



# CYCLE CLIPS

## October 2007

Newsletter

Cyclists' Touring Club, Grampian



### Foreword

As we all know, CTC used to stand for Cycle Touring and Campaigning. A friend with an optimistic outlook on life calls it Cycle Touring and Complaining. Like me, she gets fed up to the teeth with moaners. A sentence starting with, "Drivers nowadays..." comes readily to the moaner's mind. As if there was a time long past when all drivers respected cyclists, when white van men gave a cheery wave to passing cyclists. Another expression in the vocabulary of the moaner is, "In this country...". As if in other countries you will see families riding through the cities without helmets, cheerily waving to the friendly lorry drivers, where all cycle lanes are smooth and free of cars and no cyclist is ever seen going through a red light or cycling on the pavement. From the above it will be clear that I don't like moaners.

### The Aberdeen Cycle Forum

The ACF is now a well-established and respected group of people, meeting every last Tuesday of the month in the Town House. **Every cyclist is welcome at those meetings.** They are the mouthpiece of cyclists of all sorts, but especially cycling commuters. As far as Aberdeen City Council is concerned, they represent all cyclists. The CTC is well represented there every month. ACF formulated a response to the Aberdeen Local Transport Strategy. This can be viewed at the ACF website [aberdeencycleforum.org.uk](http://aberdeencycleforum.org.uk). This website is worth a visit; it is useful, interesting, up-to-date and gives lots of room for moans to the council.

### How many miles for a pint?

In the July issue of CYCLE CLIPS, I rashly asked the question: *does the average person cycling on an average road have to cycle 10 miles to deserve one pint?*

There were several people asking me to define an average road and an average person. Fortunately, Steven Miles came up with a real answer as follows:

"There are approximately 35 calories per 100 ml in beer and lager.

About 33 fluid ounces in a litre.

So 1000 ml / 33 floz = 30.3ml/floz

and 1 pint, 16floz, = 16 x 30.3ml = 484ml

So 484/100 \* 35 = 169.x calories per pint.

I observe the average speed to be around 10 mph on CTC rides (when I am on them).

This would give a 30 mile distance at 66 watts of power, 3 hours to complete and 681 calories expenditure.

$681/30 = 22.7$  calories per mile."

$69$  calories per pint /  $22.7$  calories per mile =  $7.44$  miles per pint of beer :)

Regards, Steven



All I wanted to know - how many miles I have to cycle in order to allow myself one pint of beer. Now I know the answer, 7.44 miles. Thanks Steve.

### We are cycle heroes

The following comes from an article in BBC News, issued at the release of CTC's CycleHero film.

*"A menace is spreading. Silently, invisibly, moving across the planet. A new breed of hero is needed"*

*That new breed of hero is the cyclist, the menace is climate change and the line is from a new cinema trailer to promote CycleHero Week. Today, it seems, cycling is more than a mode of transport. It is a noble enterprise, a "good thing", an activity that's taken up by responsible people who care for the planet and for future generations.*

My choices from letters to the editor (I left out the normal ones)

Excuse me, let's not forget that human beings riding bikes produce more carbon dioxide from respiration than human beings sitting down behind the wheel of an electric car - whenever somebody gets round to making this available, that is.

Tom, Lisbon

Cyclists in Britain are becoming a menace. Very few obey the Highway Code. They frequently go straight through red lights onto busy junctions, usually listening to their iPods and therefore oblivious to the furious car drivers who try desperately not to hit them as they weave all over the road. Despite there being a law demanding it, not all use lights at night, which is dangerous for every road user. The laws of the roads are there to protect everyone who uses them, and if bikes want to be allowed on roads, then their riders should obey the rules like everyone else. All bikes should be taxed, insured and MOT'd if they want to

use the roads, and every rider should be forced to wear a helmet. It may not be a fashion item but they save lives. And shouldn't everyone on bikes have a cycling licence? This might make people think twice before they grab a bike and head out onto the roads without thinking.

*Claire Sutton, Oxford*

I don't cycle, I'm too scared to in London, but my biggest bugbear about cyclists is their attitude towards pedestrians, especially when adults ride on the pavement, which is illegal. I don't drive either, but rely on public transport and my sturdy legs.

*Annie Bebington, London*

What gets me is cyclists who cycle through red lights or through pedestrian crossings oblivious (or not perhaps) to pedestrians and then tell you to "f\*\*\* off" when they get shouted at... Karma my cycling friends, karma!!!

*John Matheson, London*

There may be a decent road infrastructure in Holland but that does not mean that cyclists obey the rules of the road. Having lived in Holland for the past 7 years I would say that Dutch cyclists have absolutely no regard for other road users; they frequently ignore red lights, casually cycle 3 or 4 abreast on busy roads, give no indication of their intention to stop, turn, pull out, etc. Unfortunately, these 'bad habits' which are learnt at a very early age, often seem to stay with them when they become car drivers.

*Penny Williams, Huizen, The Netherlands*

There was a time when riding a bike was about getting from A to B - not any more. For some it has become a moral and environmental crusade. Are cyclists getting too big for their boots?

*Brendan O'Neil*

The biggest problem I have with cyclists is that they think they have a god-given right to cycle on the pavement and pedestrians should move out of their way. Far from being heroes, they are dangerous, ignorant and downright selfish.

*Dougal McKinnon, Stoke on Trent*

## **CTC Grampian AGM**

On Saturday 3 November at 6.00 p.m. in YMCA Youth Hostel, 8 Queens Road, Aberdeen.

After the AGM (about 8 p.m.), there will be supper & wine at Sheila's.

## **Chairman's reports**

*"Now that another year is over and as we move into the New Year, it is a good time to reflect on the past year and take stock of what has been achieved, at the same time looking with confidence into the future".*

I could scream when I happen to hear or read this same boring sentence (or near enough) in Chairman's reports of two clubs I belong to. Fortunately, our

Chairman would never use such high-faluting words. In fact, he is a man of few words, letting others do the talking. Very wise, highly admirable.

## **The conference bike**

In August, six cyclists from Aberdeen were lucky enough to try out this bike (see p3). Unfortunately, it was in the middle of Amsterdam, along narrow canal roads, with the threat of being thrown off the bike into the Heerengracht looming over us. This bike seats seven people in the round facing each other. All seven have pedals to push the bike, but only the driver can steer and stop the bike. You can grab hold of the central handrail and hang on for dear life, especially if you are facing the driver and your back is turned towards the direction of travel. The designer of the bike, Eric Staller, was our driver. It only costs 9000 euros, and our CTC Grampian funds are getting close to that sum. I would love to see it travelling up and down Union Street. If you want to see one in Scotland, you will have to go to the isle of Cumbrae. The roads there should be quiet enough to have an enjoyable meeting, whilst riding, facing each other.

## **Critical Mass (again)**

The ACF saw fit to show the Critical Mass film. It showed a lot of self-satisfied, childish cyclists who were very pleased with themselves. They were gratifying their desire to be alternatives, blocking the roads en masse, without regard for other road users. Then the film showed how dreadfully the police behaved in stopping them from stopping the traffic.

One woman was very disappointed that she only got arrested once, got charged and found guilty only once. Poor woman and it was her fiftieth birthday too.

## **LTS - a new beginning?**

Aberdeenshire Council has published its *Local Transport Strategy for 2007-2010*. It contains the usual sweet noises about supporting cycling [p.26], and includes a picture of a child cycling on an aggregate cycle path with family walking behind [p.7] and a female cross-country cyclist off-road [p.11]. In the consultation, there was a modest level of support for improved walking and cycling facilities, with 27% seeing this to be a high priority, though much more support was shown for car and plane facilities.

However, the most important issue that the CTC argued for was for significant targets to be set. Dig deep and you will find these discretely located in the supplementary Implementation Plan, where the modal share of cycling is targeted to increase from 1% [2001] to 2% [2007/8] to 4% [2008/9] to 6% [2009/10]. Consultations are planned for a revised cycling strategy. Let us hope that it is more meaningful and effective than the present policy, which has been largely ignored, especially if those ambitious targets are to be met. All documents are available at [www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk](http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk).

*Mark Hagger*

### **Exercise by osmosis**

This is the mistaken belief that regularly watching football is a substitute for exercise.

### **Gutters next to steps**

On the Deeside Line near Cults, I have spotted the first set of Stairs with Gutters! You can place your bike in the gutter and push it up or let it down. We should all try them. These particular gutters have right angles and bicycle wheels do not like right angles. Nevertheless, congratulations and thanks to the designer of these new steps. He or she was thoughtful of cyclists.

### **The never-ending saga of the 101 uses of an old inner tube**

Jacqui Cameron's eager eye spotted some inner tube news. It came from a magazine called *House Beautiful*. Gordon's spirit will again soar with this contribution. Thank you, Jacqui.



### **Parisians embrace 'freedom' bike scheme**

Taxi drivers and other critics said that it would never work, but three weeks after Paris was sprinkled with 10,000 self-service bicycles, the 'Velib' scheme is proving a triumph and a new pedalling army appears to be taming the city's famously fierce traffic, reports *The Times* this week. Dave Holladay, CTC's bikes & public transport campaigner, told the paper it's a scheme we should be using over here: "It takes no more than 15 minutes to get to any Central London terminus by bike, so there could be huge benefits for the city" he said.

(From CTC newsletter)

### **Britons lured by pedal-power holidays**

Increasing numbers of Britons are hitting the road for cycling holidays, a report out today says.

The growing appeal of pedal power generated some 450,000 vacations based around cycling last year. Up 30% on the previous year, according to market analyst Mintel.

The CTC Grampian tour of Holland was one of those lured abroad. It counted nine cyclists and one pedestrian, who went to all the resting places by train and bus.



(CTC'rs puzzle over the conference bike. Photo by Wilf)

### **Technical problems in breweries**

Is it really easy these days to organise a piss-up in a brewery? There could be major technical obstacles in modern plants.

(From a letter to *The Times*)

### **The Aberdeen Mountain Rescue Team Ceilidh**

This is on Saturday the 13th October 2007 at the Ashdale Hall in Westhill, from 8pm-midnight.



Dancing the night away with Galik Bred. Tickets will be on sale from August at a cost of £10 per person and include stovies (veggie option available). There will be a licensed bar for the alcoholics, a raffle with superb prizes for the gamblers, and a prize winning competition for the disputatious. All proceeds will go to the AMRT.

Tickets available from Claire Marris (clairemarris@hotmail.com , 01224 611550)

### ***Very tall police in Schiphol***

Walking in the airport, I met an amazing sight. I stopped to look at 8 feet tall police officers floating about through the crowds. They were going at some speed, probably about 10 mph. None of the other passengers looked up, these police were apparently a familiar sight. I don't know whether my mouth fell open or not, I must have looked like a country bumpkin. They were standing on a Segway. In The Netherlands, they are allowed on cycle paths, but we never saw one in the week we were cycling there. In the UK they are unfortunately strictly verboten after four officials of the Department of Transport had a look at it. Three of these officials did not try it and the fourth only went 100 yards. The Segway is a marvellous machine and would be very useful for the police here in Aberdeen.

### ***Grampian Rally***

Friday 23 to Wednesday 28 May 2008  
at Templars, Maryculter.

This is the fourth Rally, organised by CTC Grampian. All have been enjoyable, but this next one promises to be the best. Detailed information from Gordon Mackay via [secretary@ctcgrampian.org.uk](mailto:secretary@ctcgrampian.org.uk).

### ***Cars rule***

One of the people coming out on Try Cycling (every Sunday at 10.00 from Duthie Park) tells me that at his place of work he can park a car but there is no room for a bicycle?!?

***The next issue of Cycle Clips will be published in January 2008. Any comments and contributions to Gerard by 10 December at 01224 734799 or to [gerardvlaar@yahoo.com](mailto:gerardvlaar@yahoo.com)***

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