

Your opinions

LETTERS

THIS MONTH CYCLING UK KIT, FERRY PROBLEMS, BIKE BAGS, TOURING IRAN, PEDALLING PROBLEMS, CATCHING A THIEF, SOLAR POWER, AND MORE



Left: John Ferguson. Right: Alamy

Cycling UK kit

KITTED OUT

NOTICE CYCLING UK is bringing out some new kit. Now that we have a new name and a new logo, I understand the need for this. As Cycling UK is made up of hundreds of different groups, it would be great if we could fly the flag for Cycling UK but also have our local group emblazoned on the front and back of cycling tops and jerseys.

All this needs is a white strip across the front and back to print the local group's name across. In this age of computerised printing techniques, this cannot be difficult or expensive.

So come on, Cycling UK: let's have some national kit with local groups on. It would be great to be able to see and chat to fellow Cycling UK members who are cycling along and instantly recognise where they are from.

Steve Randerson

Cycling UK kit is indeed in the works – more details next issue. Good news: the new club jersey *has* been designed to accommodate the name of specific Member Groups. A number of groups are already producing their own kit too. Here's that of Two Mills (The Wirral), which has 'Cycling UK' on the front and 'Two Mills The Wirral' on the back. Nice work! Brand guidelines and logos for Member Group kit are on the Cycling UK website. See bit.ly/cyclinguk-brandguidance.

Write to Cycle

EMAIL: cyclinguk@jppublishing.co.uk **POST:** Cycle, PO Box 313, Scarborough, YO12 6WZ.

The star letter wins a **£39.99** Altura Microlite, an ideal just-in-case jacket that's wind and showerproof yet packs down into its own rear pocket.

For more about this ultra-lightweight jacket, which comes in men's and women's designs, go online to altura.eu



ALTURA

BIKE BAG'S CLEAR BENEFITS

The April/May issue had an interesting article on bike bags and boxes. Because Wiggle were out of the Cycling UK plastic bike bag a few years ago, I went to a bed shop and was given a single-bed clear plastic cover. It was brilliant when combined with sticky parcel tape. And it doubled as a ground sheet on the trip. I threw it away when I came home and will get another for my next trip.

Ben Morris

ANOTHER SIDE TO IRAN

What an inspirational article by Charles Stevens and Will Hsu (The Road To Iran, April/May 2017)! It can be a cliché to say 'the people are very friendly', but in the case of Iran I think it is significant. My immediate reaction was that the authors are braver than me. Some might say that was the classic knee-jerk reaction because of what comes across from the



On the Silk Road to Tehran



Some won't take bikes

NOT FERRY PLEASED

My wife and I planned to cycle from St Malo to Nice using the route outlined in the France En Velo book. Brittany Ferries was the obvious choice to get from Portsmouth to St Malo. However, I was unable to book our cycles onto the ferry using their website. I phoned and was told that their policy is 'not to take foot passengers with cycles at the start of the school summer holidays'!

It seems preposterous that cyclists are being denied access in this way. We ended up having to do the route from south to north, which makes following the instructions in the book somewhat difficult!

Eric Marsh

I phoned Brittany Ferries who confirmed that bookings were not taken for foot passengers, with or without cycles, at 'the busiest times'. That seems to mean school holidays and bank holidays, and the Portsmouth-St Malo crossing is the worst affected, being the company's busiest route.

media and misconceptions built up over time. Perhaps I have been influenced by the fact the son of one of my cycling friends was one of the soldiers captured on a boat and held by the Iranian authorities. I have had horrendous reports of his treatment.

Maybe the ordinary Iranians are trying to send a message? I just might go there. The scenery looks spectacular.

John Thompson



TANDEMS IN TANDEM

I took this photo of four cyclists on two tandems while recording the 'Circuit of the Dales' 50-mile tourist trial run by Nelson Wheelers in April. They're riding east from Ribbleshead toward Hawes, with Ingleborough in the background.

Raymond Bracewell

PEDALLING PROBLEMS

I recently underwent left-knee replacement, and although I can cycle pretty well I cannot bend the new knee as much as the original right. Strapped and clip-in pedals are not an option. Consequently, I have to cycle with the arch rather than the ball of my foot resting on the left pedal. This can be dangerous at times as my foot sometimes suddenly slips off the pedal, especially if conditions are wet.

I've raised my saddle as high as I dare, but still have to pedal using my instep. There must be other Cycling UK members who have limited flexibility in one (or even both) of their knees. I really would prefer to cycle with both feet resting 'properly' on



Hase Bike's Special Pedal

the pedals. Does anyone have any advice on how this might be accomplished?

Brian Parry

If you want your knee to bend less as you pedal, try shorter cranks or a swing crank on the left side. See highpath.co.uk for more details. To keep your left foot in place, a Hase Bikes 'Special Pedal' might work. It's £164.03 from Quest88.com see bit.ly/cyclinguk-specialpedals.

Alternatively, if the problem is less severe, you could try flat mountain bike pedals with pins and tacky-soled shoes from the likes of FiveTen.

STOP, THIEF!

My wife and I went out on a Sunday morning training run today and stopped at the local supermarket on the way home for something to eat. We locked the bikes but come out to find them gone. The supermarket security guard basically just shrugged his shoulders. While I was pleading with him to call the police, a police car pulled up – an armed response unit! My wife ran over to them to report the theft.

'We know,' they said. 'A member of the public has just phoned. They witnessed a lad carrying away two bikes and hiding them in a hedge round the corner.'

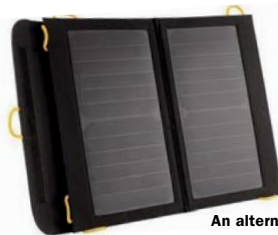
Our bikes and faith in human nature were both recovered within five minutes. The witness was also able to put a name to the thief, who is a known offender so a prosecution is very likely. A happy ending.

Matt Rayner

TAKING CHARGE ON TOUR

Reading the report on hub dynamos, I was reminded of some experimenting I did with a typical hub dynamo as a USB device charger. As an electronics pro, I hoped to improve on the power available. I quickly realised that the dynamo self-regulates, rendering the power to a lamp-set constant and independent of speed, allowing a wide range of useful speed and protecting the bulb from overload. It is this behaviour that limits the power to a measly 3 Watts or so.

My first long bike tour was a



An alternative to a dynamo

OBITUARIES
Are now being published online at cyclinguk.org/obituaries. Send obituaries to publicity@cyclinguk.org. You can include a digital photo if you wish.

camping LEJOG in 2015. I decided on a Levin solar charger as a lighter, more powerful, cheaper and bike-independent source for charging, and combined this with a USB power bank as a cache. The rugged, flexible, folding 'book' panel claims 13W output, has two USB ports, and cost around £40. Mounting on top of my rear pannier load suited my northerly heading. I was able to keep my tablet, lights, smartphone and GPS charged with this system, even with a typical mix of UK 'summer' weather.

Martin Haigh

Join the conversation

CYCLING UK FORUM

Get immediate feedback from other Cycling UK members on the Cycling UK forum: forum.cyclinguk.org. Here's an abridged extract from one recent thread: bit.ly/cyclinguk-bp-v-panniers



BIKEPACKING V PANNIERS

mnichols: Interesting article about the aerodynamic drag of panniers versus bike packing: bit.ly/panniers-v-bikepacking. Thoughts? Generally, I'm happy with my touring bike and panniers, but I've got an upcoming tour with four other people who like to ride fast.

elleithya: Interesting but not sure I would ever consider Option 1 for touring. That bag under the top tube is mostly likely to get in the way of my legs and any down

tube bottles I would carry. Frankly, a few seconds of extra drag is hardly of great importance when touring...

trilathon: For one or two nights I use a Carradice Longflap, which sits behind the thighs and bum, so adding only a little to the frontal area. On a full tour, feats of distance aren't my objective.

pwa: On slow climbs, wind resistance is not a big factor. On descents, a bit of extra drag is helpful because it saves on braking. So the real disadvantage of panniers is on the

flat. And I don't do much touring on the flat because it is boring.

willem jongman: In my experience of riding at lower speeds than 30 km/h, tyres play perhaps the biggest role. My current touring tyres are the new Compass Rat Trap Pass 26x2.1 tyres, and they are the fastest 26 inch tyres I have ever enjoyed.

Bmbibzzz: For me, panniers are convenient, capacious and even comforting; the smell of Carradice Super C is the smell of holidays!

How to contact Cycle



LETTERS are edited for space (if above 150 words), clarity and, if necessary, legality. Please note that if you have specific complaint or query about Cycling UK policy, you should address it to the relevant national office staff member. Letters & emails for the Aug/Sep issue must arrive by 30 June. Write to: cyclinguk@jppublishing.co.uk or **Cycle Letters, PO Box 313, Scarborough, YO12 6WZ**



FACEBOOK
Tell us what you think on Cycling UK's Facebook page: [facebook.com/CyclingUK](https://www.facebook.com/CyclingUK)



TWEET US
Read the latest updates and get in touch on **Twitter** @wearecyclinguk