



MAD Musette



News and musings from Maldon & District Cycling Club

Welcome

Welcome to the winter edition of the club newsletter. Where was the autumn edition I hear you say? Setting aside the summer temperatures in October that meant longs stayed in the cupboard a bit err...longer, the idea is to tune the cadence so that the season editions are more preview than review. Enjoy!

Staying in touch

The Spond sports app is now in operation to provide members with a one stop shop to find out what is going on at the club. The **events** feature allows you to see details of organised rides and a section for **posts** on any club related matters. Many members are now signed up so if you aren't please do and join in the conversation!

Annual dinner and awards night

The Competitions are finished and we will gather to celebrate the 2023 season at Maldon Rugby Club on 9th Feb 2024. To secure your tickets contact Colin Edmond or look for details on Spond.



As winter bites, the days get shorter and temperatures drop, getting our cycling fix as individuals and as a club changes. There's nothing like wrapping up on those crisp winter days to enjoy a nice steady ride out so why not jump on one of the Sunday club rides for that little bit of extra motivation. The new intermediate group is starting soon to provide something a bit more challenging than the Sunday social but not at the eyeballs-out pace of the training ride. Check Spond for details. Of course the cyclo cross enthusiasts are in amongst the mud and ferocity of their season so if you haven't tried it maybe give that a go? For some it's time to dial things down, but for others it's time to prepare for 2024 with base fitness foundations being laid down over the next few months. This may include turbo sessions and with the array of virtual platforms nowadays it isn't quite the drudge of years gone by. You can also make gains (and reduce injury risk) with some strength and conditioning and let's not forget about giving your bike a bit of TLC with some maintenance.

Whatever you choose, ride safe and a Merry Christmas to all. See you in 2024!



Alpine adventures

Adrian Tovey headed to Bormio in the Italian alps in August and he says 'there can't be many better towns to act as a base for such a break. It's very cycling oriented and regularly hosts professional races with a huge selection of reasonably priced hotels and plenty of restaurants'. Notice boards in town suggest routes of all distances and toughness but be warned they all involve a significant amount of climbing, however there is something for everyone. Head out of town in any direction and you have a choice of famous passes like the Stelvio, Gavia and Mortirolo or little known routes to some tranquil beauty spots off the beaten track. Adrian recommends the road to Torre di Fraele for the latter. A road with as many hairpins as Alpe d'huez but with an easier gradient and at the top there are great views for miles across the valley. Weather changes suddenly and within minutes clouds and rain were coming so time for a swift descent before the roads got wet. The highlights of such a trip are the chance to ride the famous passes. They didn't disappoint. Even in August there had been a storm that had deposited snow on the Stelvio and Gavia with temperatures at the summits around 0°C. A few days later most of the snow was gone but those climbs are long and hard enough in good weather. The views on those passes are amazing and help with the very lengthy ride to the summit. Thankfully there are cafes or restaurants to take a break in when the hard work is done. Then the descending can start. These passes have several stretches where the road is straight, good surface and not too narrow. Adrian said 'Go as fast as you dare! I was regularly doing >40mph!'



Torre di Fraele. Sweeping hairpins and stunning views

If this has inspired you Adrian is happy to give advice on routes, preparation etc.

News bites

A round up of what's been going on....

The Club **TT season ended** with a social evening at the Star Inn HQ at Steeple. No race because of roadworks but a good gang of us got out for a bit of a social spin before heading back to the pub for supper and a few drinks. Thanks to all that volunteered and competed in these events.



The club **hill-climb** took place on November 5th over 700 gruelling yards on Loddart's road, Hazeleigh. Windy conditions added to the challenge with **George Wakefield** claiming the overall.

Chris and Joanne York have been racing their tandem this year, competing in time trials in Essex, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire. After submitting their times they have been awarded the mixed tandem records at 10 & 25 miles for both over 40s and over 50s. Especially exciting as they used a tandem that used to belong to Paul & Lesley Gregory and are delighted to have given it a new lease of life.

The club multi-sport charge has been led by **George Wakefield** this year. Competing on the world and European stage he has nailed some impressive results in aquathlon, aquabike and triathlon events. This included a 12th place finish at the world olympic distance trip and 4th at the European aquabike which was a 90km TT after swimming 2km! Keeping it local he also took the win for the 3rd year in a row at the Maldon Sprint Tri. Chapeau!

The **AGM** took place at the Bell pub Purleigh on 22nd November. Twenty or so members attended where key club matters were discussed. Minutes to follow but if you have views on how we can improve don't wait for next AGM, contact your committee

MADCC on tour in Spain

Eight members of the club along with a matching number of our friends from Crest CC headed to the warm and sunny South of Spain for eight days touring in late October. (All the 8's?) Emphasis was on enjoying the challenge and the social and the trip was memorable for some fantastic scenery, a few lumps and bumps to overcome, welcoming hotels and cafes and a good bit of off road adventure. Oh and the occasional flat! Covering around 300 miles and nearly 25,000 feet of climbing this was a good challenge as the group made its way down to Gibraltar and then back to Malaga. All the team reported that a good time was had and from the pictures you can see smiles all around. Special mention should be made of **Steve Moore** who decided to ride out to the tour. He took the ferry to Bilbao and then spent two weeks riding to Malaga as a warm up!



Refuelling!



When you go touring and especially off road taking care of mechanicals is a given



'I'm blue dabba-dee dabba-dah..'

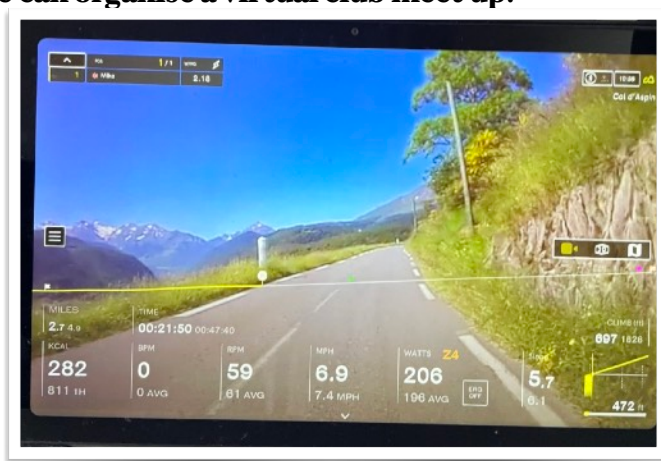


Enjoying the sweeping majesty of the Spanish countryside

Coaching corner: Winter thoughts.

During the winter months it is tougher to get out on the road. Shorter days, freezing temperatures and sometimes treacherous road conditions means that our opportunities to ride are fewer. Many turn to the turbo trainer to keep their fitness going. The good news is with the advent of smart trainers and the array of virtual platforms like Zwift, Bkool or Rouvy etc. these sessions can be more interesting and productive than in days gone by. From gently cruising for an hour or so accompanied by video of real life routes through to very specific sessions aimed at boosting your fitness in a controlled and measurable way, there are sessions to suit most of us. Top tips for rewarding turbo:

- Warm up. Don't leap straight into that club or sprint session. Use a fan to keep cool and have a towel to hand (no air currents!)
- Sweet spot sessions pack a punch. 4 x 5 mins at a hard but achievable pace with matching recoveries in between can really boost fitness.
- Many platforms have real course options with the choice to just ride for yourself or to compete with others. Some days a nice spin - other days a bit of competition to spice things up. **Maybe we can organise a virtual club meet up?**



'Ahhh.. the freedom of the 'virtual' open road

In addition this time of year is a good opportunity to work on base fitness and change things up. Two or three weekly sessions of core strengthening doing sets of planks, squats, lunges, plyometrics and some free weight work etc. can really help to give you a base for your spring training and provide all round stability. It minimises osteoporosis, keeps body in balance (vs just cycling) and helps with injury prevention. Maybe try something different to freshen the mind as well like going for a run, hike or actually using that gym membership!!

It is highly recommended to have a good discussion about this with a personal trainer or strength/conditioning coach but if you want to discuss anything about this, your specific training (maybe for an event) then please get in touch with Mark at coaching@madcc.org.uk This is a free service to all club members.

Cyclo X

Cyclo-X is fast, fun and filthy!

Doddy has been competing and reports that there have been quite a few new venues across the Central, London & Southeast and of course Eastern leagues this year, which has made things interesting. The season started in unusually hot weather, with a water tent required for the first event at Springfield (in a sport where the handing up of water is usually not allowed!) But the recent wet weather has made for "proper cross conditions" with mud in abundance. One event saw a long flat stretch get so muddy it turned into a run for most of the riders. There is a great welcoming atmosphere and usually some yummy catering on site so you can re-fuel after the exertion.



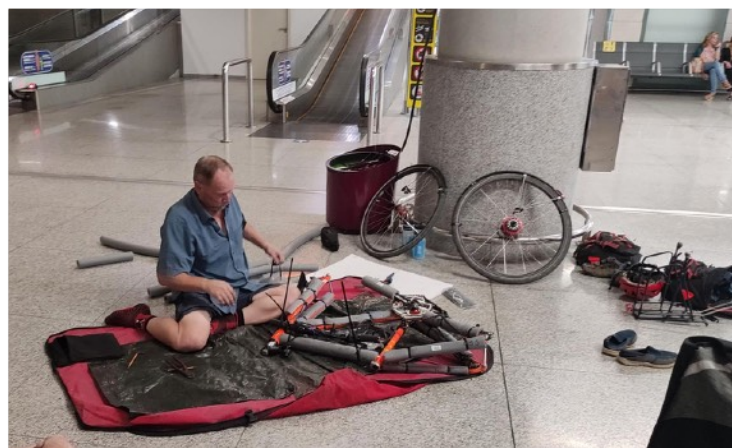
The club is searching for a venue to hold our own events so stay tuned for news on that. For more information on cyclo-x visit the eastern region website <https://www.easterncross.org.uk/> Or there is an app called "CX hub" which has info on nearly all the UK leagues.

Maintenance

It is not just our bodies that need a bit of maintenance during the winter. Our bikes should get a little bit of extra TLC at this time of year. After a long season it is a good idea to put a little extra effort into making sure your bike is in good working order ready to see you through the winter months. Although after a cold ride it is usual that first order of business is to get yourself sorted out with a warm shower to thaw out frozen fingers and toes and to get some hot food and drink inside, taking a few minutes to clean up your bike will mean next time you take it out you are not confronted by muck and rust and all the other nasties that can occur as a result of foul weather and the salt from the road surface. I called up my local bike shop to get their top tips for maintenance at this time of year:

- **Keep your bike clean** A quick spray down and maybe a dousing with soapy hot water will get rid of the grime that can accumulate and can foul up the more essential parts. Plus a clean bike is a happy bike!
- **Lubricate your chain** The one thing that needs to be taken care of as without it the bike simply doesn't work! Make sure it is clean, use a chain cleaner and lube or a brush/rag to remove the grit and grease then dry it and give it a light oiling using wet weather chain lube.
- **Check your tires** The least fun is having to change a tube when your fingers are frozen so now is a good time to check tires for splits and wear. You also need good function when the road surfaces can be a bit tricky and check tire inflation, don't be shy of reducing the pressure a bit from what you use in summer to give you more surface area on the road.
- **Rattles?** It is a good idea to go around with Allen keys and just check all those nuts and screws are tightened.
- **Brakes** Unless you are a trackie these are essential and with tougher road conditions in winter it is important to check that your brakes (discs or blocks) are in good working order and replace pads if needed. You will be grateful for good functioning brakes to give you stopping confidence in the more challenging winter days.
- **Improve your skills** We should all know how to fix a flat but what about a broken chain or cable? Maybe time to learn some new skills (Is there appetite for a club maintenance training day?)
- **Keep your lights charged** The last thing you want is to be out and run out of day light or if the weather closes in, so having a serviceable front and rear light on your bike at all times will allow you to be seen.
- **Get your bike serviced** We can all do our bit to keep things ticking over but it is also good to get your bike serviced professionally. Checking for chain stretch, worn cassettes or cables needs some expert oversight so talk to your local bike shop about servicing options

A little bit of maintenance can go a long way to ensuring your winter riding is safe and enjoyable. Use Spond to start a post and share your maintenance tips!



'This is my bike. There are many like it but this one is mine...'

New Years day social ride

To celebrate the dawn of 2024 and help us all clear out the fog of new years eve celebrations the club will hold a gentle social ride on New Years day. A chance to get some gentle exercise and have a chat with club mates. Likely route around the Dengie as previous years. Look out on Spond for details

Contact Information

madcc.org.uk

WhatsApp | X | Facebook |
Spond

membership@madcc.org.uk

Member info

How much and what you get

£20 / year (£10 for second claim
and under 18s)

Discounts, events, coaching,
friendship and good times!

Check the website for details

Club gallery Club life in pictures...



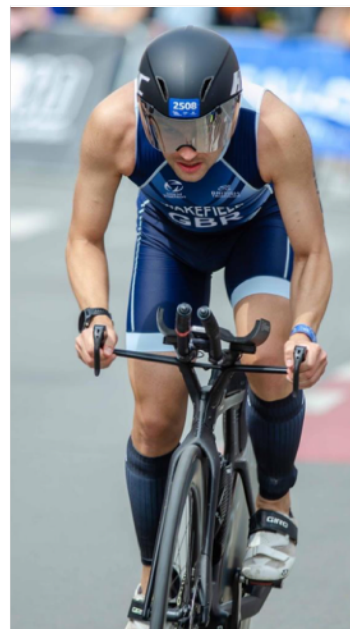
Nathan's stoker doesn't seem to be taking things seriously



'I didn't see nuffin!' What goes on tour stays on tour!



'What's going on outside the MADCC bubble?'



George Wakefield in his GB kit representing the club on the World and European stage



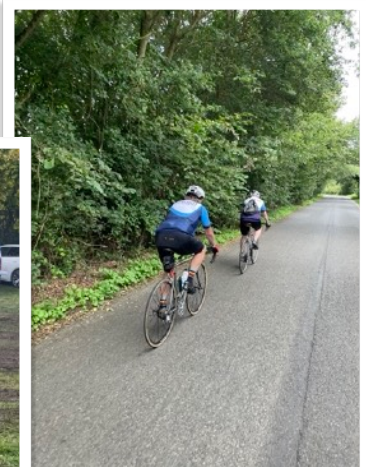
Tandem power!



Winter is coming... but the Alps are not! Maybe a mountain adventure next year!



Mud, mud glorious mud... now? Maintenance!!!



Sunday social