

'WAG' and The Wag Cup

I was encouraged into cycling in 1982 by good friend and Stourbridge CC stalwart Norman Fenn who insisted on accompanying me to my first club night at Hawbush Community Centre where he introduced me to the officers and to 'Wag' who was obviously a close friend of his.

Wag was standing just inside the door and I immediately warmed to him. He appeared to be quite a large man but his heavy overcoat may have contributed to that impression. However, there was no doubting his charm which was evident in his smile and the way in which everyone seemed to respond so cheerfully to him.

He talked enthusiastically about a mid-week ride through the lanes to Belbroughton and Chaddesley Corbett. He described the beautiful scenery around Clent and told me how much he had enjoyed the warmth of the spring sunshine. I found it fascinating that a man of 70 years could be so exuberant about a bike ride. His love of cycling was certainly contagious.

William Arthur Garnett Onslow was born in 1913 in Netherton. He was a baby when his family moved to Barnt Green near Birmingham where his father was chauffeur to a millionaire and his mother was employed in service at 'the big house.'

Wag lived in the lodge at the bottom of the drive and took every opportunity to explore the surrounding countryside both on foot and on his bicycle. He enjoyed the lanes between his home and Bromsgrove and it was in that Worcestershire town that he struck up a friendship with a group of serious cyclists who spent their Sunday lunchtimes at a favourite pub, swapping stories about their cycling experiences. Wag was fascinated by them and their approach to life, in particular their love of the countryside. He was infected by their enthusiasm and Wag's love of cycling grew out of those Sunday gatherings.

After seventeen years in Barnt Green, his father resigned his post and bought a garage in Lye. Wag did not share his father's interest in cars, he had no time for the Rolls-Royce and the Bentley which his father had driven with such pride and he certainly had no intention of spending his spare time working in the garage. Wag preferred his bicycle.

Cycling became a passion which he shared with those around him. He entertained and stimulated innumerable people with stories of his exploits but never boasted; he was often the butt of his own jokes and people loved him for that.

He and his wife Margorie welcomed everyone with an interest in cycling to their home in Vicarage Road, Lye where they exchanged stories and listened to Wag's precious Louis Armstrong records. Many evenings were spent with groups of friends gathered around the coke fire which Wag

built to enormous heights and which generated such intense heat that visitors often had to excuse themselves and step outside for fresh air or remove their coats and shirts. Wag liked to be warm. Margorie complained loudly about the temperature in the living room but rather than reduce the amount of fuel on the fire, Wag simply adapted the doors so that they could be lifted off their hinges allowing the heat to escape around the house.

Wag and Margorie complemented each other perfectly. He enjoyed the simple things of life such as his pipe, his fire, his music and his bike. She was more flamboyant and extrovert. Together they made an ideal couple and wonderful parents.

Daughter Jo was introduced to cycling at a very early age. Wag built a trailer which he attached to the back of his bike so that he could simultaneously enjoy his regular outings and fulfil the role of devoted father. Jo progressed to a special seat above the rear wheel and, as soon as she was tall enough, to the back seat of a tandem. Some daughters might have resented such forced involvement in their father's passion but Jo remains grateful to him for introducing her to his world and to sharing his friends and experiences.

All three members of the Onslow family raced regularly, often with dad and daughter paired on the tandem. Wag and Margorie progressed to tricycles and were conspicuous in events all around the country, making friends wherever they rode. Wag raced in all events from 10 mile time trials to 24 hour national championships and was particularly successful as a veteran where he set a national record for a 69 year-old. His achievements were attributable more to the thousands of miles which he rode each year rather to any great talent but his love of the sport lasted a lifetime.

His workmates at Morgan's Engineering in Lye appreciated his dedication to the bicycle and regularly asked about his racing results. They knew that the older he became the less likely he was to actually win prizes and so they made him a special cup which they presented to him at his lathe one Monday morning. The cup was carefully designed so that the large handles represented Wag's prominent ears which, they joked, caused a great deal of turbulence and slowed him down.

Wag appreciated the sentiment and enjoyed it as much as those who had made it. He didn't want the cup to simply gather dust on a shelf and so he dedicated it to Stourbridge Cycling Club as a trophy to be presented annually to the club member responsible for the most outrageous or foolhardy act. It is entirely appropriate that the man who was the epitome of impish good humour should be responsible for initiating an award which acknowledges acts of stupidity. It was a perfect fit.

Sadly, Margorie died at the early age of 49 years and Wag passed on in 1986 after a short illness. At his funeral in Stourbridge there were more

people outside the church than could be accommodated inside. Friends from all parts of the country gathered to pay their respects and to celebrate a life which had been filled with fun. We all loved Wag. He was everyone's favourite uncle.

The Wag Cup has been 'won' for some startling acts of stupidity and carelessness. Wag would have appreciated them all. The following few were either winners or strong contenders.

The Suit

A youthful but chubby Brian H was the first winner of the Wag Cup way back in the days when he was a keen racing cyclist. He trained hard with some of the "big hitters" but eventually had to accept that he would be faster if he shed a few stones. He tried dieting but enjoyed his food and drink too much for that strategy to be successful.

One day, when reading his newspaper, the solution jumped off the page and hit him between the eyes. A very attractive and shapely blonde was advertising a new slimming method which involved exercising in a full length, close-fitting plastic suit. The principle was simple enough and appealed to Brian who was keen on exercise of all kinds. He bought a suit and set about his prescribed programme with considerable enthusiasm.

Sweat pored off him in great quantities and lay trapped around his ankles. He overlooked the need to dispose of the sweat in a hygienic way and unfortunately made very large puddles on the carpet. It happened night after night and the puddles grew larger and larger.

The result was not quite as anticipated. Brian shrank. It is true that he lost weight but he also lost height. Those people who meet Brian now would find it difficult to believe that he was once six feet four inches tall.

There was, however, a distinct improvement in his athleticism. His breast stroke improved dramatically.

Careless Talk

It was the morning after a Stourbridge CC 'International Cabaret' in which David F had performed as beautifully as ever. His appearance as Fairy Queen was a triumph of elegant femininity over the crude dramatics of his male colleagues. He was, as ever, the star of the show. The audience reaction justified the many hours of rehearsal and innumerable costume fittings which he relished. Our small group of five chatted about the production in general terms as we rode to Ironbridge for our breakfast.

The cafe was deserted except for a truck driver who was engrossed in his bacon, egg, beans and 'Sunday Sport'. He glanced briefly in our direction as we stripped off our brightly coloured jerseys and swept the morning dew from our cycling tights. We sat at the table next to him and ordered our tea and toast. He continued to scoop beans into his mouth and

allowed some of the tomato sauce to drip onto his chin. Our conversation about the pantomime continued quite naturally from where we had left off.

"You were really good last night," said Roger.

"I'm pleased you think so," replied David. "That was a new dress and it was a little too tight."

"Really, I would never have guessed, it seemed to fit you perfectly," chipped in Jeavo.

"I think it's important to wear the right bra," said David convincingly. "Usually I wear a Playtex but last night I tried a Berlie and it really seemed to hold me firmly."

The truck driver put down his fork and stared blankly at his plate.

"I haven't seen you in those sequinned tights before, were they new?" asked Chris.

"Yes, I bought them from Dorothy Perkins in Wolverhampton," replied David "I buy all my underwear from there. They have such helpful assistants."

The truck driver crumpled his paper, shoved his plate to one side and rushed for the door.

Locked Out

Most cyclists take precautions to ensure that their machines are not stolen which usually involves securing them with a lock when unattended in public places. Grahem B was sure that his heavy duty chain and formidable padlock would deter the most aggressive thief and that he could therefore relax and enjoy a few pints with his mates after club that Friday evening. He may have had more than a few.

On leaving the pub he reached into his pocket for the key to the padlock but there was no key. He searched under the tables and retraced his steps to the men's toilets which he scoured diligently but unsuccessfully. Unfortunately, he became contaminated by the smell which lingers around those places.

His friends could stand it no longer. They attacked the lock with hairpins and screwdrivers but it resisted all their efforts. Eventually, Grahem conceded defeat, lifted the bike and chain onto his shoulder and staggered off down Brettle Lane to cheers and sarcastic advice from road users and pedestrians who gave him a very wide berth. Even the cats and dogs avoided him.

His family waited anxiously at home, convinced that he had suffered a serious accident. He found it difficult to explain that he had simply lost a key.

Red Light

Some cyclists are notorious for the risks they take; others are extremely cautious. Malcolm H would normally fall into the latter category but on one particular Sunday morning training ride he lost his normal self-control and did a rather foolish thing.

His group approached some roadworks which extended for some distance. The road curved around a bend so it was impossible to see what was approaching through the temporary traffic lights which were on red at Malcolm's end. It was a quiet morning with almost no traffic. Malcolm decided that the traffic lights were totally unnecessary and that he could safely ignore them. None of his group followed as he rode through the red light.

Fifty yards further on he was confronted by a police motorcyclist who had quite correctly ridden through the green light at the far end of the roadworks. The other members of the group roared with laughter as Malcolm was stopped by the police officer who proceeded to take his details.

The summons arrived one week later. His dejection at the prospect of a fine gave way to elation when he read that his offence was '...riding a motorcycle contrary to mandatory roadsigns.' Malcolm had never owned a motorcycle. The summons was, he believed, invalid. He decided to contest it in court and was confident of the outcome. All his 'friends' encouraged him to take on the British judicial system and that they would give him their total support.

On the day of his court appearance all his 'friends' realised that they had other things to do and so Malcolm went to the court alone. He entered a side room where there were three other defendants waiting to be called. They were not like Malcolm. They wore studded black leather jackets and dirty jeans torn at the knees. Their greasy black hair hung on their shoulders and they smoked untipped cigarettes. They did not appear to know each other.

"What yer in for?" said one leather jacket to another.

"Robbin' a bank and a bit o' GBH," came the reply.

The third leather jacket was asked the same question.

"Assault, I stuck a bloke with a glass. Deserved it. Wouldn't get out of me way. I'd just mugged this old lady in the pub and was on me way out."

Malcolm eased himself into a corner. He felt conspicuous in his Marks and Spencer's suit. But it was impossible to hide. He felt all six eyes turn towards him and eventually a jacket asked, "What you done?"

Malcolm blushed and sat up straight. He gulped and then replied in a rather high-pitched voice, "I rode through red traffic lights."

His statement had surprisingly little impact. All three jackets just accepted it. Malcolm was visibly relieved.

After a few moments one of the jackets turned to him again and said, "What yer got, Honda, Kwaka, Suzuki, Harley?"

Malcolm hesitated slightly and then replied in an even higher pitch, "Well, no actually, it's a Raleigh...you know, a pedal cycle."

The faces above the jackets looked at him incredulously. "A what, a bloody Raleigh? Bloody 'ell, we've got a nutter 'ere," said one of the faces.

Malcolm was relieved to be called into court where the Clerk read out the summons and asked him if he agreed with the charge. "Well, yes and no," replied our hero.

"What do you mean, yes and no?" enquired the Chief Magistrate.

"Well, yes, I rode through red traffic lights but ..." Malcolm paused to add extra impact to his coup de grace. He stuck out his chest and declared, "I do not own a motorcycle, I was riding my bicycle!" he exclaimed in triumph.

"Stop wasting the court's time. Fined £50. Next case," grumbled the Magistrate.

Malcolm stood transfixed at the bench, stunned by the speed of his conviction and by the way in which his carefully worked out defence had been totally ignored. He was ushered from the court and as he stumbled through the waiting room one of the jackets turned and sneered "What they give yer, life?"

The Kiss

Bob F earned the Wag Cup for a perfectly innocent act and indeed there is an argument that those who participated with him deserved it more than he. It was a warm, sunny day in the Cotswolds. Zab and other members of his group had enjoyed a delightful morning ride through some magnificent countryside and had stopped for lunch at a cosy village pub. Zab enjoyed his few pints and then strolled off with his bicycle to a nearby grassy knoll for a short nap. He found a comfortable spot next to a milestone and settled down for a peaceful rest. He was tired and swiftly fell into a deep sleep.

A short while later, a group of French tourists approached the grassy knoll on their way to the pub. One of the older, less attractive female members saw Zab with his head resting against the stone and immediately came to the conclusion that this poor cyclist had suffered a severe accident and had knocked himself unconscious. She rushed to his side and pressed her lips against his in a rather crude attempt at mouth to mouth resuscitation. It worked. Zab 'recovered' immediately and shook violently as he tried to extricate himself from this overwhelming woman who was doing strange things to him.

"Leave me alone, you daft Frog!" called out Zab. "I don't need your stupid help!" He shook her off and jumped to his feet.

He then noticed that there were several younger, prettier girls in the party. "Mind you, I do feel feint, perhaps some of you others might care to blow a little oxygen into my lungs," he offered hopefully.

The girls studied his eager face with its staring eyes and brushed past him into the pub.

Hanging Around

France features in several Wag Cup triumphs. One such award was presented to John H for an amazing act of foolishness which quite incidentally resulted in a fine French restaurant being struck off the Michelin guide. It is impossible to give a true account of the incident because it happened late at night when all the participants were drunk.

It seems that a group of Stourbridge cyclists were enjoying a long weekend in Brittany. They had ridden all day through attractive, rolling countryside. In the early evening they booked into a comfortable hotel which boasted an excellent menu in its restaurant which was popular with the more aristocratic and discerning members of French society in that region. It was certainly too expensive for our cyclists and so, after a few beers in the bar and a brief discussion with the head waiter who obtained a promise from them that they would return quietly so as not to disturb the diners, they wandered off into town to find a more suitable eating place.

There were several restaurants from which to choose and eventually they settled into a very hospitable and relatively cheap establishment where the strong local wine flowed freely throughout the meal. Our cyclists enjoyed excellent food but perhaps ordered a few too many bottles of red.

It was approaching 11.00 pm when they staggered quietly towards their hotel only to find that the front door was locked and no-one in the party had thought to bring a key. It was obvious that the restaurant was still busy but the blinds had been drawn to ensure the privacy of the diners. There followed a brief debate about whether or not to beat on the door to attract the head waiter but this was ruled out on the grounds of their

earlier promise. But what else could they do? There was no other entrance.

John noticed that his bedroom was immediately above the front door and that he had left his window open. There was a drainpipe up the side of the hotel and he reckoned that he could climb up the pipe, traverse a narrow ledge across the front of the building to his bedroom and then let the others in through the front door. Easy.

He skilfully shinned up the drainpipe until he could stand on the narrow ledge. His party whispered encouragement as he began to inch his way along towards his bedroom. But suddenly there was a loud snap as part of the ledge broke beneath him. John slid rapidly towards the pavement but just managed to grab a solid part of the ledge to be left suspended in mid air immediately in front of the window into the restaurant.

John's colleagues tried to rescue him by reaching up and grabbing at his legs. All they managed to do was pull off both of his shoes and, to muffled guffaws, his trousers and underpants. They realised that they could do nothing more to help and so ran off giggling to the shelter of a nearby bar.

The head waiter was aware of a slight disturbance and pulled the blinds open to investigate. He and the thirty or more diners were treated to the sight of the lower part of John's naked body as it swung gently backwards and forwards in the moonlight. The diners gasped in unison and moved their sausages to the sides of their plates.

Some excellent meals were left half eaten that night and our party was told to visit some other part of Europe in the future; preferably Poland.

The Horse

John D was involved in a weekend trip to France which included an overnight stop at a medium-sized provincial town where, it was claimed, Napoleon's favourite horse had been sired. The mighty steed carried the Emperor into many battles and the town erected a magnificent life-sized statue to it in the centre of the square. The stone horse stood on top of a dais and was quite an impressive sight.

John and his party enjoyed their evening meal. They lingered over the cheese and ordered even more wine which they drank slowly and appreciatively. Then they ordered a few more. It was late when they sauntered into the town square. John was feeling frisky and cast a glance at the statue. "I could ride that," he boasted.

"You couldn't even mount it," replied a tipsy friend.

"Course I could," John responded as he clambered onto the five-foot high dais. No-one in the party knew that John had been a dedicated rock climber before turning to cycling and he found it relatively easy to scale

the statue. He swung a leg over the horse's hind quarters and sat proudly high on its back. "High ho Silv..." His triumphant shout was cut short as he sighted two agent de police who were enjoying a crafty cigarette hidden out of sight on the far side of the statue. They stared angrily at this stupid Englishman who had not only disturbed their smoke but who showed no respect for their beloved horse.

The rest of the party disappeared in a flash and John was left conspicuously alone on top of his horse. Slowly and carefully he slid to the ground right into the arms of the police who took their time in questioning him and pointing out his childish behaviour. John agreed with every word they said and promised in future to treat the town with respect. He also promised never to return.

Once bitten?

John is one of the few people to win the Wag Cup on two occasions. The second time was in recognition of his tenacity and determination which resulted in a rather painful and unexpected outcome.

He rode his bike to work almost every day and one evening was approaching Gornal when he suddenly felt a searing pain in his right thigh. His hand flew to the spot and an airgun pellet lodged in his palm.

Despite the excruciating pain he was able to look back and see two scruffy young urchins dashing away around a corner. John immediately swung his bike round and chased after them. He pedalled like fury and was only a few yards away from them when they darted up a garden path and into a house. They slammed the door shut but John knew that he had them cornered.

He prised open the letterbox and shouted through it, "I'll wait out here all night if I have to but I can tell you now than I'm going to tan your backsides and tell the police." He had just enough time to finish his sentence before the door swung open and a vicious mongrel sprang at him and buried its teeth in the most sensitive part of his groin. The animal hung onto its prey, snarling angrily as John tried to shake it off. He could feel the dog's teeth penetrating his skin and threatening his manhood. He screamed for help. His prayers were answered by the scruffy urchins who reappeared at the door and dragged the dog away.

"Don't mess about with us in future," they threatened. John promised them that he would be a good boy and offered to let them shoot at him anytime they wished.

Holly Run.

The last Sunday before Christmas was a special day when lots of club members met at the old Stourbridge Library and rode off in groups to meet at noon in a pub usually around Belbroughton. It is a time to forget problems and worries; the aim is to have an enjoyable ride surrounded by one's friends and to conclude the morning with a good chat over lunch in

convivial surroundings. Occasionally, one or two members drank rather more than usual and had some difficulty finding their way home.

One year, Tony E fell into that trap. All his friends turned up at the pub and insisted on buying him drinks. He was too polite to refuse and supped far more than his body could cope with. It was well after three o'clock when he left for home. He managed to ride as far as Hagley but the task of negotiating the island was too great for his feeble brain and he wobbled off into a patch of mud at the side of the road. One of his friends was close behind but in no condition to help him. This 'friend' did however manage to reach home in Norton and telephoned Tony's wife, to tell her that her husband would be home a little later than promised.

Tony arrived home at dusk. He was met at the front door by wife who demanded a full account. "I've just been out for a ride with my mates," he said unconvincingly.

"You've drunk too much and fallen off, haven't you?" scolded wife.

"No I haven't," replied Tony, "And anyway, who told you?"

She was not amused and sent him upstairs to change.

Tony woke next morning with a serious hangover. His head hurt and his eyes refused to focus. He stumbled into the kitchen and fumbled his way through the cupboards to find some medication. Fortunately, there were some Beecham's Powders which was unusual in his house because wife tended to buy Paracetamol for herself and Neurofen for him. However, he was in no condition to search any further and emptied two of the powders into a glass of water and drank it down in one gulp. He took the remaining powders with him for later in the day.

That evening, wife was in a rather agitated mood. Nothing had gone right that day. She had not been able to buy all her Christmas presents and some household items had disappeared. She wanted to feed their dogs and give them their prescribed tonics. She entered the lounge where Tony, who was not at all well, was slumped in a chair. "Tony, have you seen those Bob Martin powders we bought from the vet.," she asked.

Tony looked up and winced.

Canal

One of the attractions of cycling is the variety which can be planned into routes. Country lanes are marvellous especially when interspersed with some short sections of 'off road' such as bridle ways and canal towpaths. There are, however, some hazards; tracks can be muddy; twigs and thorns can play havoc with tyres; canal towpaths can be slippery.

Graham F was enjoying his tour of North Wales but, when his group turned off the main road onto the path alongside the Llangollen canal, he

was entering dangerous territory. No one actually saw him fall into the canal and no-one, certainly not Graham, can explain why it happened. He stood waist high in the middle of the canal, cursing and swearing as any reasonable person would. He managed to paddle to the bank where his colleagues stopped laughing long enough to drag him out. With much muttering and complaining about stupid Welsh towpaths, he took off his wet clothes before realising that all his possessions were in his panniers attached to the bike which was still in the canal. Undaunted, he leapt naked into the water and felt around for his machine.

He had to concentrate so hard that he did not notice the rest of his party had bundled up his clothes and sped off towards Wrexham. Eventually, Graham found his bike and held it aloft in triumph. He turned to see an elderly couple staring at him in disbelief. What could this naked foreigner possibly be doing in their canal? Was he perhaps an insane scrap metal dealer or someone rehearsing for a new version of 'King Arthur'? Better phone the police.

The Garage

What fascinates me about this next Wag Cup award is why anyone other than the two participants should know about it. All the above awards went to people who were surrounded by fellow-cyclists and so were impossible to keep secret. This next one, which is without any doubt my favourite, could so easily have remained a secret but it raises the question about what else might happen behind closed doors!

Pat M was having serious problems around his groin. After almost every event he was in pain from skin being rubbed from the top of his thighs and from even more sensitive places. He took advice and changed his shorts; he even used different creams but nothing seemed to work. Skin still rubbed off and left him raw and bleeding. He finally decided that the problem had to relate to his genitals and how they hung against the saddle.

He waited until his guests had left and then told wife, that he was going upstairs to undress and that he wanted her to follow him into the garage. She considered his request for a moment and then said quietly to herself, "Why not." She knew that other people led fairly adventurous lives.

Pat crept downstairs wearing nothing but his Sidi cycling shoes and an old Macintosh. He opened the front door and dashed around into the garage where wife was waiting with the door held open wide. She hurriedly closed it behind him and then looked around to see what other preparations he had made. His bicycle stood firmly mounted to the turbo trainer in the centre of the floor. "I want you to help me with my position," Pat whispered.

"Nothing unusual in that," thought wife.

"I want you to tell me how they look from different sides," said Pat. "You may have to kneel down to do it properly. I need to know which way looks best."

Pat threw off his mac, jumped naked up onto the saddle and proceeded to spin the pedals at an amazing speed. He wrestled with the handlebars until the veins stood out on his arms. He grimaced in pain as his heart rate shot up to two hundred. He clamped his eyes shut and turned his face up to the ceiling as his body shook uncontrollably with the mighty effort.. "Which way are they hanging now?" shrieked Pat. "Are they rubbing against the saddle? Is there more room for them on the other side?"

"God help me," sighed wife and left him to it.

Straps

As we left the cafe after our obligatory Sunday morning breakfast, I couldn't help but notice that Roger A had taken on a strangely oriental appearance. He looked well enough but his eyes were pulled tight and squeezed at the edges. We rode on for a few miles and he chatted away quite normally but I was intrigued by the subtle change. I glanced repeatedly in his direction to try and determine if it was his eyes that were abnormal or was it mine?

Eventually we stopped to repair a puncture and other members of our group looked quizzically at him. He simply grinned in a Chinese fashion and carried on with his conversation.

Suddenly I saw the problem. He was unwittingly wearing his helmet backwards.

Too Early

Ian C is the archetypal absent-minded professor. He is undoubtedly a very clever person but he is not street-wise. He enjoys social events but sometimes makes mistakes on important details. He did, for example, buy a ticket for the 1989 Annual Club Presentation to be held at the Pedmore House Hotel.

He was at that time living in Coventry and thought nothing of donning his dinner suit and cycling to Coventry station to catch a train to Birmingham New Street. So far so good. The Inter-city was somewhat late and he had to pedal quite hard along the Halesowen bypass and up Hagley Hill to arrive at the hotel on time. His dress shirt was slightly sweat-stained and his glasses were misted up but at least he was not late. It was eight o'clock on Friday 24th November and he looked forward to a decent meal and a dance with Isabel. But the dinner was on Saturday 25th.

Mary! Mary!

Mary D is a careful, courteous person who would not harm a fly. She does, however, get ratty when she is out on her tandem and is interefered

with by motorists who come too close or by pedestrians who step out in front of her. Her language can be rather strong for such a nice woman.

When she left Safeways in Sedgley with two very heavy plastic bags, she was worried that the gin bottles might be too heavy for the plastic. Her mind was naturally occupied by the consequences of dropping the gin as she stepped off the pavement into the oncoming cyclist. There was an almighty crash as the cyclist fell heavily onto his shoulder and broke his collar bone.

They were taken to hospital in the same ambulance. Mary tried to be brave but the pain from her broken arm was quite considerable. She also had to endure the cyclist's anger at being knocked off his bike by an absent minded pedestrian who obviously could not care less about proper road users. Mary hid her shame and nursed her arm. Poor Mary. How embarrassing

A Quickie to Finish

Pat A is a lovely, thoughtful, hard working woman who makes a major contribution to Stourbridge Cycling Club. She organised refreshments for competitors and marshals at every open event sponsored by the club. The quality of food and efficiency of service at 'Pat's Pantry' is legendary. However, occasionally, just occasionally, she would like to be acknowledged as a woman and not merely as a cyclist and cornerstone of our organisation.

For example, on her fortieth birthday she had hoped for perhaps a small bottle of Chanel or Yves St. Laurent from husband. What she actually received was a mileometre which he obligingly fixed to her front wheel. Hiding the obvious disappointment behind a thin smile, she set off on a ride around Enville to test the present. Imagine her surprise when she found that she had covered 971 miles in two hours! Husband had fitted the striker below the counter instead of above it and so the dial was spinning backwards. Easily done. Any imbecile could have made the mistake. Poor Pat. She deserves better.

Tony Taylor
Stourbridge CC
1995