



## **VTTA East Anglian Group**

### **Chairman's Report 2021**

It surely goes without saying that the past two years have been the strangest in living memory and among the strangest in the history of the VTTA, which, given that the VTTA was founded in the middle of the Second World War, is saying something.

For an organisation whose express purpose is to facilitate racing, not to be able to do that deprived us of our *raison d'être* and in 2020 our response in the East Anglian Group was to suspend our trophy competitions and to hold neither the annual luncheon nor the AGM. Want of the latter means that we, as a committee, stand before you this year as usurpers and imposters, since the constitution requires us, with the exception of the President, whose three-year term came to an end during lockdown, to be re-elected each year, so we hope you'll forgive us.

As a committee, our instinct, in response to the lack of racing during 2020, was to carry over subscriptions into 2021, but the National Executive Committee's decision not to do so prevented us from doing that, since the national subscription constitutes the overwhelming majority of the Group fee. Likewise, the annual timetable of this organisation means that the NEC makes its decision on any fee increase for the subsequent year after this Group, and probably others, have set their annual subscription. For 2022, this means that we shall be absorbing an increase in the National subscription for which we had not budgeted, but it also explains why we are proposing now, at the 2021 AGM, a modest increase in the Group subscription for 2023, since it would be imprudent not to hedge against a future increase by the NEC that could otherwise see our subscription income running at a deficit.

We did, however, carry over entries for standard awards, on which matter, this strange year also saw the introduction of new VTTA standards. The committee quickly developed serious misgivings about the comparability of men's and women's standards across the age range and responded by introducing a new awards policy for Group events with separate prize lists for men and women, equal in value and proportional in number to the numbers of entries of each sex. In these enlightened times, we may yet need to define those terms as referring to persons born with either two X chromosomes or an X and a Y chromosome, but for the time being, we have also made all trophies for individual events male/female dual award, as you will see from the Recorder's report. As the Group has for many years had separate season-long competitions dependent on chromosome-count this has brought a logical consistency across all our Group awards.

An additional oddity in an already odd year was that in 2021, the two fastest 25 courses and one of the fastest 50 courses in the UK were out of action due to road works, and it

reflected well on East Anglia that with the assistance of London North and the particular help of Chris Dyason, to both of whom I want to record our gratitude, we were able to come up with alternatives just as fast if not faster.

At one end of the age spectrum, on the F2, Group member Matt Smith rode the fastest 25 and 15 ever recorded by an over-40-year-old, while at the other end of that spectrum, Peter Horsnell holds up the record table with the first 25 over 20 mph by a 91-year-old and on the E2, similar, if not even more impressive feats at 10 miles.

We won the Group title in both the short distance and 3 distance National season-long competitions and supplied an individual winner in each, with different combinations of chromosomes as well as a women's 100 and a men's 50 national title.

Against the good news, we have taken a sad leave of some good friends, among them, Ian MacKenzie, trike exponent and for many years organiser of our annual luncheon; Doug Yareham, stalwart of the Victoria CC and, with Christine, long-time organiser of the 10 series that for a number of years contributed to our 10 competition and Kevin Hallahan, elected at the last AGM to be our Awards Secretary and who sadly never got the chance to take up office. We remember their contributions with gratitude.

As the season drew to a close there were hints of normality returning; for the last 25 of the season Michael Martin provided us with not only a pusher-off at the start, but tea and cakes at the finish, and even a result board, so we could stand around chatting in a superspreading huddle.

In that spirit, and in the hope that things continue to normalise, we have set a date of 19<sup>th</sup> February 2022 for an annual luncheon, again at the Rosery in Exning. Further details to be announced in due course.

Lastly, but by no means leastly, we have the pleasant duty of congratulating two new Honorary Life Members in Davey Jones and Bill Broadfield.

More unusually, we have the honour to bestow upon two of our members, the highest accolade the NEC has to give: the status of Distinguished Life Member, and I don't think there'll be any dispute about the right of Mary and Peter Horsnell to wear the title.

**Andrew Grant**  
**27 November 2021**