

CTC-Cambridge Committee Meeting – 21 Oct 2017

CTC-Cambridge AGM – 12 Nov 2017

[The same report will be submitted to both meetings]

RUNS SECRETARY REPORT

Our rides have been working well this year. Nearly all our rides have had a leader and we have good numbers of riders on most of our rides.

We will continue to make small adjustments to the ride formats but the basic format is working well and no major changes are planned.

My primary issue this year is a renewed effort to improve our group riding skills.

I want to start by saying thank you to all the many leaders who have led the club rides this year and helped to make our rides a success. We have welcomed several new leaders this year, and this has helped with the extra demands, not least the need for two leaders for the Thursday rides each week.

Our main club rides are the Sunday and Thursday rides, and these involve some of the more interesting and challenging routes, and also some of the largest groups of riders. We now have many different leaders for these rides and I want to thank everyone who has taken a turn at leading.

I also want to thank the leaders of our other regular rides. Thank you to Ian Wright who plans and leads most of the Saturday Social rides, to Nigel Deakin who plans and leads most of the Wednesday evening rides and to Clive Peace for organising the Tuesday Senior lunch meetings.

One change this year has been the introduction of the rider registration forms. This has been rolled out and managed by the membership secretary and I would like to thank the leaders for helping us to implement this important change.

The rest of this report is about some of the detailed plans for the Sunday and Thursday rides.

Sunday all-day rides: The Sunday all-day rides have continued to have a mixture of “full day” rides (3 stops) and “light day” rides (2 stops) on alternate weekends. This year we have also added several “longer” rides, mostly led by Alex Brown, and this mix of different rides seems to work well. Rider numbers on most of the all-day rides are generally 6-10, and quite a variable group of people. Over the winter we have changed back to the shorter 2-stop winter ride format every week.

Sunday afternoon rides: The Sunday afternoon rides have been more decoupled from the all-day rides this year, with the afternoon ride only meeting with the longer 3-stop all-day rides. This has allowed the afternoon rides to choose different stops and has also enabled us to trial a shorter afternoon ride format as a “stepping-stone” between the Saturday rides and the longer afternoon rides.

We have enjoyed a great set of Sunday food treats this year. Top of the list is the two excellent home teas – my thanks to both of our hosts. We also enjoyed our first new BBQ event. And last but

not least, we have enjoyed booked teas at The Chestnut Tree in West Wrating and repeat visits to the popular church hall teas.

Thursday rides: The dual start for the Thursday rides is now an established part of the rides. The rider numbers have stabilised at about 6-10 on the city start and 15-20 at the village start.

The earlier City start time was designed to get both rides to the coffee stop around the same time, but in practice the arrival timings have been quite variable. We have recently experimented with an earlier 09:15am start for the village ride, and this seems to be popular, so we are considering a change to a 09:15am start for both the city start and the village start next summer.

The dual start does have some impact on the social aspect of the Thursday rides as the two groups ride independently to coffee. But I think this is now settling down with more people swapping between groups at coffee. And the two leaders often choose different routes after coffee which gives an interesting choice for the riders.

The primary reason for the dual start was to manage the large number of riders on the Thursday rides. But these Thursday rides still involve some big groups of riders and hence I think there is still a need to improve our group riding skills – so I have highlighted this as a runs issue for 2018.

RUNS ISSUES FOR 2018

Our first focus for 2018 will be on improving our group riding skills, especially for the larger Thursday groups. This was a highlighted issue last year and I am a bit disappointed by the limited progress we have made. So this year, I am asking everyone to make an extra effort to raise our standards. Traditionally, ride discipline was the sole responsibility of the ride leaders, but think every rider needs to play a part in improving our group riding skills.

A good example is the issue of how to organise a large group on busy roads in order to make it easier for cars to overtake safely. The whole group needs to adjust their formation: firstly by splitting these big groups of riders into two or three smaller groups with a large gap between each group (large enough so that a car can pull into the gap). Each small group should have less than 8 riders so that they can ride in a small compact pack. The key point is to avoid creating one long “straggle” of bikes which makes overtaking difficult and causes drivers to get frustrated and then attempt a dangerous overtake. I think this simple change to the group formation works well: it doesn’t eliminate road rage, but it does help.

Separately, I am pleased to report that we have had a good year for stops, with visits to many good quality stops including several new stops. I want to thank everyone for supporting our efforts to improve relations with our stops. The runs committee have been more consistent in making advance bookings – especially at the smaller stops. Our other important change was a stricter policy of “no picnics” at the Thursday lunch stops to avoid offending the stops and this has been mostly well respected – thank you.

Lastly, we still need more volunteers to lead our rides: it is important that all our rides have a leader. So again, thank you to all the many leaders who have led rides this year. But a request to them and everyone else: please volunteer to lead a few more rides, or to start leading if you have not yet started. Please contact the runs secretary to volunteer.