

Chair Comments

Hi Everyone and welcome to this year's Annual Report.

It's been another year full of challenges, events, endeavour, celebrations, suffering and socialising, I hope you've taken the opportunity to participate in as many of those that appeal to you, as that is what the club is here to provide.

I'd really like to take the opportunity to say a few thank yous, firstly to everyone who has played a part, however large or small, in running our events over the last year. We have once again run a Hill Climb series, a Club 10TT series, a Club 25TT and a SupaCross.

Special thanks of course to the main organisers on each of these events as they wouldn't even get off the ground without your dedication. Secondly, a big thank you to the many ride leaders who continue to organise and lead rides week in week out across a range of distances, speeds and difficulties. In particular it's great to see the Saturday club runs returning as well diversifying through the new women's rides, kudos to Fred & Rachel on both of these. Our club kit remains as visible and distinct as ever, with even more of you wearing it with pride and taking advantage of the discount currently available, many thanks to Mike & Emma for administering its distribution so well.

Finally, a big thank you from me to everyone who has been a part of this year's Committee, unsung heroes all of you, without which the club would cease to function.

On the point of Committee, a key agenda item at the forthcoming AGM will be a discussion on Committee Pipeline. It is always healthy for a Committee to rotate membership and avoid stagnating, to that end we will be discussing how we bring people in early and help train them (if required), ahead of them taking on any formal role. Hopefully this will remove any 'fear factor' for members and make the roles much more accessible, why not come to the AGM and give your views?

See you out on the road!

Mark

Membership

Current membership is at 256, a little down from 2022 but still at a very healthy level and continues to make Macclesfield Wheelers one of the largest clubs in the region. Membership makeup is 58 female and 198 male riders.

For various reasons there are always members who no longer wish to renew their membership and with no lost members in 2021 due to membership being free there were 47 non-renewals in 2023. However, 30 new members in 2023 so far has kept overall membership at a similar level.

One plea/gentle reminder: unless you are a new member who has joined from 1st October onwards subscriptions are due on 1st January and a prompt renewal is appreciated.

Simon Robinson

Our Rides

After the COVID years, who remembers them? Club rides are back on the up. The Saturday club ride has evolved through a number of formats but has settled on an alternate Saturday format with two or more groups riding a couple of courses with a common café and end point. One thing that doesn't vary is the end of ride refreshment at the Kings Head, all welcome for a pint or two. These rides are attracting more riders each week and are a great entry point for new members. The website has the details.

The Saturday social ride takes place on alternate weekends with a slower pace for all riders. The Sunday social has always had a strong group riding in it and a 30-45 mile day out with one or may be two café stop proves enduringly popular.

For those lucky enough to be able to ride daytime in the week there is a group on Wednesday led by Moray with a more challenging ride out. Thursday sees a leisurely with pop up rides in the week coming up with some frequency.

We must not forget the ever-popular JAR on a Tuesday night. Lights and reflective gear essential but a chance to do a swift 20-25 miles in company and keep the pedals turning through the long dark nights.

A new introduction to the calendar is a women's ride once a month on a Saturday alongside the Saturday social. This has had three editions and is planned to continue through the winter and into next year.

Cont'd

Annual Report 2023



The lighter months also sees the chain gangs hitting the roads for that extra training work out. They've been well attended and are a great way to build fitness over the early summer.

Some Big Rides

Club Reliability Rides

The year got underway with our two early season events. A very good turnout of wheelers met at Tytherington on Sunday Morning the 19th of February for the Barry Hyde Circuit Of The Edge. About thirty riders overall chose from the several route options and groups: longer 50mls, 40mls, shorter 33mls, fast, steady and easy. Groups crisscrossed the course(s) taking in Beeston Brow, Woodbrook Road, Artist Lane, Birtles and plenty of lesser climbs in between, an excellent and successful test for all participating.

A month later on the 19th March the Richard Elliot Three Loops went a lot further afield, just into Wales on the full 201 km three loops. There were also the shorter two loops of 160km ridden at a faster pace and one loop ridden at an easy pace.



The dates for these events are already set in the calendar for 2024. There's no excuse not to participate!

Annual Report 2023

Sportives

Members have again been active on the sportive scene. Despite terrible weather Rebecca M, Michelle S and Lia B rode the Velo 29 Femme event, Simon Gr rode seven in total from Lancashire up to Northumberland and closer to home Janet H completed the Manchester 100 (km).

Audaxing

Ever more wheelers are representing the club in local Audaxs, up and down the country and abroad. The Dark Peak Grimpeur, 108km and 524 M of climbing, was Rachel L's first. The White Peak, Mid Peak and West Peak Grimpeurs were also ridden by Wheelers and other popular events included Spring In The Peak, Eureka, Venetian Nights, Chirk, and Cheshire Safari to name but a few.

The club's most senior active Audaxer and now octogenarian Mike R completed a 110km event in September making it well over 200 over all distances since he retired from work. Most miles have been clocked up by Paul Anders J; 4,131 km over 20 events in England, Scotland and Wales ranging from 100 to 600k with 38,906M of ascent.

First off over the water was Matt Lk in April riding the 2,600km Calais - Brindisi permanent. On 19th August John J started the classic 1,200 km Paris-Brest-Paris, completing the ride within the cut off time of 90 hours. That was of course after completing 200,300,400,600km qualifying brevets, plus other Audaxs just for the fun totalling 2,533km and over 21km of ascent. Amazing efforts all!

Tourist Challenges



Annual Report 2023

In June a several Wheelers travelled south to represent the club on the Danny Mason Shropshire Highland Challenge organized by Ludlow CC. Eleven completed the 60 mile course with 5k feet of climbing. As always the promoting club were welcoming to the orange army and we didn't make too much noise on the campsite (honestly).

Bala Rugby Club was once again the start / finish for the 2023 Wild Wales Challenge. The challenge being for the club to have the greatest number of finishers of the tough long course which this year was 95 miles and over 9,500 feet of climbing. For the second year running Macclesfield Wheelers came out on top with 18 confirmed finishers after some technical issues with the electronic tagging at the last control. So, the club retains the prestigious Harold Kewish Trophy, a reflection of our strength in endurance events.

Community involvement

The annual Macclesfield Bikeathon in support of Just Drop-In was well supported by Wheelers this year, with members riding both the long and the medium course. We were blessed with fantastic weather for this event, back in its May slot after being run in October. Between us and the many entrants a great figure of over £4,000 was raised for the local Just Drop-In charity.



PS In case anyone was wondering this was the “before” picture....

25TT

The club 25TT open was run on Saturday 29th April on J2/9. This is always a well-attended event by competitors far and wide. This year we had a near capacity of 95 riders attending. We had to use our second choice HQ in Chelford as Goostrey was booked up. Note to self – book it early in 2024.. The HQ placed some restrictions on us in terms of parking but in all it worked well. The weather was kind to us again and we used our preferred course after the issues in 2022 of having to switch courses in the last few hours due to roadworks. We had riders competing across several classes including a young rider of 14 years age who was accompanied by his father. Good to see youngsters out competing.

As ever these events are only possible with the members turning out in force to marshal and look after the HQ. Mark and I are always appreciative of those who give up their time to help and this year we had a number of new members joining in and supporting the event. The 25TT also generates funds for the club to support other activities through the year.

Date for your diaries: 20th April 2024 – Club 25TT

Supacross 2023

For the second year running we held the Supacross in October as opposed to our traditional slot in the Northwest Cyclocross calendar of being sandwiched somewhere between Christmas and New Year. This earlier date gives the organising team and helpers longer daylight hours to build and dismantle the course after a hectic day in South Park. An earlier date should also, theoretically, make for drier course conditions which means less mess. But 2023 was not to be! In the week leading up to the event the weather forecast was kind and we were promised sunshine. But as the weekend approached, black clouds and big fat rain was showing on the weather apps, which materialised at around half nine in the morning just as the whistle blew for the Youth races. Crossers are tough though, and the kids raced through horizontal rain and spray to be rewarded with prizes and medals on the podium. For the senior races, the new course design was met with lots of compliments with many racers reporting it was the best one yet. The Supacross is our biggest event of the year, and it promotes our club on a national stage. Many thanks to those who contributed in the run-up to the event, and to 30+ volunteers who faithfully manned their marshal posts, sign-on tables and lap scoring positions through the wind and rain.

Club 10TTs

A somewhat mixed season with weather disruption meaning we had to cancel 3 races for safety reasons. However, 6 races went ahead on our JC36 course and 9 run by Westmead 88 on the J2/1.

In the races we ran 169 riders took part in total - with 20 Wheelers racing over the season for the individual competitions. David Watkins won the scratch trophy with a very impressive 317 points, just 3 off a perfect return. Second place went to Bartosz Lukasik and third to Pete Jackson.

In the handicap competition - where the club handicap system is not age related but is designed to favour new riders to the sport and thus encourage participation - junior Tom Gamwell ran out the winner with David Watkins second this time and Lynda Cook a strong third.

The mixed 2up team time trial we ran as an experiment for the first Wed evening event of the season was a great success. One male one female in each team, all on road bikes with no special TT kit allowed. 23 teams of 2 contested it and the race was won by Alistair Ribbands and Kerry Parton of the Congleton CC in a quick 22'25". The winners prize kindly provided by the Wincle brewery was enthusiastically accepted. Alison Dockney and James Scrivener were the fastest MWCC pair with Jo Hinton and Pete Jackson second, Yasmin Cooper and Lawrence Fryer-Taylor third.

The event was very well received with many requests for a repeat next year - so we plan to do just that. Fastest individual times this year were both on the J2/1 course, as you would expect.

- Louis Thomas-Messenger recording 21'28" to be fastest male.
- Fastest overall was Monica Greenwood with a 21' dead on the last evening race of the year.

Also of note was Monica's 22'02" on the JC36 course - to put this into context Sarah Storey on the same evening recorded 22'30", can you come close next year?

Already looking forward to next year!



Hillclimbs

The club ran its familiar, by now, 16 race Hillclimb series attracting club members, local clubs and participants from far afield. We had a total of 468 entries across our 16 events running through from late spring to late summer. This is all little down om 2022, but on the upside, there have been more different entries spreading the word more widely across our region. This year has also seen a marked upswing in the number of volunteers stepping up to marshal the events. Whilst it's not an especially onerous series to run having more boots on the ground makes it safer and less stressful. It's also a great way for new members to meet people as well as promote the club's welcoming image. So, a big thank you to all those who have participated as racers or as marshals!



The enthusiasm for hill climbing translated to a major presence at the National Hillclimb on The Struggle in the Lake District. Thirteen members entered this toughest of assignments and acquitted themselves admirably. It was as usual an excuse to paint the hill orange with wheelers out in force to cheer on their friends. Attending this event as it moves around the country has become a feature of the calendar with around 30 members making the journey north to enjoy a fabulous weekend.



Ed:- I think that race suit on the right needs some work....

The Final Word from our President

Looks like it's been another active year for everyone. 2023 started with the Awards evening and party night when we celebrated individual achievements from 2022 including team Macclesfield Wheelers winning the Harold Kewish trophy at the Wild Wales Challenge for the most club riders completing the long route, which we retained this year. Well done all !! Our time trial events started in April with the Lads and Lasses 2 up event, 46 riders lined up to start, it was so successful we'll be running the event again next year. We aren't all about racing and the newly introduced format having the Saturday club run and a Saturday social ride on alternate weekends is proving popular with new members asking to join the club after these rides. It's great to see social interactions at the start, café, plus the option of a drink in the pub afterwards. September saw the inaugural women's ride, and these continue to be very successful. We were well represented at the RTTC National Hill Climb Championships this year by competitors and supporters showcasing Macc Wheelers orange helping to bring the event to a crescendo at the top of The Struggle. Want to know what we have planned for next year?

How about joining us at our AGM on Monday 4th December 2023 at The Pack Horse Bowling Club?

Also save the date for our party night and awards evening on Saturday 3rd February 2024, where plans seem to emerge for socials, weekends away and events to participate in for 2024.

Hope to catch you on one of the many rides we offer or at the socials!

Macclesfield Wheelers Committee