



the Signpost

the magazine of Derby Mercury RC

DERBY
MERCURY

June 2012

Committee Members

Chairman	Jim Crew	01332 231451 crewfamily@ntlworld.com
Vice Chairman	Post Vacant	
Treasurer and Membership Secretary	Avice Sleath	01773 852800 avice.sleath@btinternet.com
Secretary and Mountain Bike Secretary	Dave Banks	01332 383099 dave.banks51@ntlworld.com
Social Secretary	Bette Wilkins	01332 661613
Time Trial Secretary	Mark Gray	07889 522482 marktgray@live.co.uk
Road Race Secretary	Tom Butcher	01332 747449 tom.e.butcher@ntlworld.com
Junior Rep	Harry Crew	01332 231451 crewfamily@ntlworld.com
Touring Secretary	Pete Turner	01332 661339 p_turner@talktalk.net
Cyclo Cross Secretary	Matt Crouch	01332 545170 moo.crouch@hotmail.co.uk
Magazine Editor	Roland Sutton	01332 813792 roland@suttonuk.com
Press Officer and Webmaster	Jon O'Brien	07950 710716 jondobrien@gmail.com
Clothing Secretary	Jon Anglesea	john.anglesea@gmail.com
Club Coach	Mark Gray	
Co-opted	Dave Luscombe, Rob Slater, Richard Hunt	

Editorial

Well it's been a long haul getting the latest issue to the "press", the combination of rather splendid weather that was just calling out to be ridden in, a job change that required a load of administrative work, but with a regular cycle commute and a week long family holiday thrown in for good measure. So hectic in a word. However the upside is a twice a day pleasant commute in beside the Derwent into Derby.

This issue, for your delight and delectation, we have a wide range of articles. John Anglesea is sharing his favorite cycling related web sites or where he spends his time when not on his bike. There's an article about the danger of trialling new equipment while racing and also a write of a first MTB race. We've got two write-ups about the Mercury PedalPowerMeter.com road race that Tom Butcher organized, it's nice to get two views on the same race, fortunately the two correspondents agreed on the details. Finally to get your interest for the next issue we'll have Pete Turners musings on why he (and possibly many other riders) do long distance rides and what they think about to get them through them, which is probably thinking about why you're doing them the key thing is that it will be appearing in the Signpost to save those of us without that particular hankering the trouble of 5-600km to contemplate it ourselves.

A special mention must go to John Anglesea who as well as being heavily involved in organizing a number of local road races he's also been producing articles for magazine. On that note if you do find yourself getting bored with mine and John's ramblings then both of us are almost completely certain that you can indeed do better so give it a go and put pen to paper on something vaguely related to cycling and there's a place waiting for it in the signpost. If however, writing is not your thing then I'll always welcome images to use as a front cover, my supply of cover images does not overfloweth

So without further ado I shall leave you to this issue, so enjoy and I leave you with the hope that at least a few of you will be inspired to put pen to paper and right something for the next edition that will be coming along at the end of the summer.

Happy Reading

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Roland". The script is cursive and fluid, with the 'R' being particularly large and stylized.

Roland

John's top cycling blogs:

For those not 'in the know', a blog (a portmanteau of the term web log) is a personal journal published on the Internet consisting of discrete entries or 'posts'. These can vary in style from diary-like to similar to magazine content depending on the content of the blog and the author's style. Most of these blogs discussed here relate to the professional cycling scene, although most of them also include articles of general cycling interest.



The Inner Ring

inrng.com

Without doubt the best blog on Pro cycling on the internet. I don't think anyone knows who actually writes the blog, he has certainly never given it away in any of the time I have been reading it. The blog mainly consists of news articles (he seems to be in the know about lots of things and is sometimes the first to release a piece of news or a rumour that turns out to be true) race previews and race results and analysis but also covers a lot of subjects related to the 'culture' and also the politics of the increasingly global sport of Pro cycling.



Cycling Info UK

cyclinginfo.co.uk

This is a slightly 'quirky' blog written by UK hill-climb and TT specialist Tejvan Pettinger. He covers a wide variety of topics from cycling advocacy and issues such as cycle lanes (he commutes regularly) to Pro racing. A significant part of the blog is devoted to Tejvan sharing his

training techniques and what riding he has been doing. It is interesting to see what a high level amateur does and how he copes with injuries and illness. Try and ignore his appalling grammar and spelling!



Velominati

www.velominati.com

This blog is written by the self-titled Keepers of the Cog, at the heart of which are 'The Rules' that must be obeyed in order to be a member of the 'Velominati'. The articles are written by a variety of writers but they and they are mostly either reminiscences of moments in cycling history or reverential articles about a particular piece of equipment, clothing or great riders from cycling history. Quite entertaining though and worth a read.



Red Kite Prayer

redkiteprayer.com

Red Kite Prayer grew out of one of my previous favourite websites, Belgium Knee Warmers. RKP is similar in style to Velominati in some ways. Well written articles mostly relating to Pro cycling and the Classics in particular.



Irish Peloton

www.irishpeloton.com

This is a blog written by Cillian Kelly who comments on the pro cycling scene with a

particular bias towards articles about Irish racers such as Nicolas Roche, Dan Martin and Philip Deignan. Like many internet bloggers, Cillian is an aspiring cycling journalist and writes this blog as an advert for his skills. I enjoy his style and particular focus on Irish and other UK riders. He also produces an excellent Podcast* called 'This Week in Cycling History' with another Podcaster, John Galloway. I hope to cover the world of cycling podcasts in a future article so look out for that.

Cyclocosm

cyclocosm.com

This is an American blog written by Cosmo. I only really 'read' this blog for the 'How the Race



Was Won' videos which are superb. Essentially they are an often humorous account using edited together TV footage of how a recent big race was won, for example the recent classics have been covered. There was a bit of a hiatus in coverage but 'Cosmo' seems to have been prodded into doing them again after someone 'stole' his idea and started producing very similar (although inferior) videos.

King Me

bicycling.com/blogs/kingme

This is American pro cyclist Ted King's personal blog. Ted is one of the new breed of pro cyclists who are very new-media savvy and has done a very good job of creating his own 'brand' based around twitter (@iamtedking) and www.iamtedking.com. He has a much higher



profile than he otherwise would have as essentially a domestique on the Liquigas-Cannondale team. It helps that he is American and spends a lot of time doing charity work. He

is an excellent writer and his blog posts are usually thoughtful and provide a great insight into the life of a pro in the professional peloton. His viewpoint is even more interesting as he is an 'outsider' American on a very traditional Italian team.

The Road to Cat 1



Road to Cat 1

theroadtocat1.com

This is a blog written by American amateur racer Russell Harding who after cycling in college has come back to road racing. His blog (formerly known as the Road to Cat 2) documents and charts his progress through the ranks of amateur cycling (he actually attained Cat 1 status last season). As an (very) amateur racer myself, this blog is absolutely fascinating, particularly if you are interested in training with power, in that Russell documents all of his training including what type of rides he is doing, whether he is having an easy week etc. in relation to what races he has coming up. He also discusses his performance in races in great detail, often referring to the power data he collected during the race and talks about the tactics he uses in detail and what he could have done differently which is fascinating. Highly recommended for racers. As well as articles on specific races and the training he is doing, he also covers racing techniques and tactics in great detail such as riding in a 'paceline' and how to pace time trials to give just two examples.



Holly's British Cycling Blog

britishcyclingblog.tumblr.com

Holly Blades has started a new blog reporting on the ins and outs of the domestic road racing scene.



bikesnobnyc.blogspot.co.uk

This is probably my favourite non-pro cycling related blog (although if something particularly noteworthy happens in the sport then Bike Snob will often comment on it). The Bike Snob lives in Brooklyn and is a former bike messenger, commutes daily in New York and also races. Whilst he does write about cycling in New

York, it is always in the context of issues that could happen anywhere. From an online review of one of the Bike Snobs two books, "the author lampoons the missteps, pretensions, and absurdities of bike culture while maintaining a contagious enthusiasm for cycling itself". That pretty much sums up the blog and it's usually very funny, although you may need to read it a while to get the "in jokes".

* For those not familiar with the term, a Podcast is a type of 'new media' production (often released weekly or monthly) analogous to a radio show broadcast but distributed in the form of an audio file designed to be played on a mobile mp3 player or smartphone.

My First Mountain Bike Race by Roland Sutton aged 40 1/4

After an "improvers" 'cross season it was obvious that racing through the season to improve form worked to an extent but they key was to arrive at the start of the next season with better form & fitness which meant ensuring some quality training over the off season and as far as I can see as well as intervals which can be tedious some other form of racing in the off season would be a good way of getting some intensity in my riding (I have no coaching qualifications or have ever recieved any coaching advice so this is just my thoughts so probably best ignored). That gave me the options of Road or Mountain bike and as the mountain biking would help with off road skills that seemed like the one to choose. The first hurdle was the lack of bike but that's not for here but it did keep me away from the first couple of rounds of the Midlands XC series. However once it was altogether and it'd be test ridden to reduce the chances an embarassing mid race incompetant assembly equipment failure happening the Midlands XC Round 3 at Birchall nr. Chesterfield entries were open. So with a little trepidation I filled in the web form for my first mountain bike race outing and added a date to the diary.

Turned up the venue a little on the late side for the 10:30 start considering that I needed to do a

sighting lap of the course - thought that I'd better know what the "A" line options were rather than having to make a split decision at race speed when I arrived on lap one. However with no idea how long the lap would take it was a bit of a risk - any way set off up the climb with 6K of lap in front of me, lap was big long steep, wet climb, then single track through woods still up hill but nice and twisty then there was a good bit of downhill with 3 "A" line options - nothing too bad on this course so I took them all, then a granny ring ascent before some more single track down hill with drops and a set of dirt jumps to get over - they were a royal pain in the rear since they were throwing you all over the place, throw in a few logs to lift the the front wheel over and a good smattering of roots and a couple of steep banks that made sense (to me at least) to run up and it was good riding. The lap then finished with some fire road back to the arena and onto the start line just as they were calling up the riders 5 mins before the start - phew! time for a gel, banana and drink before the wonder that is the zip off Zepnat tights and I was ready to go.

The Race

Got a reasonable start, the first hill was a bit of a shock but there wasn't a lot of moving to be done as it was hold your position, single file and

try and conserve energy. Pete T caught us up as we went into (the Super Vets had started 1 minute behind us and Pete Likes Hills :-)) I let him past and then followed him through the single track - one of the highlights of the day was getting to see him run in to a tree :-) and he inched away from me as we approached the top of the hill, still it was good to follow a stronger rider to see what they were up to - although I don't think that Pete (by his own admission) gives a very good example of how to ride the technical stuff. Anyway had a good lap - over took a few people and was over taken by a couple, the gist of it seems to be once you get onto the single track or down hill its almost impossible to change position so the best you can hope for is to have a clear run through the section an possibly catch up the next group. What my recce lap didn't show was that there was a finishing loop round a wet and muddy field at the end of each lap that pretty much rendered you stationary and an elegant walking pace past the start finish line and feed zone.

Lap 2 More of the same although caught a few riders up the big draggy hill.

Lap 3 decided that it was time to dig in and make some ground up on the hill - got past 4 riders, but with 26 minute laps the legs must have been on the wane, lost concentration a few times, nothing major but on one the a lines I braked too hard and the bike went a bit sideways and I bailed. - not helpfull. The result was that I ended up running for 50 more metres than I needed to (I would have run up a bank shortly afterwards anyway) but then got back on at for the granny ring climb and the legs had gone - oops - frantically downed a gel but I knew that would take a while to kick in so the 4 people who I'd over taken on the climb and then gapped as well came back past me and I just couldn't stay with them so it was a case of damage limitation.

Lap 4, took a swig of energy drink from my dad as I went through the feed zone and then it was the climb for the final time. As I went up the ascent I just had to dig and hope the wobbly legs recovered which they did a bit but I seemed to be noticeably slower - a race that was twice the length of a cross race had unsurprisingly found me out :-) I did start to feel a little better and was catching lapped riders from the other

categories that were racing but I couldn't bridge up to the group in front of me but I was generally feeling better and dug in till the end but was struggling.

To summarise, I loved it, would have got there earlier to not have to rush round my sighting lap, would in future have a gel each lap as I left it way too late, having it when my legs had gone was the wrong time but just need to get some longer rides in so 2hrs isn't a complete shock to the system. Finished 39 out of 60odd in my age group (was about 10 mins slower than Pete T who got 4th in his category which I was pleased with) so for a first go having done no training after my cold I was very pleased. Add to that, the fact that I'd not really ridden a mountain bike for the last 10-15 years so I was a little rusty but didn't feel out of my depth even on a fully rigid bike. So I'll be doing more, although unfortunately not the next one in the series as there's a family racing date clash and Sarah is doing a 10k that day but will be finding more to do as it's good fun (not as good as 'cross though :-))

Fools Rush in Where Wise Men Fear to Tread

Roland Sutton

After a reasonably successful rookie cross season where I'd got to grips with my equipment, bike handling and racing skills an idle summer and the arrival of a new member of the household meant that there was less time on the bike and more time than is healthy tinkering with equipment. I decided that for the approaching season that I needed to mix things up a bit in a search for higher placings and a larger helping of mid league glory.

Everything that I had read suggested that in 'cross tyres and in particular the pressure that you run them at were the critical performance decider especially when the mud starts to get autumnal. Further research suggested that the conventional wisdom was that tubular tyres were the "champions choice" however it quickly became apparent that in order to fund this I

might have to sell my children into slavery and this didn't seem like a good idea, however further reading suggested a glimmer of hope on the horizon, the mountain bike world was embracing tubeless "technology". Running tyres tubeless is said to have the advantages of lighter weight, increased resistance to snake bit pinch flats (and hence the ability to run at lower pressures) and improved ride. All of these benefits are right in line with the advantage of tubulars for cross so my interest was truly piqued. Furthermore companies like Stan's NoTubes had started producing cyclocross conversion kits to in theory allow you run any standard road clincher rims without tubes using any tyre . This meant that it would be possible to run 'cross tyres tubeless. In a flash this seemed ideal, all the benefits non of the expense what could go wrong?

A plan was hatched that would have me on the start lines of the following season's Notts & Derby cross races with a smug grin due to the fact that my wheels were shod with the latest secret weapon in tyres, such was my confidence it was tantamount to technical doping. Needless to say it was slightly curious there weren't more success stories on the web but I assumed that a) it was a relatively new innovation and b) all of the early adopters were so overjoyed with their new found tyre systems that they were out enjoying plush feeling puncture free rides at every opportunity and so didn't have the time to sit at the computer and write about the experience. As luck would have it, I found a very reasonable priced conversion kit on Ebay and eagerly awaited their arrival.

When the kit arrived I received two rims strips, a bottle of sealant and instructions to go and watch a load of instructional videos on YouTube. This I duly did, so armed with the knowledge the the tricky bit was to get the tyres to inflate to seat the bead but after that it would be plain sailing. So with my hardware choice being Shimano RS10 wheels and Michelin Mud II tyres I enthusiastically started the job. It turns out that to get to "plain sailing" might be easy if you own a compressor but with a track pump it is most definitely not. The two key things that I learnt in my fortnight's journey of discovery were a) removing the valve core will definitely help getting air into the tire and b) when you think

you have used enough soapy water use more as you almost certainly haven't used enough. At the end of this process I had managed to get both tires seated on the rim and had a bad case of washer womans fingers.

Once the beads are seated, add the sealant and then do the tubeless "shake and vac" dance to seal up the micro-holes in the tyre casing. So after a number of hours of shake, lie flat (the tire not me) apply soap and water, watch for bubbles repeat ad nauseum until a level of air tightness has been achieved. After a night inflated I was like a small child at Christmas running down stairs to see santa had been but I had the more important goal of catching a rare glimpse of the inflated tire. Next I had to ride them and it was with a few nerves that I set out to hit a few of the local bridleways. After 10 or so miles and a few bumps they seemed to be holding air and all was good and ready for the fast approaching first race of the season.

Bad Experience #1 Shipley Park

A reasonable start from Box 2 got me away nicely and for the majority of the lap no problem, however in the woods at the top of the course while going over the rooty bits a was hear a few "vrrrrrrrrp" noises from the rear tyre, hmmm. Now I'd heard that tubeless tyres can "burp" if the hit a bump causing them to deflate - hmmm now that would be a bad thing, at that stage, I didn't have spare wheels so my only option was to try and reserve the remain 30psi for the remainder of the race. There were probably 4 laps left and every time i hit something I got the "vrrrrrrrrrrp" sound and the handling got correspondingly sketchy. For the rest of the laps things got steadily worse till I crossed the start finish line for the bell lap and "vrrppppppp" there was last gasp from the tyre and then it rolled off the rim, giving the announcer a worthy event to mention. Now I could have dropped out but I had no intention of having a DNF for the first race of the season so there was no option but to run the lap so with an energetic bounce in my step it was off on my lap (primarily to get out of sight of the announcer) I received words of encouragement from a couple of Mercs as a steady stream of riders passed me. However my fairy god mother took pity and

the lovely Mr Crew instructed Harry to give me his spare wheel. With a bit of effort the 9 speed wheel was shoe horned into my 10-speed setup and once I'd located a gear that would work, and rode the half a lap to the end. This gave me plenty of time to contemplate the failure that had wrecked my race. That evening I cleaned and resealed the tyre with little problem and it held air no problem.

The next two races at Allestree and Belper passed with barely more incident than a couple of burps at Belper again in the rooty wood section at the top of the course.

Bad Experience #2 Bramcote

Bramcote is one of my favorite cross courses due to the elevation changes and tough nature of the course. Got a reasonable start, half way round the first lap the course crossed a small innocuous kerb and "vrrrrrrrrrrrrp", didn't sound good and sure enough it wasn't by about 200m later flat rear tyre, well it's only half a lap to the pits and by now I had spare wheels waiting there for me so with an enthusiastic bounce I set off running being passed by a lot of people and finding myself somewhere near the back changed the wheel (the smart rider would have changed both!) So now with two air filled tyres, I set off in pursuit of the few riders I could see heading up the hill, I caught a couple on the hill but I could feel the running in my legs so I wasn't exactly feeling good. As I went round the lap the front did feel a bit squishy and maybe was losing air however as I came out of the woods on a loose gravelly turn the front tyre unceremoniously removed itself from the rim depositing me ungracefully to the floor, I few choice expletives and the realisation that there were a) spectators watching and b) they included my parents & my wife and two young boys, oops so after some grovelling apologies a fuming cross race set off once more to run the half a lap to the pits. I changed the front but by now my race was pretty much done and it was really only the desire to avoid a DNF that kept me going. So a very grumpy racer finished the race fortunately my kids were there to greet me so that soon perked me up.

After that tubeless and I have had a trial separation, urged on by Sarah (my wife) who

persuaded me to stop the silliness, put the tubes back in a just race. And that's what I've been doing since then. The rim strips haven't gone to waste as they're being used in my 29er mountain bike with not so much of a hint of a burp so far. For the coming cross season, maybe I've slipped into the equipment comfort zone or perhaps I'm just creating material for magazine articles but I've built myself two sets of tubular wheels and I'll be running tubs for the season, fingers crossed this is indeed tried and tested and will give a long and successful season of cross racing. Watch this space for an update in the near future on adventures in wheel building a tub gluing.

Race report - pedalpowermeters.com road race, 18th March 2012

John Anglesea

3/4 category on the Hanbury Circuit,
Staffordshire

Mercury riders: John Anglesea, Jerry Clark,
Steve Donald, Stephen Price, Rob Slater

It was bitterly cold, although thankfully the snow storm and rain had passed over by the start of the race at 10am. Waiting behind the lead cars to head out into the neutralised lane that would take us to the course proper, I found myself next to Mark Lovatt. I asked him if he was making a comeback this season to which he replied that he was just keeping his hand in. I wished him good luck but thought that he probably wouldn't need it, being a former winner of many Premier Calendar races.

We headed down the neutralised lane from the HQ, thankfully no punctures this time, behind the lead cars and turned left onto the course. In my opinion the flag was dropped a bit early as I wasn't at the back of the bunch and I was still in the middle of the left turn when the race suddenly started. Bit of a sprint on to gain the back of the bunch but nothing too bad.

The Hanbury circuit is not really flat anywhere

and this section of the course around to the lap board was gently rolling with the only real significant feature a fast section on the descent from the left turn at the roundabout with the garage on it. There were a few nerves in the bunch and a few shouts here and there as people jostled for position. I took the opportunity to move up the bunch on the descent as I wanted to be near the front when we came to Draycott Bank for the first time. There's the lap board, 4 laps to go. That's 4 times up Draycott Bank, could I hang on? As we turned left onto the A515 for the first time the pace speeded up, people wanting to either press on up the hill or, like me, give themselves some distance to slide through the bunch. Draycott Bank is really in 3 sections, a gradually steepening lower section, a shallower middle section and then a steeper top section that gradually flattens out over the top of the climb. It actually keeps going up for quite a bit further than you think which is not good when you're trying to get onto the back of the bunch! However, my tactics worked, I had slipped about 2/3rds of the way back through the bunch but I was still there. Plenty didn't make it and the bunch gradually got smaller on each lap.

The next two laps were actually slightly easier. Each time I used the same tactics, work my way to the front of the bunch gradually before sliding back on the climb. Mark Lovatt tried to get away a few times but he was a very marked man and he obviously decided eventually keep his powder dry and save his legs for the finishing hill.

A small break of 3 or 4 riders had melted off the front with about a lap and a half to go and had something like a 30 second lead over the bunch. They appeared to be working well together and there was no cohesive effort in the bunch to bring them back, it looked like they might stay away. We didn't have anyone in the break but I daren't put in an effort to bring them back before the last time up Draycott Bank as I was worried about getting dropped as I knew it might be pretty fast up the climb with it being the last lap. Indeed the climb was pretty hard and I had to kick a few yards on to the back of the bunch over the top but I got back into the bunch and started moving up.

Before the race the Merc riders had agreed that

we would try and get our best hill climber, Pricey, up as near the front as possible for the finishing climb up Hanbury Hill. As we approached Tutbury I was still moving up the bunch and I could see Rob on the front with Jerry and Pricey just behind. The break was still away; they needed help. So I burned a match and moved up the bunch and after the left turn out of Tutbury moved onto the front and put the hammer down such as I could at the end of a tough race! I wish someone had a picture of us at this point as it was 4 Merc riders on the front of the race working to reel in the break; it might have even looked like we knew what we were doing!

I think I managed about a kilometer on the front before I could feel the power in my legs starting to fade. I had wanted to bring the break back but had to settle for them being brought back into range of the bunch. After this point I'm not sure what happened as I sat up and cruised to the finish. Talking to Pricey afterwards I think he had intended to attack on the short rise just before the left turn onto the finish hill but had misjudged where he was on the course and went too early. Still a great effort to finish in the top 20 on a tough course after only a few road races.

Jerry, although a very experienced sportive rider was riding his first road race so to finish it and place well was a great result. I get the feeling that Jerry has been bitten by the road race bug so I am sure we will see him again in more road races. Steve was also riding his first road race but I think, like a few riders, was caught out by the fast start and never really got into the race. I am sure that it was valuable experience and I sincerely hope that it does not put him off from racing again. Rob rode a solid race, never really looking in difficulty and was instrumental in helping to bring the break back. More results to come from Rob later in the season, I feel.

The race was won by former Mercury rider Tom Lowe who made his move for victory on the steep finishing climb. Of the 80 riders that started the race, only 40 finished. Despite rolling in as the lantern rouge I was pleased with my race as such a hilly course really does not suit me. Even more pleasing was to be able to contribute something to the team effort to reel in the break on the last lap. Very many thanks to Tom Butcher for organising the race and all the

members and friends of the club that volunteered their valuable time to make the race possible. Bring on the next race!

- 1 Thomas Lowe (Kingsnorth International Wheelers)
- 2 James Allen (Sheffrec CC)
- 3 Richard Binks (Clay Cross RT)
- 4 Mark Lovatt (Planet X RT)
- 5 Matthew Nell (RM Cycling)
- 6 Blake Cowley (BC PM)
- 7 Robbie White (Birmingham University CC)
- 8 Shane Culpin (Witham Wheelers)
- 9 Mark Jacobi (Peak RC)
- 10 Jack Frisby (VC Rutland)
- 17 Stephen Price (Derby Mercury RC)
- 24 Jerry Clark (Derby Mercury RC)
- 39 Rob Slater (Derby Mercury RC)
- 40 John Anglesea (Derby Mercury RC)

Part II

Jerry Clark

Well the race on Sunday was my first Road Race after 8 years of riding Sportives in the UK and Europe. I was nervous!

Bottom line – I stayed towards the front of bunch all race making sure the other Mercury riders were always close but my quest for glory slowly unravelled on Hanbury Hill to finish 24th!

Woke up to snow and rain and 1 degree....not nice. The weather improved and I raced in

leggings under Club kit with arm warmers.

After 1.5 miles of protected roll-out it went pretty quickly from the gun on what is a rolling course with one long climb on it. After all the sportives the fact is I am used to riding in smaller groups but its a little more hairy with 3 or 4 abreast.

I made sure I stayed in the top 20 of the bunch at all times which kept me out of trouble. The lumpy bits suited me as I went up through the bunch without too much effort. 2 riders went up the road by about 600 yds early on but they were allowed to go and caught late on the last lap.

Mark Lovett the ex Pro was in the field and I was told he could smash the race apart so to follow him and he attacked on Lap 2 of 4.5 - I jumped with him a couple of times because I was afraid of missing the key break but being so heavily marked could never get away.

On the last lap I think I did too much work at the front (with a mile to go I pushed up a ramp only to turn around and see everyone 20 metres behind = big mistake!). I must admit though that the feeling of the 4 Merc riders pulling on the front out of Tutbury was a good feeling (although tactically not perhaps the brightest move bearing in mind the finish to come). All lessons banked for future races.

Steve Price got a 50 metre gap and Rob quite rightly told me to ease up and not chase (obvious now but one of the key difference to a Sportive).

The finish was a 90 degree left turn into Hanbury Hill – I came round the corner in the Top 10 hoping to jump but being frank I had nothing in my legs so went backwards rapidly!

All in all a great experience and very proud to wear the Club kit.

Diary

Date	What' Going On	Time
31st January	Natter Night	8.00pm
7th February	Pub - Trip to The Abbey	8.00pm
14th	Valentines Bangers Night - Sausages supplied by Andrew Coates Butchers, King Street, Duffield	8.00pm
21st	Pancake Night	8.00pm
28th	Natter Night	8.00pm
6th March	Pub - Trip to The Abbey	8.00pm
13th	Bike Fit with Andy Brookes (provisonal)	8.00pm
20th	Puncture Repair Challenge	8.00pm
27th	Bring & Buy Sale	8.00pm
3rd April	Pub - Trip to The Abbey	8.00pm
10th	First Evening Time trial - The venue will be the Long Lane course.	

Club Rides

Club Runs: 60+ miles at a medium pace. Saturdays and Sundays at 9:00 am. Meet at the A38/A6 roundabout, Derby.

Contacts:

Saturdays - Kevin Cunniffe (01332 366807)
Sundays - Dave Banks

Autumn Tints: 50 miles or less, easy pace, with lunch stop. Sundays at 9:45 am, meet at either Allenton (Arden News nr Spider Bridge) or Alvaston (Mercian Cycles) or Mickleover Nag's Head). Contact Derek Wilkins 01332 661613.

Training Rides: Tues./Thurs. 6:45 pm, Little Chef, Little Eaton. Contact Tom Butcher.

Mountain Bike Runs: A couple of hours thrashing around the trails in the Ticknall / Ingleby area. Monday evenings, 6:30 pm. Meet at the John Thompson, Ingleby.

Contact: Dave Banks.