



VELO TEIFI CYCLING CLUB PRESENTS



# RONDE VAN VLAANDEREN 2013

VTCC AT THE TOUR OF FLANDERS

28TH-31ST MARCH, 2013

## TO SUFFER LIKE A FLANDRIAN IS TO KNOW CYCLING



Half of the weekend's race team: RC, Co-Chairs and Rainman, posing before the real suffering began. Missing from the photo are Timmeke, Stevie Sums, the Late Dave C and Prepared James.

## AN INAUSPICIOUS START—KOPPENBERG #FAIL

With the enthusiasm of an eight year old in a sweet shop (or Dylan, for that matter), Team VTCC screamed out of Oude-naarde; scorching along the canal paths that formed the initial 15 fast kilometres of the route and positively barreling into the foot of the first cobbled monster,

the epic Koppenberg. The historic Koppenberg. The full Koppenberg. Here was an equation that only Stevie Sums could solve:  $700m \times 3m \times 9.5\% \div 16000 = TS^e$ , where  $e$  = everlasting and  $TS$  = track-stand. Good job we hadn't fitted new cleats, what with all that walking...



### IN BRIEF:

- 133km sportive using the same route as the 'De Ronde' a.k.a. Tour of Flanders (full distance 259km)
- Route notable for 17 climbs interspersed with farm roads and six cobbled 'flat out' sections. Some of the climbs are 'Pavé' too, such as the Paterberg, Kwaremont Molenberg and Koppenberg, to name but four.
- 1559metres of climbing.
- 16,000 sportive riders on the Saturday, 200 pro riders on the Sunday.
- Technique for riding pavé is 'light on the bars and full gas'. Easier said than done.

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## TO PEE OR NOT TO PEE, THAT WAS THE QUESTION.



The sinister head above is that of our navigational genius and all-round directional

savant, Rainman. The dash from Wales to the Chunnel left our hero with a bladder that just wouldn't quit. When faced with a one hour delay to board the train and a complete absence of a) toilets or, b) trees, bushes or cover of any description, the shyboy opted for in-car storage of waste products. Helpfully, an empty water bottle was close to hand/penis so Dustin Hoffman's cousin started a docking procedure akin to in-flight refueling (floppy hoses seeking

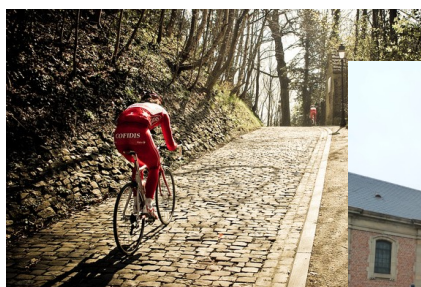
out receptacles). Several minutes later, a distinct lack of tinkling sounds caused the crew to wonder whether the refueling nozzle fitted into the receiver basket. With room to spare, as it turns out, but Rainman's efforts to pack his bag (as it were) into the bottle also, were met with some resistance. So the "look Mom, no hands!" trick would go begging for another time, it seemed. "Phew," went the collective. "Tinkle," went Wee Willy Winky.

## MUUR VAN GERAARDSBERGEN



As warm up for the main event, the day before the sportive, Rainman took the crew to the iconic MvG for their first taste of cobble climbing on the fabled and much-photographed Muur.

Oh lord. What had we signed up for? Please let the race day be dry...



## AH'LL 'AVE A MONKEY ON THE SKINNY ONE.



Dateline: ToF race morning.

Location: Old Kwaremont village, Flanders, Belgium.

Mission: establish illegal betting syndicate to mug daft Welshies using knowledge gained from the Smoke. Gaw blimey, Guv'nor.

Procedure: take all rider names and numbers, randomize them into 8 Super-

teams, making sure the donkeys, also-rans and Euskatel names are allocated to those of a Celtic persuasion.

Execution: flawless. Tim-meke wins the pot and runs off to pay for recently purchased engagement ring.

Conclusion: BetFred and Ladbrooks are sleeping soundly tonight.



## NO SOLDIERS WERE LEFT ON THE BATTLEFIELD

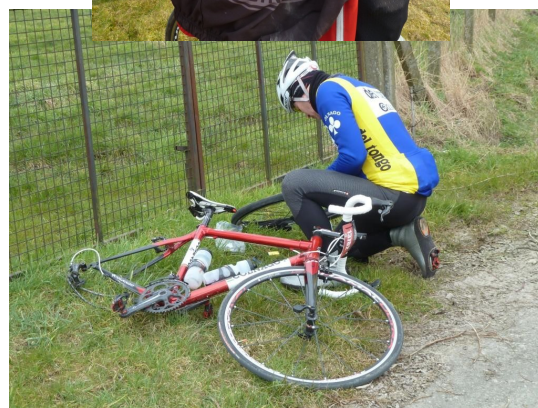
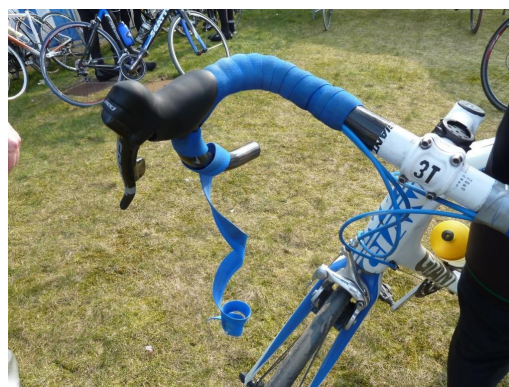
"GET ON TOP OF THAT GEAR," screamed Timmeke as the group rushed headlong into its first high-speed section of pavé. Eyesight blurred, arms shook and joints jarred; bikes banged, clattered, hopped, skipped and jumped their way over the cruel surface. The ground was covered in smooth, rounded objects causing riders to shout, twitch and panic—these weren't the cobblestones, but the sea of bidons discarded by bottle cages too feeble to handle the pavé challenge; too weak to perform their primary function—pretty much consistent with the emotions being felt by the VTCC warriors as they struggled to obey the bellowing Timmeke as he crushed those in front of him, grinding the big ring to maintain 20+mph for the duration of the ordeal.

Then it was over and silence prevailed, except for sound of panting. Riders conducted system checks: teeth, fill-

ings, fingers nails, eyeballs and testicles were all present and correct. They had survived the first test. They were alive. ALIVE! The euphoria was short lived however, as the primeval sound of Timmeke launching his next assault on Belgium's finest medieval road surfaces drove VTCC onwards and upwards. And overwards. And downwards.

Prepared James was first to be felled—Johnny Foreigner's poor technique and an even poorer approach to rucksack fastening saw James go into slow motion as aforementioned rucksack detached from a Feckless Flan-drian and inserted itself into James' front wheel.

Stevie Sums succumbed next as 70kms of rattling dislodged some cleat bolts, but the genius of Timmeke found a solution and the gang moved on. Some punctures and cramping aside, the team all made it safely back to base reporting a successful assault of De Ronde.



## NOT THE MAN YOU THOUGHT HE WAS...

"I'm sorry, Border Control Operative, but there's no-one of that name in the Mystery Wagon," Co-Chair explained to the passport-wielding booth-dweller in Calais.

"We have an Andrew, a Dylan, a Carl and a Cynan," continued the perplexed Scooby Truck occupant, "but no-one of *that* name, I'm

sure."

Fortunately, the Passport Scrutineer was familiar with the concept of middle names being taken as forenames... and suggested the same just as RC piped up from the depths of the Tour Bus, "Er, yep, that's me."

So next time you bump into RC, make sure you use the right handle otherwise he

may just blank you. Or punch you. Or get you very, very, very, drunk.

What was the name? Well, it begins with 'R'...







## INTRODUCING [SOME OF] TEAM VTCC VvVL 2013



Clockwise from top left: Clackerhand chases Rainman through Old Kwaremont; Clackerhand introduces a thoughtful RC; Clackerhand being drawn back from Shrek Donkey impression; Clackerhand tickling the Prepared chin of James; Clackerhand assault of Timmeke.

## MUSIC, BEER, BIKES AND BLOGGING

If you've got this far you have more perseverance than the News Team gave you credit for. But... you are probably perplexed by the names used (to protect the innocent, obviously), the inanimate objects referred to and the regional dialects poorly transcribed for a hastily cobbled-together summary of the Club's trip to experience the Ronde van Vlaanderen/ Tour of Flanders.

There's only so much we could squeeze into these pages which is why a fuller, far wordier, more tedious, somewhat interminable, tawdry tale of the trip has

been prepared for you to read/ignore at your leisure. This tome will appear on the VTCC web pages along with a selection of artistic, thoughtful and thought provoking images... Sorry, what? It's just Carl's happy snaps again? Oh well, there will be some blurry, out of focus Polaroids made available too.



AndrooL's moon-walking was coming on a treat by race day but no-one believed for one minute that RC was tootin' a six-shooter