was joined by friends at the Tor Café at Cromford where the proprietors had made him a cake and made all very welcome. Sadly, not long after, George was admitted to hospital with a broken hip after a fall. The last I heard, he was doing okay; best wishes to him for a full recovery.

VTTA North Midlands Chairman John Fitch and Secretary Janet Fitch are standing down at the end of this term. The Group found itself in a tricky situation in 2010 and John and Janet came to the rescue by taking over at very short notice. Any members interested in taking over these positions, please contact John or Janet.

As I write this report I have decided to retire from racing. I had intended to make this my last season but circumstances have resulted in me bringing it forward somewhat. I came back to racing in 2006 after years of riding Audax events. I've thoroughly enjoyed the last seven years racing as a member of the VTTA. I thank the organisation for giving me the opportunity to test myself and pick up the odd prize or two for my efforts. Not forgetting the social side, where the race scene offers the opportunity to meet new friends, chat with old friends, and of course sample the tea and culinary delights on offer after the race. I shall miss it greatly, and I'm sure the temptation will be there to make a 'come back'. I will not give in, as I intend to enjoy my cycling without the pressure of trying to keep 'race fit'. I shall still be involved by marshalling at events etc.

If you have any news that may be of interest to the membership, please get in touch.

Safe riding, and mind those potholes, they're getting deeper.

*John Scully*