



Handy Cross Joggers Bulletin

5K Summer Series Results 1997

		Wargrave	Burnham	Marlow	Maidenhhd	Datchet	Handy X
		Pos Time	Pos Time	Pos Time	Pos Time	Pos Time	Pos Time
Dan	Ayres	125 23.25		227 31.09	119 24.40		
Michelle	Ayres	216 30.57	232 32.19	226 31.07	177 32.44		
Alfred	Benjamin	29 18.55	23 18.21	20 18.04	24 19.15	33 18.36	25 18.54
Mike	Blowing						112 24.13
Sandra	Bremner	53 19.56	55 19.45	49 19.4	36 19.57	48 18.20	
Eric	Buckle		34 18.57			22 17.59	21 18.31
Chris	Busby	112 22.49	111 22.23	100 21.43	93 22.47		
Bob	Carter						141 26.28
Claire	Carter						140 26.28
Pat	Carter		189 27.48				
Brian	Childs					158 25.20	131 25.38
Ian	Childs					124 23.05	109 24.09
Marina	Crisp	115 23.02					
Tony	Crockett	58 20.12					48 20.20
Sue	Darrington		196 28.07	193 27.49	153 28.34	173 27.12	
Liz	Davey	113 23.01		116 22.40		106 22.04	89 22.40
Eleanor	Davies	202 29.41	214 30.01	204 28.27	165 29.43	185 28.10	171 29.02
Simon	Davies	92 21.42	78 20.51	64 20.39			74 22.03
Martin	Dean	56 20.09		52 20.04			66 21.23
John	Dooley				2 17.27		
Maureen	Edington		180 27.20	167 26.06	128 25.41	162 25.53	
Peter	Edington	31 18.57	40 19.16	25 18.31	14 18.33	23 18.03	
Greg	Emmett						173 19.12
Nicole	Emmett						172 29.11
Terry	Eves		67 20.20	50 19.41	44 20.18	45 19.14	
Peter	Flannery	129 23.28					
Tony	Flannery	72 20.50	84 21.13	73 20.55	59 21.15		51 20.32
Martin	Franzese	158 25.57	174 26.47	152 24.50	122 24.58		
Jack	Fuller						168 28.48
Julie	Fuller			217 30.08	161 29.20	183 28.08	163 28.29
Kevin	Fuller		119 22.45	218 30.08	90 22.36	93 21.30	85 22.31
Anne	Gallacher	230 32.36	236 32.44				201 34.24
Gerald	Gallacher	197 29.15	209 29.05				192 32.08
Pam	Gilbert	215 30.54	218 30.23	207 28.39			
Alison	Gowers		145 24.21				
Chris	Hall				31 19.40		
Jenny	Hart	194 29.00	190 27.49			170 27.04	
Trevor	Hart	103 22.18	97 21.50			90 21.21	
John	Harvey						4 17.31
Kevin	Hayes					4 16.21	
Mike	Hickman	79 21.06	99 21.53	63 20.38	74 21.41	71 20.49	
Keith	Hicks	120 23.13		114 22.27	97 23.04		
Ian	Hodgson					154 25.16	
John	Hudson	25 18.47		24 18.28	20 19.06	25 18.10	30 19.05
Alex	Johnson	168 26.44	164 26.07	149 24.45			
Philip	Jones		20 18.07	15 17.41	10 18.16	17 17.42	18 18.20
Anne	Leigh	193 28.57	207 28.58	189 27.34	155 28.39	174 27.16	166 28.44

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		Wargrave		Burnham		Marlow		Maidenhd		Datchet		Handy X	
		Pos	Time	Pos	Time	Pos	Time	Pos	Time	Pos	Time	Pos	Time
Dave	Leighton	110	22.46	98	21.52	96	21.39			79	21.03	68	21.41
Gareth	Lloyd					202	28.24			176	27.36	143	26.32
Jonathon	Lloyd											202	34.25
Nigel	Lloyd	39	19.06	31	18.50	23	18.20			32	18.28	29	19.04
Tim	Long			89	21.26								
Peter	Mackley	76	20.57	63	20.01	43	19.24	30	19.40				
Jock	Maclean	61	20.23	69	20.31	59	20.26	55	20.49	56	19.50	62	21.03
Des	Mannion	51	19.49	57	19.49	47	19.37	37	20.05	50	18.25		
Lucy	Marsh												
Nick	Martin	45	19.31	50	19.31	27	18.39			35	18.41	47	20.19
Vernon	Martin							101	23.54	131	23.31		
Rob	McGrath											5	17.33
Adrian	Messenger							17	19.00	21	17.56	101	23.21
Margaret	Moody	97	21.57	93	21.41	86	21.17	71	21.31	95	21.32		
Dave	Nash			150	24.40	144	24.02	121	24.47	137	24.15	124	25.22
Stephan	Naunko			160	25.41					77	20.58		
John	Nichols	192	28.54	200	28.27	181	26.55	148	27.19				
Rod	Palmer	44	19.30			48	19.37			39	18.51		
Paula	Parkin	227	32.18	234	32.22	219	30.21						
Jeanette	Perry					97	21.40						
Mike	Perry			121	22.54	95	21.38	84	22.13	99	21.41		
Rose	Priest			201	28.34					187	28.15		
Kevin	Rabbett					138	23.38	99	23.23	98	21.39	91	22.48
Debbie	Ridout	161	26.23	159	25.41	142	23.52	112	24.23	125	23.07	123	25.16
Sean	Ryan	130	23.29	115	22.35								
Russell	Saunders									115	22.19		
Brian	Sinclair	165	26.34	165	26.16	154	25.01	131	25.44	142	24.30	106	23.48
Pete	Smith	3	16.41	5	16.52	4	16.29	1	16.59	2	15.54	2	16.31
Tony	Spencer											15	18.11
Christine	Stone	229	32.32	235	32.24	224	30.53						
Mike	Stone	66	20.32	81	21.06	51	19.54						
Richard	Stone												
Sue	Stone	187	28.36	204	28.53	191	27.35	157	28.43				
Thomas	Stone	167	26.41	216	30.08								
Alex	Thomason	87	21.34	101	21.57	89	21.29	83	22.05	110	22.12		
Anthony	Tonna							105	24.09				
Christine	Turfrey	184	28.07	213	29.56					184	28.10		
Natalie	Turfrey									186	28.10		
Peter	Turner									114	22.18	125	25.22
Alyson	Unitt	226	32.17	233	32.22	222	30.44						
Tim	Wallen												
Julie	Welch			162	25.48			137	26.17	148	24.46		
Hans	Wessel												
Pam	Wilkes			137	23.48	118	22.42	92	22.43			93	22.52
Roger	Wilkes					94	21.37	69	21.30			64	21.16
Dave	Woolley	43	19.28	47	19.25	35	18.54	29	19.35	36	18.44	37	19.28

NOTICE OF THANKS

On behalf of my family and of course myself, I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their kind words of comfort and support when my wife, Bridie, was taken ill with cancer in March 1997 . Sadly, we lost Bridie to this tragic illness in July 1997. I would like to thank you for the wreaths and many donations for The Sue Ryder Trust . It has certainly helped ease the pain and it is a great help and comfort to have friends like you .

Thank you once again

Duncan

Charity Bike Ride from Helsinki to St Petersburg

When I first saw an advertisement for this bike ride last February, it was for a trip from Helsinki to Moscow taking place in July, which sounded like an interesting adventure back in the middle of the winter. On enquiry I found the ride consisted of two sections, the first from Helsinki to St Petersburg and the second onward to Moscow starting a few days later, covering a total distance of 900 miles in 20 days and with a commitment to raise £3500 for the charity, Friends of Russian Children. A few days reflection convinced me that the first 450 mile section of the ride, taking nine days and with a more modest target of £2000 to raise, appeared more feasible.

At the time I was unaware of the aims of this charity, or how to set about raising sponsorship, but they sent me plenty of information and advice. The charity was formed following the Bashkira train disaster in Russia in 1989 in which 300 children died. Many more suffered terrible burns. The hospitals were unable to cope and turned to the West for help. The first Charity Bike Ride in 1995 set out to raise the £500,000 or so needed to build an in-house sterile laundry at Children's Hospital No 9 in Moscow. Prior to this, linen arrived back from the central laundry still dirty and more children were dying from cross-infection than from their burns. The laundry is now up and running. FoRC is actively working to *prevent* many of the deaths and burns injuries suffered daily by Russian children. This is to be done through fire safety lessons in primary schools, initially in Moscow and St. Petersburg and then, when funds allow, in other major cities throughout Russia.

In return for the sponsorship the charity organised the whole trip including bike hire, transportation of luggage, meals and pit stop refreshments, accommodation, visas, security, medical support, transport back to Helsinki and flights to and from Finland. In June a one day ride was organised in the Henley area to encourage training and allow people to meet before the trip.

The trip started with an early morning flight from Heathrow, arriving in Helsinki at lunch time. After lunch the 50+ riders were introduced to their bikes, which were a hybrid of a mountain bike fitted with road tyres. The riders were also a hybrid mix ranging in ages from 16 to 79 and with a selection of nationalities including English, Channel Islanders, Scottish, Irish, Dutch, Russian, Finnish, and Israeli and including three British ex-patriots living and working in Moscow who had arrived by train earlier in the day. The 79 year old, Jack from the West Midlands, was also doing the complete trip to Moscow, where he would be staying with friends until September.

Once everyone was happy with their bikes a short tour of Helsinki was enjoyed, led by the three Finnish guides who accompanied us for the whole trip and taking in all the interesting sights; including the Olympic Stadium, an underground church with a glass roof and the huge Baltic ferries that resemble not so much a ship as a floating block of flats. Apparently one in three people in Finland own a mobile phone and we noticed that they all seemed to be talking to each other at once, even when riding a bike or a skateboard, which they were able to do late into the evening, as the sun was still shining at 10 o'clock.

The following day saw the start of the ride proper with over 120km to be covered . We set out in two groups to negotiate our way out of Helsinki without getting lost . Rather like Handy Cross Joggers, the groups soon broke up as people cycled at their own pace, but frequent pit stops, with refreshments provided by the back-up crew in cars, enabled everyone to successfully reach the lunch spot in the picturesque old town of Porvoo . Here many of the traditional old brightly painted wooden houses and cobbled streets are preserved to accommodate the artistic community of this very old town . Fish is very popular in Finland as we were discovering . Lunch in Porvoo consisted of a fish soup accompanied by salad and followed by coffee .

The roads in Finland were excellent, rolling through gently undulating countryside in which trees and lakes were the predominant feature . Finland has a population of only five million people in an area as large as Great Britain, so there were only a few scattered farms and houses to be seen along the way . The weather was hot and sunny, so it was wonderful to be able to stop at the side of a lake in the late afternoon for a swim . An hour later we were wet again, this time due to a torrential thunderstorm, but this soon passed and we quickly dried out before arriving at our first overnight stop, a rural school where we slept on the classroom floors .

The following day was also to be a long ride of 124km through similar undulating countryside with yet more trees and lakes . Passing a large timber factory, we noticed an environmentally friendly way of transporting the cut logs, by throwing them in the river and allowing them to float to their destination ! At a village with the unlikely name of Kääpäla we came across a collection of modern sculptures made from rusty old junk like petrol pumps and car springs . The late afternoon produced the customary thunderstorm, which cut off the electricity supply to the hostel where we were staying . So although showers were unavailable that evening, the lakeside sauna followed by a midnight dip with the sun setting across the lake, provided a very acceptable alternative .

The third day of the ride also promised to be a long one as we were due to cross the Russian border late in the afternoon . This was the hottest day we had experienced so far and by midday we had only reached the beautiful lakeside town of Lapeenranta on Lake Saimaa, the largest of Finland's one thousand and eight hundred lakes . Our route to the border was alongside the Saimaa Canal which links Finland with Russia and provides access to the Gulf of Finland and the Baltic Sea . This canal was not like the narrow waterways we are used to, but more the size of the European canals with huge locks capable of accommodating sea-going ships . Unfortunately the canal side path we used was rutted and very sandy . After struggling for 17km along this path we at last arrived for a late lunch at 3 o'clock, just on the Finnish side of the border .

After lunch we took the last opportunity to fill our water bottles from a tap, after this it was to be bottled or boiled water only . A half mile downhill ride brought us to the Finnish side of the border where we were all lined up for passport inspection . Following this we turned a corner and passed a Russian checkpoint, but this was only the start of the border which is 22km wide, with nothing to see apart from the occasional canal lock and a duty-free shop half way across . At last we arrived at the Russian border post, which was reminiscent of a Cold War film, with lots of soldiers, important looking officials scurrying around, no photography allowed and a long wait

while our papers were repeatedly and suspiciously inspected before being stamped several times . The customary afternoon thunderstorm was threatening all the while and we eventually proceeded with a police car escort towards the border town of Vyborg .

Two hours after crossing the border we made a memorable entrance into Vyborg in the middle of a stupendous thunderstorm . The primitive Russian drainage systems, consisting of large holes in the surface of the huge bridge leading into the town, was unable to cope with this deluge and the road surface was flooded, with the numerous potholes invisible, leading to a few riders parting company with their bikes before we arrived at our hotel, cold wet and hungry . Having lost an hour crossing the time zone between Finland and Russia, we found it was now 9.30 in the evening ! However after a shower miraculously provided by the primitive Russian plumbing system, we happily devoured a late meal of onion soup and unidentifiable meat washed down with Russian tea .

By the following day we realised we were definitely in Russia, having been provided with an armed security guard to accompany us for the rest of the trip . The Accommodation in the town's principal hotel was very basic and a simple but a filling breakfast of porridge and sausages saw us queuing up to collect our passports, which had been confiscated on our arrival the previous evening . The floods had by now receded, but the town did not appear any more inviting and we were glad to cycle out into the Russian countryside . Although similar to the rolling Finnish countryside of lakes and forests, there was much less cultivation and what there was looked poor compared to what we had experienced before . Even the weather had deteriorated and everything seemed much less attractive than Finland .

We were prepared for the poor state of the roads, which were wide but badly maintained, particularly at the edges where we were cycling, but not for the sudden changes from tarmac to dirt and gravel which occurred frequently and continued for many kilometres . However the poor road surface made little difference to the Russian drivers who continued at the same speed, leaving clouds of choking dust in their wake .

Along these tracks we would pass people walking with shopping bags, although we had not passed any shops or houses for miles, nor came across any soon afterwards . When we did encounter a shop, close to a remote railway crossing, there was very little to buy anyway . As coins have no value in Russia, all money transactions are carried out using notes, with Dollars being more acceptable than Roubles . I offered a 500 Rouble note for some bananas, but that wasn't enough and as the only other note I had (100,000 Roubles) was too large for the shop to change, I came away empty handed . This shop was equipped with a modern electronic calculator backed up with an old-fashioned mechanical till and if all else failed, an abacus, which appeared to be used regularly .

A stretch of heavily rutted dirt track just before the lunch stop brought one of our party to grief and caused me to puncture, so I was grateful to find a picnic lunch had been prepared in a forest clearing by our Russian support crew, complete with a log fire and steaming samovars . After my puncture had been repaired and the patient's

wounds patched up by our medic, a soldier in the Territorial Army whose little pink tablets cured all ills, we continued on better roads to our overnight camp site .

This was on the shores of the huge Lake Lagoda, the largest lake in Europe . When we arrived our back-up support crew had already erected two rows of tents along the lakeside and were busy cooking dinner on a log fire . The lake looked inviting after a hard day's cycling, but turned out to be very cold, being fed from rivers having their source above the Arctic circle, so after a quick dip we queued up for some strange looking but very filling stew and then sat around the camp fire for an evening of singing and drinking cheap Russian beer .

I awoke from an uncomfortable night under canvas to hear the wind howling off the lake, but fortunately the morning was dry though cold . After a breakfast of porridge, bread and jam and tea, we walked the 2km from the edge of the lake through the forest and back to the road . Here we were met by a TV film crew who, after filming us, kept passing us at high speed and reappearing at intervals along the road . After 13km of dirt roads we joined a busy, by Russian standards, main road which was very hilly and seemed to attract all the badly maintained old lorries from the whole area which belched out clouds of black smoke up all the hills . After lunch we cycled along some pleasant forest paths, in contrast to the dirt track roads we had previously experienced, encountering a ford along the way where we could all have fun watching people fall off in the middle . That evening we stayed in a rest house which was very comfortable with two saunas and a bar . We were visited by a Russian song and dance troupe who entertained us in traditional Russian manner, then joined us for a drunken party until the early hours .

A very late start was made the next day, but as we were by now fairly close to St Petersburg, we had only 50km to cover that day, although much of this was on very poor roads . Our lunch time picnic spot was beside a lake a mile from the road, accessible only by a steep and narrow track which was hard work even on a mountain bike, although the Russians managed to negotiate it with their truck . This part of Russia once belonged to Finland and was the scene of many bitter battles before and during the last war . We saw several war memorials, cemeteries and destroyed shelters in this area . We camped by another lake at the end of this day and as we had to make an early start in order to arrive in St Petersburg at a pre-arranged time, most people took the opportunity of an early night .

Early the following morning we loaded our luggage on the support truck for the last time and set out for the coast before eight o'clock . A mixture of roads and tracks through the forest brought us to a clearing containing the single storey house in which Lenin had been exiled before the Russian Revolution . To protect the house, now a museum, a large pre-cast concrete roof has been put over it, which gives it the appearance of a self-service petrol station . We reached the shore of the Gulf of Finland and began following the coast road which was very busy, this area being much more heavily populated and prosperous than anywhere we had seen before in Russia .

On the outskirts of St Petersburg we were met by a police escort and accompanied through the streets to the centre of the city where our ride finished in the square in front of the Winter Palace . Here we were greeted by a large crowd and ushered onto a stage for speeches of welcome . It seemed a lot of trouble to provide a stage for the finish of a bike ride by a few British cyclists, but I found out later it was used for a huge outdoor pop concert in the evening . We then put our bikes on a boat for a trip around the city, which is built on a number of islands, before docking in front of our hotel . Here we regretfully (?) relinquished our bikes before finding rooms in the huge and magnificent tourist hotel which was as good as anything we would expect in the West . The view from my bedroom window included the battleship Aurora, moored in the river opposite . It was a gun fired on this ship that signalled the start of the 1917 uprising that led to the October revolution .

The ride successfully completed, we could now look forward to a gala dinner in the hotel . This was a gastronomic delight, the food being accompanied by vodka, champagne and wine . Following this we had an entertaining series of impromptu courts martial, in which various misdemeanours noted during the ride, such as falling off one's bike or wearing unconventional clothing, were punished by fines levied by a kangaroo court and donated to the charity . This was followed by celebrations in a night club with people arriving back at the hotel at times dictated by the river traffic . In St Petersburg the bridges are only raised at various times throughout the night to allow ships to arrive and depart .

The following day involved a long coach journey back to Helsinki with another long and frustrating delay at the border . We eventually reached Heathrow and said good-bye to the people who we had got to know well on the trip, to return home for a rest and to relieve the saddle soreness and treat the many mosquito bites collected on the ride .

I would like to return one day and complete the second part of the ride from St Petersburg to Moscow, especially as the roads are much flatter on this section . Many thanks to all the club members who helped me with sponsorship, I have so far raised nearly £900 for the charity .

Martin Dean

July 1977

