

The weather-gods were smiling down on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Girls on Bikes on 18 February in Methven. From the nervous chatter of many women at the start line for the 37km and 76km races, came the frenetic pace of the registered riders and the very fast front women.

Being in the front group of the 76km race, with a heart rate constantly over 170 is no fun (particularly at my age), and it took 12km for me to see sense and back off. However, the challenge over the next 30km was two of us pushing into a wind that seemed to anticipate any change of direction and continue to torment us.

I felt sheer relief at the 42km mark when a bunch of about 20 riders swallowed us up, with a sea of yellow and black Complete Performance riders. However, it soon became evident that the group was moving, and again the pace picked up.

Biking past an accident with a rider stretched out on the road (being well attended to) is a chilling reminder of just how vulnerable we are simply being on our bikes, let alone racing along at speed in a packed bunch.

The final 5km was a frenetic as the first 5km, with Complete Performance riders showing their strength and pace, racing to the finish line.

As usual for Pete Halligan, the infrastructure and planning that he and his devoted crew put into each event they run again ensured a fantastically run GOB. And good news for you guys – a Boys on Bikes is apparently in the pipeline.

Appropriately, the benefits of what Complete Performance has to offer were acknowledged by Pete Halligan at prizegiving, regarding the extensive skills and safe training that CP provides for athletes.

It was also great to see a number of CP guys giving their time and expertise as Bunch Police (Peter, Martin, Neil, Graham). And, no repeats of last year's Bunch Police needing to extricate a flowery hanky out of a lady's chain and cluster!

Luckily for me this year (after months of a specific weights programme from CP), I did not have a repeat of my left hamstring completely failing after I got off my bike, and finding myself trapped in the portaloos unable to lift the offending leg (how embarrassing!) – thanks CP.

This event has something for every female cyclist – from those wanting to break the sound barrier, to those dipping their toes in. See you next year.