

Corwen Autumn Audax - 13th October 2018

No weird dreams this year in the run up to the event apart from one about a **CTC dinner** in a local hotel featuring **Winston Churchill** as guest speaker! But lots of agonising over the weather forecast which was dire. However the **Audax Handbook** strongly suggests that unless there are amber or red weather warnings in place events should proceed. There was only a yellow warning for rain. It was also windy with gusts up to 40mph but unseasonably warm. There was a noticeable decline in the number of entries this year, only 77 as opposed to almost 100 in the last two years, and as kick off time approached the numbers of emails telling me of riders who weren't coming increased. To be fair not all cited the weather as their reason not to ride but most did and I don't blame them in the slightest I would not have ventured out. Someone once said you can usually rely on the diehards on the 200k event and the geriatrics on the 60k event to turn up but this did not happen this time round. The geriatrics let me down but I forgive them and look forward to seeing them all next year.

The Clwydian

Six riders set off and returned in times ranging from 11.20 to 13.35. Amazingly they all with one exception said how much they had enjoyed themselves. The sixth was reserving judgement until he saw how he felt the next morning! Man's battle against the elements is as old as civilisation itself and when you achieve something against the odds it does give you a great sense of personal satisfaction and well being. One of the riders actually completed a **RRTY** (*that's one 200k event every month for a year*) so huge congratulations to him - and another is one ride away from doing the same. Two of the riders commented on how welcoming the people at all the controls were. Presumably footfall was sparse in the conditions so they had more time to engage with their customers. There was one declared member of **Chester & North Wales CTC** who has since told me it was like banging your head against a wall – lovely when it stopped!

The Clwyd Gate

Graham and I had ridden most of this route the **Wednesday** before in perfect weather. It's hard in terms of climbing but the scenery is gorgeous. Only four riders (two of whom were **Chester and North Wales CTC members**) ventured out and they all completed in times ranging from 8.55 to 10.08. Again they were all in good spirits on their return and said how much they had enjoyed it. Our own **Terry Davies** said he actually found the rain refreshing as he was getting a bit hot on the climbs. He was driving down south that night to take part in another 100km **Audax** the following day. That's the sort of commitment that wins national competitions!

The Bala Mini Bash

This turned into a women only event with four intrepid ladies setting out including our own **Secretary** as well as the **Founder of Fabulous Ladies**. One lady doing her first **Audax** had jumped the gun slightly and left about half an hour before the others. She turned out to be the only one to complete the ride but sadly her ride could not be validated as she had not got an answer to the info

question. She was surprised so many haven't turned up as it was "just a bit of rain and wind". She is keen to enter future events. The other three ladies abandoned before reaching the first control at the end of **Llyn Tegid** due to rising flood water. (See the attached photographs courtesy of **Sue Booth**.) Discretion being the better part of valour as the saying goes. **Lowri** said it was the first **Audax** she had not completed.

I have to say that this year in particular I am glad it's all over and that everyone was accounted for. They all deserve medals for turning out in such conditions. On a personal note I was more anxious than normal not just because of the weather but also because my brother-in-law had fallen from his bike in good conditions the Tuesday before the event resulting in a stay in intensive care. Thankfully he is out of the woods now but it will be a long road to recovery as he sustained a broken collarbone, flail chest and small bleed on the brain. He is now suffering from post traumatic amnesia.

So many many thanks to everyone who took part, to all the controls but especially the **Corwen Craft Centre** and the **Royal Oak** and last but not least to **Graham** and also our daughter **Sabina** who manned the control in **Pensarn** after the café had closed.

Text by Vicky Payne - Organiser

Photos by Sue Booth

