

VTTA WEST GROUP: VETERAN CONTACT REPORT FROM BRIAN GRIFFITHS

Having just received the start sheet and my marshalling details for the CTT National 100 mile Championship, which is being held in the West this year on 16th August, I have to say I have the utmost admiration for the organiser Peter Rogers. With a field of 140 riders and such stringent rules set out by CTT it must be a real test for his organising ability. It is good to know that we are still able to stage such events to give us a chance to decide our National Champions, who must have worked very hard in the current circumstances to achieve peak fitness. I suppose like me many are unable to see an end to the way things are. Will the pandemic change things forever or will we eventually be able to subdue this raging virus?

I regret to report the passing of one of our most stalwart members; at the age of 92, Gordon Lee from the Severn Road Club has recorded quite an interesting history over many years which I should like to relate. The information I have would not do justice to his contribution over many years to so many aspects of cycling in the West, so I will try to gather together a more comprehensive tribute for the next edition.

As I mentioned in my last report our prize presentation has been postponed until the present restrictions will permit us to hold it, which of course our organiser and group secretary Gordon Scott is most anxious to do.

On a personal note members will I hope be pleased know that after a four year struggle with Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, more commonly known as "ME", I am at last back on my bike and slowly trying to restore some of my badly wasted muscles. It will be a long tough journey I have no doubt but I have every intention of competing again even if it is only at shorter distances. It is a delight to see so many new cyclists out on our roads since the beginning of the year. My experience is that we seem to have generated quite a useful intake of born again cyclists who have no problem buying top grade expensive racing machines. Having talked to them on a Sunday cafe break, many seem to have a sporting inclination, so surely this is an opportunity to gain some new VTTA members, especially if we can persuade them that we can give them the opportunity to demonstrate their athletic ability against their friends in competition.

Paul Freegard is still managing to produce an interesting WestVet magazine despite the lack of racing and other current group activities. Please keep sending him your interesting stories and opinions in plenty of time for the next edition.

It is pleasing to know that Bristol is intending to put in physical separation between cyclists and motor cars in the busy centre of the city. In the first two or three weeks of the lockdown the streets were so quiet and safe and the pollution levels were exceptionally low. Cycling heaven! Then suddenly the cars were back with a vengeance and the brand new timid cyclists are now scared to bring their bikes out after being intimidated by aggressive motorists who believe that they pay for the road and that there are far too many cyclists getting in their way. Close overtaking at speed, overtaking on the wrong side of traffic islands and at central reservation strips seem to be common place. However, we never see a policeman to witness these incidents and there are far too many to start reporting them. Although they have made a start I very much doubt that the city council will get very far with their plans before the money runs out as usual.

Brian Griffiths

VTTA West Group Veteran

