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BC, CTT, CTC, SCCU, Surrey Cycle Racing League

All Fools Day 2017

### Spring Newsletter 2017

May in blossom, daffodils, primroses and the first bluebells on Weare Street today. Traditionally the Spring Newsletter starts with a bleat about how awful the weather has been for cycling over the last three months but it hasn't been too bad this year and the last few weeks have been mainly bright although still chilly. Actually I should not comment as I have been off the bike most of the time following a fall whilst stair-diving before Christmas; my longest lay-off ever. Three and a half months later and I still have a hole in the bottom of my leg although I have been assured it will be healed in time for Mallorca at the end of the April. Thanks to Ev and newly-retired John Aitken for contributing nostalgic pieces, on times past, for this letter. A pity we don't get more current stuff but I can only publish material here or in the weekly briefing sheets if you tell me about it. I suspect we are being superseded by Facebook.

In recent years we have not been offering the winners of our races to keep the trophies for the year for security reasons and the hassle of getting them back. Lately we have resumed doing that because people have shown an interest in the history of past winners and this has prompted me to write a brief account of the Fred Cowley Memorial Trophy and I copy it below if you are interested.

Participation in club runs has been reduced but should pick up as the weather improves. The most successful group currently is the off-road evening rides run by Bill Martin, they had eight out last week. Bill is to be thanked for getting this off the ground and established. Bill also has off-road jerseys on order so contact him if you want one. I still have road jerseys in stock. Sizing of cycling clothing bought by post or on-line is often fraught with difficulty; Gino de Geest always insisted "Don't buy it until you've tried it on!" We've had riders in some sportives this Spring but I don't have details. Billy McNamara started racing at Cyclopark on a cold and windy day a month ago but was over-trained by the sound of it and struggled for the whole hour. After a good week at Cheltenham, which started with a 50-1 winner, in the first race he rode at Milton Keynes Bowl last week. He finished 8<sup>th</sup> and is back there again this weekend.

Clubnights have been quite well attended and we have now switched to meeting in The Railway, at the end of Bob Green's road in Cheam, still on the first Thursday in the month at 8.30pm. Martin Toye has got the new website up and running and people are using the blog to notify ride arrangements. Martin has also started distributing the weekly briefing in a new format and thanks again to Martin for his continuing efforts.

Redundant bits are piling up in our garages so I asked Jerry Green to book a table at the Spring Ripley Jumble Sale so we could all turn up for a clear out. He did that and it turned out to be scheduled for Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> April. The only trouble is that I will be returning from Mallorca that day so Jerry needs more help. Barry has offered to chip in but more help would be appreciated.

Trips away are starting. Belgium for The Classics this month and the first few events have seen excellent racing, Gary Smiths Mallorca trip comes up at the end of the month. St Ybard has already been visited by Trevor, Denbo and Paul Martin, Rob Potter has opened his place in Laborie but we hear he has been admitted to the hospital in Brive with tummy problems and Wombat is back in the Lot et Garonne. In Ghent Charlie van de Steene will be 90 at the beginning of May and some of us will be going there for a celebratory lunch on May 3<sup>rd</sup>. There are still some spare spaces in the cars so if you want to join us let Mick know.

Later that week, Saturday May 6<sup>th</sup>, we are hoping to try something new. Brian Harris has been exploring the south bank of the Thames by public transport and on foot and had rediscovered The Hoo Peninsular at the eastern end of the estuary. It is quite an interesting somewhat isolated area featured recently on Country File on TV. We are going to drive there for an AwayDay leaving Cheam at 0900 and starting the ride from Higham Station shortly after 1000, hopefully returning about 3.30pm. Let Mick Know if you want to come. It's only about 26 miles and you can come on road or MTB bikes because a few off-road detours are possible.

Paul White will be leading his Kennet and Avon canal-side ride on the Gloucester-Bristol-Reading route from June 19<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> and time is running out to book yourself onto this journey.

Paul also plans his Hythe AwayDay on 23<sup>rd</sup> July.

Tension starts to rise in my breast about this time of year regarding the 4-up scheduled for Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2017. I have the timekeepers and the HQ booked and will start putting the volunteers list on the briefing sheet this week. I know it is early but it helps a lot if you can let me know whether you can or cannot help on the day. You can always change your mind if your situation changes. The format will be the same as previous recent years and hopefully will again be a successful promotion. Start will be at 1pm and it should all be over about 4.30.

So let's enjoy the season.

### **Three Rides In One Winter**

It was back in the early 80s when this took place. I am unable to recall the exact year because a number of my diaries have gone missing. It was probably in late February or March that the rides in question took place as they were around 80 miles in length from where I lived in Streatham. These were not club runs, but training rides that grew in length throughout January, February and March culminating in the Bourton-on-the-Water weekend.

The first was a regular club training ride to Hindhead. We stayed as a group all of the way through Epsom, Leatherhead, Guildford and Milford until we got to the bottom of the climb at Thursley, where riders went up in ones, twos or threes. Robert Douglas, Norman and I were at the head with Rob setting a good pace. Me, not being the best on the hills, kept slipping off when the incline increased, but battled back when it eased: so I was yo-yoing all of the way to the big bend in the road at Gibbet Hill where we lined it up for the sprint for the Hindhead sign which Norman won in style.

The funny thing about the climb was the fact that I used to use a milometer. This was a primitive device long before the days of bike computers and comprised of a unit held in place by the front wheel quick release. There was a "star" with four prongs on it which was hit with a pin which was attached to a spoke. It was noisy like a clock, but as it turned out, quite accurate. Robert said of the Hindhead climb that he always knew where I was because of the ticking of the unit!

The second ride was on the Chailey loop, another 80 miles, where having descended Wych Cross we commenced the climb from Forest Row to East Grinstead on the A22: a surprisingly tough little climb up around the "S" bends. Rob was once again on the front with me huffing and puffing behind him with Norman on my wheel. Psychology does not come up much these days in the scientific world of cycling, but it did here, as near the top of the tough section Norman started to whistle a tune! How he managed it I don't know, but Rob and I both admitted later that it really put us off!

Ride three is my favourite though, as for once I came out on top and put one over Robert. Heading back the same three again were on the front climbing Reigate Hill. I think that it was a Shoreham and back ride. Somehow I lead up the first ramp to the petrol station on 42x16, the road levels out there so one is able to gain momentum to hit the hard part of the climb. Anyhow I really pushed on the level, dropped it onto the 17 and leant into climb. Climbing is always hard for me, so I was surprised when after a while neither Rob nor Norman had come past me. I looked over my shoulder and was surprised to see them both about 20 yards back! So I put even more effort in and passing Gatton Bottom on the right upped the gears to maintain my advantage. Me getting to the top of the hill did not happen often so I tend to remember them fondly.

*Ev Quistorff*

### **Odds and Sods**

Why go riding up and down steep hills when you do not possess the basic fitness to do so? It seems that that is all the ill-informed rider of today seems to do. Strange. Strength first, then you will find that you can climb hills better.

Only one event ever made me nervous: the Hill Climb. I used to feel ill riding out; ill warming up; ill being held up at the start and very ill at the top!

On the Hill Climb, think of this next time you ride up Ranmore. Starting at (I think the fourth or fifth house from the right turn into the road) ride up as hard as you can and see where you are at 4 mins 14 seconds as that was how long it took Robert Douglas to climb to the bridleway at the top right-hander when he set the club record. When you reach 4 mins 18 seconds Mick O'Brien had set the previous club record. Mick O'Brien used a 72" fixed wheel; Rob was on gears but he was a very good climber.

I go down hills fast. I do not even think about it as it is a skill with everything done on reflex and, of course, reading the road. In my first Winter of 1977, at the age of 14, I decided to try

to improve my downhill skills. We had a number of experienced racing cyclists in the club at the time who could all really handle a bike. Of these, Dave Morris was pick of the bunch: and was an extremely good, if not brilliant, bike rider. We met at Purley Lights once a month for Winter club runs and off we went up the A22 to Woldingham, up the hill and onto the ridge to descend Tandridge Hill. Dave led in and I happened to be second in the line so I thought that I would copy him. Down we went, me watching him like a hawk. There was no M25 in those days so one could hear if anything was coming up the hill. Anyway, Dave slows for the slight left hander halfway down and I do likewise: only I don't. The gap between me and Dave is shrinking fast before a vast shuddering through the bike told me that the brakes had at last cut in. Still going too fast and I am in the gravel and muck in the left hand gutter but I make it. Two things learnt: Dave's alloy rims respond to braking faster than my steel in the Autumn damp and secondly I now knew I could descend Tandridge Hill at THAT speed.

I have had numerous falls from the saddle, some nasty, some not (documented on a previous quarterly) but I have never come off descending a hill. Though here is a strange near miss. Mick Ayliffe, John Weeks, Robert Douglas and I were on a Summer Wednesday 100 mile training ride descending Pebble early in the ride. I was on the front going through the left hander at the foot of the gradient, when a piece of wood (it looked like a plank from a pallet (it was that close to my head)) shot out spinning from under a vehicle going up the hill and whizzed past my eyes. Oh what larks we had!

Every second counts. No, not the game show but margins in time trials. A second is as marginal as it gets but I have been on the wrong and right side of that unit of time: 1/9/78 Frank Penton beat me by one second in the Autumn interclub 25 with a 1-1-47 to my 1-1-48; 30/5/81 Pat Lacey beat me by one second in a club 10 recording 23-13 to my 23-14; 4/7/81 Norman and I both recorded 23:17 in a club 10; 11/5/82 Ray Swetman and I recorded the same time in a club 10 with 24-53; 29/5/88 I recorded 2-7-36 beating Harry Featherstone of the promoting club by one second to get second place to Gethin Butler.

You do not need an expensive bike and technology to gain fitness and be a good rider.

Watch riders who have raced and done something in their cycling career: question them and learn from them.

If you really want to get fitter, tea stops should not be a part of your rides. They are great for social rides but do not play any part in getting fit.

What is the matter with road riders today? Why are they so intense even when riding slowly? What has happened to the friendly wave or good morning or hello? In contrast, mountain bikers are really friendly when one comes across them on a mountain bike ride. Are road riders just too far up their own backsides?

*Ev Quistorff*

### **The Fred Cowley Memorial Trophy – a brief history**

Fred Cowley was an early pre-war member of the Clarendon Cycling Club. He was a very keen all-round sportsman with interests across the whole spectrum of sport, football, cricket, boxing, snooker, golf, tennis. He was a very keen cyclist though not particularly competitive. He was club captain before the war and his all day Sunday club runs were legendary – Winchester, Cambridge, Oxford, Bournemouth, Folkstone and Hastings were some of his regular destinations and he toured extensively in the UK. He rarely raced but was willing, if cajoled, into making up a team for a particular event when required. Bicycle polo was his particular love and he was an accomplished player. He was instrumental in reforming the Clarendon after the war in 1946. He reformed the club's polo team and was a President of the British Bicycle Polo Association. Mention must be made of his great sense of humour, together with his mate, Micky Ayliffe, he made a great double act. He enthusiastically encouraged any new activity or enterprise; in the 1930s he actively supported the club's entry into the new field of massed-start racing and involved himself in our early promotion of racing at the Brooklands motor racing circuit. After the war he was the club's regular timekeeper, driver and President.

In 1957 the club was shocked when Fred collapsed and died at the end of a bicycle polo match on Tooting Bec Common leaving a wife and young family. At that time the long-standing fight between the BLRC and NCU over massed-start racing on the open road was being resolved and riders were able briefly to hold dual licences of both organizations. The Clarendon's youngsters availed themselves of this facility to allow them to compete under both jurisdictions. The snag was that they were not getting into league road races because the club did not yet promote on the open road. When the club committee came to consider a fitting memorial to Fred they came up with the idea of promoting an open road race in his memory and launched an appeal for donations to buy a suitable trophy. The thinking was that although Fred had never raced on the road he had always supported new initiatives especially if they would be of benefit to the club's younger members or the sport in general.

So it was that the first Fred Cowley Memorial Trophy road race was organized by Brian Read on the Chobham circuit over 80 miles in Surrey. The race finished in a bunch sprint on the old

concrete road outside Chobham. There was a pile up in the middle of the sprinting bunch but out of the melee came a very young Tony Mills of the Southern Elite from Battersea. Millsey went on to a successful career in the British professional ranks and later owned the influential Dauphin Sport bike shop on Box Hill. He now lives in Brittany, is still involved in the sport and we are still in contact with him. Thus the pattern was set, the race tended to be won by up and coming young riders who went on to better things.

The following year the race switched to the Ashdown circuit in Sussex in search of more testing terrain and the race was won by a very strong rider from the Dulwich Paragon, John Gallo. The next two years' races were won by an older established come-back rider with an impressive record, Bill Stocker. Tragically Bill was killed a few weeks after his 1962 win when in collision with a lorry when riding home from work in bad weather. He left a wife and young son and in recent years we have been pleased to be able to provide that son with some cine film of his Dad's win. 1963 provided a great performance when Johny Goodrum of the Catford broke away with a teammate on the first lap up to the pylons on the Ashdown and they stayed away the whole race for Goodrum to win. Dave Gillett of the Woolwich, another rider from south east London, won the next year and was followed in 1965 by John Froud, one of twins from the local Festival RC, who went on to ride the Tour of Britain and share national honours.

By now the reputation of the race had extended and riders were attracted from farther afield. The course was changed to the Pirbright and in 1966 Martin Roach, then of the Feltham RC, won before going on to National BBAR time trial success with the Hounslow Wheelers. We first raced against Alan Perkins in the late 1950s when he was with the Planet RC from Essex but he was racing with the strong Hemel Hempstead squad when he won the 1967 race. He went on to a professional career with Holdsworth. In 1968 we had an administrative error which resulted in us promoting only a Junior race around the Henfold Hill course and Rik Goodall a young lad from Fareham won the Fred Cowley. The following year the race was back to the usual senior formula and Geoff Wiles came up from the Medway Velo to win before going on to take the National Road Race Championship.

In the 1970s most of the winners came from our local area starting with Alan Clarke's 1970 victory for the Ross Wheelers and Alan came back to ride in the race for many years thereafter. In 1971 Graham MacNamee won for the Twickenham and in 1972 Don Awcock of the Central Sussex was the victor. In 1973 Bob Woodley gave the Twickenham another victory and Bob Beatty of the emerging East Grinstead club took it back to Sussex in 1974. 1975 was a blank year when another administrative error with the BCF meant there was no promotion. By now the event was being run on the Lingfield circuit which seemed to give our mates from SE London encouragement. Mick Lee of the Gemini won in 1976 followed the next year by Colin Christie of the 34th Nomads. By this time I was driving the lead car for the race each year and I dented the driver's door panel on my car banging with my fist in excitement as Colin held the bunch at bay for the last 10 miles from the top of Cowden Hill to Dormansland for a fine solo win on Mutton Hill.

The reputation of the race and quality of the field was extending and in 1978 Neil Hodge travelled over from Cardiff Ajax to win the race but for the Clarendon the year marked the death of Fred's bosom pal, Micky Ayliffe, and the club started to promote a 4-up team time trial in Mick's memory. 1979 saw a Fred Cowley win for local lad Sean Yates riding for 34<sup>th</sup> Nomads. Sean went on to a long and distinguished career as a continental professional which included a Tour de France yellow jersey. In 1980 Dave Roberts took the trophy back to Thornaby on Teeside, the furthest it had been from home.

In the 1980s the course was switched to the area around West Sussex and we introduced an innovation by using three separate circuits to break up the race and introduce variety for the riders – and more difficulties for the organization! Our aim had always been to put on a good day's racing in Fred's sporting memory and the riders always came first. So it was that the 1981 race started with two laps of the Alfold circuit before switching on to the Dunsfold for three laps and finishing with 5 laps of the Kirdford circuit. Victory went to Steve Baker of Ross Wheelers. 1982 saw another win for the Nomads when a young Tim Stevens won and we were saddened recently to hear of Tim's passing. Alan Green of the nearby VC Etoile won on the Alfold/Kirdford in 1983 and by now the size of fields was increased to 80 riders changing the pattern of racing from the old 40 rider field format. 1984 saw another 34th Nomads victory for Nigel Carpenter. At that time Nigel was working in Millseys shop on Box Hill. When he went in to work the next morning Tony asked him how he'd got on yesterday and on hearing of his win drawled, "It's about time they had another good winner of that race!"

In the mid-1980s the winners switched away again with two wins for Paul Doel of West London's Chequers RC. In 1985 he was determined to be the first hat-trick winner of the event and got into a good break on the first lap only to puncture and retire. The break stayed away the whole race and victory went to Colin Bath of Essex's Anglia Sport. In the next two years Sussex provided the Fred Cowley winners, Paul Rogers of VC St Raphael and Steve Blackmore from East Grinstead. In 1990 the trophy lived under Karl Lyndon's bed in the Halls of Residence at Loughborough college following his win and then Andy Naylor of Apollo RT won the 1991 event. The three circuit formula made the race different from most. It was about this time that I

overheard an unsolicited testimony from an Essex rider in the queue waiting for his bike to be checked. He asked the guy behind him if he'd ridden the race previously. He hadn't and this rider said, "It's great, you never know where you are. You turn left out of here going flat out with no clue where you're going and just when you think you've got the circuit sussed they turn you off onto another course and then after another hour or so onto yet another and all of a sudden it's the finish!" No such problems for Hugh Broadbent of West Sussex's Southdown Velo with his win in 1992.

In 1993 the race was run off in appalling conditions and an older rider from East London with a great record, Mick Gray of Crest RC, prevailed with a solo victory. In 1994 and 1995 Paul Crook gave Ross Wheelers their third and fourth Fred Cowley wins but, rather like Paul Doel earlier, his hat-trick bid in 1996 was foiled by mechanical problems when Hounslow's Colin Roshier had the first of his three consecutive successes. He was followed by Aaron McCaffrey of Heffs Bike Shop in 1999. Mick Coyle of VC Etoile was probably the most joyously surprised winner ever in 2000. He hadn't raced much that year and entered just for old time's sake and was well pleased still to be there coming out of Kirdford on the last lap. The small bunch of survivors eased slightly for the sprint approaching Skiff Lane and on reflex Mick took a flyer and held them off to win by some distance with a huge grin.

By the turn of the century the lads in the Clarendourt were getting a bit past promoting bike races and the heavier traffic on the Surrey/Sussex border necessitated legislation adding to the admin with risk assessments and suchlike. The riders still wanted the race and the winners shifted back to West London with Colin Roshier showing in 2001 that he still knew his way around with his fourth win, this time riding for Team Quest. Anglia Sport revisited Sussex for Welshman Huw Pritchard to win in 2002. Prolific local winner Gary Dodd had long had the Fred Cowley in his sights so was delighted with his win in 2003 before Colin Roshier, by now a vet, signed off as the most prolific winner of the race in 2004 with his fifth win in Team Quest colours.

With that the Clarendourt announced that they would no longer be promoting the Fred Cowley Trophy Road Race and the Micky Ayliffe Team Time Trial with signs of regret from all quarters. Russel Clarke of the Festival asked if he could promote the event and the following year he put on a very ambitious promotion with sponsorship and some closed roads around Cranleigh for the finish and that race was won by Tony Gibbs of the DFL team. But the race was not run again.

The rest refused to believe the message. In 2004 the club was asked to promote the newly resurrected CTT Team Time Trial which it did and then was asked by the Surrey Cycle Racing League to promote their 4-up team time trial championship to prevent the 4-up discipline disappearing from the calendar; 4-ups were disappearing. We have been doing that since 2006. What to do with the valuable solid silver rose bowl, the Fred Cowley Memorial Trophy? After some discussion it was decided to award that each year to the winners of the Surrey League TTT and to redesignate the Micky Ayliffe TTT Trophy for competition by women. This involved some engraving changes but we endeavoured to preserve the history of both events on the silverware. Thus the memory of two sporting mates from the 1930s is preserved; they'd have made some joke about that!

Thus the engraving on the Fred Cowley trophy changes after 2005 from individual riders to club teams and that on the Micky Ayliffe trophy changes from mens' to womens' teams.

#### **Fred Cowley Memorial Trophy**

1958	Tony Mills	Southern Elite CC
1959	John Gallo	Dulwich Paragon CC
1961	Bill Stocker	29th Wheelers
1962	Bill Stocker	29th Wheelers
1963	John Goodrum	Catford CC
1964	Dave Gillett	Woolwich CC
1965	John Froud	Festival RC
1966	Martyn Roach	Feltham RC
1967	Alan Perkins	Hemel Hempstead CC
1968	Rik Goodall	Fareham Wheelers CC
1969	Geoff Wiles	Medway Velo
1970	Alan Clarke	Ross Wheelers
1971	Graham MacNamee	Twickenham CC
1972	Don Awcock	Central Sussex CC
1973	Bob Woodley	Twickenham CC
1974	Bob Beatty	East Grinstead CC
1976	Mick Lee	Gemini BC
1977	Colin Christie	34th Nomads
1978	Neil Hodge	Cardiff Ajax CC
1979	Sean Yates	34th Nomads
1980	Dave Roberts	Thornaby CRT/Beenbag
1981	Steve Baker	Ross Wheelers
1982	Tim Stevens	34th Nomads/CP Hart

1983	Alan Green	VC Etoile/Merchant Investors
1984	Nigel Carpenter	34th Nomads/CP Hart
1985	Paul Doel	Chequers RC
1986	Paul Doel	Chequers RC
1987	Colin Bath	Anglia Sport
1988	Paul Rogers	VC St Raphael/Waites
1989	Steve Blackmore	East Grinstead CC/Snowhill
1990	Karl Lyndon	Loughborough Students CC
1991	Andrew Naylor	Apollo RT/Nicosport
1992	Hugh Broadhead	Southdown Velo/Butler Cycles
1993	Mick Gray	Crest CC
1994	Paul Crook	Ross Wheelers/Dave Russell
1995	Paul Crook	Ross Wheelers/Dave Russell
1996	Colin Roshier	Hounslow & District Wheelers
1997	Colin Roshier	Hounslow & District Wheelers
1998	Colin Roshier	Hounslow & District Wheelers
1999	Mike Coyle	VC Etoile
2000	Aaron McCaffrey	Heffs Bike Shop
2001	Colin Roshier	Team Quest – The Bike Shop
2002	Huw Pritchard	Anglia Sport/Condor/Campagnolo
2003	Gary Dodd	Sigma Sport RT
2004	Colin Roshier	Team Quest – The Bike Shop
2005	Tony Gibbs	DFL
	Surrey League Team Time Trial Championship	
2006	VC Meudon	
2007	London Dynamo	
2008	London Dynamo	
2009	Sigma Sport RT	
2010	London Dynamo	
2011	Team Corley Cycles	
2012	London Dynamo	
2013	Pedal Heaven RT	
2014	Catford CC	
2015	Pedal Heaven RT	
2016	Sigma Sport	

*Mick Ayliffe*

### **MY FIRST BIKE(S)**

I've just found this article which I wrote in response to a general request in a CCC briefing a while ago, to write a short article about, amongst other things, my first bike. I thought I would respond, although I felt I would have to refer to my three first bikes. I obviously forgot to send it, and I hope it's not too late now.

First Bike (1). This was bought, second hand of course, from one of my friends at my primary school. What I remember about it is that it was a steel framed bike as was universal in those days, about 1963, although I have no idea of which make. I remember hand-painting it black and yellow, and affixing a 'Tour De France' transfer which I bought at a bike shop in Rose Hill, and which caused my mates to take the mickey out of me. I remember one of the pedals detaching, so I had to ride it with only the pedal spindle remaining. I remember also, using it for my paper round for 3 or 4 years. I fitted to it drop handlebars, and the first time I rode it in my road, I crashed into a parked car because I had my head down. I migrated to cowhorn handlebars and a 13-tooth fixed wheel sprocket, which I thought was really cool, although that word was unheard of then. I also remember bending the rear wheel rim whilst doing a really daring broadside skid on the grass in Revesby Road, and I suppose that contributed to my bike's eventual demise.

First New Bike (2). This bike caused me to find it difficult to get to sleep for a few nights. I bought it with the money I had so far earned on my paper round. It cost me £32 in about 1965, from a bike shop in Morden, by the name of Jack Ruff, I vaguely remember. I do remember though that the manager, maybe JR himself, gave me a discount of £3, a concept which I didn't understand in those days, but which my Dad, who had come with me, explained that I should be really grateful for. It was a Dawes Double Blue, with 10 gears and half-chromed front forks. I had to wait for maybe 3 days to pick it up, which explains the sleepless nights. My brother had bought a slightly different bike in the same shop at the same time. He had his stolen not long afterwards, and instead of having it replaced on the insurance, opted to take the money, and never cycled again. I rode my bike to death, the bike's, not mine. The first time I rode it to Brighton from Sutton, starting off at 4.30 on a summer's morning, I wrapped my jersey round the saddle because my bum was so sore.

First Racing Bike (3). I was 24, and had ridden my first few time trials, and Ivor Morris, one of the founders of the London Fire Brigade CC, to which I now belonged, as well as the Clarendon CC, procured a bike frame for me from one of his mates. It was a Ron Cooper 531 cyclo-cross frame, with Mavic centre-pull cross brakes, and was painted light grey. It lived in my bedroom, where I dreamt about racing it. As I could afford it, I bought a seat pin and saddle, dreamt about racing it, bought a stem and handlebars, dreamt about racing it, and then wheels and tubs, and later a chainset and chain, and later still, the gears. Then I was able to ride it down the road, but I had to be really careful because I still hadn't been able to afford the brakes. I remember being pretty disappointed the first time I rode it, because after all the anticipation, I found that it was so twitchy and hard to handle. I got used to it though, and when I got back on my old roadster, that felt like riding a barn gate. I was finally able to afford the brakes for my new bike, and in my first time trial on it, I had begun without yet knowing it, what was to be the first of several decades of riding proper bikes. This has been a lifetime of friendship, fun, pleasure, a little heartache and pain, but worth every minute, and every pound spent, and then some.

*John Aitken.*



**New Zealand 1980. Clarendon's Bill Dawson attempts to dead heat with breakaway companion Liverpoolian John Clarke at the end of the Mountain Race. The Kiwis didn't like that and declared Bill the winner. In the National vets championship the next week Clarke was 3<sup>rd</sup>, Bill 4<sup>th</sup>!**

