

Nearly 200 Members!

TIMBER



Expanding, Building & Maintaining Mountain Bike Trails and Routes in the Thetford Forest

Newsletter Issue 9

www.timbermtb.org

Jan-Feb 2009

Chairman's Report

TIMBER chairman John Gould gets "quite excited" about the future!

First of all, I must make reference to the AGM. A really good turnout, thanks to everyone who attended. I think the landlord was happy to see a room full of people on a slow Thursday evening - but then again most evenings in The Bull must seem slow! A big thank you to **Revel Outdoors** for providing raffle prizes, it was much appreciated. I must say though, that by the end of the evening I was sick of the sound of my own voice so I can only imagine how bad it must have been for you!

The minutes are on the forum for anyone who has not already read them. It needs to be said though that there's still some unfinished business. There are two committee posts that need to be filled - Public Relations and Fund Raising. No one was willing to even to be considered for either post, which is a little disappointing. I appreciate that time may be an issue here so we are open to job sharing if you feel able to help but can't commit to giving it as much attention as the post requires, maybe find a friend to work with?

If we have no PR then no one outside Thetford will ever know we exist and if we maintain the lowest of profiles, how can we possibly hope to attract sponsors or external funding? All I can ask is that you think about it and contact any of the committee if you want to have a go.

In the last month, things have moved on apace. The FC have a firm timetable for the contractors to start work, our trail crew now have a defined role helping to prepare trails. The trail inspection crew have dates for training including on how to ride a bike! Trail maintenance days are back on the agenda and Ops 1 has been submitted for our next big project. We now have nigh on 200 paid up members and the garden is looking rosier than it has of late.

The initial order of shirts has been rolled out and by now, everyone who ordered one should have them. As mentioned at the AGM, the first person to get a decent picture of the shirt in the



Recent snowy conditions on Tigtrope

TIMBER SUPPORTERS



Bury Free Press or East Anglian Daily Times will get a bottle of wine or a box of chocolates if they are under age. (I will determine what constitutes a "decent" picture!) If you know of anyone who would like a shirt, we have some spares.

Colin Herd has relinquished his committee post as web bod owing to the fact that he is studying to design web sites! Thanks for all your work Col, it has been much appreciated!

As our first build day of the year approaches I think we can look forward to an activity filled 2009 and I must say, I'm getting quite excited!

Cycling Development team meeting

Roger Powell reports on the meeting held Friday 10th January

Some of you will know that a TIMBER representative is invited to take part in the Forestry Commission Cycling Development team monthly meeting. Paul or Stuart usually attend but as they were not available for the January meeting they asked me to take their place.

Senior managers, Forest Rangers, FC Civil Engineers, Thetford MTB racing and Bike Art were all present. The meeting was very positive and I got the impression that they were all fully committed to the future of cycling in Thetford Forest. The minutes will be published on the Forum in due course.

The two things that came out of the meeting of most interest to TIMBER was that the Contractors are soon to start on the all weather surfacing of 2 kilometres of the Red Route and that they are keen for us to get on with the proposed improvement to the Blue Route link on the Thetford side of the B1106 from Brandon Country Park to High Lodge.

The blue route link will be an all weather section just across the B1106 road for 150 meters and include improving the safety of crossing the road to give better visibility. There has recently been the addition of a Bus Stop perfectly positioned for us to hopefully take advantage of. It has hard standing, and will allow us to create a staggered crossing.

Paul Jewby and myself have surveyed the site and I will be preparing the necessary paperwork to apply for OPS 1 permission from the Forestry Commission so we can make a start in the Spring.

TIMBER will purchase the stone financed from the Suffolk County Council £1000 grant awarded to us last year.

Thetford Winter Series

Tina Potter, honorary TIMBER racing correspondent reports on the recent Thetford racing series

In October 08 I wrote, "I ride an old Marin Bobcat which I bought for under a hundred for last years Rough Stuff events. It seems to cope. About the winter series, can anyone give me a link? I know this exists but don't know much more."

RECENT TIMBER STATEMENT IN THE IMBA UK FEBRUARY 2009 UPDATE

After a difficult year there's finally some good news for the trails in Thetford Forest. The Forestry Commission have renewed their commitment to make a significant investment in the trails and will be surfacing 2km of the red route bringing it up to an all weather standard. The local trail group "TIMBER" will be supporting the FC where possible.

Contractors will be on-site from the beginning of March and the FC will soon start tree thinning to make way for them. For work to happen safely the FC have little choice but to close the popular red route. They plan to try and reopen it again in time for Easter if the conditions allow.

We ask that no one tries to ride the closed off areas (which will be clearly sign posted) or any of the new trails as soon as they've been built. New trails need time to settle, harden and normalise before they can receive any load. Experience shows the trails will last longer if they're not ridden too early. It's the difference between a trail lasting 10 years and a trail lasting 2 years.

WS1 BCP. Fast Swoopy Trails

WS1 terrified me; I had no idea what I'd let myself in for. I stopped to let packs of men go by; was afraid of the 'bridges' in case I was pushed off and sank in a quagmire; was thankful there were no bomb holes and amazed by a septuagenarian in the 4 hour race! I vowed that for WS2 I'd start at the back and after that sell my place if need be. I went on a **Get Mountain Biking** beginner's course. Sara Flatt (Salsa Factory Racing), contacted me about a women's day and by the time WS2 came I had the bug.

WS2 Santon Downham. Bomb Holes and Sapping Surfaces

The day was cold, frosty and beautifully sunny. One of those wonderful to be alive days. I'd not met frozen mud before. I decided not to attempt the bomb hole, queuing gave me time to think; I got off, slid down and ran with my bike out the other side, relieved to be safe! I was unaware there was another lined up for me to fall in! The course was slogging hard. In contrast to frozen sections the sun had thawed patches and the fresh cut, soft, lumpy trail was energy sapping. Very different from WS1.

WS3 Tunstall. Mud Mud Mud

TROG prepared a course with TLC. The fortnight leading up to race day was very wet. I'm afraid of mud. I told myself all I had to do was get round once, that there would be no shame in pulling out. Once out there, run/walking almost as much as riding, I knew that persistence would offer a reasonable place as many wouldn't be mad enough to keep going. Sure enough, the atrocious conditions suited my endurance. Speed was of lesser importance. I learned a lot about mud, often at very close quarters, became a proficient faller; mostly from a near static position.

WS4 BCP Tears and Alcohol

A mild but dull day took us back to now familiar territory that no longer held fear for me. The course was fast flowing and exciting. By now I had been on a Get Mountain Biking intermediate course, upgraded my bike, discovered Nobby Nics and done some night rides. For the first time I felt quietly confident, thought I knew what I was doing.

Things did not go to plan. I hooked my shorts on my seat setting off, luckily kept the shorts but lost my gridded position. My chain seized: I stopped, sorted it. Started, nearly come off, discovered I'd nearly lost my rear wheel. Started again, chain came off on the Plumb Buster. I wanted to give up. I had my worst race of the series.

On cleaning my bike, I discovered the back wheel wouldn't turn freely, not even one revolution... I'd bent the disc when the wheel came out!! Amazed I'd continued for 3 gruelling laps with the brakes effectively on, I drowned myself in a bottle of red!



Looking Back...

The thing that has struck me most has been the friendliness, relaxed atmosphere and sportsmanship that have existed in this series. My skills have been transformed beyond recognition from that first race and my experience has thrilled me. Each course has had its own unique character. I'd like to say a huge thank you to Paul, Frank and team for superb organisation and fantastic fun.

PS. Watch out for the TIMBER Team in the Summer Series 6hour pairs!! *Tina (L8 Starter)*.

New Members

The observant ones among you will have noticed that we are reporting nearly 200 TIMBER members (192 to be exact) in this newsletter a big increase since the last newsletter. This is because the FC has finally delivered the details of those who have joined via the season ticket scheme. However we are missing some vital details so if you have joined TIMBER via a season ticket and you want to get more involved in the group please get in touch with the membership secretary. Details of new members below – thanks for your support!




S Page, J Evans, C Varani, J Fitzpatrick, S Reece, R Handley, S Larson, J Williams, N West, G Norman, S Christie, D Sanders, A Price, J Talbot, P Scarff, J Collyer-Crane, M Bensley, N McConnell, S Taylor, N Howard, V Stasiak, S Arya, L Wilkinson, T Claydon, T Rands, S Hensley, C Matthews, S Lawson, G Pringle, J Green, T Hyde, P Arthurs, J Durville, T Nash, R Britland, A Metcalf, W Boyle, P O'loughlin, P Rotherwell, D Hunt, A Denton, J Norman, Nat. Autistic Society, D Clark, N Morgan, J Hutchison, R Cutler, D Owen, A Hay, S Hollis, M Browne, L Mosley, S Staples, S Craske, A Smith, C Pringle, S Partridge, R Sartain-Rouse, L Barker, I Selfridge, K Gale, A Moniz, D Briant, R Thurston, E Westwell, T Earey, C Smith, M Akhaei, T Graville, E Peterson, A Moffat, T Moffat, A Verney, Ian Gillies, Len Fletcher, James Arnold, Paul Purcell

If anyone has any membership queries, please get in touch with the Membership Secretary (membership@timbermtb.org) or Treasurer. Contact the Web Master to get access to the private discussion area on the forum. Note that April is membership renewal time!

NOTICES





CALENDAR

See www.timbermtb.org/calendar.htm, and check the forum before attending a TIMBER event.

-  **TIMBER Meeting** – Thu 12th March – General TIMBER meeting – everyone welcome.
-  **FC Development Team Meetings** – Fri 13th March, Wed 22nd April – send your any items for discussion to TIMBER representative Roger Powell
-  **Trail Building with FC contractors** – As and when needed every weekend in March!

MARCH GROUP RIDES

These are kindly organised by Martin Monaghan (Moe on the forum). The following dates are subject to change. Before attending please first make contact via the forum in the Groups Ride section. All rides from Brandon Country Park (BCP) 10.00am Orchard Car Park unless otherwise stated.

-  Thursday 5th March (Night ride) Meet 7.00pm @ BCP visitor centre carpark
-  Saturday 14th March (Build day?! ride early?)
-  Saturday 28th March
-  Sunday 29th March

TIMBER COMMITTEE

Chairman – John Gould	Secretary – Stuart Head
Treasurer – Peter Harper	Chief Trail Pixie – Paul Jewby
Membership secretary – Tim Duncan	Webmaster – Tim Duncan
Cycling dev. team rep. – Roger Powell	

Fundraising and PR roles are currently vacant – can you help?

CONTACT DETAILS

Email – info@timbermtb.org

Forum – <http://timbermtb.org/forum>