

The Speedway Researcher

Promoting Research into the History of Speedway and Dirt Track Racing

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SHALE SHIFTERS (Part 1)

We thank **Chris Byles** for the following contribution on the history of dirt track / speedway bikes. We've split into two parts as it is a lengthy article and we hope it will stimulate a bit debate too.

Most spectators of modern day speedway can easily recognise their favourite rider's machine simply by the paint work and the sponsor's logos - but strip it down to the bare bones and it becomes very apparent how standardised machines have become. So it has been for some time now. However, in those early pioneering days of leg trailing, flying cinders and gay abandon, there existed a marvellous state of mechanical mayhem.

With huge crowds flocking to see the new spectacle that had reached our shores, manufacturers were quick to see the obvious potential, so when it came to machinery, anything and everything went. Taking their standard 350cc and 500cc models, they simply stripped off everything that wasn't required such as lights and mudguards and created their own Dirt Tracker. Very little in the way of additional extras were required except the knee hook which was necessary for the art of leg trailing. The electrics were also modified to provide an ignition cut out as killing the engine and allowing it to restart at the entry to the bends often promoted the broadside.

The American manufacturer Harley Davidson had such men as Frank Arthur, Frank Pearce and Colin Watson as works riders while Billy Lamont was supported by AJS and Jim Kempster was a Rudge man. Many of the serious aspiring racers adopted the Douglas machine while Jack Parker used the company BSA. BSA also powered Clem Cort. Irishman Larry Coffey favoured the neat looking Zenith whilst those whose purse did not stretch too far used the Ariel marque.

Other manufacturers such as Sunbeam, Norton and Cotton made successful appearances. A number of machine like the Rex Acme used a Blackbourne engine when the company did not manufacture its own engine. Privateer and engineer Charlie McEvoy used a Blackbourne engine in his original single cylinder lay down machine.

Roger Frogley initially used a fairly standard Rudge machine. However, in the middle of the season, Stanley Glanfield designed a new model especially for "Dirt Racing" and it was marketed under the name of the Glanfield **1**

Rudge Special. This machine housed a Whitworth engine in a duplex frame with added tubing (struts) which became known as the Strutted Rudge. Unfortunately the struts braced the frame and made too inflexible to a successful dirt track bike.

Some of these early machines were soon to fall by the wayside, but as one manufacturer pulled out, so another would take their place. So it came as no surprise when no less than seventeen manufacturers exhibited their machines at the 1928 Motorcycle Show at Olympia. The stands which displayed one or two models were Scott, Zenith, Cotton, Royal Enfield, BSA, Dunelt, New Imperial, Chater Lea, Calthorpe, Rex Acme, Triumph, Rudge Whitworth, Douglas, New Henley, McEvoy, Coventry Victor, and James. The contemporary magazines Motorcycle and Motor Cycling carry show editions and feature photos of some machines mentioned here.

On to 1929 and there was a huge selection of machines, including the show models turned out in 1928, to be seen on the tracks. A dip into early newspapers will often reveal the type of machine each rider used.

In March of 1929 a new machine appeared at White City, London. It was the dirt track Wallis designed and built by George Wallis into which almost any engine could be fitted., either 350cc or 500cc. Aussie legend Frank Arthur took the Wallis powered by a 344cc JAP engine for a trial spin and pronounced it one of the finest machines he had ever ridden.

Scott made available an entirely new redesigned machine available at £95, a machine ridden with some success by works rider Frank Varey.

P & P offered three mounts. The 500cc model cost 66 guineas (1 guinea = £1.05), a twin port 350cc model cost 62 guineas and a single port 350cc would set you back 58 guineas. The Rudge and BSA machines would supply a machine for £70 while the Douglas flat twin cost £85 with its TT engine. But it was the Dirt Track Douglas that was to dominate that year, so much so that it sold some 1,300 machines which were raced in Britain, Australia, Europe and South America. Nothing could live with the "Dougie" which appeared in two models, the DT5 and DT6. These differed only in the fact that their engine capacity were 500cc and 600cc respectively. The price brand new were, £85 and £90 respectively.

It is worth mentioning that all these early custom built speedway machines were clutchless. Rolling starts for scratch races or push starts for handicap racing did not need a clutch. They were all, however, fitted with a cut out button which allowed the engine to be killed momentarily as the rider entered the bend, an action which promoted the lurid slides.

By 1930 the numbers of manufacturers had declined, although the quality had been bettered. Rudge Whitworth used their 100m.p.h. Ulster engine which obtained at least 30b.h.p. and could turn out motors in unlimited quantities. The Rudge was almost identical to those that appeared towards the end of the 1928 season, although its frame was no longer strutted. **2**

Freddie Dixon promised 346bhp with his super tuning on the 1930 special Douglas motor and the real battle would undoubtedly be between the Douglas and the Rudge. Sadly for the Bristol factory, the track surfaces were changing, becoming shallower and even the shortened Douglas introduced in 1930 could not halt the surge of the Rudge. It was internal, financial, company problems and a new competitor's motor that would do for the Rudge.
To be continued.

WOOPS!!!

Woops! My slip is showing. For some reason the vast bulk of the tracks (Dagenham excepted) starting with the letter D vanished from the track directory. Perhaps I should get a conical cap with the letter D on it to remind me of the error of my ways or, more probably, to save the items once I'd typed them into the script of the appropriate **Researcher**. However, this edition remedies the error.

Jim Henry

DALTON IN FURNESS : Dalton in Furness, Cumbria. Track length : 350 yards. 1st Meeting : Not Known. Years of Operation : 1972 - Training (N)
DARVEL : Roundshaw near Auchinleck. Track Length : Not known. Years of Operation : 1980 - 1985 - Training. Built on an old coal bing (spoil heap for those south of the border) the Darvel Rockets "home track" was the source of the name of a Scottish Junior League team that raced out of Blantyre. (N)
DEWSBURY : Hazy venue possibly used in April 1928. One for a bit more research - any offers ? (Source Motor Cycling 4/4/1928).
DONCASTER : Greyhound Stadium, York Road, Doncaster. Track length : 350 yards. 1st Meeting : (Possibly 1.9.1929) 27th April 1969. Nicknames : Stallions. Dragons. Years of Operation : 1929 - Open, 1969 - 1970 British League Division Two, 1971 - Training. (U)
DONNINGTON : Motor Racing Circuit, Donnington. Meeting staged on a makeshift track on 2.6.1968 featuring Jan O. Pedersen. (N)
DROGHEDA : Lourds Stadium, Drogheda, Louth, Ireland. Meeting staged on 2.6.1968. (N.)
DROYLESDEN : Dodds Farm, Moorside, Droylsden, Manchester. Track Length : One Third Mile. First Meeting : (25th June 1927.) 13th April 1929. Years of Operation : 1927 - Open, 1929 - Open. Proposals for a long track fixture in 1972 never came to fruition.
DUBLIN : CHAPELIZOD : Chapelizod Stadium, Dublin. Track Length : 364 yards. 1st Meeting : 19th August 1950. Nicknames : Dublin Eagles, Lizods. Years of Operation : 1949 - 1954 Open. Site redeveloped.

DUBLIN : HAROLD'S CROSS : Harolds Cross Greyhound Grounds, Dublin. Track Length : 440 yards. 1st Meeting : 15th September 1928. Years of 3
Operation : 1928 - Open. Proposals to reopen in 1952 came to nothing.
DUBLIN : SHELBOURNE PARK : Shelbourne Park Greyhound Stadium, Ringswood, Dublin. Track Length : 385 yards. 1st Meeting : 7th May 1950. Nickname: Shelbourne Tigers. Years of Operation : 1950 - 1954 - Open, 1961 - Open; 1970 - 1971 - Open.
DUBLIN : SANTRY (OR J.F.K.STADIUM), John F.Kennedy Stadium, Dublin. Track Length : 410 yards. 1st Meeting : Not Known. Nickname : Saints. Years of Operation : 1948 - 1950 - Open, 1951 - Training, 1968 - Open.

ROLL OF HONOUR

In this edition we conclude the serialisation of the list of names of riders fatally injured on the speedway tracks round the world. The list is probably incomplete but it is the best information available. We do not think it goulish to publish the list. We genuinely feel that most of these men have never been properly honoured by the sport and we hope that by printing this list that it will contribute to the perpetuation of their memory.

Maybe one day the Speedway fraternity will provide a permanent memorial to those riders who paid the ultimate price for the sport we all love.

Teo TEODOROWICZ *	Polish	Swindon	West Ham	01.09.64	20.01.65
Johnny THOMPSON	27	Scottish	Poole	09.05.55	12.05.55
Tadeusz TKACYK	21	Polish	Lublin	03.05.68	10.05.68
Lubos TOMICEK	33	Czech	Pardubice	21.10.68	22.10.68
Jack UNSTEAD		English	Exeter	13.04.62	13.04.62
Ben UNWIN		Australian			
Henk VERHOEF		Dutch	Alkmaar	23.08.59	
Reg VIGOR	22	English	Wimbledon	27.07.37	27.07.37
Gennady VYUNEV		Russian	Leningrad		.05.70
Leif WAHLMAN	19	Swedish	Exeter	28.07.84	29.07.84
Andrezj WALICKI		Polish	Gorzow Pila	13.08.67	14.08.67
Noel WALKER	24	Australian	Townsville	07.05.48	08.05.48
Mike WALSH	28	Scottish	Blantyre	26.08.83	30.08.83
Danny WARK	21	Australian	Tennant Creek	20.11.93	21.11.93
Nigel WASLEY	24	English	Long Eaton	29.08.79	14.09.79
Andrezj WALIKI		Polish	Gorzow Pila	13.08.67	14.08.67
Hugh WATKINSON	25	English	Birmingham	.11.46	11.46
Neal WATSON		English	King's Lynn	19.05.84	19.05.84
Noel WATSON		Australian	Motherwell	06.11.53	09.11.53
Arne WATTERGREN	24	Swedish	Norrkoping	20.09.62	21.09.62
Oscar WESSMAN		S.African	Johannesburgh		.50
Dave WILLS	26	Australian	West Ham	22.06.65	22.06.65

Billy WILSON	32	English	Middlesbrough Norwich	03.07.48	05.07.48
Horatio WILSON	22	English	Wembley Harringay	15.08.47	15.08.47
Damien WINSTANLEY	17	Australian	Mackay Mackay	19.10.91	01.11.91
Poul WISSING	23	Danish	Rostock		10.67
Andrzej ZARZECKI	22	Polish	Zielona Gora Zielona Gora	21.03.93	21.03.93
Boris ZAKHAROV		Russian	Moscow		.05.64
Oleg ZUBENKO		Russian	Elista Elista		06.88

* Held UK Citizenship at time of accident.

We hope this list will never grow any longer except to add any names which have been missed.

LIST RIDERS WHO DIED FROM NON SPEEDWAY CAUSES

This list was compiled by **Don Gray** of Cambridgeshire and should be of interest to readers. As always we are happy to add to the list or amend it as necessary to correct any errors.

Geoff MEREDITH	Australian	Celtic Park	June 1928	Pneumonia. [^]
A.E.WOOD	English	Halifax	July 1928	R.T.A.
Bert ROUND	English	Sheffield 1928		R.T.A.
Will NICHOLAS	S.African	Crystal Palace	1930	R.T.A.
Clem CORT	English	Belle Vue	1931	R.T.A.*
Oliver GOODFELLOW	Scottish	Glasgow	April 1931	Speedboat**
Blos BLOMFIELD	Australian	West Ham	1932	Road Racing
Les BLAKEBROUGH	English	Clapton	1933	Diphtheria
Frank CHARLES	English	Wembley	1939	Gliding
George PEPPER	Canadian	Newcastle	1941	RAF Flying
George COCHBONE	English	Belle Vue		Killed on active service
Syd GRIFFITHS	English	Southampton	1941	Killed in air raid
Jack HARGREAVES	English	Belle Vue	1942	R.T.A.
Eric EVANS	English	Bristol	1947	Grass track
"Red" SKELTON	Australian	Sydney Royale	Jan 1947	Sidecar
Steve ISON	English	Harringay	1949	R.T.A.
George FARMER	English	Middlesbrough	1949	Killed practicing.
Stan HODSON	English	Exeter	1949	Illness
Reg COURT	English	Oxford	1949	No information
Sven LOFQUIST	Swedish		Oct 1949	Long Track
Alfred SMOCZYCK	Polish		1950	R.T.A.
Ken MORRIS	English	Brafield	April 1953	R.T.A.
Bosse ANDERSSON	Swedish		1953	Plane crash
Don RALSTON	Australian		Feb 1956	R.T.A.****
Terry COURTNELL	English	Oxford	Nov 1956	R.T.A.^^^
Ingemar SUNDQUIST	Swedish	Kaparna	Dec 1958	Drowned****
Dick SAYER	Rhodesian	Norwich	Jan 1959	Died Kent coal mine
Gerry HUSSEY	English	Leicester	March 1959	Midget car ****

Merv ANDREWS	Australian	Brisbane	Oct 1959	R.T.A.****
Ernie STOCKMAN	New Zealander		Nov 1965	R.T.A.^^
Johnnie FAAFENG	Norwegian	Glasgow	Jan 1968	R.T.A.***
Martyn PIDDOCK	English	West Ham	14 July 1970	R.T.A.^ 5
Gary EVERETT	English	Wimbledon	14 July 1970	R.T.A.^^
Peter BRADSHAW	Australian	West Ham	14 July 1970	R.T.A.^^
Malcolm CARMICHAEL	Australian	West Ham	14 July 1970	R.T.A. ^^
Peter BAILEY	English	Coventry	April 1973	R.T.A.^^
Jochen WILKENS	German		February 1977	R.T.A.^^^
Jack MILLEN	New Zealander	Berwick	April 1978**	R.T.A.
Graham BANKS	English	Canterbury	June 1978	Grass track
Anatoli KUZMIN	Russian	Lokomotiv Moscow	1979	R.T.A.
Oleg KUZMIN	Russian	Lokomotiv Moscow	1979	R.T.A.
Zdenek KUDRNA	Czech	Birmingham	June 1982	Grass track
Josef ZOLLER	German	Ruhpolding	August 1984	Grass track
Kieran BERWICK	English	Eastbourne	1984	Lukemia
Billy SANDERS	Australian	Ipswich	April 1985	Suicide
Kenny CARTER	English	Bradford	May 1986	Suicide
Walter DIENER	German		August 1986	Long Track^^
Mark CHISWELL	English	Mildenhall	Sept 1987	R.T.A.
Troy WYTON	Australian	Adelaide	June 1993	R.T.A.****
Nathan GAYMER	English	Iwade	Nov 1994	R.T.A.
Gary REYNOLDS	English	Iwade	Nov 1997	R.T.A.
Jon UNDERWOOD	English	Arena Essex	June 2000	R.T.A.^^

R. T. A. means road traffic accident. * In Argentina. ** In Scotland *** In Norway **** In Australia ^ In the Isle of Man ^^ In Holland ^^ In New Zealand ^^ In Germany ^^ In South Africa.

NEWSPAPER INFORMATION

Rayleigh : Track : **Weir Stadium** 1948 - 1973 but with gaps. Also Central Speedway track in the vicinity in the pre war at nearby Laindon which is very much in need of research work to pull together details.
 Newspapers : (356) The Local Weekly Sept 1960 - Jan 1961; (357) The Local Review Feb 1961 - May 1966; (358) Aayleigh and Wickford Gazette jan - July 1933; (359) Rayleigh and Wickford Gazette and Mid Sussex Recorder Aug 1933 - Aug 1937; (360) Rayleigh, Wickford and Southend District Gazette Aug 1937 - April 1940 & July 1947 - March 1968.
Reading : Tracks : **Tilehurst Stadium** and **Smallmead** plus the Training tracks at Smallmead and the Longmoor/California track which is nearby.
 Newspapers : (361) Berkshire Chronicle 1928 - Sept 1961; (362) Berkshire Chronicle (County Edition) Jan 1947 - Sept 1961 & 1968 - date; (363) Evening Gazette Aug 1935 - Dec 1938; (364) Reading Gazette Jan - Oct 1939; (365) The Football Chronicle 1928 - Dec 1936; (366) Reading Mercury, Oxford Gazette, Newbury Herald and Berks County Paper 1926 - Nov 1960; (367) Reading Review

Sept 1935 - April 1940 & Aug 1946 - Aug 1948; (368) The Reading Standard 1928 - Sept 1965.

Rochdale : Track : **Milnrow Road Stadium**. A 1928 - 1930 venue which reopened for a couple of seasons 1971 - 1972.

Newspaper : (369) Rochdale Observer 1928 - date. Patchy coverage.

and Mid Kent Advertiser 1928 - Oct 1940. Try also Kent Messenger.

Rotherham : Track : Rotherham. Not as famous a venue as immediate neighbours in Sheffield. Yet another with a history to be dug out.

Newspapers : (371) The Rotherham Advertiser 1928 - Dec 1944; (372) Rotherham Express 1928 - Oct 1940.

Ryde IOW : Track : **Smallbrook**. The UK's only offshore venue 1996 to date.

Newspaper : (373) Isle of Wight Times and Hampshire Gazette 1996 - date.

Salford : Track : **Albion Stadium**, 1928 - 1929. Newspaper : (374) Salford City Reporter and Salford Chronicle 1928 - June 1951. Also try Manchester papers.

Scunthorpe : Tracks : **Quibell Park and Ashby Ville**. Sunny Scunny with the two of the most unusual tracks ever. Newspaper : (375) Scunthorpe Star 1970 - date; (376) Scunthorpe Evening Telegraph 1970 - date. It is possible that pre war Scunthorpe papers may carry information about **Thorne** Speedway which is nearby.

Sheffield : Track : **Owlerton**. Built originally by an Aussie - Spencer Stratton and a Scot - George Cumming - the steel city has had speedway off and on since 1929. The Library in Sheffield has a large holding of post war programmes.

Newspapers : (377) The Sheffield Daily Telegraph 1929 - July 1936; (378) Sheffield Telegraph July 1936 - Oct 1938; (379) Sheffield Daily Telegraph and Daily Independent Oct 1938 - May 1939; (380) Telegraph and Independent May 1939 - June 1942; (381) Sheffield Telegraph 1946 - Sept 1965; (382) Sheffield Morning Telegraph Sept 1965 - Jan 1966; (383) Sheffield Morning Telegraph Jan 1966 - date; (384) Yorkshire Telegraph and Star 1929 - Oct 1938; (385) Telegraph and Star Oct 1937 - Nov 1938; (386) The Star Nov 1938 - date; (387) Sports Special (The Green 'Un) 1929 - 1937; (388) Green 'Un Aug - Nov 1946; (389) The Star Green 'Un Nov 1946 - date; (390) Sheffield Independent 1929 - May 1932; (391) Daily Independent June 1932 - Oct 1938; (392) Sheffield Mail 1929 - Aug 1931; (393) The Weekly Telegraph 1929 - Dec 1951.

Sittingbourne : Track : **Iwade or Marshbank Farm**. Look out for the markers in the hedge row. A training track for many years with some league action. Lang may yer lum reek Graham. May be some obscure Kent action to be found.

Newspapers: (394) The East Kent Gazette 1928 - date; (395) North East Kent Chronicle Oct 1931 - Jan 1935; (395) North East Kent Times 1928 - Jan 1965; (396) North East Kent Times and East Kent Gazette Feb 1965 - date.

Skegness : Track : **Skegness Stock Car Track**. Short lived venture in both 1997 and 1998 which is a pity. Newspaper : (397) Skegness Standard 1997 - date.

Southampton : Track : **Bannister Court**. 1928 pioneer which died on the altar of redevelopment in 1963. Also a training track at **Hamble**. Also other obscure venue of Swaythling Atlantic Park whatever it was is likely to be detailed in these papers.

Newspapers : (398) The Hampshire Advertiser and Southampton Times 1928 - Nov 1940; (399) The Southampton Daily Echo 1928 - June 1958; (400) The Southampton

Evening Echo July 1958 - date; (401) Football Echo and Sports Gazette 1928 - Sept 1939 & Aug 1946 - May 1966; (402) The Sports Echo March 1930 - Sept '39

Stockport : Track : **Hazel Grove**. An obscure 1937 venture in this town on the south side of Manchester. The track was located at the greyhound track and is mentioned 7

in the 1937 editions of Motorcycling.

Newspapers : (403) The Stockport Advertiser and Guardian 1937; (404) Stockport Express 1937; (405) The Cheshire Daily Echo 1937.

Stoke on Trent : Tracks : **Sun Street Stadium** (Also known as Hanley) and **Loomer Road** (Which is in Newcastle Under Lyme.) Pre war activity as Hanley 1929, post war in the 1950s as both Hanley and Stoke and Provincial League 1960 - 63 as Stoke.

Newspapers : (406) The Staffordshire Sentinel Daily 1928 - March 1929; (407) The Staffordshire Sentinel Weekly 1928 - date; (408) Evening Sentinel March 1929 - date; (409) Stoke on Trent City Times Nov 1935 - Dec 1969; (410) Sunday Sentinel 1928 - Aug 1929.

Sunderland : Track : **East Bolden Greyhound Stadium**. An abortive attempt of 8 meetings in 1964 followed by a short spell in the early 1970s when Newcastle was closed. Superb wee track which produced some great racing.

Newspaper : (411) Echo 1964 - date. Also try Newcastle papers of this era.

Swansea : Track : None, but nearly a few years ago. Could carry details of other venues in the South Wales area. May give details of Taffy Williams.

Newspapers : (412) The Cambria Daily Leader 1928 - March 1930; (413) Swansea and Glamorgan Herald and The Herald of Wales 1928 - March 1930; (414) Herald of Wales March 1930 - date; (415) The South Wales Daily Post 1928 - March 1930; (416) South Wales Daily Post and Cambria Daily Leader March 1930 - March 1932; (417) South Wales Evening Post March 1932 - date; (418) South Wales Weekly Post 1928 - March 1930; (419) Sporting News and Football Leader 1928 - May 1930; (420) Sports Post Aug - Sept 1930; (421) Sporting Post 1929 - March 1930.

TRACK RECORD UPDATE

Further continuation from **John Jarvis'** superb record of tracks.

FARRINGDON : Farringdon Raceway, A417 Farringdon - Wantage Road.

Track Length : 250 yards. 1st Meeting : Not Known. Years of Operation : 1985 - 87 - Open; 1988 - Open & Training. (N.)

FELTON : Felton, Northumberland. Track Length : Not Known. 1st Meeting : Not Known. Years of Operation : 1978 - 83 - Open & Training; 1984 - 88 - Training. Team Name : Flyers. (N.)

FERNDOWN : St Ives Road, Ferndown. Track Length : 230 yards. No Meetings. Years of Operation : 1958 - 61 - Training. A team rode in a four heat match at Aldershot in 1959. (U.)

FLEETWOOD : Highbury Avenue, Fleetwood, Lancashire. Track Length : 336 yards 1949 - 325 yards 1948. 1st Meeting : 13th April 1948. Years of

Operation : 1948 - 51 - National League Division Two; 1952 - Open. Team Names : Flyers, Knights (1952) Stadium still standing. Trace of track can be seen.

GLASGOW : Ashfield. Saracen Park, Hawthorn Street, Glasgow, G22 6RU. Track Length : 355 yards 1949. 1st Meeting : 12th April 1949. Years of 8

Operation : 1949 - 52 - National League Division Two; 1953 - Open; 1999 - 2000 - Premier League. Used for midget cars 1953 after speedway closed.

After original closure became a dog track for duration. Reopened 1999. (U)

GLASGOW : Carntyne Greyhound Stadium, Glasgow. Track Length : 420 yards in 1930. 1st meeting : 25th May 1928. Years of Operation : 1928 -

Open; 1930 - Open. Proposed venture 1947 seems to have come to nothing. Stadium demolished some years ago. Site public open space. (U.)

GLASGOW : Celtic Park, London Road, Glasgow. Track Length : 440 yards. 1st Meeting : 28th April 1928. Year of Operation : 1928. Lasted for all of 12 meetings closing after meeting of 23rd July. Track site now buried under stands of redeveloped stadium. (U.)

GLASGOW : Govan. 181 Helen Street, Govan, Glasgow. Track Length : Not Known. No Meetings - Training Only. Year of Operation : 1930 - Training. (U.)

GLASGOW : Hampden Park, Mount Florida, Glasgow. Track Length : 420 yards. 1st Meeting : 11th April 1969. Years of Operation : 1969 - 72 - British League Division One. The speedway crowd was lost in this vast arena. Oval track retained in revamped stadium.

GLASGOW : Nelson. Olympic Stadium, Camlachie Street, Glasgow. Track Length : 486 yards. 1st Meeting : 9th April 1928. Years of Operation : 1928 - Open; 1932 - Open. Egg shaped track in stadium located immediately north of Celtic Park. Open to public in early March 1928. Now a housing site. (U.)

GLASGOW : Shawfield Greyhound Stadium, Glasgow Road, Rutherglen. Track Length : 363 yards. 1st Meeting : 15th April 1988. Years of Operation : 1988 - 90 - National League; 1991 - 94 - British League Division Two; 1995 - 1997 - Premier League. Hosted Glasgow Tigers for all but 1996 when it was base for the Scottish Monarchs. Long time home of Clyde F.C. was saved from redevelopment as supermarket. (N.)

GLASGOW : White City Stadium, Paisley Road West, Ibrox, Glasgow. Track Length : 430 yards. 1st Meeting : 29th June 1928. Years of Operation : 1928 - 29 - Open; 1930 - 31 - Northern League; 1939 - ACU Northern Cup; 1940 - Open; 1945 - Open; 1946 - Northern League; 1947 - 1953 - National League Division Two; 1954 - National League Division Two - resigned; 1956 - Open; 1964 - Provincial League; 1965 - 67 - British League; 1968 - British League Division One. Demolished 1969 and is now on the line of the M8 motorway. Team Names : 1939 - 40 - Lions. 1946 - 68 Tigers. (U.)

GREENFORD : Greenford Driving Park, Birbeck Avenue, Perivale, London. Track Length : 880 yards. 1st Meeting : 7th April 1928. Years of Operation : 1928 - 29 - Open; 1931 - Open. A trotting track used for dirt track racing. Site developed. (U.)

HACKNEY WICK : Hackney Wick Greyhound Stadium, Waterden Road, 9 London, E15 2EQ. Track Length : 340 yards 1937, 345yards 1980. 1st Meeting : 3rd May 1935. Years of Operation : 1935 - 37 - National League; 1938 - 39 - National League Division Two; 1963 - 64 - Provincial League; 1968 - 74 - British League Division One; 1975 - 83 - British league; 1984 - 86 - National League; 1987 - British League; 1988 - 90 - National League; 1991 - British League Division Two; 1995 - Open; 1996 - Premier League. Nicknames : Wolves, Hawks, Kestrels, London Lions. (U.)

HALIFAX : The Shay Grounds, Halifax. Track Length : 402 yards 1949, 378 yards, 1965 - 70, 410 - 1971. 1st Meeting : 6th April 1949. Years of Operation : 1949 - National League Division Three; 1950 - 51 - National League Division Two; 1965 - 67 - British League; 1968 - 74 - British League Division One; 1975 - 85 - British League; 1986 - Training. The stadium has been redeveloped to square off the terracing of Halifax Town F.C. probably ending any chance of a return of speedway. (U.)

HALIFAX : Thrum Hall Cricket Ground, Halifax. Track Length : 465 yards 1928, 462yards 1929. 1st Meeting : 2nd May 1928. Years of Operation : 1928 - Open; 1929 - English Dirt Track League; 1930 - Open. 1936 - Grass Track event on circuit inside dirt track. Used flares on inside of track to illuminate a night meeting. Terry Warren's Halifax history worth a read. (U.)

HAMBLE : Near Southampton. Grass track in 1946. Years of Operation : 1947 - Training; 1949 - 50 - Training. (N.)

HAMILTON : Showgrounds. Near Hamilton Ice Rink off Motherwell Road. Track length : Not Known - probably varied from year to year. 1st Meeting : 15th May 1949. Years of Operation : 1949 - 51 - Open; 1953 - 55 - Open. Did not run 1952 due to foot and mouth epidemic. Hybred event- grass cum dirt referred to as grass speedway in programme but described as a blaes (shale) park by riders who raced there. (N.)

HARRINGAY : Harringay Greyhound Stadium, Green Lanes, London. Track Length : 339 yards approx 1928, 336yards 1938, 333 yards post war. 1st Meeting : 29th May 1928. Years of Operation : 1928 - Open; 1929 - 30 - Southern League; 1931 - Southern League - resigned; 1934 - National League Divisions One and Two; 1935 - 37 - National League; 1938 - 39 - National League Division One; 1940 - 42 - Open; 1947 - 53 - National League Division One; 1954 - National League - closed after completing fixtures; 1958 - 59 - Open; 1961 - Open. Now site of supermarket where a celebration of the speedway history was staged. (U.)

HASTINGS : Pilot Field, Elphinstone Road, Hastings. Track Length : 388 yards. 1st Meeting : 21st April 1948. Years of Operation : 1948 - 49 - National League Division Three. Closed following court action. (U.)
HEDNESFORD : Nr Cannock, Staffordshire. Track Length : Not Known. No meetings. Years of Operation : 1955 - Training; 1958 - Training; **10**

1960 - Training, Now a stock car track. (N.)

HIGH BEECH : King's Oak Hotel, Near Loughton, Essex. Track Length : 361 yards 1928, 370 yards 1930, 340 yards 340. 1st Meeting : 19th February 1928. Years of Operation : 1928 - 29 - Open; 1930 - 31 - southern League; 1932 - Open; 1935 - 36 - Training; 1937 - 39 - Open; 1948 - 50 - Open; 1967 - Training; 1968 - 40th Anniversary Gathering. The track is now overgrown and a visitor centre is sited on the first bend close to Hotel.

HOLBEACH : Bell End, Nr Holbeach, Nr Spalding, Lincolnshire. Track Length : 380 yards, 370 yards 1939. 1st Meeting : Not Known. Years of Operation : 1936 - 39 - Open; 1945 - 48 - Open. (U.) A grass speedway with dirt on the bends.

HIGHBRIDGE : Oak tree Stadium, Near Highbridge, Somerset. Track Length : Awaited. 1st meeting : May 2000. Years of operation 2000 - Conference League. (N)

HUDDERSFIELD : Quarmby Stadium, Longwood Edge, Huddersfield, Yorkshire. Track Length : Not Known. 1st Meeting : 4th August 1928. Years of Operation : 1928 - 29 - Open. Pear shaped track which had a very short life.(U.)

HULL : Boulevard Stadium, Airlie Street, Hull. Track Length : 423 yards 415 yards 1980. 1st Meeting : 7th April 1971. Years of Operation : 1971 - 73 - British League Division Two; 1974 - British League Division One; 1975 - 81 - British League. (U.) See Roger Hulbert's Book.

HULL : Hedon Stadium, Heddon, Nr Hull. Track Length : 443 yards. 1st Meeting : 27th March 1948. Years of Operation : 1948 - National League Division Three; 1949 - National League Division Three - resigned. Swindon took over fixtures. Built on old disused airport had its own dedicated railway station. See Roger Hulbert's Book.

Wolverhampton Speedway 1929

The running of Wolverhampton speedway was taken over in 1929 by Midland Speedways Ltd. The opening meeting was staged on 16th July and was attended by 1,500 people. The Express and Star noted that a possible reason for the low numbers was a local flower show !!

Jack Barber of Sheffield easily defeated Tommy Deadman while Westy Westwood won the Golden Helmet. A match race between Australian Jack

Sweeney and Westwood was postponed for a week when the Aussie's engine failed.

2,000 attended the next meeting staged on 23rd July. At this meeting Westwood defeated Ivor Creek in a match race and set a track record time of 87.0 seconds. T. Anslow won the Golden Gauntlet after Westwood had taken a spectacular fall. **11**

A week later a Wolverhampton team took to the track for the first time. The home side defeated a Warrington team 19 - 9. The Golden Sash was won by a Coventry youngster who would quickly become famous, Tom Farndon. Many of us wonder what honours Tom would have won in the sport but for his tragic death in 1935.

Hanley (Stoke) were the next team to face Wolverhampton. The match, watched by a crowd of 2,500, was drawn. Most of those attending would have been disappointed by the late arrival of Westwood but he appeared in the twilight to draw a match race series with Leicester's Billy Ellmore one each. Ellmore and Westwood squared up again on 13th August with the latter winning. Westwood was in the wars as a participant in a spectacular crash. One week on and the new Wolverhampton management, Midland Greyhound Racing Co. Ltd., had invested in track illuminations. An incredible 8,000 turned up to watch the Wolverhampton team race against Leicester. The local press reported this as the best meeting seen at Monmore Green so far but did not provide match details. The only source of criticism was the ragged rolling starts. Yet again the local hero Arthur "Westy" Westwood was in trouble taking another heavy tumble.

Most of the 8,000 returned on 27th August. R. Hutchins on a locally made Rudge machine was a popular winner of the Scratch Race while Sheffield's Dusty (Stan) Jenkins won the Monmore Handicap.

Wolverhampton broke new ground on 3rd September when Eva Asquith became the first lady to ride at the Midland venue. A good crowd turned up to watch the Yorkshire lass give a good account of herself. Broncho (Frank) Bianchi, yet another Sheffield man, won the Monmore Handicap while Harry Taft won the Scratch race and a three cornered event. Taft nearly had a clean sweep a week later but Westwood took the Scratch Race and Harry had to be content with 7 wins out of 8 starts.

September 18th saw Wolverhampton beat Nottingham 39.5 to 13.5. The nine heat match saw Wolverhampton win six heats by a 5 - 1 margin and the winning riders in the other three races. (The scoring system was now 3-2-1). Probably the Nottingham men were not used to the narrow Monmore Green track being used to wide open spaces on their home cinders.

Harry Taft won the handicap final on September 24th but a week later he and brother Cyril failed to turn up. The local press was not happy with the management's failure to provide the public with a reason for their absence. Their absence gave the Rudge mounted Hutchins another chance to shine.

The last meeting of 1929 was abit of a fiasco as 8 of the advertised riders failed to show and the meeting featured a series of match races. Yet again the management could not explain the riders' absence and again Hutchins was the star turn.

Concluding **Mark Sawbri e's** history of Wolverhampton'snext time. **14**

Rants and Ravings, Updates and a Question or Two

Barry Stephenson of Workington draws our attention to an old Glasgow White City programme of 1946 vintage which carries an article advising Glasgow speedway fans that their new team can't be called The Lions as they were in 1939 (and presumably in 1940) because Wembley had licenced the name. A suggestion that the team be called the Dynamos was vetoed by fans and, after all that they became the Tigers.

Question from the Editors (1). When did Sheffield become The Tigers and were Norwich ever the Canaries after the war ? Also what was the exact date the Cradley Heath Cubs became the Heathens ?

Question from the Editors (2). Can anyone check up and find out if there was a speedway track at Bridgewater in Somerset in 1935 ? **Don Gray** has come across a newspaper article mentioning the possiblity of a track in this part of the cider country.

Vic Butcher of Tangmere suggests that Ben Living, mentioned as Coventry reserve in the article about Clapton, should be Ben Livine. He adds that times were not announced at Southampton sometime late 1950s - early 1960s. Can anyone confirm this and give exact dates ?

Vic suggests that he can go one better and advise of the meeting at Southampton staged on 5.10.1929 when the results were not announced. The reason for this was a competition was held among the spectators to provide the names of riders finishing order plus a guess at the time recorded. Vic has found winners names but not the results.

Finally Vic thinks the 1929 Star Championship event between Parker and Hayes did not take place because Hayes was injured, and out for the season, on 17th July in the match v Stamford Bridge.

Ann On, who won't supply a name or address, tells another out of pits tale which will amuse. A certain Italian rider, who was unhappy with being excluded, telephoned the referee to advise him of his displeasure. Rather than be overly rude the rider told the referee that he thought the referee should be down in the stadium selling ice cream rather than working in the referee's box. Thankfully for the rider concerned, the referee was not too put out by this.

Bob Ballard, 2, Stansty Close, Wrexham, LL11 2BS, updates our name that tune item with Wembley's offering as "The Entry of The Gladiators" and that

Walthamstow played "Goodnight Irene" for a reason Bob is unsure of. Over to you to explain Goodnight Irene.

On that same note has sent us a copy of sheet music and words for "The Brandon Bees" , a song for all you Coventry fans, by a person called Archie Layton. It goes:

We supporters of The Bees are supporters of the Bees,

"Cos we think The Bees are easily the best!

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And there isn't any doubt, They're a team to shout about;

You can see they're always out to beat the rest!

Cheer them along! Cheer them along!

With the B E E S song!

It'sThe Bees! The Brandon Bees!

They go buzzing a-round the track with perfect ease!

They're as crazy as the craziest, Sporty as the sportiest,

Busy as the busiest are The Bees! We're filled with pride-- to see them ride,

For the "black and gold" are always sure to please!

When you hear the mighty roar, Who d'you think we're roaring for?

It's The Bees ---- The Brandon Bees! It's The Bees!

The song is copyright of Coventry Speedway and was published in 1953.

David Selby, 34 Paddock Drive, Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 6SS suggests that there could be a couple of errors in the 1932 National League table as follows : Belle Vue 35 Plymouth 15; Wimbledon 23 Crystal palace 31 and Wimledon 33.5 Plymouth 20.5. Again we'd appreciate any other views on this one.

David is also keen to build up a central resource of heat details of post war meetings. We endorse this and can tell you that Hugh Vass is working on 1946 and 1947 (as well as 1939 in this manner). Bids for other years

welcome. If everyone could chip in we could really do this exercise justice.

Congratulations to Coventry Historian **Dave Rowbotham** for his well written item carried by The Sunday Times in July (and to the newspaper for the good picture of Chris Louis). It does, however, beg the question - Why is someone from Exeter asking The Sunday Times if speedway in the UK is alive and well ?

Can You Help ?

Vic Butcher is trying to reconcile his records of the points for and against for the 1930 Southampton team. Published tables show For 717 Against 561 whilst from the records Vic has compiled the sums add up to For 716 Against 561. See tables in last edition - Lea Bridge v Southampton result from Mike Terran seems to differ by one point from the score Vic has supplied.

Jeremy Jackson, Glen Maye, 85 Park Way, Fairfield Park, St. Austell, PL25 4HR. 01726 66484. is looking for photographs of Maurie McDermott, Eddie

Williams, Rusty Wainwright, Larry Young, George Gower, Ray Thackwell, Graham Royle, Cyril Maidment, Bryce Subritzky, Ronnie Rolfe, Ken Vale, Bob Warner, Mike Keen.

Jim Henry is seeking heat details for the following meetings (match and second half) : 1945 15.8 - Glasgow v London; 29.8. Glasgow v Newcastle; 19.9 Glasgow v The Rest; 10.10. Ron Johnson's Select v Bill Kitchen's 16 Select. 1946 10.4. Glasgow Trophy; 1.6. Birmingham v Glasgow; 1947 22.5. Middlesbrough v Glasgow; 15.10 Glasgow v Jack Parker's Select. 1950 15.9.Lanarkshire Eagles v Scottish Select; 22.9. Best Pairs at Motherwell.

Eric Watson, 43 Hammonds Green, Totton, Southampton, SO40 3HU Phone : 02380871561 is seeking details about pre war tracks. He is looking for Team Colours (TC), Logo or Design on the race jacket (L) and nickname for the team (N). Barnsley Northern League 1929 and 1930 TC,L,N; Belle Vue 1931 Southern League, 1934 National League Division 2, 1937 Provincial League, 1939 National League Division 2 TC,L,N; Barnet 1929 - 1939 TC L, N; Birmingham Hall Green Southern League 1929 and 1930, National League 1934, National League Division 2 1934, Provincial League 1937, National League Division 2 1938 TC,L, N; Belle Vue Northern League 1929 to 1931, National League 1932 to 1935, National League Division 1 1936 to 1939 TC, L, N; Birmingham Perry Barr Southern League 1929 and 1930 TC,L, N; Clapton (Lea Bridge) National League 1932 and 1933 TC,L,N; Coventry Southern League 1929 to 1931, National League 1932 to 1933 TC, L, N; Edinburgh Northern League 1930 Royal Blue Jerseys with Tartan trim (unconfirmed), Race Jackets carried only team numbers, No nickname; Bristol Provincial League 1936 and 1937, National League 1938; National League Division 2 1939 TC, L, N; Crystal Palace Southern League 1929 to 1930, National League Division 2 1939 TC,L,N; Glasgow White City Northern League 1930 and 1931 TC,L, N (No known logo 1930 Team race jackets had letters (A - H) in 1931) No known nickname until Lions of 1939.

Jim Gregory is looking for heat details (and a photocopy of the programme if possible) from the following meetings: 1949 20.4. at Hastings; 25.4. at Liverpool; 9.5. at Exeter; 6.6. at Hull; 1950 6.4. at Wimbledon; 21.5. at Shelbourne; 30.7. at Shelbourne; 1952 6.5. at Southampton; 14.5. at Fleetwood; 7.8. at Oxford; 9.8. at Swindon; 8.10. at Glasgow White City and 1953 9.9. at Ipswich.

The Editors are seeking details of Peterborough Eastfield Road (not the old Peterborough Showground site) venue which had grass straights and dirt bends and operated sometime between 1947 and 1951. Race jacket of the team was a Capital letter P in green on a yellow background.

They wonder also if anyone can provide Christian names for Bluey Thorp, Bluey Langtry, Shorty Schirmer, Gundy Harris and Rusty Wainwright. (Did

you know Slider Shuttleworth was John Charles Starkie Shuttleworth and that Indian Allan was Jim ?)

Ian Moultray is looking for the Christian names of the Dutch riders who appeared at Glasgow Ashfield in late 1949.

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Speedway Racing in 1930

We continue with **Don Gray's** personal thoughts on speedway racing in the early days. This time we look at 1930. –

Speedway racing commenced its third season as a well established professional sport, having survived a British baptism as a novel and exciting and largely urban spectator sport. Despite a faltering start and some indifference, particularly in the North, the 1929 experiment of team racing had been accepted by the public.

However, the days of easy money and large appearance fees had ended and the authorities intended to exercise stronger control. A Riders Association was formed to look after the interests of Southern riders and a similar Association was set up for those in the North.

Some of the second rate Australians who had become well known on the tracks had gone home for good but an influx of new Australian hopefuls had replaced them. As the season got under way some of the lower grade riders supplemented their incomes at weekends by appearing on unlicensed tracks using false names. This practice continued well into the thirties.

On July 20th the Speedway Riders' Benevolent Fund was inaugurated at a garden party held at High Beech.

Although a few motor cycle manufacturers continued to produce prototype machines designed purely for speedway racing, the successful long wheel base flat twin Douglas had only one major rival, the Rudge. It was the latter, despite efforts by Douglas to shorten the wheel base, which slowly but surely proved to be more popular with the riders as the season progressed and tracks surfaces became shallower.

The domestic programme format again consisted of two leagues, North and South, each league embracing new clubs although some of the 1929 members elected to stay out and to operate on open licences. This year, and henceforth, overseas stars were all permitted to ride in league teams.

In the South matches were between teams of six a side over nine heats, as before, but the Northern Association decided to limit their matches to teams of four a side plus one reserve over six heats. Scoring became 3 - 2 - 1 for both leagues.

As the season got under way some riders were suspended for a period of weeks for misdemeanors such as signing contracts to ride for a club in the South and another in the North at the same time. Non appearance to honour a booking was also severely dealt with. For example Arthur and Hugh Jervis were banned for a month for failing to fulfil a booking at Glasgow. They promptly nipped off to Germany and rode there until their bans were lifted. Clem Beckett of Sheffield was banned indefinitely for trying to organise a riders' strike. He then took a team to Moscow, but did not appear again on British tracks.

Newspapers and motor sports magazines had shown interest in the sport **18 Rochester** : Track : Rochester. Hazy pre war venue. Nearly reopend in the late 1960s. Newspaper : (370) Rochester, Chatham and Gillingham Journal, Chatham Standard **6** from day one. Who has not seen a copy of the front page of the Daily Mirror covering the pioneer meeting at High Beech ? By 1930 local newspapers and the popular nationals were providing trophies and cash prizes for competition. John Stark Hoskins, the Wembley manager was twice engaged by the B.B.C. to broadcast meetings from Wembley to listeners to what was then called the wireless.

In 1929 "The Star", a London evening newspaper had provided trophies and cash prizes for an annual competition. In 1930 the London "Evening News" put up a cup for a K.O. competition between London based teams. Wembley beat Stamford Bridge in a two leg final. The "News of The World" went one better and provided a cup and medals to be awarded to the Southern league and the "Sunday Chronicle" did the same for the Northern League.

Other regional competitions were instituted, such as the London Riders' Championship, an annual event held at Crystal Palace and later at New Cross. In 1930 Jack Ormston of Wembley secured the title and Bluey Wilkinson of West Ham was runner up.

Four tracks, Nottingham, Hall Green, Coventry and Leicester Stadium, competed for a Midland Cup, each track being represented by two riders. The two Leicester stars Squib Burton and Syd Jackson were easy winners.

The most significant event of this season was the introduction of a series of official Test Matches between England and Australia. Media attention was engendered by virtue of the concurrent cricket tests between the two countries.

The first Test at Wimbledon was a six man a side, nine heat match which the Aussies won fairly easily. The remaining four Tests were each narrowly won by England consequent upon the teams being increased to eight a side over 16 heats.

As the Aussies could only muster six star quality riders, the home team selectors had a bigger range of choice. Lack of strength in depth was to handicap the Australian selectors for many years to come.

During the close season a number of riders toured tracks in Denmark, Germany, France, Buenos Aires (Argentina), Australia and South Africa.

Johnnie Hoskins tried promoting in Spain and a group of riders built a track in Cairo. In September 1930 the Liverpool team crossed the North Sea to appear in Copenhagen. The Leicester Stadium team followed suit in October.

Southern League

Apart from the London White City Stadium, which had given up speedway in favour of athletic competitions, all of the 1929 league members returned including Hall Green which had resigned from the league after a few weeks of the previous season. Thus Birmingham was again represented by two tracks, although this time it was Perry Barr tht left the league after six **19** weeks and continued spasmodically for the rest of the season on an open licence. The league was enlarged by the addition of Leicester Stadium, which decided to join the Southern Association, and newcomers Nottingham and High Beech, the latter billed during the season as Kings Oak.

Wembley had considerably strengthened their team at the start of the season and ensured near invincibility when they signed Colin Watson from harringay six weeks into the season. Wembley finished the year as league champions and also won the Knock Out London Cup final against Stamford Bridge.

In September they were declared unofficial national champions after defeating a combined Belle Vue and Manchester White City team 27 - 20 at Wembley and 29.5 - 23.5 in the return at Belle Vue.

Nottingham collected the wooden spoon.

Northern League

The complement of the Northern League for 1930 showed a number of changes for the new season. For a start matches were to be between teams of four a side plus a reserve and were to be raced over six heats. Salford had ceased operations and Leicester Stadium had decided to join the Southern League. Leeds, the champions, opted for open licence meetings, as did Halifax, Newcastle Brough Park and Middlesbrough.

Newcomers to the league were Leicester Super, Edinburgh, Newcastle Gosforth, Wombwell and Glasgow White City. Belle Vue, White City Manchester and, much to the disgust of the locals, Sheffield, operated under the same management.

The fixtures were never completed.

The effects of the world wide recession following the 1929 Wall Street stock market crash began to be felt particularly in the industrial North and Scotland. League members Rochdale, Barnsley, Manchester White City, Warrington, Edinburgh, Gosforth and Wombwell either withdrew or closed down. Non league Halifax and Middlesbrough also closed in 1930.

The ultimate demise of Rochdale was accelerated by its suspension from the Northern Dirt Track Owners' Association for permitting betting.

The Riders

Notwithstanding the unsatisfactory situation in the Northern League the tracks in the North had produced a number of clever and competent British riders who were now the equal of their overseas mentors and who were to become leading stars in the immediate future. However, at the end of then year Vic Huxley, the Australian, was considered to be the world's top rider following a highly successful series of individual £1000 Championship wins including "The Star" Trophy at Wembley on September 12th. Although the format of the Star Championship had been changed for the 1930 season, it was still limited to riders from the Southern League teams. It was during this season that the A.C.U. banned women from competing on the speedways following an accident to a lady rider on a warm up parade lap.(See Vintage Magazine June 2000) (P.S. Why ban women for a parade incident as Andy Nichol of Glasgow broke a collar bone in a crash and fall in a warm up parade at Belle Vue in 1930?) Once again the year ended with many of their number leaving these shores to continue to ride during the British close season.

PUBLICATIONS

There is a pile of publications to report on this time. Our track directory wizzard **John Jarvis** has teamed up with **Robert Bamford** to publish a book of "Track Photographs" showing over 90 tracks as they were when John visited them. £10 + £2 p&p. The same team has published "Parker's Playground" which is a history of Bristol Speedway 1928 - 1930 £8.99 + £1 p&p. Robert has teamed up with **Dave Stallworthy** to produce A History of Reading Speedway covering California and both Tilehurst and Smallmead. £10 + £2 p&p. Robert, this time with **Glynn Shailes** have produced, in addition to the 50 years of Swindon Speedway book, Swindon Robins A - Z 1949 - 1999 £4.99 + £1 p&p and Swindon Millenium Handbook - a review of the 1999 season priced £7.99 + £1 p&p. Also available from Robert Bamford, 3 The Mews, Gastons Road, Malmesbury, Wiltshire, SN16 0BE are The Birth of Speedway in Swindon. The Re-Launch of The Comets, and a book on Steve Lawson called No.1 in the National League £7.00 + £1p&p. **Tony Lethbridge** has published his second instalment of his history of Exeter Speedway covering 1947 to 1953 costing £12.50 + £2.50 p&p. Available from Alikat Publications, 6 Lower Kings Avenue, Exeter, EX4 6JT. Volume One is still available at £5.50 inc P & P and Volume Three covering 1954 to 1964 is due out soon.

SPECIAL REQUEST

There are many keen researchers out there and none more so than **Keith Farman**. Keith is working away on a history of Yarmouth Speedway and, having seen some of his output to date, it is a real labour of love and a real quality effort. Keith is only one meeting short of completing his labours and we'd love to help him complete the exercise. Have you, or do you know of anyone who has or might have details of the Wombwell v Yarmouth Third Division match of 1948. It was rained off on 6th August and restaged on Friday 23rd August. Contact Keith on 01493 668139.

Remember - If it isn't in - you haven't sent it **21**
Who Is Doing What

We continue to provide details of more subscribers to The Speedway Researcher and what their interests or reserach subjects are.

Eric Abbott **Plymouth Speedway Pre and Post War**
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Geoff Alman **Pre-war and early Post - War Speedway**
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Andrew Anderson **Provincial League and 1946 to 1964 era**
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Robert Bamford **Swindon Speedway / Speedway in General**
 3 The Mews, Gastons Road, Malmesbury, Wiltshire, SN16 0BE
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Paul Baston **Riders' Averages**
 30 The Weald, East Grinstead, Sussex, RH19 3HB
 01342 323734

Allan Batt **New Zealand Speedway - History and Riders**
 PO Box 19 - 687, Woolston, Christchurch 8007, New Zealand
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Alan Barwick **Speedway Magazines / Team and Rider Photos**
 6 Croft Villas, Church Street, Henfield, West Sussex, BN5 9NX
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Bernard Brinkley **History of Ipswich Speedway.**
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38 Stock Street, Plaistow, London, E13 0BY

Simon Clegg **Wigan Speedway 1947 / 52 / 60**

57 Loxton Crescent, Wigan, Lancashire, WN3 5NR

01942 201680

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8 Strathbogie Avenue, Findon, South Australia 5022, Australia

Brian Collins **International Speedway Meetings**

22 Jameston Court, Wilbury Crescent, Hove, East Sussex, BN3 8FT

01273 207280

To be continued.

Essington Hall Training Track

Adrian Pavey tells us a little about one of the more obscure training tracks featured in John Jarvis' list of venues.

The Black Country Bugle, a weekly local history newspaper in the West Midlands (4th May) carried an article entitled "When Speedway came to the Simkin's Farm at Essington" and was penned by a local historian called **Jim Evans**. The article carries three photographs

During 1949 Mr Evans used to visit Perry Barr and then started going to Wolverhampton as well when it re-opened at Monmore Green in 1950. The tractor driver at the time was Tommy Nash who was very friendly with Bill and Tom Simpkin who farmed Essington Hall, near Wolverhampton. They all became ardent speedway fans and decided to lay out their own track at the farm. Between the three of them they purchased an old Excelsior JAP speedway bike from Birmingham rider Doug McLachlan. It cost them £150. Apparently the farm was an old moated site and one the bend of the track was very close to the still flooded site - you can imagine the rest! A novel safety fence if nothing else ! The sound and sight of the three lads attracted many others from the village who all wanted a go themselves. It became a regular meeting place on Sunday mornings and attracted a number of Wolverhampton and Birmingham riders too. Derek Timms, Gundy Harris, Roy Moreton and a very young Howard Cole are mentioned. Howard Junior took to the track on a minature machine specially built for him by his father. The article confirms John's dates for the venue as 1950 - 1951.

Commando !

For all you collectors of everthing speeway -- have you ever looked at the Commando comics - the war story books ? Well, they carried photographs of sportsmen and did not ignore speedway riders.

Ian Turner was featured in No. 1260, Neil Collins in No. 1373, Les Collins in No. 1579 and Tommy Knudsen in No. 1582. but how many more were there in total ?

Thanks to **Eric Abbott** for this interesting snippet.

Deadline for items for next edition is : 1st November 2000

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1930 Regional Tournaments

London Cup

1st Round

Wembley	71 - 25	115	Wimbledon	62 - 33	105	Stamford Bridge	60 - 35	113	Harringay	52 - 44	99
High Beech	52 - 44	77	Crystal Palace	52 - 43	85	West Ham	40 - 53	75	Lea Bridge	47 - 47	91

2nd Round

Wembley	52 - 44	108	Stamford Bridge	58 - 36	104	Final		Wembley	59 - 37	105
Wimbledon	39 - 56	83	Harringay	50 - 46	88	Stamford Bridge	49 - 46	86		

Essex County Championship

Away Team	West Ham	Lea Bridge	High Beech	Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Home Team											
West Ham	xxxxxxxx	34 - 20	31 - 22	West Ham	4	3	0	1	113	96	6
Lea Bridge	30 - 18	xxxxxxxx	33 - 18	Lea Bridge	4	2	0	2	105	102	4
High Beech	24 - 30	32 - 22	xxxxxxxx	High Beech	4	1	0	3	96	116	2

1935 National League

Away Team	Belle Vue	Hackney	Harringay	New Cross	Wembley	West Ham	Wimbledon
Home Team							
Belle Vue	xxxxx	45 - 27	45 - 26	41 - 30	46 - 35	35 - 35	41 - 31
	xxxxx	30 - 41	44 - 25	47 - 25	49 - 23	46 - 26	43 - 26
Hackney Wick	35 - 37	xxxxx	40 - 30	29 - 43	43 - 28	38 - 33	29 - 43
	35 - 35	xxxxx	34.5 - 37.5	31 - 41	40 - 32	39 - 31	47 - 25
Harringay	31 - 41	43 - 29	xxxxx	44 - 27	41 - 30	40 - 31	30 - 39
	46 - 25	32 - 35*	xxxxx	42 - 29	44 - 27	43 - 27^	43 - 29
New Cross	31 - 40	43 - 24	38 - 33	xxxxx	34 - 38	43 - 29	38 - 33
	25 - 47	35 - 37	30 - 41	xxxxx	40 - 31	35 - 37	43 - 28
Wembley	37 - 34	42 - 28	41 - 31	39 - 33	xxxxx	28 - 42	35 - 36
	30 - 42	42 - 26	32 - 39	50 - 22	xxxxx	45 - 25	48 - 22
West Ham	34 - 38	38 - 34	37 - 35	35 - 36	40 - 31	xxxxx	45 - 26
	39 - 33	42 - 28	39 - 33	44 - 28	41 - 31	xxxxx	45 - 27
Wimbledon	34 - 37	43 - 29	38 - 30	29 - 42	29 - 41	37 - 34	xxxxx
	35 - 36	26 - 46	35 - 36	41 - 30	25 - 45	43 - 27	xxxxx

Data compiled by **Mike Terran**.