



MILDENHALL CYCLING CLUB

PRESS RELEASE Festival No 4

For immediate release

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The organisers of the Mildenhall Cycling Festival could not have wished for better weather over the August Bank Holiday weekend as thousands of people from across the UK enjoyed themselves in the Suffolk countryside out on their bikes, or enjoying the packed programme of events on site.

This is the first time the new look Festival was back to its full three-day format and previously known as the Mildenhall Cycling Rally was held in and around West Row Village Hall and an adjacent camping field with views looking out over the Fens! It is just over two miles from the old Rally site and Mildenhall with many riding the short distance on the tarmacked Wamil Way bridleway.

Chairman of the organisers, Mildenhall Cycling Club, Mark Burchett said, "Although compared to the last few years of the old Mildenhall Cycling Rally, the numbers were down. But the important thing from our point of view is all those that did attend the relaunched Festival went away very happy and excited at the new venue and what we are trying to achieve.

Having had complete washouts on the final day in 2014 and 2015, we were overdue a decent weekend and it has helped tremendously, allowing our visitors to see just how good the new venue and facilities at and around West Row Village Hall is.

This now gives us a terrific platform on which to build the event back up again. There are already a few things that we know we need to tweak for next year and we will continue to listen to the feedback from this year's visitors"

Speaking on behalf of the Village Hall Trustees, Michael Peachey said "We were pleased to be able to provide a new home to the popular festival, and it was good to see so many people making use of and enjoying the great facilities we are fortunate to have here in the village. By all accounts it was very well received by the local community, and we look forward to working with the Club over the years to come to ensure the ongoing success of the event."

The grass-track as ever was the centrepiece of the Festival, with racing every day from 12 noon. It was interspersed with Children's Sports and fun events, which were very well received by the riders and spectators alike.

Some of the racing on the Saturday from the Juveniles was a joy to watch! Local riders Caris and Harley Gregory (West Suffolk Wheelers) finished third in the Under 8 and first in the Under 12 Omniums, respectively.

John McClelland (Bush Healthcare) was the dominant rider in the Seniors Omnium, finishing with just 13 points, while just two points separated David Mitchinson (CC Ashwell) in second with 20 points and Mitch Powell (Team Terminator) in fourth. Lawrence Lister (Green Arrows) finished third with 21 points.

Powell's younger sister Sherilyn riding for BowlPhish Racing was the clear winner in the Ladies Omnium recording just 4 points, five ahead of Lindsay Clark (Fenland Clarion) and seven ahead of Alice Codling (Gt Yarmouth CC) in third.

The Fun events included a Minion & Spoon race, Backward Bike Push as well as the inclusion of an old favourite, the 'Bristow' Devil, named after World and Olympic Para Champion, Mark Bristow MBE who was a member of Mildenhall CC before he moved to the USA.

Providing a suitable backdrop to the grass-track arena was the Trade Show on the Sunday & Monday, with Thrill Seeker's mega Bouncy Castle, Face Painting by Kellii from Off the Curb & Over the Rainbow and Stevie Spud, Circus Skills workshop, also lining the track.

Special Guest 'Boysie', a Percheron Gelding, had a severe case of stage fright and failed to show on the Sunday. Owner and handler Barry Atkin, said there is just no point trying to argue with him once he has made his mind up he doesn't want to do something!

But stand in 'Sid', a Suffolk Punch, more than made up for the absence of his much bigger working horse companion 'Boysie'. Young children and adults alike got to get close up to the friendly giant, whose breed were once the mainstay of the Suffolk farming landscape.

Nearly two hundred of the campsite tent and caravan pitches were occupied, most of which were families. As well as the younger generation, the organisers are very keen to promote the environmentally friendly aspects of cycling and had offered an incentive to those that actually cycled to the Festival. They are very pleased that of the 30 lightweight cycle camper pitches 12 of them claimed the £5 refund, which reduced the cost of their pitch to just £23 for the whole weekend.

Riding for the host Club in the Children's Duathlon, Alex Robb and Colin Mantle took the top two places in the 11-16-year-old age group, with Alex's younger brother Francis, finishing in a very respectable 8th position.

In the Madison Cyclo-Cross, father and son Kevin & Tom Peyton (Stourbridge CC) beat Paul Bird & Stewart Miller riding for Ipswich BC and Mitch Powell & Lawrence Lister. Behind them there was an interesting tussle for fourth and fifth between West Suffolk Wheelers duo Father & Son Barry & Matt Denny and Mildenhall's Matthew Mantle and Zak Towler with the visiting Club doing enough to just finish ahead of the host club riders!

Both the Cycle Jumble on Saturday evening and the Quiz Night on Sunday evening seemed rejuvenated at the new venue, with both venues packed! The Tricycle Association's second team won the quiz ahead of a team representing Fenland Clarion.

On the touring front, C.T.C. (Cyclists Touring Club) Suffolk had hundreds of cyclists riding over 57, 100, 160, 200 or even 300km timed-touring rides on the Saturday, with the fine weather meaning all but one of them finished. While many bought Mildenhall Cycling Club's touring leaflets that allowed them to go off on their own to enjoy a variety of scenery over varying distances.

"There are too many people and organisations to name individually, but the Festival would not have taken place without their efforts and on behalf of Mildenhall Cycling Club, I would like to thank them all!" concluded Mr Burchett.

A complete set of the results and pictures can be found at www.mildenhallfestival.bike

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NOTES FOR EDITORS.

- PLEASE DO NOT PUBLISH ANY PHONE NUMBERS. The website has an email address they can write to which gets checked daily, but unfortunately as we are all volunteers, we cannot deal with the volume of phone enquiries from the public that the Festival generates. Thank you for your co-operation.
- If you want to use the Festival logo, please contact Mark Burchett for a high-resolution version.
- For more details from Forest Heath District Council, please contact Mark Beaumont (Media Officer) 01638 719236 or Julie White 01638 719728