

CLEVELAND WHEELERS EVENING TIME TRIAL AND HILL CLIMB SERIES 2014

SEASONS REVIEW

2014 saw a number of changes, the first of which is in the event title. Reacting to the comments of members saw a slight change in the name but more importantly the addition of an end of season Hill Climb Series. Over the last few years there have been some changes but this year saw the most significant in that racing started earlier in the year and finished later to give the space for the Hill Climbs. Racing on the Seamer Circuit started mid-April with Lesley Meadows as the organiser for the first 3 events. The early season start attracted 31 and 40 members in the first two weeks which vindicated the decision to start early; it is clearly what people want! The only concession to the time of the year was to move the start time to 6:30 to make the most of the daylight.

May saw Bill Millen take over the on the night organisation with strong numbers continuing to arrive each night with a peak mid-May at 47.

Steve Tilly took over the organisation next in time for the 'big one' our annual joint event with Stockton Wheelers which attracted 56 riders! The organisational baton was then passed on to Colin Moore and then Paul Christon for the summer season. In previous years this period has seen a decline in the number of riders turning up as people go on holiday but not this year the average for this period being around 30 per night. The final event as usual was the two up time trial, not counting for the competition but just as fiercely fought out with some very quick times being recorded!

The changes proved popular with 600 individual rides being recorded with a weekly average of 35 riders per week. Throughout the season Bill Millen acted as time keeper, Ian Hutchinson did all of the clerical stuff! and Derek George sorted out the handicap positions. Without all of the people mentioned above, and all of the on the night marshals it would not run so it is as usual a BIG THANK YOU to you all for your help.

On to the racing front, in the Mens Scratch event James Gash showed what a winter and turbo dedication can do by consistently recording top times only getting some competition when Richard Lilleker turned up, taking the second position on the leader board. Third place went to Robert Lee a good reward for a consistently strong season. 27 men completed the required 6 single lap and one double lap requirement to be in with a shout.

In the Ladies Scratch event Angela Ackerley proved to be the strongest throughout taking a well-deserved first place from Tricia Bell, second and Katie Scott, third. Six ladies completed the required number of events.

In the 40 to 49 age related category Steven Turner won through to claim the prize. Robert Lee was the strongest in the 50 to 59 group whilst Roger Oldroyd took the 60+.

In the Men's handicap competition James Meadows upheld the Meadows winning way to take first place from James Gash with John Kettle gaining third place. Ladies Handicap winner was Kay Stokes from Barbara Kettle with Sandra Main third.

The junior Handicapped competition was won by Paige McLeod from Toby Tanfield, second and Ross Turner, third. Competition has improved each of them over the last year to the extent that they give many of the adults a run for their money.

The new Hill Climb series proved to be a popular addition to the season, running from mid-August to mid-September. This inclusion added 4 additional weeks to the club season and required on the night organising and marshalling. Thanks to David Cole for stepping in to do the first week organising before I returned from my trip to Poland, it was a good one to miss with very wet conditions for all concerned. Thanks also to the marshals who allowed it to work. 105 individual rides were recorded with 28 people riding the first one in spite of the weather! Clay Bank proved to be a good choice as the car park at the top of the hill meant that it was easy for riders and a good number of spectators came to support the riders.

The racing was close at the top of the leader board; the best 3 rounds from the 4 saw Richard Lilleker storm the 1.7 mile hill usually with a time around 6 minutes to gain the new trophy. Second place went to Graeme Tate with Dave Kirton third. Special mention goes to Toby Tanfield, the junior taking an impressive fourth with some excellent rides to comprehensively beat his dad!

Second claim member Rob Carter proved to be the fastest up the hill over the four weeks with a time of 5 minutes 46 seconds in week 3.

A very brief comment regarding the joint Stockton Wheelers/ Cleveland Wheelers annual time trial event. Stockton took the trophy again after winning the second leg comfortably from an understrength Cleveland team who were much closer in the first leg. Well Done Stockton. Next year all holiday is cancelled for Wheelers as we must get the trophy back!

It has been a good season in no small way helped by in the main decent weather each week. As always additional help would be gratefully received to spread the on the night organisational load! If you feel that you could help out please get in touch with me or a committee member we would love to hear from you.

Mike Cole