



MILDENHALL CYCLING CLUB

PRESS RELEASE Festival No 4

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This year's Mildenhall Cycling Festival was blighted by bad weather on the Sunday which deterred most of the people who would have visited on the Sunday from attending!

Although it did not stop most of the hundred's camped on site from staying and take advantage of the improvement in the weather on Monday.

Mark Burchett chairman of the organisers Mildenhall Cycling Club said "It is something beyond our control but it is terribly disappointing that all the hard work put in by Club members and the organisations, sponsors and traders we work with, reaped very little reward on the day.

The weather forecasts before the weekend predicted rain with wind of up to 40mph and although we were not hit by the strong winds like other events further south, the forecast and the rain on the day was enough to deter all but the hardiest of souls to venture out. It could have been so much worse but after the Children's Duathlon in the morning which had a reduced entry, the crowds disappeared"

"The grass-track still went ahead but using the Fun alternative programme that ironically had been planned when we were in the middle of the drought to reduce the risk of accidents for the riders racing on a track that would have been more like riding on an ice-sheet with no grip. Instead it was used because the conditions were too wet! Mr Burchett added.

The one race that was not cancelled was the 8km Mini-Milk Race as it was the penultimate round of British Cycling's National Grass-Track Endurance Series. In spite of the conditions it was a thrilling race to watch and was won by one of the pre-race favourites Laurence Lisher (Green Arrow CRT). It had begun with a spill of riders, although fortunately none were injured and all were able to get back up. In the latter stages David Mitchinson (Contour Cycles RT) made a bid for glory and Series points attempted to go away and led by up to 50m at one point. But First Category rider Lisher showed why he is leading the Series this year to produce an electrifying turn of pace on an energy sapping track to overhaul Mitchinson in the closing laps.

The Mini-Milk race was sponsored by local cricketer and cyclist Ken Lucas from Worlington in memory of his brother Robert who died recently. Mr Lucas has been cycling with the Mildenhall Club since the 1960's.

Laurence's brother Phil Lisher (Hemel Hempstead CC) won the Men's Parsramps and JKH Drainage Omnium events, while Jennifer Andrews (CC Ashwell) won the Women's A&A Motors, JKH Drainage, Mark's Fruit & Veg stall Omnium.

The Festival weekend had got off well with the majority of the 150 camp and caravan pitches occupied by the end of the Friday evening. At 5am Saturday morning, 29 intrepid riders started the C.T.C. (Cyclists Touring Club) Suffolk Festival Roving 300km Audax ride, with the first rider back at 4.47pm, averaging nearly 16mph (25.5kph)! The last one arrived at two minutes passed midnight – 58 minutes inside the cut-off time! In all 148 rode in these timed touring routes over 57, 100, 160, 200 & 300km distances.

The first ever running of an official On & Off-Road Time-Trial, sanctioned by time-trialling's governing body in the UK, Cycling Time-Trials (CTT) was an over-whelming success. Run as a Taster Event, it may have only attracted 16 riders, but this was more of a learning exercise for the Club and the CTT. Judging by the reaction of each and every rider they thoroughly enjoyed the experience and this event will definitely be part of next year's Festival.

Paul Moss from local club Stowmarket & District CC was the fastest around the mixed and unique Fenland 23km course of byways, tarmac lanes and Drovers in a time of 40minutes 27seconds, well ahead of his nearest rivals. David Robb for the host club missed out on second place by just three seconds from Andy Bell (Selby CC), which he would easily overcome had he not had a fall on the course.

Saturday evening's Cycle Jumble was as popular as ever with plenty of people browsing the jumble tables which continued out of the marquee, such was the interest in having a table!

The Children's Duathlon supported by SJ Parr & Sons on Sunday morning did manage to miss the rain with nearly 50 children from across the UK competing in the different age categories. The 5 & Under section included what must have been the youngest competitor over the whole weekend, two-year-old Anwyn Wienloch-South from Fenland Clarion CC.

Also notable was Ivy Adams who like Anwyn not only competed in the Duathlon but the Barry Atkin Children's Sports that were held every day. Not that anyone watching her would have known but this brave little 5-year-old girl only has half a heart and all the associated problems that that brings! It is a testament to the Festival that children of all ages and abilities can compete and above all else enjoy themselves in the family friendly atmosphere. Ivy's family especially her grandparent Lyn and Alan Gay who live in the Hull area have been coming to the event for well over 25 years.

In addition to those events Ivy also took part in the Balanceability Bike Sessions for 4-7 year olds, provided by Abbeycroft Leisure. They used balance bikes which are lightweight, pedal-less child's bikes, enabling young children to cycle without ever needing stabilisers.

The Sainsbury's Quiz Sunday evening packed out the village hall, whose wonderful facilities the Festival is based at and around. Seventeen teams watched by friends and club-mates enjoyed an evening of trying to answer questions on the weird and obscure set by quiz master and West Row resident, Dave Sennitt. Helen Gower from Sainsbury's in Mildenhall who helped score during the evening presented the prizes to the winning team 'Fenland Clarion Youth'

On the final day of the Festival Cyclo-Cross took advantage of the rural setting of & around the village hall and adjacent land of Alan Rolfe to provide an interesting and testing course!

Like the Duathlon, the Under 9 and 12's races were very popular with the children and watching parents & spectators. William Holland-Leader, whose family are from Godalming, Surrey and have been visiting the festival for a number of years won the Under 9's group, ahead of local rider Caris Gregory from local club West Suffolk Wheelers. Other local riders were Emily Mistsenico from Thetford, Norfolk and Eila Ward from Stanton, Suffolk.

Riding for the host Club in the Under 16's race was Colin Mantle who finished sixth ahead of West Suffolk Wheeler's Matthew Waller.

The Mildenhall's traditional 'Mad Madison' was won by father and son team of Kevin & Tom Payton from Stourbridge CC in a time of 34minutes 13 seconds. A further minute down was Mitch Powell & Laurence Lisher (Slug Slug) while Mildenhall's own father & son team of David & Alex Robb finished in a very respectable seventh.

A full round up of all the results with pictures are on www.mildenhallfestival.bike.

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NOTES FOR EDITORS.

- 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/Photographs, please contact Mark Burchett for high-resolution versions.
- For more details from Forest Heath District Council, please contact Mark Beaumont (Media Officer) 01638 719236 or Julie White 01638 719728