

## **The Corwen Autumn Audax Rides - 14th October 2017**

There was an exceptional turnout of eighty-eight riders from a field of one hundred and six entrants for these events, thanks mainly to the weather which was forecast to be dry and very warm - and so it turned out. There was also a fair wind which would become a problem for Clwydian and Clwyd Gate riders returning over the moors. I am a born worrier and worry if I haven't anything to worry about! The main concern for these events was a damaged cattle grid which Graham and I had discovered about three weeks prior to the event on one of our route checking rides. When we came across it there was a warning sign in place so we approached it gingerly and emerged unscathed. One of the rails had been broken and it had been packed out with sand bags which had slipped down. As there was a warning I was confident that it would be fixed promptly so on Thursday before the event I drove over to check. The warning sign had been removed but the grid was still damaged although some sort of makeshift repair seemed to have been effected. It still looked lethal to me and I was anxious that everyone affected knew about it before they set off. Even so, I remained on tenterhooks throughout the day and could not relax until the last rider returned safe and sound. Thankfully the mangled bodies and bikes of my nightmares did not materialise.

### **The Clwydian**

Twenty-three hardy souls departed on this epic ride and twenty-three returned in times ranging from ten hours to twelve hours fifty four minutes. There were two declared Chester and North Wales members. The tandem pair from Macclesfield were with us again but seemed slightly crestfallen having ridden over the day before and come off the bike on the Hirnant Pass when riding through a puddle which was concealing a pot hole and some nasty green slime. They had matching wounds on their legs. After they completed this 200km route they were then intending to ride home through the night. Special mention must also be made of the 'lantern rouge' who completed this arduous ride well within the time limit in his seventieth year. It sometimes pays to be a tortoise because by the time he was coming over the moors the headwind everyone else had complained about was a side wind!

### **The Clwyd Gate**

There were thirty-five starters on this ride with thirty finishers in times ranging from six hours fifty-five minutes to nine hours thirty-five minutes. All were well within the time limit. There were six declared Chester and North Wales members. Those DNF riders in fact all finished but had either missed controls or infos by mistake or design apart from one who arrived back about an hour after the start with a mechanical problem.

## **The Bala Mini Bash**

There were thirty starters and twenty-seven finishers in times ranging from three hours to four hours thirty-four minutes. The DNFs were all accounted for and there were five declared Chester and North Wales members. Their ages ranged from thirteen to over eighty.

So apart from my fears over the cattle grid, everything went well and everyone seemed to have enjoyed themselves which is always pleasing. As in previous years there were entrants from all the country not just the local area.

I will be running these events again at the same time next year. It just remains for me to thank everyone who took part, all the controls volunteers for their excellent service and lastly, my husband Graham who was amazing as usual.

**Vicky Payne - Organiser**