



CRAPAUD CHRONICLE

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almost weekly

Bike Bash 2019 special edition

Sitcom weekend

Friday 6th September

It's that time of the year again and intrepid crapaud cyclists gather at the Harbour for their annual tour de France. This year the hares are Colonel Tom and Kodak (NB. Hash handles correct for the dates shown – their renaming is covered later). However they are nowhere to be seen and we are told they'll be meeting us in France. It's an early start for a change and breakfast and coffee are being taken instead of the stronger stuff. Before we head for the check in Captain Poocock hands out little green soldiers in various martial poses. He explains that these have to be kept on the person at all times and when the call is given we have to mimic the pose of our soldier. This led to a plethora of down downs over the next few days and despite your humble narrators best efforts I'm afraid a record of



Assume the position!

all of the recipients proved a step too far. However a visual record was kept and is included in its own section later on.

We are also given our FBB t-shirts and everybody is very pleased with a super-

perb design and all of them individually named. We also learn from his t-shirt that Steptoe had been genetically modified (at least I think that's what is meant by the suffix to his name – see picture).

After the usual chaotic check in (herding cats is a piece of p*ss compared to rounding up crapauds) we board the boat and we're on our way. We have the rear section of the boat virtually to ourselves apart from one Frenchman who claims a gammy leg and insists on taking one of our seats – he didn't join in with our singing though. There are actually a couple of down downs on the boat – April for the last to assume the position after the first green soldier call and Wendolene for wearing her shirt back to front.

After disembarkation in

St Malo we do indeed meet with Colonel Tom and Kodak. We are also very pleased to meet their South African mate 'Biltong' who would be driving the Jack Wagon support vehicle for the weekend and now took our luggage from us. And so off we go, but not very far. We squeeze onto the small ferry to Dinard and discover that it is April's birthday and she has her second down down of the weekend.

We arrive in Dinard and the real cycling begins. There were to be three fallers during the weekend and Red Baron had the dubious honour of being the first. He



That explains it – he's been genetically modified



Crapauds assemble

has a deserved down down at our first drink stop in Tremeurc. From there we headed for Dinan where we have a very civilised lunch at the aptly named Les Voyageurs restaurant by the port. Suitably fed and lubricated we mount up for what proves to be a longish afternoon's cycle. It is a very pleasant ride though, including a drink stop at Evran, memorable for its lavishly decorated but rather dilapidated pissoir. A few down downs ensued before we set off again.

The next point of interest is a visit to the crash site where Colonel Tom had his nasty accident during one of the reconnaissance trips for the Bike Bash. It's clearly marked with chalk and he agreed to recreate the after effect for us.

Our next stop is our resting place for the rest of the Bash. It is the delightful camp site Domaine du Logis at La Chapelle-aux-Fitzmeens. We discover that Colonel Tom and Kodak have their very own luxurious mobile homes here. After refreshing ourselves with some beers we head off to find our own mobile homes and prepare for the evening's festivities.

Our dinner is served in the campsite restaurant

and we then head for the bar. We are delighted to see that there is a live band who also do Karaoke. A great time is had by all and the band are very gentle with the spirited but not always too tuneful singing.

Saturday 7th September

The next morning we find out that a run has been laid in the beautiful countryside surrounding the campsite. The down downs after the run are held in front of the chateau – a magnificent backdrop. In the afternoon we head off for our cycle, a not too strenuous hop to Combourg. We spend a very enjoyable couple of hours at some of its finest hostleries before a cautious and wobbly return to the campsite. Some of us have time to use the pool at the campsite whilst others make avail of the bar or have a gentle snooze, ah well chacun a son gout.

So we come to the high point of the weekend. The British sitcom fancy dress party – see centrefold. Everybody has made a superb effort and rather than describe all the marvellous costumes I will let the pictures do the talking. (Although I must make special mention of the prizewinner Hilda 'Ballcock' Ogden who thoroughly confused our French hosts, not least



Thumbs – and fingers – up

by his/her energetic and imaginative use of the mop!)

Sunday 8th September

There are more than a few bleary eyes and sore heads today. Not to worry a brisk morning cycle ride will soon clear out those cobwebs; and a brisk ride it is (Mr. Google tells me it was getting on for 30 miles – gulp). Those on electric bikes shrug their shoulders and laugh at this mere trifle whilst those using just muscle power have a slightly a different expression. One of those is Muff Diver who decides to have a little lay down en route. However he would probably have done better to get off his bike instead of trying to fly across the roadside ditch! Fortunately there is not too much damage, only a little bruised pride and a few scratches which are tenderly dressed by nurse Grantchester.

We head to a couple of drink stops including one at a Hotel de la Gare in the middle of nowhere and with no train tracks in sight. As we gathered in the hotel car park the patron peeked out from behind dusty curtains and made it very clear that he was closed and we weren't welcome. Luckily there is a lorry park across the road and the Jack Wagon has plenty of liquid refreshment for us.

Suitably refreshed we commence the last leg of our

journey. All is going well until we enter the outskirts of St Malo where Frisco attempts a risky overtaking manoeuvre on Hooker. The upshot is she takes a flyer whilst he disappears into the distance. Once again we are lucky that no serious damage is done (except maybe to the love between Frisco and Hooker?)

Eventually we all end up at Cunningham's Bar in St Servan. They provide an interesting, not to say eclectic, buffet for our lunch. After the meal we gather for the final down downs. There are a few virgins and several namings, including 'official' renamings for our two hares. Colonel Tom is renamed Discharge in honour of his early departure from hospital after his cycling fall; and Kodak renamed Flasher to reflect his photographic inclinations. They were also enthusiastically thanked by everybody for a superb weekend.

Before we know it it's time to head for the boat. The weekend has clearly taken its toll on some of us and the opportunity is taken to travel to the land of Nod before we arrive back in God's own Island.

Lastly and most importantly special mention and thanks must go to the kind sponsors of the drink stops – a truly noble demonstration of corporate, if maybe slightly displaced, generosity.



Awaiting boat trip No 2



Some bespoke shirts



Biltong and the blood wagon



Straight in and straight out



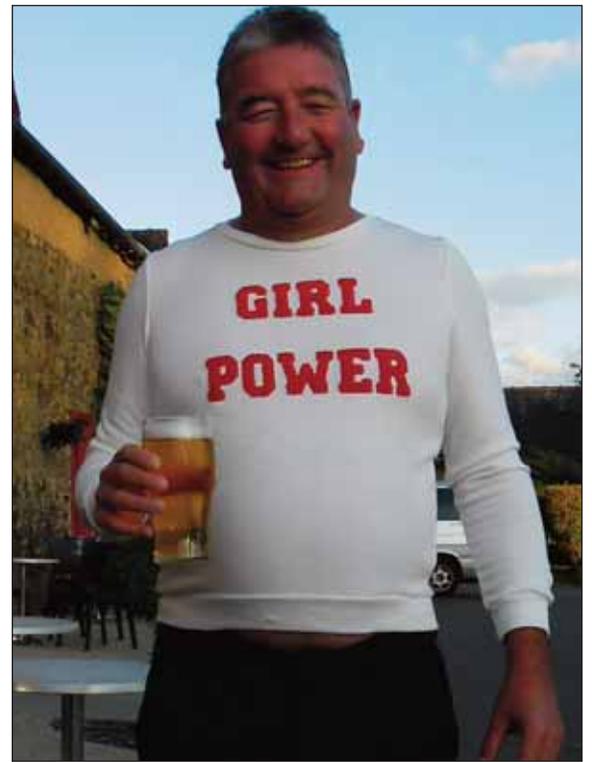
Frisko remembers he's forgotten his money . . . again



Déjeuner à Dinan

Overleaf: The fancy dress party







Spot the dummy



Who wants to ring my bell?



I hope that's beer



Discharge re-enacts his fall from grace



Our luxurious accommodation



Karaoke Harriettes



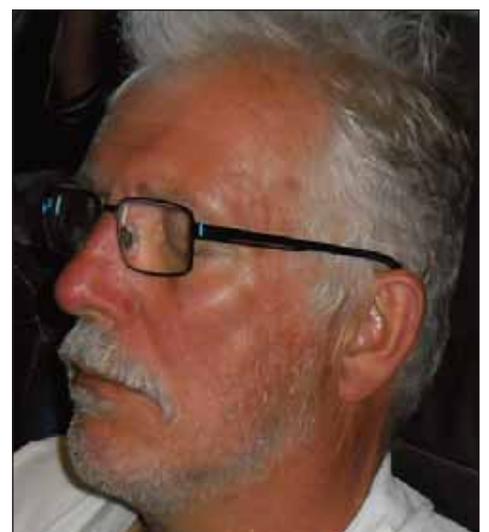
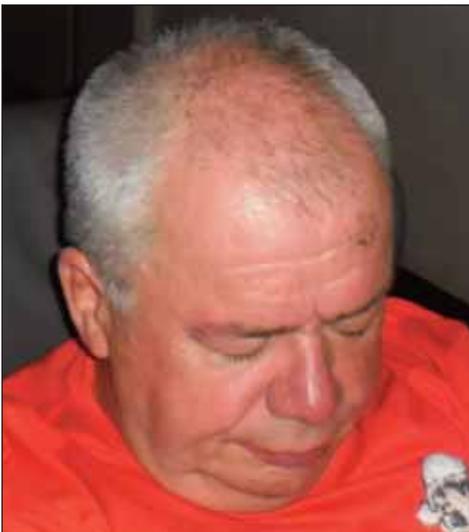
A posh drink stop



Hedge-traveller Muff Diver



No room at Hôtel de la Gare but plenty of room in the car park



Homeward bound after an excellent but tiring weekend



Finally, the down-downs

