

Corwen Summer Audax - Saturday 16th July 2016

This was my first year as organiser of these events and I had hoped that a new organiser might mean a change in the weather as it has been pretty dire the last two years. Alas it was not to be and the forecast rain duly arriving cutting the field from 79 to 56. On the plus side it was fairly warm and not too windy.

The scenery on all three rides is stunning and my greatest fear was that the riders might become totally mesmerised and not concentrate on their surroundings. Conditions put a damper on this but I did notice a few cyclists returning with scuffed clothing and battered limbs. However, on the whole, everyone seemed to have enjoyed their day out.

Barmouth Boulevard 200km

There were twenty-one starters on the 200km Barmouth Boulevard including Audax "Royalty" in the person of Mr Mike Wigley. One Chester and North Wales CTC member took part. Twenty finished the ride in times ranging from 11hrs 09mins to 13hrs.16mins. The DNF actually completed the ride after sorting a broken seat post at the bike shop in Bala but his ride could not be validated as he had not passed through the first control at Llanuwchllyn. The tandem pair from Macclesfield had ridden out to the start leaving home at 2.40am and intended to ride home to complete a 400Km. I'm sure they will have succeeded as they rode this very hilly event with panniers and impressed everyone with their ascent of the last big climb, Bwlch Y Groes, where they overtook quite a few. I understand the visibility on the Bwlch was not good with one rider describing the moment the mist cleared and he caught sight of his companion in front of him as like a scene from "Gorillas in the Mist ". A bit harsh I thought but no offence seems to have been taken.

Brenig Bach 100km

There were twenty-seven starters on the 100km Brenig Bach with twenty-three finishers in times ranging from 4hrs 53mins to 8hrs 05mins. Eight were Chester and North Wales CTC members. One rider took a tumble before the first control at Pentrefoelas damaging his rear mech and decided to abandon and head back to the start. He looked fairly beaten up when he arrived back but after some food and a

change of clothes he was ready to drive back to Buckingham. I spoke to him on Sunday and he was planning his next audax next weekend so no real harm done. Of the other DNFs two got lost and the other one abandoned as her husband had not realised until the night before how hilly the route was!(It always pays to plot out the route BEFORE you enter the event.)

Bala Parade 60km

There were eight entries for the 60km Bala Parade three of whom were Chester and North Wales CTC members. Only five finished together in 4hrs 09mins. The other three who were also riding together, decided to abandon and had a nice lunch in Bala before tootling back to Corwen for afternoon tea. Given that one of them was wearing a Beckham boot and found it easier to cycle than walk I don't blame them and think it was very sporting for them to turn out at all.

Overall I was pleased with the way everything went on the day and look forward to next year's event which will be held on the same weekend. Fingers crossed for better weather. Many thanks to everyone who took part and also to the Manor Craft Centre, the Royal Oak, and all the other controls - and as always, the long suffering Graham who is always a tower of strength. His computer expertise has been particularly helpful this year. He has written two very useful programs which have enabled me to convert the Audax downloads to simple start sheets and CTC competition results sheets in the blinking of an eye.

Vicky Payne - Organiser

Vicky and Graham

