

On Yer Bike

with Ian Bailey

GOOD morning On Yer Bikers, did you miss me?

A week out and I feel a little more refreshed and fitter – ergo more able to ensure you get the best cycling stories and advice to keep you motivated and riding your way into a better frame of mind, body and soul.

Keep it up, guys and girls, you are doing well.

A week last Saturday, a beautiful day dawned, with blue skies and the promise of light winds.

A cyclist's dream, I thought, and the hardy Southport Club riders, led by their now well established ride leader, Geoff Caton, deliberated as to whether or not to extend their Saturday ride further into the West Pennine Moorlands to include Tockholes and Belmont before their return pushing the days total to over 80 miles with more than 4,000ft of ascent.

Chapeau, chaps!

I was busy helping construct the safety barriers and placing cones on the track in the park for the youth of our great club.

I would be riding the following day but this day, for me, was my chance to help our up and coming youth riders achieve their goals in a safe, well managed environment under British Cycling rules.

Then I made my way to the Liverpool Cycle Rally, making the case for cycling to the metro mayor candidates.

Cycling the last few miles to the Pier Head got me thinking of what a new metro mayor means to us cyclists, not just in Liverpool but also here in Sefton (as the metro mayor will also have a say in our transport objectives here).

Both the Merseyside Cycle Campaign and Cycling UK hope that Liverpool's first metro mayor will be a strong advocate for both cycling and walking strategies in the future.

Their influence will help to developing better and more sustainable ways to work and live here in Merseyside.

In preparation for the rally, Dr Stella Shackel had written to all eight candidates, hoping they would come and address prominent members of our cycling fraternity on their infrastructure vision for Liverpool city region but until the week before the event none had replied to her inquiry on behalf of the Merseyside Cycle Campaign.

On the day, two cycle-friendly candidates came and pledged that they would ensure cycling and walking would be given space should they become metro mayor.

Tom Croone of the Green Party and Carl Cashman, the Liberal Democrat, took the megaphone in turn and pledged to further improve the Merseyside infrastructure for us all.

I wish both Tom and Carl well and good luck in the upcoming elections. If I could, I would be voting for both as they both took the time to

Rallying to the cause



● Cyclists cheer the mayoral candidates at the Liverpool cycle Rally



● Breeze women's cycling representatives at the rally

come and engage with us cyclists and their concerns were heartfelt and positive for Merseyside.

Before making my way back to Southport to help marshal and clear up after the championships I bid a fond farewell to all my Merseyside Cycling friends who attended the event, including: Dame Janet Atherton, Cycling UK trustee; Sara Braithwaite Merseyside & Cheshire Breeze coordinator; Pedal Away Cycling Group; Roland Birch, Dover Cycling Fellowship representative; and everyone of the 100 or so riders who came to show their support for Cycling UK and cycling in Merseyside.

A short journey back to Southport and I was in time to watch and photograph the last three or four races of the cham-

pionships again we had powerful displays from both the world-dominating Cosgrove boys.

Daniel with a third place and Joe gaining second after failing to disengage a rider who was tucked in close behind him right up to the finish, where the tucked rider finally took advantage and out-sprinted Joe to the line.

Isabelle McKinnon kept herself in the mix for the championship finishing in the top five of her class in both races.

Well done Southport CC and many thanks to all the marshals and helpers on the day for making Southport a great cycling town for others to enjoy.

HEADS-UP

How does a mid-summer

● Isabelle Mckinnon from Southport CC lines up against strong competition in Victoria Park



ride of 200km including more than 10,000ft of ascent grab you? Next week I will be reporting on Southport's newest event – the Fleet Moss Audax – and why audaxing is fast becoming the choice of the discerning cyclist when it comes to cycling fun and enjoyment. Until then get out, wave and smile – summer's coming enjoy!

WALKING NEWS

Southport Walking & Social Group (Ramblers Association affiliated) is looking to recruit more walkers for their well

established social group. They have an exciting programme of beautiful walks coming up in May.

Grasmere in the Lakes and Buckden in North Yorkshire have been chosen for their lovely vistas and charm. A moderate standard of fitness is required to participate.

Call 07766 428033 for more details or to check out their Facebook page, search Southport walking and social club.

CYCLE CHAT

The next meeting of the Sefton Cycle Chat will be held

at MeCycle café, 59 tation Rd, Ainsdale, PR8 3HH.

After the success of the last meeting where 50 people came to talk about cycling and how you can be better supported by Sefton Active Travel, they are keen to keep the vibes going and hope you can come along.

The meeting starts at 6.30pm tomorrow (Wednesday, May 3) and continues until 8pm. Come along, all are welcome.

If you have any comments or thoughts on cycling please drop me a line at Onyerbike285@gmail.com or phone 07596 557553.



● Action from the first meeting of the North West Cycling Championship and, right, Southport CC's Conor Mckinnon in the mix