

Hi everyone

It is now ten years since Ken Hodgson stepped down as Editor of *Ot' News*, a post he'd held for over 15 years. Since then, we've dabbled with various forms of communication but nowhere is there a simple note of what is happening at the Club. It is for this reason that I thought I'd have a go at penning a revamped *Ot' News* to be emailed directly to all members and which will also be linked to the Club's website, WhatsApp and OCC Members Facebook pages.

Events coming up:

Sunday, 19 April, probably a little too late to promote now, but the annual **GH Stancer Memorial** ride to Pocklington is this Sunday with refreshments at the club house on return. - see the RidesApp.

Every Sunday, the B section has posted a calendar of weekly rides through to October.

Tuesday evenings, Brownlee sessions Peter Middlebrooke & Stuart Hall are running five more sessions in the coming weeks and then will break for Summer. Dates will be posted shortly, bookable through Trybooking (no link yet).

Wednesday, 29 April, Committee Meeting at clubhouse @ 19.30, all welcome.

Thursday, 30 April, weekly **Time Trial** season, organised by Liam Mealey starts.

Sunday, 24 May, Stamford Bridge to Filey ride, Carol Armitstead has posted a 'Social Series' style, full day 75-mile out and back ride on the RidesApp. Shades of the old Great Yorkshire Bike Ride.

Friday evenings, 12, 19 & 26 June, 3, 10 & 17 July, our children's cycle coaching at Prince Henry's Grammar School, Wharfe Meadows returns, Sessions are already bookable [here](#) through Trybooking.

Wednesday, 1st July, Otley Cycle Races, the Club is sponsoring the Super Prestige Race for U16 girls. The Otley Races are followed, just two days later, by the **Ilkley Cycle Races** on **Friday, 3rd July**.

What else is happening?

WhatsApp Community



Gareth wrote to all members recently inviting them to join a newly formed OCC WhatsApp Community. It's proved very popular, with 182 of our 346 adult members joining many of the 12 ride groups available, which include Storm Rides (A), B Section, Zephyr, Wed Social, Goat Rides, Otley Ladies & Cycle Coaching Friday. It's early days but this also appears to be a great way to keep up to date with Club happenings, so if you are a Club member, aged 18 or over and missed the chance to join first time then let us know at OtleyCycleClub@gmail.com and we'll resend the email.

Club Centenary, Otley 800, Tour de France Femmes



Next year will be a big year for the Club as it celebrates its centenary in Jan 2027, for Otley as the town celebrates 800 years since it gained its licence as a market town and bridged the River Wharfe and for Yorkshire cycling as the Tour de France Femmes starts from Leeds.

The Club is planning to mark its centenary by producing a Centenary Booklet, a Centenary Jersey in conjunction with Santini, and by organising themed rides and events through next summer tying this in with an Anniversary Dinner / Party.

We would love members to help us organise celebrations, we are also on the look-out for club stories, memorabilia and lovely old photographs. If you can help or can share memories, please contact Gareth at OtleyCycleClub@gmail.com

Friday evening children's cycle coaching

Carol Armitstead will again be running the Club's popular Friday evening children's cycle coaching at Prince Henry's Grammar School, Wharfe Meadows site this Summer. These sessions are tailored for primary-aged children between year 1 and year 6 and aim to improve confidence and skills when riding a bike in a safe and fun environment under the careful supervision of our British Cycling qualified coaching team.



This year's dates for coaching are 12, 19 and 26 June, 3, 10 and 17 July. The courses run from 6.30pm to 7.30pm and are already bookable [here](#) through Trybooking. Prices are still just £19 for all six sessions, for up to 2 siblings. Your ticket will also include family membership of OCC for one adult and up to 2 siblings for one year.

Carol is looking for volunteers for each session and would also like help getting word of the sessions into the local schools, so please don't be shy, please step up and help – you'll have a great time!



Club kit @ Chevin Cycles

Club kit, in our distinctive blue design, is supplied by Santini SMS and sold at cost on our behalf by Chevin Cycles. You can find a list of the stock available at Chevin on the Club website [here](#) or contact Gareth. We have known Chevin Cycles for longer than any other partner and you will find their friendly staff are always happy to help members with kit or bike matters.

Otley CC 10-mile Time Trial

Saturday, 11 April (just gone), saw the first Time Trial of the OCC season with 70 riders heading off into a stiff head wind in the annual Otley CC 10-mile Time Trial. The ride was run along the A168, which runs parallel to the A1M at Arkendale. The event was again organised by Steve Moncur with 9 Club members volunteering to help as marshals or as signers on and off. Hats off to Steve M, Tony, Sheldon, John, Kathryn, Liam, Ann, Helen, Peter and Steve B, many of whom have been helping out for years.

Racing was keen. As well as 12 riders from our own club we had riders from all over Northern England and Anna Morris, World Track Pursuit Champion 2023, 2024 & 2025.

There were some really close times with only 2 seconds separating 1st and 2nd in the men's, and 3 seconds between 1st and 2nd in the Women's. Club congratulations to:

- Olivia French, 2nd in the Women's category in 23.17 mins and only beaten by World Champion, Anna Morris who rode in 23.14; what an amazing result for Olivia!
- Zack Stobbs 2nd in the Juniors in 22.55, and
- Sam Ward fastest "Veteran" in 21.02, missing out on top 3 in the overall men's by 1 second!

You will find the full results on the CTT website [here](#). A great day.



Thursday Time Trial Season

The regular Thursday Time Trial season, organised by Liam Mealey, is due to start on 30 April with rides scheduled for most Thursday evenings right through to early September but with a short break in August.

You can see all of the rides on the Walshford, Brownlee, Penny Pot Lane, Hilly and Pool Triangle courses [here](#).

New riders are welcome, as are volunteers to help marshal at the event.



Regular Club Rides

The WhatsApp Communities have been set up to help riders find out about the Club's regular rides:

The **Storm / A** riders usually meet on Sundays, their rides average 15 - 18 mph over 60+ miles. They have a good mix of ages 17- 60+. Rides include a generous café stop and are typically only posted on the RidesApp a few days ahead.

The group also rides on **Wednesday evenings**.

The **B Section** also goes out on Sundays at a steady 13 - 15 mph on the flat, regrouping where necessary. Rides typically cover 40 - 50 miles in winter and 50 - 80 miles in summer. There is a full calendar of this season's rides on the RidesApp.



The **Thursday Zephyr** riders offer more of a 'gentle breeze' than a 'storm'. Rides are 30 - 45 miles, sometimes with a bit of climbing, but then this is Yorkshire. Again, rides are typically only posted a few days ahead but you can get a sense of the planning through the WhatsApp group, **the group welcomes a growing number of riders on e-bikes**.

The **Abbey Dash social** rides are held on Tuesday mornings. Riders leave Otley or home to follow a quiet route through Nesfield and Beamsley (or over Langbar) with the sole aim of meeting for a chat and coffee at the Abbey Tea Rooms. **This is another group with an increasing number of e-bike riders (like myself)**.

Our **Mountain Goat** rides are social rides for those who enjoy the challenge / fun of taking on hillier routes on quieter roads. As the weather has improved in recent weeks, a small number of rides have been offered on a Sat and Wed with more to follow. Current rides are typically 40 miles, so why not join their WhatsApp group?

The **Otley Ladies** WhatsApp group has 42 members and is open to all women members. While it is still early in the season the group has organised three Women Only rides recently, a social ride to Beckwithshaw, a session at the Brownlee and a local gravel ride. Join the group or speak to Sam Edwards to find out what is happening and keep an eye open for some of their more ambitious longer rides like the earlier 'Coast and Castles' ride.

Missing ride groups

☹️ While it is great to see the variety of ride groups on WhatsApp there are still areas of cycling where the Club currently has very little representation – our Sunday Social Series rides, regular children's rides / events both on and off road and Mountain Biking. All three are covered in the President's Vision for the Club and will become priorities for action.

Social Series rides – this group was once the largest in the Club putting on 2 or 3 gentle rides every other Sunday. It had a good balance of male / female riders and was a great pool of volunteers and co-opted many members to the Committee. However, the group disappeared during Covid and has rarely operated since, with many members understandably finding it easier to organise their own weekend rides. As part of the Club's plans for 2026 we are looking for members to reinvigorate the group by offering to put on easy going, social rides on Sundays, we also need a leader for the group. If you think you can help please put your name forward, the Club will support you in this.

Children's Rides – the Club once had a very active **Mini-Flyers** group which would meet on Saturday mornings for rides varying between 16 and 35 miles, with the pace being dictated by the riders themselves. The rides were a Club run, with parents riding with their children and both experiencing the buzz of riding in a group. The highlight of the ride was undoubtedly the coffee stop. However, no Flyer rides are active at the moment and so the Club plans to engage with parent members to discuss rebooting these rides or perhaps changing their format to include gravel and / or mountain biking with the aim of taking the children into a safer environment and off our busy local roads. Would any parents be interested in helping set this up? Again, the Club will support you in this.

Mountain and Gravel Biking – the Club has never had an mtb section and yet many members also have mountain or gravel bikes at home and many local hills and areas have suitable tracks. Would anyone like to start things off by setting up a WhatsApp Group to meet and share ideas and rides?

Race Team ('Blue Train')

Otley Cycle Club has a proud history of helping riders reach their potential. Our Race Team (affectionately known as the 'Blue Train') is inclusive. It is coached tirelessly by Peter Middlebrooke and Stuart Hall. Thank you guys.

In recent years OCC has been the best performing cycle club in Yorkshire (excluding dedicated Race Teams). Chapeau!



The team supports young riders, aged 12 – 22, who train hard and commit to a schedule of races over the year. Many riders move up through club coaching and rider development. Increasingly OCC is being recognised as a cycle club with a structure to support young cyclists to fulfil their potential. New riders are very welcome.




Race Team Launch and review of 2025

At their Team Launch Event in January the riders were presented to their supporters and some of their sponsors. Peter gave a review the successes of 2025 and outlined the team's targets for the coming season, which will include a team visit to race in Belgium this summer.

If you would like to read Peter's review of the 2025 season then please follow this [link](#). As Peter said, 2025 was an incredible year, we had a **WORLD CHAMPION** on the track, a **WORLD CHAMPION** in duathlon, a **NATIONAL CHAMPION** in gravel racing, lots of podiums and numerous amazing performances.



How to follow the team

 Members can follow the team's week-by-week progress and enjoy hundreds of great photos of the team on their Otley Race Team Facebook page [here](#).

Sponsors

For the current year Otley Cycle Club Race Team has again secured significant financial support thanks to the commitment of multiple sponsors (from a variety of commercial sectors) including [Santini](#), [Chevin Cycles](#), [MAS Design Consultants](#), [BBS Natural Stone](#), [Bike Futures](#), [Richardsons Electrical](#) and [Nuffield Health](#). Our thanks once again go to Jon, Sanjai, Mark, Fraser, Ian and Nick for their very generous support.

Road Race Development sessions at the Brownlee Circuit



Peter and Stuart continue to host the Club's Road Race Development sessions for youth, junior, U23 and senior riders at the Brownlee Circuit on Tuesday evenings. The sessions are open to all Yorkshire riders and must be booked in advance through Trybooking (no link yet) and just think, you may appear in one of Stuart's aerial videos!

They are running 5 more sessions after Easter and will then break for Summer. Each session costs £5, starts at 19.00 and lasts for 90 mins.