

DE LAUNE NEWS

SPECIAL ADDITION

By NIGEL SCALES

A VISIT TO

Le Beau **Velo**

Supplement AUGUST 2010

CLUB NIGHT
SECOND MONDAY
OF EACH MONTH

Crown & Greyhound
in Dulwich Village



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Le Beau Velo

Those of you who know Mal Pires will be aware how passionate he is about everything to do with cycling. While working full-time in the City, he trained as a cycle mechanic and then spent weekends putting his training into practice and further developing his skills as a mechanic with Evans Cycles. Later he worked full-time at Evans and then On Your Bike but although he was enjoying these jobs he harboured a dream of doing something a little different. He's been working on it for some time and on July 30th, Mike Peel, Terry Shotton, Alan Rowe and myself went up to his new premises in Shoreditch to see what "Le Beau Velo" was all about and, specifically for Mike, Alan and myself to try one of the services available, a Fitness test by one of Mal's business affiliates, the Metabolic Solutions, part of VeloSolutions.

While we were there, someone came down from the London Cycle Sport website for an article that can be seen via the link below. I'm inclined to agree with the author's comment that Le Beau Velo is more like a Pro team's "Service Course" than a traditional bike shop and that's in line with what Mal wanted to achieve.



http://www.londoncyclesport.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1525:le-beau-velo-racing-bicycles-ltd&catid=43:gear-news&Itemid=102

So, what's it all about? Well, as you can see from the accompanying photos, and those on the London Cycle Sport website, Le Beau Velo is located in a spacious white-painted basement, in Shoreditch. There's a large main space where bikes (Viner, Legend, Fondriest, Formigle, Tomassini) and some equipment are displayed and a separate large room where the bike-fitting was taking place. Although white paint can make for a clinical feeling, in this case it didn't. There's something strangely relaxing about chilling out on a sofa, surrounded by glossy high-end bikes, with Brian Stanwyck working his magic on a tricky problem with a bike in one corner, a VO2max test in progress in another and with a custom bike-fitting visible in the background.



The joys of internal cable runs



Waiting for the “Off”

Mike, Terry and I made it to the venue without incident but Alan lost his way a bit and saw a bit more of London than he'd planned, missing his 10am slot. As we'd all been told not to eat for at least 4 hours before the VO2max test I let Alan take my 1pm slot – I had visions of him collapsing if he had to wait until after a later slot to eat!



Alan records the moment as Mike eases into his V02Max test

VO2Max test

The VO2Max test administered by Peter Byworth of Metabolic Solutions was an enlightening experience, all the more fun for being done with clubmates in attendance to provide a bit of encouragement... Not that I provided any, it has to be said! Peter was very professional and took time before the test itself to explain the equipment, the process and the science involved.



Mike feels the burn!

Then it was time to adjust the position on the exercise machine, don heart rate monitor strap and breathing mask and start pedalling! As with any RAMP test, the workload started off quite light and increased over time until the point of exhaustion was reached. I think we all enjoyed watching each other being tested and seeing the results as they were recorded by the PC more than our own time in the saddle! Peter noted our perceived levels of exertion throughout the test which made an interesting counter-point to the hard data from the heart rate monitor and gas analysis. After the test, Peter talked us through the results. In my case, they confirmed that my maximum heart rate is now 165bpm rather than the 172bpm I had hit several times a few months back. The implication from this is that my heart rate zone-based training has been incorrectly based for some time – worth knowing! Key points that Peter covered included the heart rates at which my body largely switched from burning fat to consuming carbohydrates

(glycogen) – again, important to know how your body’s fuelling itself as it has significant implications for performance. The other key measure the test established scientifically, rather than by the guesswork I’d previously relied on, was my Lactate Threshold – key for training effectively to improve performance as we all know. Peter also discussed my current (rather pitiful) training regime and suggested a workout that would help move my Lactate Threshold up and could be fitted into my current programme. He also used the test results to illustrate why my 25-mile pacing strategy (treat it like a 10...) wasn’t a good idea for me and answered some questions that were bugging me about some upcoming constraints on my training. Peter subsequently emailed me a report on the test, his conclusions and recommendations. He also included the raw data itself, which I just can’t help looking at periodically! If you’re serious about improving your performance, I’d heartily recommend booking one of the future sessions.



Mike demonstrating that hard exercise makes you feel better – when it’s over! Bike fitting in progress behind him.

Bike Fitting



And now the results...



Alan's turn...



And then mine...



Peter tries to find a way to break the results to me gently.

Bike Fitting

After we'd done our VO2Max tests, Giuseppe Giannecchini., assisted by Peter Cole, was kind enough to demonstrate the initial steps in the VeloSolutions bike-fitting process using Alan as a model and, even without getting into the full process, were able to answer Alan's question as to whether his TT bike and stem set-up was the right size. Giuseppe's body language made the answer pretty clear!



Alan models the bike-fitting process, and the 2010 De Laune kit!

Guiseppe works at the Institute of Sport in Florence with Italian national level and elite Pro Tour riders and has over 5,000 bike fits and 15 years experience under his belt so I think Alan should be following up on that verdict..! (After all, it worked for the reigning Italian Men's Time-Trial champion, and his Under-18 equivalent, who are both clients of VeloSolutions) I arrived early so that I could have a good look around and this allowed me to watch Guiseppe working with another client. After taking the basic measurements he needed, he used a special bike-fitting bike to work out the correct position then transferred the set-up to the client's own bike, adjusting saddle position and trying a different stem. The bike had been set up on a turbo-trainer so that the client could try out the new position and he was very enthusiastic about how much better he felt riding with the new set-up – he commented that he could really feel a difference and that it felt much better.



Fitting machine

Conclusion

I think we all wish Mal good luck with his venture – it's certainly a bit different and he has certainly picked a good organisation to affiliate with in VeloSolutions. I found the VO2Max test an interesting and useful experience and I think the bike-fitting would be beneficial for me too – I'd certainly recommend members to take a look. And if you're bored with your current "ride" I'm sure Mal could suggest something suitably exotic as an alternative.

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