

## LIGHTWEIGHT NEWS - 18

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We have taken part in two lightweight rides since the last edition and carried on with the tradition of 'his and hers' bikes. The first event was the annual Ephgrave event which we organise here in Cambridge. I rode my blue 23½" 1959 No. 1 Road/Path on fixed wheel, a wedding present from Patricia, and covered a total of fifty miles on the day. The wheels were Fiamme sprints on blue anodised Airlite hubs plus Chater cranks and pedals. This bike now has a custom stem to match the frame lugs. Patricia rode her 19" 1951 Ephgrave No. 1 road bike, also with Fiamme sprints on Harden 'cheesecutter' hubs. The set-up was completed with Chater cranks and Simplex 5-speed Tour de France gears.

The following weekend we travelled down to Hampshire to join in a lightweight ride in the New Forest and Southampton Water areas. This time we both rode 1948 Paris 'Tour de France' machines with Simplex 'Tour de France' gears. We had a great day out and met lots of old friends.

Being Hampshire I should have taken my Rotrax Super Course which is fitted with a 4-speed 3/32 Osgear. Unfortunately it has a habit of baulking at the change into the lowest gear which is a step from 21-24 teeth. I would like to change the block to a Regina 16-18-20-22 but have not been able to find one. I could use a five-speed 14-16-18-22-24 with the 14 tooth taken off. This would work better if it were the offset sprocket (making the block thinner when removed). If you have such a beast in your box please let me know if you are willing to part with it.

We have just finished building Patricia's latest acquisition which is possibly the last one of Pat Hanlon's own machines built for her by Tom Board. This was built just after she sold her business but was still supplying a few favoured customers from her home. Research told us that the machine was originally finished in purple and had all-Campag gear so this is how we restored it to its former glory. It is in 'Readers' Bikes' on the website. We are told that she owned both a touring machine and this racy model at this time.

### MAKING YOUR OWN TRANSFERS – by Keith Hellon

If there are no transfers available, it is possible to make them yourself. The best equipment is to have a scanner, a printer and a computer with some kind of drawing program. There are ways to do it without these items, it is a little more difficult needing a steady drawing hand, but I shall describe them. You will need a copy, photograph or a reasonable facsimile of the transfer; a tracing from the frame will also work. You will need transfer papers, they are a medium weight backing paper with a coating of flour and special binder on the transfer side. Try professional art supply shops or hobby shops for the papers and also for "Gold Size" (A type of slow drying shellac used by the painters/sign writers who did gold leaf lettering on banks). When at the hobby shop also buy the small jars of enamel thinner and enamel in the colours you need, plus 000 and 0000 paint brushes. If detail work bothers you, perhaps the clip-on enlargers for your glasses. You will also need a can of clear lacquer paint and an Exacto cut-out knife.

If the computer is to be used, scan the images in and transfer them to the drawing program. Any standard typeface used by the transfer (in black only) can be typed in as separate letters and placed over the scan on a different layer. Lines curves and arcs can be used to trace the outlines. When the detailing is complete, reverse the image. Save. Take a sheet of the transfer paper and put two thin coats of clear lacquer on the Coated side. Take a piece of ordinary paper and print the image. A laser printer is the best for this. If The image is satisfactory, cut a section from the transfer paper about 2" wider and 2" longer than the image. Tape this, coated side up with clear tape over the image on the plain paper. No tape should cover where the image will be printed. Put this sample back in the printer in the same orientation as previous. Re-print. If more are required, duplicate the previous steps. I usually add a thin coat of clear lacquer to set the image.

If the computer or printer is not available, you must have a tracing available to put the image on the transfer paper. If the image transferred is in pencil, it must be gone over in India ink. A light lacquer coat can be sprayed over the images. Before doing this, run a test strip of the transfer paper with a couple of India ink lines drawn and dried. Remember, the image should be in reverse! An alternate method would be to copy an India-inked tracing onto the transfer paper via a copy machine. Reversed, of course. A light lacquer coating will fix the image.

Now for painting. Do the lettering and any outlining first. Stay within the lines! The background colour can be applied in relative abandon, after all the detailing is dry as it will be behind the lettering. If there is a metallic gold or silver, it is better to coat the painted area with a water borne varnish with a brush. This prevents the next coat of Gold Size from attacking the medium holding the metallics.

After all is dry, cut the image with a 2 mm border. Apply the Gold Size to the entire painted image. If the image is individual letters, Take an Exacto knife and score, not cut through, around each letter. Paint with the water borne varnish and the Gold Size within the scored lines.

Application: Clean the area where the transfer will be placed. Place masking tape bands around tubes and mark lines in pen to aid placement. After coating the transfers with Gold Size, they must be set aside to get tacky. Usually an hour or two (read the label). When it has become tacky, do a sample to finger test on scrap. Place the transfer in position and wrap masking tape tightly around the tube, covering the entire image. Rub the tape to get the image into intimate contact with tube, also expelling air bubbles. Leave undisturbed for a day or more. Remove masking tape, it will tear the transfer backing paper, but make sure the image is not coming with it. Take a sponge full of water and apply to the transfer paper. Several times until with slight thumb pressure, the backing paper becomes loose. Wet some more until it slides away completely. Dab with a lint free cloth to remove the water. No clear coating is necessary, it is already there.

A third choice is to take an image of lettering you need to a sign maker. The kind who can supply cut lettering in a thin adhesive backed vinyl. This is only good for lettering without a border but many colours are available. If you are lucky, you can find a shop that does thermal imaging. There they can duplicate a multicolor transfer if provided with flat artwork.

**Bill Ives** [williamhenryaaa@aol.com](mailto:williamhenryaaa@aol.com) writes

Does anybody out there know anything of a frame builder called Freddie Folds? I've recently been lucky enough to buy on ebay a Freddie Folds tricycle. It has an Abingdon axle. It also has its original transfers including a Reynolds High Manganese one which would seem to date it to pre-531, i.e. mid thirties. My London contact tells me he has never heard of Freddie Folds so it's probably built by a provincial maker. The seller told me it came from Oxford. Any info would be appreciated.

**David Ford** [foridy.dave@hotmail.com](mailto:foridy.dave@hotmail.com)

I've have a 23" Claud Butler frameset which from my research seems to be a 1953 Avant Coureur that has been built as a cyclo-cross bike. It is equipped with Mafac cantilever brakes. The paint work is tatty but the frame and forks themselves are in good condition underneath. It has a square taper cotterless Sugino B/B fitted which runs but needs replacing and a nondescript headset that again needs replacing. The frame is Reynolds 531, forks are the Accles and Pollock ones. Both frame and forks are stamped with the same frame number and date numbers. If you would be interested in making me an offer for it contact me by email (above). The frame number for the bike is...6573 5310. This is stamped on both the bottom bracket shell and the fork column

It would be a good restoration project for someone. I'm based in Chesterfield in Derbyshire and the frame would need to be picked up.

**Eddie Wallace** [bmck.ed@ntlworld.com](mailto:bmck.ed@ntlworld.com) Wants to find out more about a 'MORGAN'S HELICAL GEAR' he has. He has looked at various trade cycle catalogues from the 1920's to the 1950's, without a mention. I reckon it could be 1930's and made in England. Any information greatly appreciated! Cheers. AVT thinks he has seen an advert for this gear, just post-war I think and made in South Wales, this is why **I think** that I remember it.

**Clive Copland** [clive.copland@googlemail.com](mailto:clive.copland@googlemail.com) Phone/fax 0208 876 3728; mobile 07956 374623. I read recently an article by Alvin Smith at the Classic Lightweights website about the Paris bicycle frame. It was an excellent piece and I learned a lot about a frame I have owned for about 40 years. The

reason that I am writing is that I no longer cycle and it is time that this bicycle found a new home. I do not have much information regarding the cycle except that it once belonged to my cousin and was possibly bought for him new in the early 50's. The frame was expertly re-sprayed by Cyril Wren in Kingston upon Thames around the mid 60's. The cycle has been kept in a shed unused for the past 30 years or so. There is some surface rust but otherwise the cycle is in more than presentable condition. I would like to offer the cycle to an enthusiast rather than advertise it on ebay or Loot.

The frame size from centre crank to the base of the tube where the saddle slides in is 23". As in the photo in Alvin Smith's article the lugs are a very elaborate design. I feel that whoever has the frame will want to start with the frame and add their own wheels, handlebars, saddle, gears etc. I live in Richmond Surrey and the cycle is kept in Kingston-on-Thames. I feel quite sad at the thought of considering selling the cycle as I have had it so long and it appears to have been in our family probably since new. After reading your article it has a special history. With some restoration, it will become a very special item. I have images of the bicycle.

**Bryan Clarke** [brc1000@cam.ac.uk](mailto:brc1000@cam.ac.uk) , is doing some research into Youngs of Lewisham and would like to know if anyone has information on the make, history of the builder, catalogues or details of Youngs machines, especially if the date and frame number are known. Mike Platten, email [mrp\\_general@btinternet.com](mailto:mrp_general@btinternet.com) is similarly interested in Cyril Wren.

STEVE GRIFFITH has some more information for us on Mafac brakes:

#### DEPTH

The original racer centre-pulls were available in two depths, standard and shallow, until the early 60's (back plate length varied, the same arms).

#### DATING

Reference in the CTC Gazette 11/52 review of Paris show to the centre-pulls being new. NB, no reference in the London show of that year to Mafac.

Both centre-pull and cantilever brakes stamped with the full stop after each letter are the older versions.

In the 70's Mafac offered black anodised Racers

Competition /2000 models introduced in 1974

S type introduced in 1975

I have seen Racers stamped "Dural Forge" but with the red plastic bushings. This would seem to be a transitional version (late 60's early 70's) before they moved to stamping them Racer.

LEVER HOODS: full hood is commonly known as the gummed hood and the half, the 'course'.

THE TOOLKIT was also available in 1950's in a natural leather pouch approx 5 by 9 cm.

The first version of the plastic pouch had the tools in individual holders the whole pouch would fold out. It was only in the 1970's that this was downgraded to a simple black or tan pouch.

1958 Ron Kit catalogue has the most comprehensive illustrations of the different model.

STRADDLE BRIDGES There were five different versions all stamped MAFAC on the front:

1. Original closed both sides with BTE SGD G on the rear
2. Open back with a full lip to hold the straddle MAFAC with a full stop after the letters
3. As 2. but with no punctuation (this is the most common)
4. As 3. above but underlined created by the first 'A'
5. Open back with split lip

(My thanks to Robin Walker for the above information)

#### BRAKE HANGERS

Rear in three different lengths all stamped 'Mafac depose'. Also version with a pulley for Mixte frames

Front unstamped variants for different shape of steerer.

## CANTILEVERS

Criterion in steel as well as alloy

## OTHER PRODUCTS

Brake cable guide like TA, which fitted, on handlebar stem top bolt

## COPIES

Olympic (Spain) badge engineered copy of the dural forge stamped 'Olympic 58'

Weinmann copied the Cantilevers in the late 70's. Imported into the UK in the 70's by Elsmar

**ADDITIONAL CABLE ADJUSTMENT** Normally the Mafac hanger will not take a barrel adjuster, as the hole is too small. You can use the adjuster from a plastic Simplex down tube for the front brake. NB will not work on the rear due to lack of space

## DESIGN WEAKNESSES

Cable adjusters on lever can break off especially if the adjuster is unscrewed. When worn can unwind.

Bronze bushing on dural forge once worn cannot be replaced. One advantage of the plastic bushing on the 'Racer' is that they can be replaced.

## CONTEMPORARY MAFAC COPY

An American company Paul Component Engineering has updated Mafac designs for modern bikes. Two models are available: Neo Racer, a cantilever, and "Racer" centre pull in both centre bolt and brazed on versions. The main differences are the use of Allen key fittings, larger, diameter pivots and arms much wider. For more information see [www.paulcomp.com](http://www.paulcomp.com) or for a product review Vintage Bike Quarterly Vol. 2 no 4 & Vol. 3 no 5. This is an excellent American magazine focused around classic French cycle touring bikes, at current exchange rates it works out about £5.50 an issue, see [www.vintagebicyclepress.com](http://www.vintagebicyclepress.com).

## MAINTAINANCE AND TROUBLE SHOOTING

If brakes won't centre:

Check pivot bolt tightness they should be tighten up to the same torque

Check position of Straddle Bridge

Check tightness of centre screw nut

Disassemble and re-grease/clean up. Should take about 15 minutes.

One cause of non-centring is if the bushing has worn. If this is the case the arms will be very loose on the back plate. If they are brass then there is little you can do apart from reverse from front to rear or vice versa. If they are plastic bushings Mafac made replacements, which can be found at jumbles or on eBay

On frames fitted with cantilever bosses it should be possible to use 700c wheels even if the bike originally had 27". It's only 4 mm difference and there is enough movement in the cantilever for this.

## DEMISE

Mafac ceased trading in 1983. Writing in the October 1983 CTC magazine review of that years Harrogate show Chris Juden reported:

"I can confirm that Mafac, that steadfast arrestor of laden bicycles, has gone out of business." p 284

There was short lived management buy-out, reference being made to this in the CTC magazine October 1984 :

"The old company who sold their products too cheaply have been revived by a management buy-out".

However I have been unable to find any further reference to this so they may not have lasted beyond 1985.

**Steve Griffith** also has for sale 22" 1959 Gillott road/path 1/2 chrome forks and stays original blue paint. Excellent condition photos available 160 pounds ONO contact Steve Griffith at : [griffith531@hotmail.com](mailto:griffith531@hotmail.com)

**Chris Daly asks:** I wonder if you could direct me to someone, or to a website, where I could learn more about my Italian Made SIAMT bicycle cranks. Chris Daly from Australia. Email [Dodgeman@bigpond.com](mailto:Dodgeman@bigpond.com)

Chris's own searches seem to indicate that SIAMT [Societa Italiana Automobili Motocicli] were a motorcycle company that was born in 1907 and ceased to exist after 1914, but he suspects that these cranks are much more recent than that. In his view, they would date somewhere in the 1935 to '55 era. They are greatly reduced in weight with a deep flute at the back & with the corners of the front face also deeply fluted, much like his Durax Super Course cranks. Length seems to be a standard 6-3/4" & pedal threading 'appears' to be 9/16 x 20.

He says "These SIAMT cranks are nickel plated [not chromed] & despite a great deal of 'shop wear' may eventually prove to be unused. I decline to say 'new' or NOS due to the degree of 'shelf wear'. They have an interesting six arm mounting for a chainring with a PCD of 145mm, however I have no chainring for it in my box of bits."

**Richard Fox ([richcafnod@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:richcafnod@tiscali.co.uk)) has been let down and re-offers for sale:**

Due to being let down by a timewaster after I had arranged to make a 400 mile round trip to deliver the family bicycles which they said they wished to buy I have the following for sale;

1 X Tom Board/Pat Hanlon time trial frame, Columbus Superlight tubing with a second set of forks as the originals were too steep a rake for my father's taste, finished in orange (recent respray) 23 or 23 1/2.

1 X Dawes Galaxy frame fitted with mid range late 1990's mid range touring equipment finished in maroon 23 or 23 1/2. Clipless pedals.

1 X Pat Hanlon Reynolds 531 tubing frame fitted equipment as above but with straight handlebars because of my mother's back problems, 22" finished in gold. Toe clip pedals.

1 X Pat Hanlon/Tom Board identical to above.

1 X Barkers of Chingford ladies lightweight, Reynolds 531 tubing, similar equipment to the two above. Finished in light blue.

1 X 1980's Marin County mountain bike, lots of upgrades from original equipment.

All of the above are in very good to excellent condition and have been dry stored since they stopped being used some six years ago. Most of the complete machines have TA cotterless chainsets, Japanese rear and front mechs, etc. etc.

There are two pairs of wheels, one with Mavic rims, one set are I believe touring one racing.

Various other things, front forks, saddlebags one a brand new Carradice, panniers carriers, a drawer full of fixed wheel sprockets, sprint covers etc etc. Which I will happily include free of charge to anyone who buys two or more bicycles

If anyone wishes to make me a reasonable offer on the lot please feel free to do so. I hope all of it will be in Hereford within the next week. I am perfectly willing to provide pictures, obtain an accurate descriptions of what equipment is fitted to which machine and arrange viewing or even a trial ride. I will do my best to help anyone who is genuinely interested and that includes a possibility of delivery.

Email above or telephone 01432 353235 / 07968 599882. Please note that if a message is left I may not receive it on my home telephone number as I am often be away due to work/family commitments it is probably easier to ring the mobile number if you do not get an answer at home and require a quick response.

Tony Toft (email [tony.toft@btopenworld.com](mailto:tony.toft@btopenworld.com)):

**I have an old Higgins trike** which sadly I have neglected and so haven't ridden for about 20 years but I hope to restore it to ride as my balance is iffy these days, so who knows I may be able to ride it but know I will need a diff for it as it has only 1 driven wheel so cannot power round corners so if any of your friends etc might know where I can get a diff please drop me an Email.