

LIGHTWEIGHT NEWS - 20

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Editor: Peter Underwood

56 Kingston Street - Cambridge - CB1 2NU Tel: 01223 565036

E-mail - peter.underwood@tesco.net

www.classiclightweights.co.uk

Clive Holmes-Dowkes has a great interest in researching the **Holdsworth** marque and finds it is becoming more and more of a challenge. He writes:

“I would like to thank all those who have contacted him. Some have needed information, or identification, others just to talk about their Holdsworths’ in general. All have been welcome and have added to my own knowledge. The frames and cycles produced by the "factory" are fairly well documented as there are catalogues available for most years, but the shop at Putney was making additional models which, without the catalogue reference, are difficult to I.D. The problem from my personal point of view is a simple one as my interest is in the "factory" built frames, between 1945/6 to 1960 but, as so many of my fellow Holdsworth enthusiasts ask me about frames which have come out of Putney, I am left unable to help, but I'm learning.

My knowledge of post-1960 frames is still very limited, and with the introduction of the Italian Prugnat lugs to so many of the frames from both "factory" and Putney it becomes harder to spot the model and or its origin. Coupled with the fact that the two sources produced different frames with the same model name. An example of this would be The "Mistral". Made by Putney as a Nervex lugged frame and by the "Factory" as a Prugnat lugged frame.

It would be understandable to make certain assumption about frames which just don't seem to fit in. During the 60's frames were being produced badged as Holdsworth, Claud Butler and Grubb. Most of the Holdsworth frames out of the "Factory" had Prugnat lugs, on the other hand most of the C.B. frames had Nervex lugs, both sets of frames were built with 531 butted tubs so, what was to stop a client saying I'll have a Nervex lugged frame made but I want Holdsworth transfers affixed? Food for thought. Answers on a post card please.

Occasionally, frames turn up against which there are question marks. On Ebay recently a frame was listed and eventually sold as an Holdsworth "Whirlwind". Now, I'm really not being contentious here but the Whirlwind models finished in the mid 50's; this was given a date of mid 60s, so I'm a little confused. The frame had been made with Nervex lugs to which had been added some very fancy "spears". It is indeed a very attractive frame, which did have an Holdsworth "feel" about it. In the hopes that I could find out more I emailed the seller for any provenance he may have had, but no reply was forthcoming. It's a shame as I would have loved to have heard more about it. Well, my resolution for the new year is to get some more old frames restored to their former glory and to have on the road a frame and trike conversion, both Holdsworth of course.

There is one thing we all have in common though, that is the love of the cycle in general and the need to know more (that'll be two things then).”

Peter Underwood: There are sayings about things coming round time and time again. When researching some magazines from the 1930's I came upon the following when reading the reports of the exploits of Dennis and Cyril Horn. It is very easy to forget that at this time there was an economic crisis in the country with thousands out of work and much poverty. *Cycling* ran a piece on the state of the nation under the heading of, “Economic Crisis” stating: – “*Those who use a bicycle are serving a double purpose; they are keeping themselves fit and efficient for their work, and by travelling so economically they are free from any charge of waste. A cycling nation is a nation with its ‘shoulder to the wheel’ keeping its expenditure along essential channels. We are sure that our readers are in these times setting an admiral example to the community.*”

Heads held up high then!

One of our unwritten rules is that we don't fit SPD pedals to our older bikes, even though we always use them on the newer machines and love the feeling of 'oneness' which they give. However the rulebook went out of the window on January 4th when we had organised a Cambridge Section – V-CC ride. I was going to ride a 1956 Macleans Super Eclipse on fixed and Patricia her 1970 Flying Scot. For about two weeks before this it had been freezing cold but we had managed to get out on almost every day and, by wrapping up well, managed to keep just warm enough. These miles had been on modern machines and we realised that with the SPD pedals we had been able to wear neoprene booties over our shoes but without them we would have had to curtail our rides or risk frostbite in the toes. So the bullet was bitten and I fitted SPD's to both bikes just for this one ride and we didn't have to think about cold feet all day. What St Peter will say about this on the day of judgement we will have to see and report it in that *Lightweight News* in the sky. In the meantime we just have to dodge some of the diehards in the V-CC for a few months. Between you and me it felt great – SPD pedals were a great step forward in cycling – having said that we are now back to Chater and Lyotard on the two bikes mentioned.

Putting down the last edition of L News you probably thought you had your fill of 4 and 5-speed blocks. No such luck as just after we went to press a 14-16-18-20-22 block arrived through the post courtesy of ebay. I had imagined a great struggle to get the 14T sprocket off. However Paul Arnold had mailed me to tell me that he held his freewheel in a vice with a chain wrapped around it to protect the teeth and then moved the sprocket with a chain whip. Nothing to lose I gave it a try and the sprocket came off without even a curse, let alone cut and scraped fingers. On the subject of freewheels (oh no!) I had been told that the best lubricant for Sturmey hub gears was 30 grade oil as sold for 4-stroke mowers and the like. When I fit a freewheel I like to give it some oil but always wonder which is the best to use. I have restored many jammed freewheels with a squirt of GT85/WD40 oils but realise that it isn't a good idea to use this as a lube as it only does the job for a short time. I guess a heavy grade of oil would make the pawls sticky with disastrous results so I have used what used to be called a sewing machine oil, which is still very light (or thin) and changes the sound of the freewheel spinning. Does anyone know if the 30 Grade would also be OK for these Regina/Cyclo/Simplex freewheels? I have since spoken about this to John Spooner who had his own cycle business for many years – he tells me that he uses a light-grade car oil on his bikes. He also confirmed that the 30-grade oil would be fine in a freewheel.

There are two ways to lubricate the chain on a bike (not bearings, hub gears or freewheels. The chain differs in that it is very exposed. The first method is the old fashioned way of lubing with a reasonably heavy oil – this looks beautiful when it is first done – until you ride the machine that is. After this ride the animal magnetism of the oil has pulled in all the dirt within 5 miles of your chain and as a result, the shining beauty has been transformed into a black goeey mess which will turn you into something akin to a chimney sweep when you have to handle, or brush against, the chain. For example, in the case of a puncture.

When you have a new chain it will be factory treated with a grease which is not so bad at this but will need re-lubing after a month or so in dry weather or sooner if it has got soaked. If this soaking is by water tainted with salt for icy roads it will start to rust much quicker. The signs are a change of colour of the chain to a horrible dirty brown colour. If you need to check if the chain has been attacked in this way, just spin the cranks backwards before you set off, if the rust has 'locked' the links the chain will refuse to travel very far backwards.

Another style of lubrication available these days is what is known as dry lube. This can only be done if you are very keen on maintenance and very conscientious. In the UK there are two common lubes available in aerosol form. The first is WD40 which will free up any locked links and lubricate the chain for about a day. It is also useful for cleaning the chain in situ. Another product is GT85 which is basically the same but contains traces of silicone which prolong the durability. Using this method you can have a shiny looking chain for most of the time (except when wet or salty as mentioned above.) When this happens you lube the chain again, clean off the dirt with a cloth (I re-lube after

this). It is as well to do this at least once a week if you use the bike most days. It is not an easy way to keep your chain clean and smooth but it will always be clean.

I am looking for the clip to hold a Pennine **compressed air pump** onto a brazed-on 'boss' on the frame (see image below). This clip is like a Terry tool spring steel clip but about 20mm wide rather than the usual Terry size of 5mm. I tried using a Terry clip and it seemed fine until I got on the road and in no time the bumps in the road had caused the pump to slip right down so I took it off rather than risk losing it. We actually need two of these clips as we have another frame with the boss on.



It is possible to fix one of these Pennine pumps using one of the double spring clips for securing a normal pump to a frame without pump pegs, but as the frames have the boss it would be a nice detail to have the proper clip.

Bike specifications always interest me and I recently came across a Claud Butler advert detailing Evelyn Hamilton's machine on which she rode 1,000 miles in seven days in 1934. It was of course a C B frame although the advert doesn't say which one, apart from the fact it was "the popular Silver finish" – oh well it was a "girl's" bike after all and she didn't need to worry her pretty head about those things! She did worry about the equipment though as C B reports that they were all of her choice. The item in biggest print was the Constrictor New Osgear Derailleur: "The New Osgear is certainly recommended by Claud Butler, having proved itself in practical demonstration". The rest of the specification was as follows: Constrictor Conloy Rims and grips, Dunlop Sprite tyres, Lucas cyclometer, Cantilever brakes, Mansfield saddle, Bluemels accessories, Bayliss Wiley hubs, Williams chainwheel and cranks, Coventry chain, Reynolds 'HM' tubing "CB gauges and specification", Phillips Vitesse pedals. She started this ride on Saturday 15th September and averaged over 12mph for the 1,000 miles. There are 40+ interesting and varied images from her life in an on-line album: <http://homepage.ntlworld.com/michael.bannon1/evelynhamilton/>

Talking of specifications, in January 1938 Chas. Holland gave details of machine he rode in Tour de France. It was 71/71 degrees with 22" seat tube and 22 1/2"; top tube; 42 1/4" wheelbase; 3" fork rake; 10 7/8" BB height. It had 27" wheels with 15/17 tied and soldered D/B spokes. Sometimes uses wood rims, sometimes alloy. Sadly he didn't give the make of this machine but I bet someone out there knows what it was.

In my research for the Dennis Horn piece I came across a copy of his NCU Foreign Touring licence for 1938 – he would have used this to take his Claud Butler track bikes abroad. It gave the frame number as 1569 and I guess the frame would have been built in 1937 or 38, so the number may give an idea of the numbers being used.

A **regular off-shoot from the website** is when family members get in touch with us to tell us about their father, grandfather, uncle. Recently Geoff Mapplebeck's (Whitaker and Mapplebeck) daughter

told us that Geoff is now in a home but was delighted to realise that he was still known, thought of, and appreciated as a frame builder. A few days later we were contacted by Arthur Waller's son who was keen to tell us lots about his father in his frame-building days. He also had a contact from someone who worked in the shop. The Waller marque enthusiast hopes to get some useful information from both. I was fascinated to learn that the frames were built up on a jig and then taken away to be brazed and brought back the next morning. I wonder if the jig went as well or were the pins (tacks?) enough to hold it together?

There was a track on the Classic Rendezvous mailing list recently about **quick-release track hubs**. It seems that in some countries these are allowed in track racing but I hadn't realised that Campagnolo had actually produced track hubs with QR. This seems to beg the question as to why anyone would want QR on a track machine – I can't think of any time there would be any advantage in using them. One of the delights of track machines is that of using a spanner on track nuts and there is extra security afforded by nuts over QR. I have a beautiful double-ended chromed ring spanner which is a delight to use and fits both front and rear hubs. A bit nerdish I know but it reminds me of a painting exhibited by a local artist showing woman sitting up in bed in a really seductive nightdress while her husband is propped up next to her engrossed in his tool catalogue!

In L News 19 I mentioned the upsurge in fixed-wheel machines. Just after sending it out I saw a rider with the narrowest pair of bars I have ever seen. They started out as straight bars but had been cut back until they were just about wide enough for a hand either side of the stem. Even if you cut about one inch from the width of bars it feels very awkward for a few days. The theory behind all this is the ability to ride through narrow gaps in traffic I believe.

Paris, amongst other builders, used the **Bayliss Wiley Patent oil-bath bottom bracket unit**. This unit doesn't thread into the bottom bracket shell like the conventional system but uses a liner which is held in by shouldered cups (which are threaded into the liner). I was surprised to read that these had been sold since 1931 as I had imagined they were introduced much later than that. This system uses conventional axles and balls and can be utilised to repair a frame with mangled BB threads if you can get the bottom bracket reamed out.

I was recently working on a 1950's image of a rider at the **turn in a 25-mile time trial**. It made me think about how things had changed over the years. Back in the 30's, 40's and 50's, a cycling club would measure out 12½ miles on a road and try to get the start and the turn on a reasonably safe stretch of road. The main emphasis being on the start area. The turn would then consist of a spot of white paint in the centre of the road with the turn-marshal standing on it. The rider got there as fast as he could and braked hard at the last minute before spinning round the back of the marshal shouting out his number as he did so. Now the organiser has to work out the route in advance – there is no such thing as a turn in the road, I believe it is called a dead turn. These days the turns are usually round a roundabout or slip-road off, over bridge and slip-road back onto the course. You can see that nowadays you must first find the turn and then measure back from it for the start/finish area. In theory a competitor would save some time not braking for a dead turn but today's riders are sometimes travelling at 30mph and I assume they have to slow to cope with the roads leading off and on to the course.

Having finally mastered the art of building up Campag bar-end levers I am looking for a few spare parts to build a pair for one of my machines. I need an early lever plus 2 x locknuts. I do already have a single one fitted as the front changer on my Pennine which seems to work well.

Important news for all cyclists who like to dress the part on their 'Classics', especially **Neil** who is undertaking a coast to coast ride with 1930's bike and camping with a genuine cotton tent; from *Aids to Happy Cycling* 1936:

Tourists' Pyjamas

Single-fold, self dyed cambric with good contrasting collars and cuffs, weight 10ozs – 6/6

And to complete the picture:

Oiled Silk Pyjama Cases . . . 1/11

What a picture of elegance Neil will look with his contrasting collars and cuffs when tip-toeing across the wet grass looking for the toilets.

Gears offered for sale in this 1936 edition of *Happy Cycling* were the Constrictor Osgear (Conloy and Professional) and the Simplex 'Champion of France' plus the Super Simplex – both offered with The Octagonal Hub.

I am still trying to identify a saddle we have, not unlike a Brooks at first glance. It has two embossings either side. The main one has 'PRYMA 75' in large letters, 'Selles' above 'Deposee Paris' below. The smaller emboss has 'Special' in the centre with 'Gruppo' above and 'Traite' below. The adjuster in the nose has holes for a 'tommy-bar' rather than a hexagonal nut. Any ideas?

Clive Copeland has a Paris cycle for sale early 50's, frame no.7743, Litealoy crank, GB centre-pull brakes, in need of some restoration. £80. Ph.0208 876 3728, mobile 07956 374623, e mail clive.copland@gmail.com.

He can mail you images

Paul Harding says he is looking for a Bates BAR or something similar, a 1940/50s bike with 22" frame and period fittings in rideable condition but not necessarily a show piece. He lives in East Sussex. paul.s.harding@btinternet.com

Jan Roberts has a Dan Genner Excel Regal Model for sale, 24" C-T-T. Dated by Hilary as 1952, It will also come with an early Dan Genner catalogue, probably 1951/52 as it makes reference to the new GB Coureur brake callipers. I'm asking £90.00 o.n.o. no defects apart from one very small dink in the top tube 1-2mm diameter and not very deep so would fill okay I have images I can mail showing that I have part stripped the frame and forks, even getting to the stage of Zinc priming the forks. In the raw, you can appreciate the quality of build and finishing. jan@strebor10114.orangehome.co.uk or phone 01284 723418

Roger Stevens has two British lightweights for sale. Both are complete, but have been poorly over-painted by the previous owner. They belonged to a Past-President (now deceased) of Gravesend CC. Both rideable and would make nice straightforward projects.

1. CARLTON (Worksop) - Believed to be 1967/68 Giro d' Italia model. Chrome head lugs. Original colour blue. Frame size 21" c/top. Williams cotted c/set. Weinmann Vainqueur 999 c/pull brakes. Lycett L' Avenir saddle. Milremo stem + anon. alum. bars. 27 x 1¼" alloy. rims (Weinmann & Rigida) on Maillard l/f q/r hubs. Alum. m/guards (might be original ??). 5-spd. Simplex rear mech. £50.

2. CLAUD BUTLER : Jan. 1951. Size 22". Frame No. 511 76. Head badge missing, but replacement may be available. Mafac 'Competition' c/pull brakes. Falcon cotterless c/set [not in keeping!]. Weinmann 700c x 25 rims on Maillard s/f q/r hubs. Lycett L'Avenir saddle. GB stem + anon. alum. drops. £50.

For more details 01474-745884 (Gravesend) steverog8@live.co.uk will be at this month's Boot and Back

Roy Callcut has for sale a 21" 1961 Leach Marathon, the brakes are Weinman999 quick release centre-pull type, Nervex lugs, the handlebars are alloy Reg Harris specials, the gears are Campag 5-speed. It is sprayed sky Blue and Gold. Most of the running gear is as original except the chainwheel, wheels and the pedals.

"I am now 60 and I am going to sell reluctantly it as I really don't do much in the way of cycling." He can send images and he lives in Cheshunt. Phone 01992 425775 or 07792 766002 Email Roy Callcut roy.callcut1@ntlworld.com

Gerald Francis has acquired a machine he believes is a Selbach. It has Chater components including hubs and cranks. Hub brake rear wheel, celluloid covered bars and swan-neck stem. Contact for images.
twencengerald@hotmail.com

Sunday 5 April - "Mad and Foolish" Lightweight Ride

Starting Madley Parish Hall, Hereford 9 for 10.30 (bacon butties and tea available). Choice of routes to Hay-on-Wye and back via the Wye and Golden Valleys.
Contact: Colin Barratt 01981 250108 or frogmorephoto(at)aol.com

Sunday 19 April – Classic Bicycle Display

10am – 3pm at Wade House Community Centre, Halifax Road, Shelf, Halifax – showing a collection of lightweight and historic racing bikes including Des Robinson's 1949 Manx International winning bike and Ken Russell's 1952 Tour of Britain bike. Short ride on Classic Machines at 11am.
Contact Derek Browne, 01274 674693 Or email: hdjmbrowne@onetel.com

Sunday 7 May - The Reading Lightweight Ride - Theale, Reading UK

The number one ride for classic lightweights in the UK organised by Terry and Pauline Pearce.
telephone 0118 9426731
This year's theme is Foreign Bikes - others welcome of course.

Sunday 24 May - Cambridge Section The Meridian Lightweight Ride – suitable for that fixed-wheel machine you never get to ride, but all classic lightweights welcomed of course. App. 35 miles with stops for coffee and lunch. Starting 10am prompt at Trumpington Road Park and Ride Cambridge – Bay 8. Towards Cambridge (A1309) from J11 of the M11. Contact Peter Underwood
Tel: 01223 565036 or mail peter.underwood@tesco.net

Sunday 14 June - Rotrax Ride we hope to take two Rotrax bikes to this ride which is held in true Rotrax country, close to where they were built. Obviously many Rotrax owners live in this area and so there should be a good turnout for a ride in this beautiful area. The start is at the popular Flower Pots Inn at 10am. Wonderful cycling in peaceful lanes with watercress beds, thatched cottages, country pubs, old churches and all things nice. Other makes welcome to join us. Contact: Chris Carter 02380 692658

Saturday 27^h & Sunday 28th June - 'The V-CC - Lightweight Section's 3rd Annual Weekend at Langport, Somerset on It is a 1930s to 1960's club-cycling themed weekend event consisting of two day rides and dinner on Saturday evening dinner at the Langport Arms Hotel. This will be a sociable weekend for those who enjoy riding their pre-1960 lightweights. Period / sympathetic clothing is encouraged but is not compulsory.

Both Saturday's and Sunday's ride will be about 33 miles, each starting at 10.00am. The terrain is forgiving and the pace comfortable, there will be stops and we will ride as a group.

In an endeavour to make this weekend even more sociable we have taken all the accommodation in the historic & charming Langport Arms Hotel. Shared on-suite rooms are a modest £35 a night. Sharron and I will be arriving the day before and staying on the Friday evening prior, we encourage you to do likewise and make this a really enjoyable weekend.

The event will be based near Langport in Somerset (not far from the Bridgewater J24 on the M5). Price to include the meal is £25 per head. Further details from Alexander von Tutschek 01225 465532 (reserve David Palk 01329 829677).Please note that there are a limited number of places for this event, book early to avoid disappointment.