

National Clarion Secretary's Report 2021/22

The 2021/22 year started with conference by Zoom as a response to the COVID restrictions. Each section was invited to send two delegates and in accordance with the constitution all private members were invited to seek access to the Zoom link. 14 Sections and one private member attended, no doubt as a consequence of the motion by Tuxford to remove the "promotion of Socialism" wording from the constitution. The motion was passed and the online fall out on Facebook was disappointingly bitter. Members should think carefully before they press the post button, and some had to be reminded of that point more than once. Social media is a great asset to the club for publicising events and circulating news. It should not be used to make unsubstantiated and at times slanderous remarks about fellow club members.

So, what have we learned from this episode? Firstly, that a Zoom conference can engage a greater section of the club and will in future years we think, become the standard format. Secondly that we need to find a way to engage more sections, we have over thirty. The ones represented at conference are, in the main, the ones with whom I have had regular contact of some sort. Most of the others remain unknown to me except as an email address I have no idea if they receive my communications as I never get a response.

Thirdly – dare I say it - that the removal of the wording outlined above has made no real difference to the way the club runs, and certainly wasn't worth the grief that it caused me, nor worth the damage to the clubs standing, as reflected by a column in the Guardian and other press comment. But hopefully we can leave the matter there. Individual sections are after all, at liberty to place appropriate wording, to reflect their views on this matter, in their section constitutions.

Beyond the grief, the club has prospered, with numbers climbing back to pre -pandemic levels of over 2100, strengthened by the addition of around a further 50 private members, bringing the total to over 100. We have seen a new section formed in Dronfield, serving the Sheffield area and interest expressed about new sections elsewhere in the country.

Events have restarted both at section level and at National level and a report from the racing secretary is appended to this report. Numbers at National events remain lower than in previous years, typified by the low turnout at the Lancaster Easter Meet, which perhaps corresponded with the peak in fuel prices arising from the tragic events in Ukraine. Plans for next year's Easter Meet at Lytham St Annes are well under way, under the management of Paul Whitehead of Blackpool Clarion, with the event being based at Fylde Rugby Club. Organised by Bury Clarion a successful autumn meet was held at Ramsbottom based around the National Clarion Hill climb championship and was well attended.

Boots and Spurs continues as the club's biannual magazine and remains valued by members. Recent editions have suffered from a lack of content on deadline day, which is frustrating, but eventually the pages seem to fill up. I thank contributors for their copy. I can't produce it without you. Once again it has been suggested that it could become a partly digital magazine and I am looking into that. More up to date news has been circulated direct to members in boxes via Extra and using the club Facebook page.

Finally, I am grateful to all those members who volunteer both for National committee posts and Section committee posts and who marshal and help at events. Without your time and energy the club cannot function. More volunteers are always needed.

Edward Gilder bikeclarion@yahoo.com

NATIONAL CLARION RACING REPORT 2021/22

Racing

During 2021/22 (to date) we've not had quite the National Clarion race programme we would have liked. This partly down to the various post Covid issues and racing getting fully back up to speed (Things are certainly different)

2021 saw us promote (in conjunction with sections) the following Championships:

Championship 10 mile TT (Stockport)

3 Up Team Time Trial (Tuxford)

Circuit Champs (Calder)

Hill Climb (Bury)

Cyclo Cross (North Cheshire)

2022 we have run the following events so far:

Championship 10 mile TT (Stockport)

Circuit Champs (North Cheshire)

3 Up Team Time Trial (Tuxford)

2022 Event still to be arranged/confirmed are:

Hill Climb Champs

Cyclo Cross Champs

25 mile Champs (Prov. 25.09.22 Fenland)

Track Champs (Prov 04.02.23 @ Derby)

For 2023 the aim should be to establish and publish early, a FULL National Clarion Race Calendar, including racing events at the Lytham St Annes Easter Meet and reintroduce the National Clarion Championship Series. To that end we looking sections to volunteer to organise one of the following events.

Championship 10 mile TT

Championship 25 mile TT

Championship 50 mile TT

Circuit Race Championships

3 Up Team Time Trial Championships (Tuxford)

Cyclo Cross Championships

Hill Climb Championships

Track Championships

Please contact the Events & Competitions Secretary (Steve Clarke) racing@clarioncc.org

Records

During 2021/22 Joanna Cebrat (Bury) offered to assist with researching and updating the latest National Clarion Records. Thanks go to Jo for undertaking this piece of work and new record holder will be issued with certificates and the website updated with the latest records.

In addition current Record Secretary Francis Grafton has recently agreed to start compiling a more complete list of historical records (times and Championships) to add to the list of latest records.

General

Entries for National Clarion racing events has been a little disappointing these past couple of seasons, with numbers somewhat down. This is due in part to the lack of pre publicity and also to do with a general trend in all racing around the country.

Participation in our National events needs to be encouraged and promoted, as it can be most rewarding for members. However, the long distances to get to National events can be off putting to many (even though it hasn't been in years gone by).

Of course travel costs, especially with the current cost of living increases have and will continue to make participation difficult. To combat this to some degree, it will be important to try to put together a programme of events that are as central as possible and where there are larger numbers of Clarion racing members.