


BLAZING SADDLES THE HOUGHTON CC NEWSLETTER

81 years old this year 1932 to 2013

May 2013



Our club rooms, Kepier Hall, the access is through the main gates of St Michael's Church, on 'The Broadway' Houghton.




10% discount for members

Cannondale, Marin, Kona, GT, Mongoose, Raleigh, Brompton folding bikes

2 & 3 John Street
Sunderland SR1 1DX
0191 5108155

BLAZING SADDLES



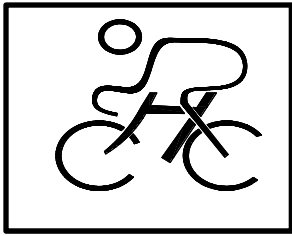
I see we have a few cowboys riding today



25% discount for members on new cycles, 20% on accessories.

main stockists of Trek Bikes, Giant Bicycles, Cervelo Frames, Ridgeback Bikes, Genesis Bikes, Fit bmx, Hoffman Bmx, Kink BMX, Subrosa BMX, Onza Trials Bikes.

222 High Street West,
Sunderland, SR1 1TZ
0191 514 1974



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Editors Comment: Harry Brown:

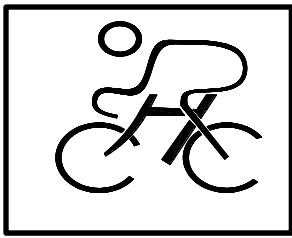
After last month's much delayed effort I thought that I had better extract the digit for this one, a sort of buy one get one free sort of month. I have decided on a new feature starting this month which I have called 'Hall Of Fame' I thought it might be of interest to younger and new members to have some insight into the legends of the sport. I start with Fausto Coppi who was my hero in my teens and remember his death with disbelief in 1960, I will follow it up over the coming months with, Frederico Bahamontes the Eagle of Toledo, Charlie Gaul the Angel of The Mountains, Eddie Merckx eight times winner of the Tour De France, Maurice Garin the winner of the first Tour De France in 1903 and others. I am also starting a section called 'Club Memoirs' with exploits and achievements of club members over the years, for instance Chris Watson beating Barry Hoban (who went on to win stages in the Tour De France) in the National Clarion 25, I start this month with my memories of riding the Barton Road Race on the Humber in the late 50's, anyone with other stories and exploits please let me know and over the months we can build a history of past glories, disaster's and comradeship so that new members can understand the foundations on which the club has been built on. I might also let Councilor Denowt go for a summer holiday as I am running out of ideas and I am sure you are all fed up with him anyway, maybe he will be back later in the year. I am informed that the club now has 90 members, fantastic, what a difference a year makes.

Out and About:

About Our Club Runs: The club run has been at the heart of the club since its conception 80 years ago and in the tradition of the club it is a social event and run at the speed of the slowest rider. We have two club runs the first for longer and a more demanding ride meet at 9.30 on The Broadway Houghton. A more leisurely ride using a circular route to Durham for coffee at Vennels usually approx. 30 to 35 miles leaves at 10am. Weather permitting in both cases.

Thursday mornings is an easy social mountain bike ride touring the river wear of about 20miles stopping for coffee at the Washington Wild Fowl Trust and following the C2C route for some of the way, mostly on tracks. Anyone interested we meet at Westfield Grove (opposite the Bishopwearmouth Cemetery Gates) at 9.30, ring or email me for details.

Check out the web site for the latest runs and training rides



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Racing News

Roving Reporter: Harry Brown

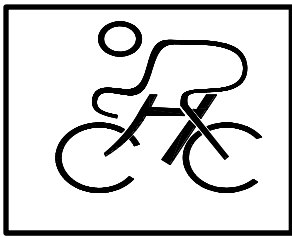
The clubs open 25 sponsored by Chuck Taylor went very well with an incredible winning time of 55min, for further information on clubs riders and the full results look on the club website.



Audax, Sportif

Reporters Required

No Audax to report this month but although the CTC York Rally has been cancelled this year the Ron Kitchen challenge ride is still on from a starting venue in York. I do not know exactly where the start is but I would advise anyone wishing to ride to contact the CTC. It is a great ride if the weather is kind and I would recommend it.



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Club Memoirs

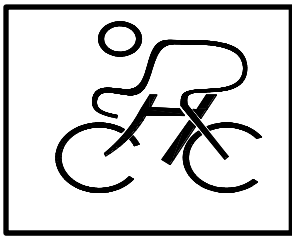
Reporter Harry Brown

Cycling without Cars.

In the late 50's the club had over 120 members and almost nobody had a car, if you wanted to ride an event, you had to ride to it, there was no other way. We would ride to Ponteland early Sunday morning for a 25 and ride back on the same day after sometimes lazing by the river (funny how you always seem to remember the sunny days). I once worked night shift and rode straight after it, at 6am, to a 25 at Blaydon, arriving just in time for my start I was on the line when the timekeeper a certain Sid Blakey, renowned for his strict adherence to the rules, noticed I did not have a bell on my bike and wouldn't let me ride, I rode home tired and disillusioned.

We would ride to Carlisle over the A69 (passing Spadeadam where they were testing the British designed Blue Streak Rocket) for the Border City Wheelers 25 on the Saturday and ride back on the Sunday after the race. Riding to Stokesley for events on Teesside was a regular thing staying at a dilapidated farm house owned by Mrs. Barr at Seamer on the Saturday night and returning on the Sunday, her giant Yorkshire puddings were something to savor, served alone before the meat and veg and covered in gravy (fantastic) but it was regularly two or sometimes three in a feather bed, I once arrived early went to bed alone and woke to find three others in the bed, two in the bottom and one beside me in the top. The bike shed was an open barn where hens roamed freely, next day chicken droppings on your bike was very common sight.

I think it was either Easter or Whitsun when we had bank holiday Monday off work, we would ride to Barton south of the Humber to ride the Barton Road Race, leaving on the Friday to ride to York for bed and breakfast, ride to Hull on the Saturday, take the ferry across the Humber for a short ride to Barton for bed and breakfast. On the Sunday we would ride the 45 mile road race (which was completely flat except for one huge hill in the middle) and then set off to ride the 130 miles to home in one go, I would arrive home after 1am in the morning once being stopped by a policeman at the top of Houghton Cut having been suspected of being a burglar (most of us carried our spare clothes in a bonk bag strapped onto our backs), he sternly asked what I was doing out at



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that time of night and where I had been, when I told him he just looked at me in disbelief and sent me on my way.

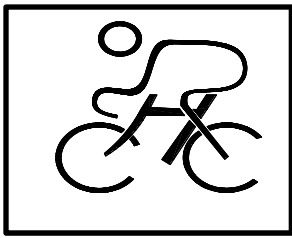
I remember riding the club road race at Wolsingham (1st, 2nd, and 3rd cats, 3 laps of the Vaux circuit) riding the 28 miles there with the club members and then riding the 80 mile very hilly course and then riding the 28 miles home again. Racing wheels were carried on brackets either side of the front wheel clamped by the quick release with toe straps tying them to the handlebar drops, or sometimes on a bar through the top of the saddle bag, I preferred the front wheel method. At the digs the evening before the race everyone would be changing wheels, adjusting, polishing, oiling their bikes or sticking on tubular tyres. Cycle clothing was basic with no Lycra or skin suits available, cotton or wool racing shorts and jerseys were order of the day. For riding to events, training and touring the favoured shop was the Army and Navy stores where good but heavy waterproof jackets and thick gloves could be bought. With no cycle helmets most wore a cap or woolen skull cap and jeans tied at the ankle with toe straps, very sexy.

Eddie McGourley and I rode down to London to stay at my Aunts, stayed a couple of days and rode back riding two races on the way and spent one night sleeping on stretchers on the floor of a fire station. Eddie, George Pickering and I met after work on the Friday at the start of the annual holidays and rode all night to catch a ferry at Harwich, after being nearly knocked off our bikes by a drunken motor cyclist in the dark on Clack bank we nearly made it, but completely knackered and almost falling asleep, had to take a train for the last 30 miles or so. On the continent, over the next 12 days, we rode on average 100 miles a day through Holland, Belgium, Germany, Luxemburg and France with next to no money and arriving back in England two weeks later with nothing but a loaf of bread and a tin of ambrosia rice between us. The club endurance test was in early spring leaving Houghton for Barnard Castle and the A66 to Penrith then over Hartside Pass and down the Wear Valley to finish at the club house in Newbottle, to be eligible for a medal you had to be back at the club house before 7pm, I remember walking up Newbottle bank to the club house completely knackered and making it with ten minutes to spare, I still have that medal and will never forget the ride.

Another time we rode all-night to Liverpool and took the ferry for the Isle of Man cycling week and back again at the end of the week. The next year I had my first flight in an airplane leaving at a very basic Newcastle airport complete with Nissan huts. We rode to the airport and taking off the wheels, tied them in the triangle. Covered it with a sheet and carried it on board as hand baggage, at the other end surprised passengers saw us take off the sheets fit the wheels and ride off, great days. It was an old twin propeller plane and I remember and notice on the back of the seat in front of me which read ' Do not be alarmed if you see flames coming from the engine on takeoff, it is normal' not very encouraging.

Lastly I remember a big group of us riding over to Carlisle on the A69 for the boarder city wheelers annual dinner, the next morning Peter Chisman wanted extra miles in and asked if anyone fancied going back with him over Hartside pass and down the Wear valley, Eddie McGourley and I went with him. How we got to Hartside and by what route I don't remember but I do remember hanging on grimly for most of the day, Peter was almost at his peak later winning the Tour of Britain and Eddie went on to win the King of the Mountains in a later Tour of Britain, that was an experience I will always remember but the following year I hung up the bike and went off into the merchant navy, it must have made me see sense at last!

Other members will have more extraordinary tales to tell, so come on let me have your contributions for future issues.



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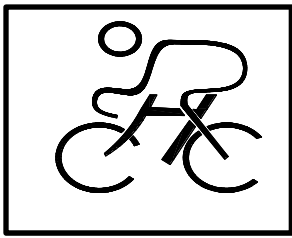
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HALL OF FAME: FAUSTO COPPI



Notice the condition of the road and the spare tyre round his neck, the mountain stage roads were appalling and team support in the event of a puncture or breakdown, few and far between.

Coppi said "... [My uncle] was a merchant navy officer on a petrol tanker, and a real cycling fan. He was touched when he heard of my passion for the bike and decided that I deserved a real tool for the job on which I had set my heart, instead of the rusty old crock I was pushing around. I just cried with joy when my kind uncle gave me the 600 lire that were to make my dream come true. I knew from advertisements I had seen in the local papers that for 600 lire I could get a frame built to my measurements in Genoa. Out of my slender savings I took enough for the train fare to Genoa and back, gave my measurements, and handed over the 600 lire. I would have to buy the fittings and tyres from my errand-boy salary. Oh how my legs used to ache at night through climbing all those stairs during the day! But I'm glad I did, because it surely made my legs so strong. Come back within a week your frame will be ready" said the owner of the cycle shop. But it wasn't ready; and not the next week either, and not the next. For eight weeks I threw precious money away taking the train to Genoa and



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still no made-to-measure bike for me. The fellow just couldn't be bothered making a frame for a skinny country kid who didn't look as if he could pedal a fairy-cycle, let alone a racing bike. I used to cry bitterly as I went back home without the frame. On the ninth journey I took a frame home. But it wasn't a 'made to measure'. The chap just took one down off the rack. I was furious inside, but too shy to do anything about it.

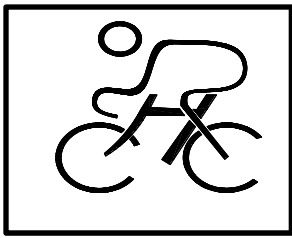
Angelo Fausto Coppi,; 15 September 1919 – 2 January 1960), was the dominant international cyclist of the years each side of the Second World War. His successes earned him the title // **Campionissimo, or champion of champions**. He was an all-round racing cyclist: he excelled in both climbing and time trialing, and was also a great sprinter. He won the Giro d'Italia five times (1940, 1947, 1949, 1952, 1953), the Tour de France twice (1949 and 1952), and the World Championship in 1953. Other notable results include winning the Giro di Lombardia five times, the Milan – San Remo three times, as well as win at Paris–Roubaix and La Flèche Wallonne and setting the hour record (45.798 km) in 1942.

Raphaël Géminiani said of Coppi's domination:

When Fausto won and you wanted to check the time gap to the man in second place, you didn't need a Swiss stopwatch. The bell of the church clock tower would do the job just as well. Whether you are talking about Paris–Roubaix, Milan – San Remo or Tour of Lombardy, We're talking 10 minutes to a quarter of an hour. That's how good Fausto Coppi was.



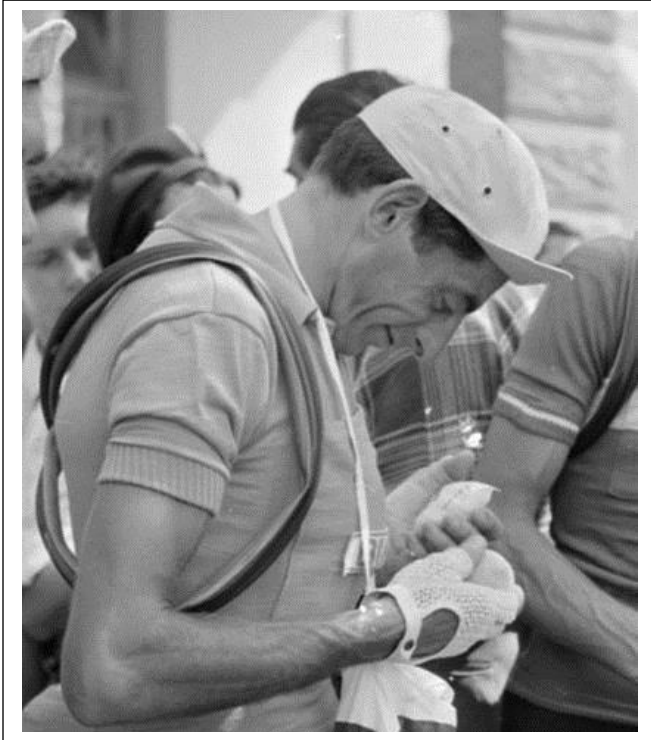
The most famous rivalry was perhaps between Gino Bartali and Fausto Coppi, arguably the greatest feud in cycling history. Gino Bartali was the undisputed champion of Italian cycling until Fausto came along. The latter beat his older rival time and again, winning the race five times and le Tour de France twice. (Gino won the Giro thrice and Tour de France once). Italy took sides between the religious, rural Gino and the self-professed atheist from Italian north, Fausto. Even the Vatican took sides: Pope Pius XII naturally supported religious Gino Bartali and refused to bless one race because Coppi was riding in it. Their personal rivalry was more acidic. In an era when performance-enhancing drugs were not yet forbidden, Coppi admitted to using them almost all the time. Doping infuriated his older rival, who would often keep spies, ransack Coppi's room or picked up Coppi's bottles to figure out what special drug Coppi was using. In 1949 at the world championships, both quit the race rather than help each other win. They apparently reconciled for 1952 Tour de France, but unfortunately the picture here was taken which would alienate two again. On the surface, it seemed like a simple symbol of brotherhood and sportsmanship, and it is. In Italy, it became an iconic image. It showed Coppi (right) holding a water bottle and reaching back to Bartali during the climb of the Col de l'Iseran. Or did it? There followed an extensive debate over who was giving the bottle to whom. Coppi said he was giving it to Bartali. Bartali insisted, "I did. He never gave me anything." They argued about it for years until Coppi's premature death from malaria in 1959.



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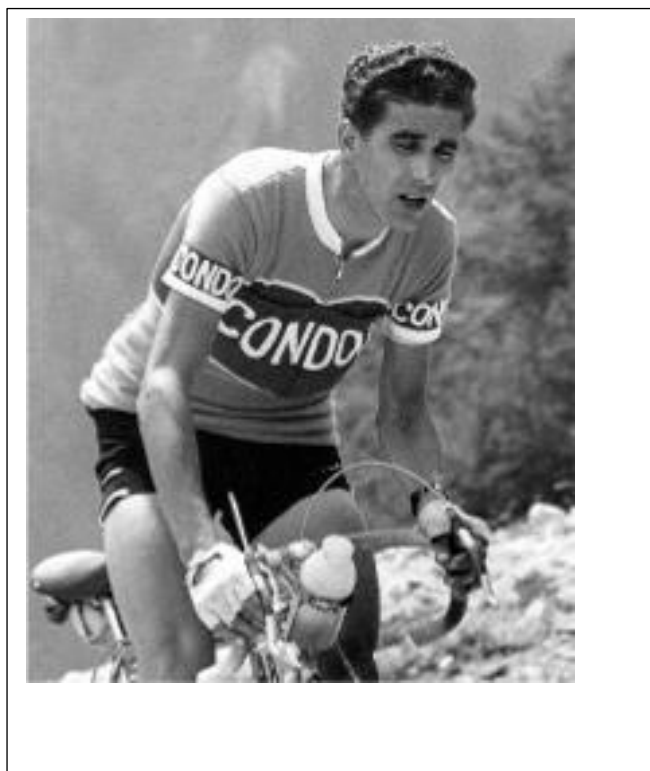
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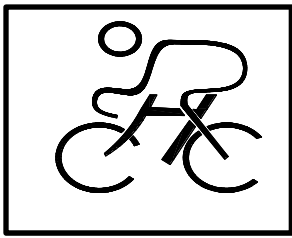


Bill McGann wrote:

Comparing riders from different eras is a risky business subject to the prejudices of the judge. But if Coppi isn't the greatest rider of all time, then he is second only to Eddy Merckx. One can't judge his accomplishments by his list of wins because World War II interrupted his career just as World War I interrupted that of Philippe Thys. Coppi won it all: the world hour record, the world championships, the *grands tours*, classics as well as time trials. The great French cycling journalist, Pierre Chany says that between 1946 and 1954, once Coppi had broken away from the peloton, the peloton never saw him again. Can this be said of any other racer? Informed observers who saw them both ride agree that Coppi was the more elegant rider who won by dint of his physical gifts as opposed to Merckx who drove himself and hammered his competition relentlessly by being the very embodiment of pure will.

Next Month: Frederico Bahamontes the Eagle of Toledo





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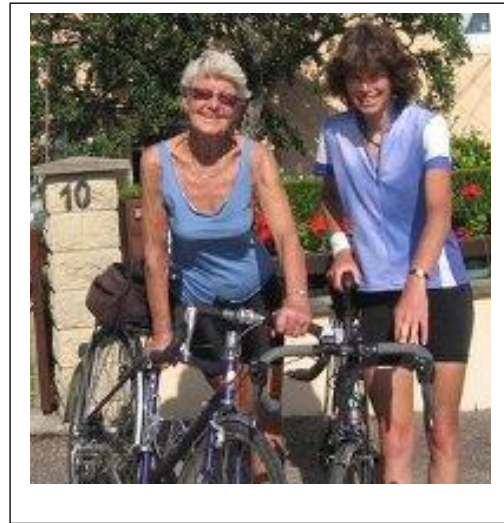
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Road Safety:

Audrey appeal allowed

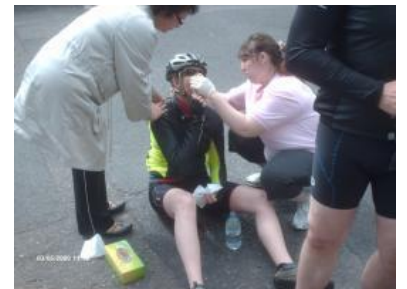
This morning, CTC has learnt that the Crown Counsel in Edinburgh has decided to refer for appeal the case of Gary McCourt, the lorry driver who killed member Audrey Fyfe in August 2011; he had previously also killed cyclist George Dalgity in 1985 by his bad driving. Following a campaign by CTC and other organisations, over 6,000 people wrote to the Lord Advocate to protest against the derisory sentence McCourt was given of a 5-year driving ban and 300 hours' community service. CTC Road Safety Campaigner Rhia Weston says: "The Crown Office only take up 12 appeals at most per year and not all of them are successful, so the fact that this case will be appealed is a huge success." The High Court will then make its decision whether the sentence should be changed or not in the autumn. CTC and the families of both Audrey and George hope this time McCourt is given a life-time driving ban.



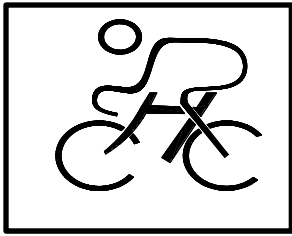
A driver ran over Sarah-Charlotte and her bike on a roundabout, leaving her with severe leg injuries that have changed her life. The driver who said in court that she 'didn't look'; pleaded guilty to careless driving.



Paul suffered a complete fracture to his leg after being hit by a car driver. Rather than the driver being charged, Paul was charged with careless cycling.



Elaine's jaw was broken in 3 places after being hit by a driver making a dangerous overtaking manoeuvre. The driver was fined £66 and received 5 penalty points.

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Not being up on the latest mobile phones (mine is steam powered) I believe that they can, (through Sat Nav) give a very accurate co-ordinate of your position (or a description and photo plus road name would do). I would like to run a campaign locally (I know that the CTC do one nationally) to highlight the atrocious state of the roads in our city. Let's bombard the council with photos and position of the worst pot holes and road surfaces and see if we can force them into action. I would be willing to spear head the campaign as I think it is only a matter of time before someone is injured as a result of being thrown off the bike or by being hit by a car while avoiding one. I can think of a lot even on my way to work, let me know what you think, email me at brownproctor@talktalk.net

Road safety is a big issue why not let me know your thoughts about what should be done?

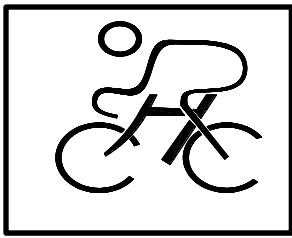
The club meets every Friday at 8pm to 9.30 pm with a special informal get together on the first Friday of the month. Club runs meet at 9.30 and 10am on Sunday mornings from the Broadway Houghton weather permitting. Mountain bike social riders meet at 9.30 Thursday mornings at Westfield Grove opposite Bishopwearmouth Cemetery gates, weather permitting. See also the website for other rides and times.

Contributors this month: Harry Brown

Contact Details and Club Officials:

President: Bob Smith.
Chairman: Eddie McGourley
Treasurer: Kathy Pickering.
Secretary: Dave Cummins.
Social Secretary: Ken Rutherford.
Membership Secretary: Chuck Taylor.
Club Run Secretary: Ian Jobling

Email: houghtoncc@btinternet.com
Email for this newsletter: brownproctor@talktalk.net
Web Site: www.houghtoncc.com



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And Finally:

I am pleased to announce that Chuck is putting on some very special prizes for his 25 next year,

First Prize;

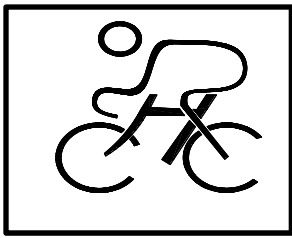
'A Cyclists Pampering and Spa Day' for the under 40's and it should be noted that, (aware of being politically correct) wives, partners, colleagues, girlfriends, associates, the person next door and anyone who has not been mentioned, all have equal opportunities to join their husband partner, colleague, or any such named person on the day, and this newsletter apologises if any person has been omitted or has caused offence in any way.



Second Prize;

A unique opportunity to take part in the **Houghton Annual Bull Run**, this thrilling event is open to riders only by invitation and is guaranteed to increase the speed of the rider, however of course it may not be enough to enable you to out run the jobs at midnight on Easington Lane.





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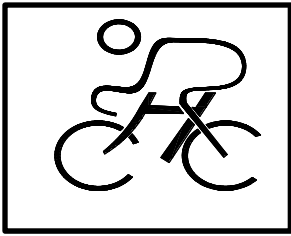
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Vets and over 70's Prize;

A unique opportunity to win a day's **'Tyre Fitting Course'**, these intrepid ladies have years of experience and after the days course, as a finale, will allow the participants to throw their tyres in an attempt to ring their favorite instructor. The first to do so wins a SAGA meal voucher for a night out, or a Campagnolo Geared Zimmer Frame.





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Discount cards are currently being made available to members



Discounts

222 High Street West, Sunderland, SR1 1TZ 0191 5141974 .

Houghton Cycling Club **Blazing Saddles 01**



Voucher 10% discount

2 & 3 John Street, Sunderland SR1 1DX, 0191 5108155

Houghton Cycling Club **Blazing Saddles 01**