

Pack it up, pack it in

written by Marcus | 13 August, 2014



I thought unemployment would mean lots of lounging on the sofa in a slanket eating pot noodles while watching Jeremy Kyle but the last 3 weeks have left barely any time for sitting around at all.



Not a bad spot to watch the track cycling

The day after walking out of our respective offices we drove straight up to Glasgow so that I could start my first shift at the Sir Chris Hoy Velodrome volunteering for the Commonwealth Games. It was a great experience being right in the middle of the action and seeing what's required for top level track cyclists to perform at their best. For the likes of England and Australia this meant a rack of shiny carbon fibre bikes in various shapes and sizes to suit different events, several coaches, a team manager, mechanics, soigneurs, PR specialists and physios all operating as a finely tuned machine to make sure that all the riders had to do was sit on the bike and win. For the likes of Bangladesh, for whom this was their first experience of a wooden track let alone a competition of that size, the whole operation was a bit more low key with one coach between them and the riders themselves helping each other out by carrying bikes and picking each other up off the boards when they fell over (which the entire team managed to do on the very first corner). However I should think these smaller nations got a lot more out of being part of The Games

than many of the track superstars despite not taking home any medals.



The 'K' Bot

In the 2nd week Kirsty was handing out timing chips to the distance runners at the Hampden Park and had front row seats for a lot of the racing. Mo Farah was unable to compete and she was asked to take his place but unfortunately had forgotten her running kit.

While up there we practiced a bit of wild camping and pitched the tent in one of the city parks causing a few confused looks from the local dog walkers and early morning joggers. We also stayed with some lovely Warm Showers Hosts , Martin and Lena who joined us for the Opening Ceremony rehearsal and invited us to their local ParkRun complete with celebrity guest in the form of Steve Way. There was wild swimming in Loch Lomond with our friends Katy and Ed and we finished the 2 weeks staying with fellow LVIS members Gav and Elise.

Glasgow put on a great show not only with the friendliness and hospitality of the locals but also by organising

surprisingly hot weather that left even the Aussies looking for shade.

After an overnight drive and quick stop off in Evesham to drop off some bikes we were back in Bristol and head long into the packing and cleaning marathon to get the house ready for our tenants/financial backers for the trip. It seemed to be never ending with boxes mounting up in the garage and me getting more and more nervous that it wouldn't all fit into our storage container.

A great parting gift from Hydro was a 15' insulated container with the plan being to collect it from Clevedon take it to Bristol where we would fill it with everything we own then send it up to Evesham where it could be stored on my parents' farm. There were plenty of potential pitfalls in this plan such as the truck could get stuck on the access track in Clevedon, we wouldn't fit everything in or the crane wouldn't be able to lift it once it was filled up. However the previous sleepless night was unnecessary as it all went amazingly well with the house left (mostly) empty and almost all of our worldly possessions being waved off on the back of the truck. All to be replaced by 4 small panniers full of essentials.



What we are leaving behind alongside what we are taking with us

Last weekend was the last chance for a family get together with a grand total of 9 nieces and nephews to entertain up at the farm. It was fantastic to see everyone and strange to think that the younger members of the family will have changed quite a bit by the time we see them again (the older ones may be a bit different too!).



The Mumford/McGaul/Harder/Nayler clan
+ special guest

All of this has left us exhausted and ready for a nice relaxing holiday riding through some pleasant parts of Europe and beyond. Saturday is the Grand Depart day!