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Bruce Home Find Friends

Bruce Ryan with Eleanor Emberson at Cruize Bar
May 28 at 5:38pm · Brodick · 🌐

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So we've spent most of today in the Cruize bar at Auchrannie, gently expectorating and drinking them out of diet Irn Bru. This means we've reached Arran and so I've changed my shorts. Not that I needed to, of course.

Yesterday was quite hard but in some ways not as hard as I had feared. Here's the cyclemeter map from Springbank on Gigha to Claonaig: <http://cyclemeter.com/c6c5a8e04fa72bae/Cycle-20140527-1000?r=e>

We had a fairly lethargic start, getting to the Gallery to meet up with Henri again around 10am. It was lovely to see her again: far too long since we last met up. But now I understand Gigha's magic a little. Thank you!

And there was more magic in that today was warm: no jacket of flatulence, no rubber wallies, only fingerless cycling gloves. The first 7 miles from Tayinloan to Clachan were blessedly flat, so legs gently got used to repetitive circling without strain. The hill from Clachan to Kennacraig wasn't as fearsome as I had imagined. Somehow going straight up was better than yesterday's up undulating rise: less ascent to gain the same height. Dropping down into Kennacraig was fine too.

And then there was the single-track road from Kennacraig to Claonaig. Now it's a long time since I tried to learn to drive but if I recall correctly, you have to be able to read, understand and obey road signs to pass a driving test in the UK. So if you are driving downhill on a single track road, and can see ahead of you a passing place and slightly further downhill a cyclist toiling uphill, what is the correct course of action? Is it reach the passing place, then pull over and wait to let the cyclist go by Step on the gas, oblivious to the passing place signs and instructions?

And if you are driving uphill on a single track road and find yourself behind a cyclist, do you:
wait until the next passing place, at which the cyclist will pull over and let you go by safely?
Step on the gas now?
Fortunately there were only a couple of such knob ends. Most of this climb was silent and beautiful apart from my rather laboured breathing.

We just missed the 1:50 ferry so we enjoyed Claonaig's facilities: a car park, a battered phone box, a couple of notice boards and a plexiglass waiting room with benches to lie on while gently steaming and expectorating. What more could you ask for?

We dozed more on the 3:15 ferry until it reached Lochranza. It still startles me that ferries start moving before the rear doors are closed, and open the front doors before actually reaching the dock. Have they not heard if 'roll on, roll off, roll over'?

I had been afraid of the route from Lochranza to Brodick. It involves a relatively big ascent straight up from Lochranza, with a drop to the left when cycling south. I'd been afraid that, especially with luggage and Arran's poor road surfaces*, I'd fall off the edge of the road and tumble down a precipitous drop to my doom. But the drop was actually far less precipitous than I'd remembered! there was no side-wind and the road surface worked to my advantage in that where it was poor I was forced to cycle away from the edge. Also, from about halfway up, there was brand-new tarmac lasting as far as Sannox.

North Ayrshire has a lot to learn from Argyll & Bute about investing in decent tarmac, in my experience.

I was quite impatient about the final 7 miles from Sannox to our lodgings at Kilmichael House. No more challenges apart from occasional knob-end evasion. So when we reached the turnoff to Kilmichael, I pushed on to enjoy Lev Davidovitch Bikestein's partial mountain-bike ancestry. My arrival was celebrated by being attacked by a storm of midges. The cyclemeter map doesn't show the last couple of miles so I'm claiming 19.5 + 14.5 + 2 = 36 miles for today.

So far, we've done
Friday
Fort William to Onich 13.5 miles
<http://cyclemeter.com/9cd25656fca9e98a/Cycle-20140523-1625>
Saturday
Onich to Oban 36 miles
<http://cyclemeter.com/c6c5a8e04fa72bae/Cycle-20140524-0917?r=e>
Sunday

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Jeannie Hunter Web

Rowan Kirsty Bell Mobile

Ian Andrew White Web

Al Macdonald 5h

Henri Macaulay

Lynne Higgins 2h

Cindy Boyd 40m

Janet Noakes 2h

Lily Singleton

Eleanor Emberson 20h

Ismini Pavlopoulou

Adriani Singleton

Peter Dennis

Nicola Macpherson 9m

Johnny Watson

Daisy Singleton

Heather Jones 1h

Andy Hunter 9m

Suzu Bacchini Gow 1h

Philip Morrison 1h

Kris Petherick 25m

Stewart Waite

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https://www.facebook.com/bruce.ryan.50/posts/484603708307669

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Oban to Lochgilphead 37.25 miles
<http://cyclometer.com/c6c5a8e04fa72bae/Cycle-20140525-0924?r=x>
 Lochgilphead to Tarbert 12 miles
<http://cyclometer.com/c6c5a8e04fa72bae/Cycle-20140525-1351?r=e>

Monday
 Tarbert to Gigha 21 miles
<http://cyclometer.com/c6c5a8e04fa72bae/Cycle-20140526-1030?r=e>
 On Gigha 14 miles
 (No map)

Tuesday
 Gigha to Tayinloan, Tayinloan to Claonaig 19.5 miles
<http://cyclometer.com/c6c5a8e04fa72bae/Cycle-20140527-1000?r=e>
 Lochranza to Kilmichael 14.5 miles
<http://cyclometer.com/9cd25656fca9e98a/Cycle-20140527-1556>
 Kilmichael to Brodick to Kilmichael 2 miles
 (No map)



Total 170 miles, near enough
 More about what we might do tomorrow, Friday and Saturday when iPad has recharged!




2014_05_27a
 Stopped Cycle at 14:04, 2014_05_27a, time 1:53:46, 19.51 miles, average 10.29 mph.
 CYCLEMETER.COM

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Heather Jones, Henri Macaulay, Al Macdonald and 2 others like this.

 **Al Macdonald** Your tale of knob ends reminds me of similar drivers on Skye with no patience with a tandem. As a cyclist I like to try and help motorists but sometimes they really don't help themselves.... Great riding so far, I look forward to more adventures. We really must try and get the 4 of us together with our velos.
 May 28 at 7:24pm · Unlike ·  2

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