



# La Gazzetta

Newsletter of Rochdale CTC & the East Lancs Road Club



No.57 August 2018

## WELCOME

Welcome to our August newsletter. Darryl visited Belgium to ride the hills and roads of the Spring Classics. Mike used an epic coast to coast ride in Ireland as part of his recuperation and Gareth gives us a flavour of the Club BBQ.

Why not get your name in print? Articles for the newsletter are always in short supply and very welcome. If you have something to say you don't have to be Shakespeare just put a few words together and email me at [newsletter@rochdalectc.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@rochdalectc.org.uk).

## COBBLES & BERGS – RIDING IN FLANDERS

Darryl Nolan gives us the inside information on riding in Flanders.

I had already ridden a few retro rides in Flanders Belgium, so when Ryan Air announced their sale I thought it would be a good time to re-visit this time on my touring bike. ("Sale" well the return fare was £50 but the cost of the bike was £120!).

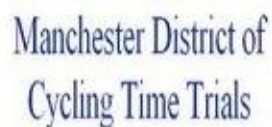
I flew into Charleroi south of Brussels and had a long ride out to the Youth Hostel at Geraardsbergen where I stayed for 2 nights and had the hostel to myself.

The first days ride was around Geraardsbergen finishing with an afternoon ride up the atmospheric and must do Mur de Geraardsbergen.



Next day I rode to Oudenaarde where the Tour de Flanders finishes. I found two excellent Air B&B's right in the middle of town.

I had wanted to ride some of the classic cobbled Tour de Flanders climbs but with lower gears on my touring bike. In no particular order they were The Paterberg, Koppenberg and Oud Kwaremont all do able in a days ride from Oudennaarde and steeped in cycling history. I spent the next couple of days riding some of the other climbs.





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## CLUB CALENDAR

The Club website has an excellent calendar that had details of our rides and events. You can view it [www.rochdalectc.org.uk/calendar.html](http://www.rochdalectc.org.uk/calendar.html).

If you are interested in any of the calendar events just click them for more details.

## CLUB RUNS

In addition to our regular Saturday and Sunday runs you may be interested in the following rides.

**Tuesday Evening Summer Club Runs**

**Wednesday Evening Mountain Bike Rides**

**Saturday Fast Training Rides**



Oudennarde is an excellent town to base yourself good bars restaurants and cafes although the Tour de Flanders Museum is an excellent source of information the café which used to house lots of cycling memorabilia has now been turned into a flash gin bar so give it a miss. But there are some great Belgian beers to try for you lovers of the amber nectar!



Manchester District of  
Cycling Time Trials





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## SATURDAY CLUB RUNS

Rides start at 9:30am from Rochdale Leisure Centre.

### 4<sup>th</sup> August

Beginners – Edenfield  
Medium - Wycoller

### 11<sup>th</sup> August

Beginners – Heaton Park  
Medium – Buxton

### 18<sup>th</sup> August

Beginners – Hebden Bridge  
Medium – Haigh Hall

### 25<sup>th</sup> August

Beginners – Haslingden/Helmshore  
Medium - Barley

### 1<sup>st</sup> September

Beginners – Pavillion Café,  
Chadderton  
Medium – New Mills

### 8<sup>th</sup> September

Beginners – Summerseat  
Garden Centre  
Medium – Bashall Barn

**DON'T FORGET** the Fast Training Ride of 40-50 miles on Saturday mornings. Check the Facebook group for more information.

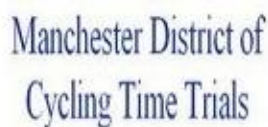
Belgium has an excellent cycling network. At each road junction there are numbered routes and you can make up your own ride by following and joining the numbered routes together. You can go flat and long or short and steep.



Well worth a visit. If you're interested in the History of the Tour de Flanders then I can thoroughly recommend 'The Ronde' by Edward Pickering (It's in the Oldham Library).

Any takers for the Ardennes or Luxembourg next year?

## CYCLING COAST TO COAST IN IRELAND – THE GUINNESS TRAIL





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## SUNDAY CLUB RUNS

Rides start at 8:30am from Rochdale Leisure Centre.

### 5<sup>th</sup> August

Short – Townley Park  
Medium – Car Assist from Ladybower Reservoir  
Long – Slaidburn

### 12<sup>th</sup> August

Short – Ramsbottom  
Medium – Bolton by Bowland  
Long – Clapham

### 19<sup>th</sup> August

Short – Ripponden  
Medium – Glossop/Devils Elbow  
Long – Great Budworth)

### 26<sup>th</sup> August

Short – Bolster Moor  
Medium – Carr Assist from Trough of Bowland  
Long – Grassington

### 2<sup>nd</sup> September

Short – Crawshawbooth  
Medium – Haworth  
Long – Hathersage

### 9<sup>th</sup> September

Short – Club Two Stage Hill Climb

Mike Coulter tells us of an interesting and thoroughly enjoyable way to get back on to the bike after seven weeks off, due to injury by taking on a long ride with a bunch of beer swilling non-cyclists.

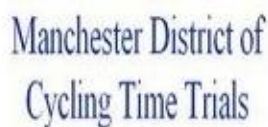
On the 8<sup>th</sup> of July we packed 8 bikes on to my truck and got the ferry from Holyhead to Dublin, with our destination being the lively City of Galway. The task ahead was to dip our bikes into the Atlantic Ocean and then set off on a what was supposed to be a 170 mile trip to dip our wheels in the Irish Sea on the Dunabate Beach just outside the City of Dublin.

This was not an ELRC trip, in fact none of the 7 riders with the exception of Judge Tim (yes a real life judge) were cyclists. One of the gents doing the ride (Andy) was a fit lad, does lots of running, but only bought his bike two weeks before for £70 on EBAY. He obviously got a bargain, as the bike was a vintage Raleigh which with a bit of TLC wouldn't look out of place on the Eroica.

The journey, and tone of the weekend, was set the evening before the ride began. After our third pint of Guinness we were all presented with our personalised riding Jerseys. The name upon mine was Micky 'Skid' Merckx, reflecting the fact that I was a cyclist and the fact that I'd had a few injuries and bumps this season.

The first day involved 60 miles of fairly flat cycling on fairly quite roads, including the R347, with our destination that day being Athlone, a tranquil town on the River Shannon. It is also home to Sean's Bar which is Ireland's oldest pub, dating back to AD 900. Being keen historians, we obviously all took the opportunity to carb load in this pub, with copious amounts of the black stuff consumed!

The second days cycling was even flatter with just 900ft of elevation over 67 miles. The majority of the riding this day followed the Old Rail Greenway, a 42km cycle way that follows an old disused railway. At the end, we jumped on the Royal Canal towpath until we reached our second overnight stop, Maynooth. Here we stayed in an old Seminary which pretty much resembled a scene from Harry Potter with the accommodation and grounds being reminiscent of Hogwarts.





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## CLUB TWO STAGE HILL CLIMB

Don't forget to get your entries in for the Club's Two Stage Hill Climb on 9<sup>th</sup> September.

This year the hills are the short and sharp Blackstone Edge Old Road followed by the longer and more familiar route up Blackstone Edge on the A58.

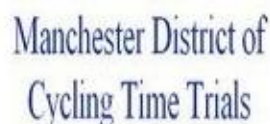
The event HQ is the Red Lion pub by the railway bridge at the bottom of Blackstone Edge in Littleborough,

Entries can be made on the Cycling Time Trials website (<https://www.cyclingtimetrials.org.uk>).



The final day of the trip should have seen us getting in over 40miles of cycling to finish our journey on a picturesque beach to the north of Dublin. However, the cycling gods were not on our side this day. The route we were following was a designated cycle route, that followed the Royal Canal. For the most part it was very good, safe and well maintained. However, the condition of the trail deteriorated significantly as we hit the city limits of Dublin.

In the area of Poterstown, the path became very narrow, and was nothing more than an uneven patchwork track punctured by rocks and large protruding tree roots. Also the in this area, the canal is in a steep ravine, some 25ft below the track. Our youngest rider Kathy (20) who had been cycling for about two weeks prior to the trip, hit a root bounced off it and rolled down the steep bramble encrusted bank and landed in the canal. It was impossible for her to get out without the aid of climbing gear. Holding on to a protruding sapling for dear life Kathy, waited whilst we mustered the emergency services, who arrived within just 15minutes with three fire engines and an ambulance. Using professional climbing gear they rescued her and fortunately she was unscathed apart from multiple scratches, grazes and bruises.





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## BEARD CUP HILL CLIMB

Hot on the heels of the Two Stage Hill Climb is the Beard Cup 16<sup>th</sup> September. As well as the usual prizes for individual effort the Beard Cup is awarded to the best three person team in the event. The Club has a great record in this event so help us to maintain it by having a go.

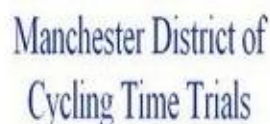
You can enter in the open class on your stripped down climbing machine, or as a tourist where your bike must have mudguards, pump, inner tube and basic tools (lights not necessary unless you are likely to be very slow).

The course is just 1 mile, starting from the Carr Lane/Harrop Green Lane/Huddersfield Road junction and finishing just short of the junction with A62. Ride Headquarters is Woolly Knit Cafe, Warth Mill.

Contact David Trippier by email for more details [clubsec@eastlancsroadclub.org.uk](mailto:clubsec@eastlancsroadclub.org.uk).



The Irish Fire Brigade were nothing less than awesome. Not only did they execute the rescue quickly and professionally but they did it with a great smile and had the crack with our motley crew. They took us all back to the fire station so Kathy could have a shower, gave her a Dublin Fire Brigade T shirt and treated the rest of us to the best coffee and biscuits we had had on the whole trip. The hospitality shown to us was that good that we concluded that they weren't real firemen and that they were all secretly employed by the Irish Tourist Board.





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## THURSDAY EVENING SWIMMING

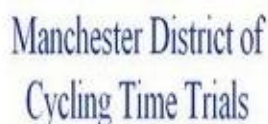
Don't forget that the Club has exclusive access to swimming lanes at the Rochdale Leisure Center on Thursday evenings from 8-9pm. The sessions are free of charge and open to all Club members.

All credit to Kathy, she got back on her bike and we took a short route, through Phoenix Park, rode through the City of Dublin and dipped our wheels in the Irish Sea in the port facing a huge Cruise Ship.



The evening and weekend was wrapped up with some traditional Irish music and stories in Doherty Nesbits where locals sang and told stories of old.

This was a great trip. Would definitely recommend Ireland for cycling. The roads are generally quiet, the people are very friendly and the evenings are good fun. If I was to do this again, I'd skip the cycle routes and keep to the quiet roads, this way you would see much more of what this country has to offer and the hospitality that the good Irish folk are keen to extend.





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## ARTICLES WANTED

Now that Summer is here and we are all out riding our bikes please spare a thought for your poor newsletter editor. Hunched over a laptop with hardly any articles. Save him from typing the ramblings of desperation by sending your news or anything of interest to our members to [newsletter@rochdalectc.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@rochdalectc.org.uk).

Thanks, Jon

## CLUB ANNUAL BBQ



The annual summer BBQ took place, where else, at the Puckersley Inn on 24<sup>th</sup> June. As always for these events the sun shone brightly to entice everybody outside and the beer garden was packed. I arrived at 13:30 to find a big guy trying to cook a whole pig. Not having any of this I promptly gave him short shrift and asked him to leave. Well I had to pay him as he was a lot bigger wider than me, so off he rolled down Narrow Gate Brow. The real chef then wheeled out the burgers and sausages. I'm lead to believe the quality at £3 for each item was superb but as I'm a vegan I could not sample any of the available food. The only fly in the ointment was the lack of salad and chips. Not to worry as this will be corrected for next years BBQ.

A great turnout by all members with over 50 people present. One of the guests, that well known headcase, Pete 'Mad Dog' Haigh commented on Facebook 'great do, why can't all cycling clubs be like this'. I can only commend his sentiments. By 17:30 I had imbibed far too much JWL bitter and wobbled home. Still it was a great day out with great camaraderie, friendship and support for the club on display.

**Thanks to Gareth Snell for organising the BBQ and writing the article.**

