

Dick O'Brien Leisure League Round 4

Liam Horner Memorial Cycle

Sunday 8th April 2018.

Report: Mick Byrne

We had a beautiful morning as we gathered in Clonee for the 10.00am start for this event. Unfortunately, last year's leisure league winner Philip Brogan had a flat front tyre. The tube was replaced but had a faulty valve and couldn't pump up so this too had to be changed, so we were a few minutes late getting started. Before setting off we remembered the reason why Liam (Horner) had selected this route taking in The Hill of Tara. He wanted to raise funds for the Special Olympics which were being held in Ireland that year and thought that a reasonably flat course taking in Tara would be attractive to a large number of people.



The temperature was a pleasant 11 degrees as the group of 19 set off together through Dunboyne and Summerhill. A pace was maintained at which everyone felt comfortable, with Willie Lawlor taking a long turn at the front of the group.

From Summerhill we headed towards Trim but turned onto smaller roads which took us across the Trim Road, through Kilmessan and onto the climb up The Hill of Tara. Here we stopped for a well-earned coffee.



The day was clear and we were able to get a great view over the valley with Skryne Castle clearly visible. It was then down the hill and over by Skryne Castle and onto the straight, fast road to Ratoath where the pace picked up with Brian & Denis Haverty opening a gap on the rest of the group. We were very lucky to have Sean McKenna with us, who with Gill Haverty set the pace for the rest of the group and made sure that the 2 boys didn't get too far up the road. We all came together at Ratoath and followed the small back roads to the finish.

The total distance was 82K and all who participated enjoyed the spin.



A happy bunch of riders on a pleasant day, in the best the IVCA tradition!

Liam Horner was one of the great domestic riders in the late 1960s and 1970s. He was a national champion and highly respected international, who passed away in 2007 at the age of 59. He won many big races during his cycling career, including the prestigious Manx International in 1967 and the Tour of Ireland in 1972. He also competed in two Olympic games. Liam was the first Irish rider to forge a relationship with the Belgian Herman Nys, with whom Sean Kelly lived for many years at the start of his professional career.