

The Speedway Researcher

Promoting Research into the History of Speedway and Dirt Track Racing

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Edited by Graham Fraser and Jim Henry
Subscribers

End of Volume Five - Volume Six Here We Come

This edition brings us to the end of Volume 5 and we look forward to Volume 6. Both Editors have given the future of the magazine some thought. We set up with the aim to promote research into the history of speedway and dirt track racing and feel we have provided a useful forum for the exchange of information. Our discussions have revolved round where the magazine was going after we have passed on a pile of factual data in Volumes 1 - 5. We have always said - If it isn't in - you haven't sent it and that we want to edit rather than write all the items in the magazine ourselves. Heartened by the positive feedback we always get from you we have decided to continue and to seek a bigger input from you in the form of items for inclusion in the magazine, be it requests for information, or items on any aspect of speedway you care to write about. We have reviewed the running costs and will stick with an annual subscription of £3.00 for Volume 6. Yet again with this edition we include our subscription renewal and survey form and welcome your requests for information and an indication of articles you might be able to supply.

1936 World Championship

Mark Sawbridge has compiled this article on the first official World Final which was a watershed event in speedway history.

In 1936, the Autocycle Union (ACU) decided that it was time to introduce a world championship for speedway racing. It was considered by many that the existing 'Star' Championship had run its course and that the British Individual Championship, in reality a match race title, was so unpopular that its replacement was inevitable and this innovation would be embraced by supporters and riders alike.

The ACU approached the FIM (the world governing body, then called the FCIM) which decided at their Madrid Conference in April 1936 to approve the scheme. There were some dissenting voices amongst its 18 nations represented but they were over-ruled by the approving nations.

The event was called the 'World's Championship'. (Author's pedantic grammar note - at what point did we lose the ownership of the world, together with the apostrophe from the title? Also, when did we start calling it the 'World Final' which, when one thinks about it, is a bit non-sensical.)

This was not the first 'world championship' that had been held, but it was the first FIM sponsored event. Previous attempts at running a 'World Final' included an effort by Australian promoter A J Hunting to run an event in Buenos Aires, which had been sponsored by the National Tobacco Company. In 1931 a similar event was held in Paris, sponsored by the Brampton Chain Company which was won by 'Cyclone' Billy Lamont. In the same year an event billed as the World Championship was staged in the UK and has been reported in *The Speedway Researcher*.

For the 1936 championship there was £3,526 prize money on offer - an enormous amount at the time when the country was in the grip of a depression. The winner was to receive £500 with second and third receiving £250 and £50 respectively.

There were two rounds - a 'qualifying' and a 'championship' round. The ACU decided that in the qualifying round there would be three riders in each race. The rationale was that the amount of money on offer would make the racing too cut-throat for four rider races. This was an enormous mistake as supporters and riders alike universally derided the qualifying meetings. If a rider fell or had an engine failure, the others in the race were happy to tootle

round for some easy money. Thankfully, four riders races were allowed for the championship rounds.

Another controversial item was the bonus point system. Points from the qualifying and championship rounds were added together, divided by the points available, and then divided again by seven and then taken to the nearest whole number. This system was modified for the 1937 and 1938 championships but the bonus point system was discontinued after the war. The championship generated much interest in Britain and abroad. One man from the USA applied for 500 tickets to satisfy demand from supporters from the club he was running. The championship took on a cosmopolitan look right from the outset. As well as a large number of English and Australian riders, there were two New Zealanders (Jack Hobson and Wally Kilminster), two Romanians (N.Ionescu-Cristea and Ovidiu Ionescu) the Milnes (Cordy {Croydon} and Jack) and Putt Mossman from the USA, the Hansens (Morian, Kalle and Baltazr) from Denmark, Ferdinand Meyner from France, Jose and Juan Vinals from Spain, B Carlsson and Torsten Sjoberg from Sweden, Alfred Rumich and Gerhard Ahrens from Germany, Canada's Eric Chitty and the delightfully named Cecil de la Porte from South Africa. There was also a Welshman, Syd Griffiths of Harringay. (Don't worry you Scots - Ron Johnson came from Duntocher and Jack and Cordy Milne could have ridden for Scotland - Jim Henry) There was considerable talk that the USA touring team would take part, but only the aforementioned stuntman Putt Mossman made it in the end.

The qualifying rounds were staged on each First Division track, with no rider being drawn at home. As I mentioned earlier, the meetings were generally duller than ditchwater. To compensate, the promoters rather astutely booked all-star second halves, which provided more entertainment than the main event. This did, however, lead to two terrible accidents. The first at West Ham, where Jack Milne suffered a severed thumb. An apocrophyal story at the time is that Milne was told by doctors, whilst he was lying in his hospital bed, that he would never ride again, as the colourful American would be unable to grip the handlebars. Milne was in a cast iron bed and told the doctors that if he could grip the end of the bed, he could grip the handlebars, and would ride again. After a few weeks, the bed was indeed grasped and Milne was soon back on a bike again.

The other incident was quite appalling. In the Wimbledon round the young Fred Tate stunned the crowd by winning the meeting beating such notables as Dicky Case, Morian Hansen and George Newton. However, in the second half Tate fell and suffered severe facial injuries. Tate spent months in hospital and had to have plastic surgery to rebuild part of his face. It was the end of a promising career, as Tate never rode again. Following on quickly from the Dusty Haigh tragedy at Hackney Wick and with memories of Tom Farndon's death in people's minds, these accidents resulted in calls for a review of the safety of the sport.

The foreign riders who had been imported for the championship made a mixed impression. Mossman rode at West Ham and, although he only scored four points, reminded many of the legendary 'Sprouts' Elder. Cecil de la Porte was drawn at Belle Vue and missed his first two rides. He won heat nine as the only finisher, in a time ten seconds slower than Bluey Wilkinson in heat one!

At Harringay Baltazar and Kalle Hansen used borrowed machines. Baltazar, however, scored a lively ten points. At Hackney Wick neither of the Spaniards knew how to do clutch starts and were quite dreadful. Unfortunately, Jose broke a finger on his left hand.

The big shock of the qualifying round was the elimination of West Ham captain 'Tiger' Stevenson after a poor performance at New Cross. Other riders were a tad luckier. A rather dubious practice existed whereby riders who missed their qualifying round were able to swap places with other riders. Therefore Ron Johnson, who broke a rib in the England v Australia test match missed his round at Wimbledon but rode at Wembley five days later scoring a flawless maximum. The swapping practice was outlawed by the ACU for the championship round.

There were other shock non-qualifiers for the championship round. One of the title favourites, Max Grosskreutz, had been injured before the rounds took place and had to miss out. Notable riders who failed to negotiate the first stage successfully were Stan Greatrex, the

New Cross rider who had actually been born in Russia, Bill Kitchen (who appeared as a substitute rider in the championship round) and Tommy Croombs.

Qualifying Round Scorers

West Ham (26.5) Jack Parker 12, Jack Milne 11, Bob Harrison 10, Bill Kitchen 7, Gordon Byers 7, Eric Collins 6, Putt Mossman 4, Billy Dallison 3, Billy Lamont 2. Belle Vue (30.5) Bluey Wilkinson 12, Lionel Van Praag 11, Rol Stobart 10, Mick Murphy (aka Jack Glass) 9, Gerhard Ahrens 7, Jack Sharp 4, Cecil de la Porte 4, George Wilks 4, Alfred Rumrich 1. Harringay (6.6) Frank Charles, Baltazar Hanse 10, Ginger Lees 10, Wally Kilminster 10, Eric Gregory 7, Stan Greatrex 7, Stan Dell 6, George Greenwood 4, Kalle Hansen 3. Hackney Wick (19.6) Arthur Atkinson 11, Jack Ormston 11, Norman Parker 9, Geoff Pymar 7, Les Wotton 7, Cliff Parkinson 6, Dicky Smythe 4, Juan Vinals 0, Jose Vinals 0. Wimbledon (20.6.) Fred Tate 11, Dicky Case 10, Morian Hansen 9, George Newton 9, Bill Clibbett 8 Jack O'Bronco Dixon 7, Ernie Evans 4, Tommy Price 4, Les Bowden 0. Wembley (25.6) Ron Johnson 12, Wal Phillips 11, Bill Pitcher 9. Eric Langton 9, Wal Morton 6, Oliver Langton 5, Charlie Spinks 4, Torsten Sjoberg 4. New Cross (1.7) Joe Abbott 12, Cordy Milne 11, Vic Huxley 9, Wally Lloyd 7, Eric Chitty 5, Gus Khun 5, Harold 'Tiger' Stevenson 4, Tommy Allott 4, Ferdinand Meyner 0.

To be Continued.

TT Racers

Andy Marlow has sent in this item which is based on information contained in a book he has recently purchased (Title? Andy). Andy has drawn the following names as TT men before they became dirt track riders.

Ham Burrill 1922 Rudge, Arthur Franklyn 1929 Scott, Syd Jackson 1926 -29 HRD/AJS/Montgomery, Bill Kitchen 1930 - 33 Scott/Excelsior/Rudge, Gus Khun 1920 - 26 Velocette/Douglas, Eric Langton 1926-29 Scott, Oliver Langton 1926-28 New Hudson/Scott, Ginger Lees 1928 New Imperial, C. Lord 1928 Royal Enfield, Putt Mossman (USA) 1938 O.K., Olle Nygren (Sweden) 1956, Len Parker 1924 - 37 Douglas, George Pepper (Canada) 1937 Cotton/Excelsior/Norton, Len Stewart (Australia) 1927 Norton, Arthur Warwick 1927 - 28 Montgomery.

Lots of road racers have tried their hands at speedway but most can't make the move as they fight the skid rather than go with it.

Any other notable road racers who have made the grade on cinder or shale?

Can You Help?

Jonathan Burrows, 9 Honeywood Close, Brymore Estate, Canterbury, Kent, CT1 1XF, 01227 760410 is looking for a copy of a video of the BBC Childrens TV programme King Cinder.

Jim Henry, (Joint Editor) is seeking heat details for the following meetings 1951 30.4. Fleetwood v Glasgow. Race by race details for Junior Bainbridge at Stoke 2.6.; at Odsal 4.8.; at Halifax 24.8; at Shelbourne Park 2.9.; Race by race details for Frank Hodgson at Swindon 16.6.; at Halifax 24.8; at Cardiff 18.10; Race by race details for Tommy Miller at Bristol 1.6; at Swindon 16.6; at Belle Vue 13.10; at Cardiff 13.10. 1952 Race by race details for Junior Bainbridge at Coventry 16.6; Race by race details for Jack Hodgson at Cardiff 29.5; Race by race details Frank Hodgson at Aldershot 31.5; Race by race details for Bob Sharp at Wigan 16.5. 1953 Race by race details for Junior Bainbridge at Coventry 1.8; at Bradford 19.9; Race by race details for Larry Lazarus at Coventry 19.9; Race by race details for Alf McIntosh at Rayleigh 30.5; Race by race details for Tommy Miller at Coventry 1.8; at Coventry 19.9.

Howard Jones, 16 Poachers Trail, Lytham St Annes, Lancashire, FY8 4FF 01253 733288 is seeking the scorers for Wigan v Newcastle 5.7.1947.

Hugh Vass, 111 Arthur View Crescent, Danderhall, Dalkeith, Midlothian, EH22 1QS 0131 663 6974 is seeking full meeting heat details including the second half for the following

meetings staged in 1947. Wombwell 6.6 v Plymouth; 13.6 v Tamworth; 27.6 v Eastbourne; 11.7 v Southampton. Tamworth 14.5. v Plymouth; 16.7 v Exeter; 3.9 v Stoke. Eastbourne 21.6. v Stoke; 28.6. v Wombwell; 9.8. v Stoke; 6.9. v Plymouth. Stoke 5.6 v Eastbourne; 12.6 v Southampton; 19.6 v Plymouth; 3.7 v Tamworth; 17.7 v Wombwell; 14.8 v Plymouth; 4.9. v Tamworth; 11.9. v Wombwell; 25.9. v Southampton.

Alan Jones, 24 Purbeck Avenue, Shepshed, Loughborough, LE12 9HF

Tel 01509 561521 is looking for the christian names for I.F. Chance who rode in 1930, for J.Humphries who rode about 1929 - 1930 and L.Bell who rode circa 1936. Alan is also wanting to know who Bill Hargreaves and Bill Crowther rode for or which track they were attached to in 1930 and who Will Lowther rode for or was attached to in 1937.

Alan is seeking heat details for Leicester Hunters junior team matches which took place after the interval at Coventry 1.7.1950; at Wolverhampton 20.4.1953; and at Birmingham 1.8.1953. He is also seeking heat details for Shelbourne v Leicester 27.5.1951.

Ian Moultray, 24 Moredun Park Road, Edinburgh Tel 0131 666 2826 is looking for details for the second half of the Ashfield v Sheffield meeting 24.5.1949 and the finishing order to the five man handicap events staged at Ashfield on 2.8; 30.8; 27.9; and 4.10; also in 1949. Ian is also looking **5** for the finishing order for the following races at Ashfield in 1950. Reserves Race 30.5 and Reserves Race 17.6.

John Warner 187 Crofton Road, Orpington, Kent, BR6 8JB is seeking details of a set of cigarette cards. Dirt Track Riders - A series of 12 cards issued by Joseph Doyle Ltd in 1928 and possibly reissued by Keelings Coaches at an unspecified date.

The Flyers Remembered (Part Two)

Mike Craven's tale of the seaiders continues as follows

The 1949 season was arguably Fleetwood's best and most exciting. The first half of the season saw the team maintain an unbeaten home record until the beginning of August and reach third place in the league table. They also reached the semi-final of the National Trophy (KO Cup of the day) and with big names like George Newton, Wilf Plant and Norman Hargreaves on board, to say nothing of high scoring Cyril Cooper and a rapidly improving Don Potter they appeared to be riding on the crest of a wave. Unfortunately it was not to last and a cruel series of injuries together with a question mark over the club's future that put them into reverse during the last couple of months. Nevertheless crowds averaged 8,000 in number and there were few complaints from them.

At the start however the omens were good. The track had been extensively altered during the winter and lengthened to a massive saucer shaped 425 yards. The bends were banked and this promised a feast of spectacular speedway especially like that served up by the spectacular leg trailer George Newton. The loss of spectator accommodation at the first and second bends had been minimised by the introduction of further railway sleepers and, generally speaking, the improvements were there for all to see.

Jack Gordon and Jack Winstanley had been transferred to Coventry Bees and the newcomers were Newton, acquired from First Division New Cross to which he had returned the previous year after a ten year serious illness. Don Potter, from nearby Blackpool, would turn out to be the find of the season as he progressed from raw novice to racer. Don turned out to be a real asset to speedway in the coming years.

Fleetwood opened the season with a heavy defeat at Bristol on April 1st. The Bulldogs were almost unbeatable as they romped home 62 - 22 against the Flyers pairings of Plant and Ernie Appleby, Hargreaves and Cooper and Newton and Ron Hart while Reg Lambourne and Potter filled the reserve berths. An unlucky start for Wee Georgie - brought down at the starting gate by team mate Hart in his first race in his new colours. He later suffered from a broken chain in his third outing when he was leading comfortably. Thankfully his luck was to change from then onwards.

The Bristol nightmare was followed by an away fixture at Newcastle with the Flyers brilliant in defeat. A maximum for George included one finish which was within a third of a second

of the track record. Wilf Plant contributed a brilliant eleven points in the 45 - 39 defeat by the Magpies. Some better support from lower order riders would probably have seen them through.

Newton's performance was reported as a reminder of his pre-war eminence as he overcame the challenge from formidable rivals such as Frank and Jack Hodgson with speed and grace which suggested that he would be a power in his new side. For the record the Hodgsons were top scorers with Frank on 10 and Jack on 9.

Two days later came the opening night at the Highbury Avenue Sports Stadium and the first meeting between George and his new fans. They still talk about this in Fleetwood. A dream home debut with a twelve point maximum in the match followed by further wins in the scratch race heat and final in the second half. This was only the second time the feat had been achieved at Fleetwood. The match against Newcastle was won 47 - 37 and the Flyers were on their way to a ten week run of home wins during which period they registered away wins at Coventry and Southampton as well as a draw at Walthamstow. Just six defeats in the first eighteen matches left them in the top third of the table.

It wasn't just home track advantage which put them there. Many of the riders had distinguished themselves and gained popularity away from home. Norman Hargreaves was the current holder of the Stoke track record as was Wilf Plant at Coventry. Both Newton and Plant were scoring prolifically home and away and Cyril Cooper had three maximums, four elevens and four tens under his belt come the first week in August.

The speedway was the biggest crowd puller in the Fylde area apart from Blackpool's first division football club which had in these days the top stars in Stanley Matthews as well as Mortensen and Johnson. Still the Flyers had Newton, Plant, Hargreaves and Cooper and apart from the usual coaches from Cleveleys, Balckpool, St Annes and Lytham, there were private cars from as far as Lancaster, Southport and various towns in East Lancashire. But then it all went pear shaped, but not from a spectator's point of view.

Ron Hart had been out of action through injury since 26th May. This in itself necessitated some reshuffling in the side but it was the broken collar bone suffered by Wilf Plant at Newcastle on 18th July which set in motion the dramatic decline. Replacements at this stage of the season were not easy to come by but the promoters managed to obtain the loan of Brian Wilson, a promising, if not yet fully fledged 19 year old from Birmingham Brummies. Brian went on to score useful points and achieve heat wins without completely setting the track alight. Alas on the very night of his home debut further misfortune was to hit the Flyers in what was probably the second worst accident of Highbury Avenue Sports Stadium's short 7 speedway life.

Ernie Appleby, once a team mate of Wilson at Birmingham, was partnering George Newton in heat 2 of the match against Bristol when he lost his footrest as he approached the third bend in the middle of a move to overtake Bristol's Roger Wise. He careered into the fence his machine tearing a three foot hole in the boards whilst he himself was thrown high into the air but otherwise clear of the machine. Nevertheless he sustained a broken thigh, an injury which was to sideline him for two years and effectively end his career. He did return to the track but the return was brief as he retired following breaking his ankle.

Speedway had not been too kind to the Appleby family. Ernie's brother, Charlie, had been killed in a track crash at Newcastle in 1946.

What was all the more heartbreaking for Ernie was the fact that the Bristol incident happened during a period of high scoring for him, in fact it could be described as the high point of his career. The previous week he had achieved his first four ride maximum at home to Glasgow Tigers which was followed by a ten point return at Glasgow Ashfield's Saracen Park. The loss of Ernie Appleby was the straw that effectively broke the (Fleetwood's) camel's back.

Bristol narrowly won the match by 44 - 39 but counted themselves extremely lucky against the severely weakened Fleetwood outfit. Three nights later Fleetwood beat Ashfield at home on a night when Ken Le Breton demonstrated the rocket powered bike in a match race against Norman Hargreaves. Ken beat Norman in two straight wins ('He would do that' Norman was to say to the author fifty years later. 'But nothing came of it did it?'). In fact Le Breton and his

rocket bike appeared at a few venues over the country but the idea never caught on as more than one rider considered the idea a tad on the dangerous side.

[The bike was a speedway machine with two rockets strapped on either side of the rear wheel. The rockets could be fired from a switch on the handlebars and the idea was that the rocket could be used to give a rider a boost at any point of the race they thought fit to use it.]

Fleetwood then lost at home to Glasgow Tigers, away to Ashfield again and then at home to Norwich. Still without Plant and with Newton temporarily out of form, the team could do nothing right.

The Flyers problems were compounded when Wilf Plant handed in his shock transfer request. Wilf decided that he needed a track much nearer to his Leicestershire home and intimated that he considered that it had been a mistake to sign for the Fleetwood club the previous year.

Wilf's scoring record for the Flyers in all the competitions which added up in excess of 600 points suggested to the Lancashire fans that Wilf was some way off beam on this score.

On the plus side Wilf recovered from his injury and was fit enough to resume riding for the team and produce some good scores during the period he was awaiting a move. George Newton returned to form, as did Norman Hargreaves and the team continued to entertain, even though their poor results resulted in a deterioration in their league position. Don Potter was now chipping in with scores of seven and eight a match which was a good return for a first year rider.

The enthusiasm with which the promoters were pursuing their dealings with Blackpool Borough Council over a possible speedway operation there had an unsettling effect on the team despite the expression of totally unrealistic views that the Flyers could survive as a Third Division side in Fleetwood alongside a high powered promotion in Blackpool where the promoters envisaged a weekly crowd of thirty to forty thousand, which could rival Wembley. This was pie in the sky. The football club was only getting twenty thousand spectators on a Saturday afternoon and popular as speedway was at the time it posed no threat to draws such as Blackpool versus Arsenal or Manchester United.

And so the season came to a disappointing end with Fleetwood finishing ninth out of twelve despite the early promise. Newton finished his season's home fixtures as he had started, with a maximum. This time it was against a depleted Ashfield side minus Aussies Keith Gurtner and Gruff Garland who were on route home to Australia. Giants were also without injured skipper Norman Evans.

Norman Hargreaves was the season's highest scorer with a combined league, cup and national trophy total of 431 points. Fleetwood riders gathered twenty one maximums between them Seven by Newton, six by Plant, four by Hargreaves, three by Cooper, and one by Appleby. Seventeen riders in all were used. Of those not previously mentioned Aussie Frank Malouf, who had been promoted from the reserve berth in the early season, was the most successful with 131 league points and 35 others. Assistance from the reserve berth was provided from time to time by Fred Yates, Ted Rawlinson, Larry Young, Percy Day, Stan Beardsall and Peter Lloyd with varying degrees of modest success. (To be continued.)

Feedback

Charles McKay of Bradford advises re Vol 5. No.3 Sports Favourites Cigarette Cards No. 402 - Jack Parker (Belle Vue Aces); No. 421 - Wilbur Lamoreaux (Birmingham Brummies) and No. 63/648 - Ken Le Breton (Ashfield Giants).

Charles also advises that if anyone is interested details of the various qualifying rounds of the World Championship should look at a site run by Anders Aberg on www.speedway.org/history.

John Warner 187 Crofton Road, Orpington, Kent, BR6 8JB adds a few more bits about cigarette cards as follows

Australian Sporting Celebrities issued in 1932 by Godfrey Phillips Ltd
No.17 Ray Taylor, No.18 Lionel Davy, No.19 Vic Huxley

B.D.V. Cigarette Cards 'Who's Who in Australian Sports' issued in 1933 by Godfrey Phillips Ltd.

No numbers but cards featured - W.(Bill)Rogers, Dirt Track Champion; G.(George)Hannaford, Champion Motorcyclist; J.Pringle, Champion Motorcyclist. (John advises that both Bill and George rode in Britain but has no information on Pringle).

Sporting Celebrities issued in 1929 by Simonets Ltd.

No.10 Frank Arthur

Photocards GS issued in 1938 by Ardath Tobacco Co. Ltd.

No number - Jack Milne.

Norman Briggs, 7 Somerset Road, Failsworth, Manchester, M35 0NU

Tel 0161 688 4112 passes on a number of very interesting items.

Firstly Norman advises that he has found information that indicates that Clem Beckett was on active service for the International Brigade in Spain when he was killed on February 12th 1937. Clem did start out as a mechanic, he then became an ambulance driver then, lastly, a machine gunner. He was killed in fierce fighting at Oragenda Bridge in an attempt to keep the Madrid - Valencia road open.

Secondly Norman has come up with information which sheds light on the alleged dirt track venue in Oldham. Whilst he has found nothing on an Oldham venue he has unearthed items from the Oldham Chronicle which provides details of a grass track meeting at Oldham Rugby Union Football Stadium at Keb Lane, Oldham on Saturday 28th July 1928.

Norman advises that a search through the Oldham paper 1928 - 1931 reveals nothing about any dirt track in Oldham but the consolation is that this paper gives a great deal of coverage of activity at Rochdale. This may clear up the Oldham dirt track mystery once and for all and is a useful contribution to a previously hazy potential venue.

Thirdly Norman has come up with another book on speedway. It is 'From Bush to Speedway' by Edwin Dale of which is Number 77 in the Champion Library Series and it was priced at 4d. (£0.02p) It seems publications in this series were published by The Amalgamated Press Ltd, Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London E.C.4 on the first Thursday of each month. The series was syndicated to Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. It looks as though No. 77 was published in April 1932. (Were there any more speedway books in this series?)

Fourthly Norman has come across a reference to what could be another training track. He has come across an article about a lad called Brian Cunliffe who rode in the Liverpool second half in 1953. He came from Rainford which is near Liverpool and the article mentions him having trial at Coppull and making progress on the training track at Rainford. Anyone with any information on this venue?

Lastly Norman sends a Liverpool programme with The Chad Song. This has two versions, the pre-meeting version and the victory version after the League match.

The promotion did not indicate who wrote The Chad Song but asked that fans join in and get the stadium rocking.

Pre Match Version is as follows-

Verse

We're here (clap-clap) to cheer the Chads!
We're here (clap-clap) to cheer our Lads.
We're here (clap-clap) without a doubt,
So, TWO, FOUR, SIX, EIGHT; Now Shout All Out

Chorus

UP CHADS, UP CHADS, listen to the Roar,
UP CHADS, UP CHADS, its YOU we're shouting for,
Five-One; Five-One; add it to the Score.
So, UP CHADS, UP CHADS --More... MORE...**MORE!**

The Victory Version (to follow the league match) is as follows

We're proud of you, our Chads.
We're proud of you all our Lads.

Three Cheers we know you're Great.
So, Well Done, Well Done-Two, Four, Six, Eight . . .

Chorus

UP CHADS, UP CHADS, listen to the Roar,
UP CHADS, UP CHADS, its YOU we're shouting for,
Five-One; Five-One; add it to the Score.

So, UP CHADS, UP CHADS --More... MORE...**MORE!**

The promotion go on to say - Keep these words – you'll find them easy to learn, and easy to sing, so join in **To-night** and let the rest of the City hear our voices.

(By today's standards the lyrics would be well worthy of the description of being totally naf but we have the benefit of 2020 hindsight and our values are not those of the 1950s by any stretch of the imagination. Jim H.)

Dave Audsley, 1 Gainsworth Drive, Bedworth, CV12 8BD writes to advise that as a staunch Norwich Stars fan of the day he attended the first meeting at Ipswich which was due to feature Norwich v Southampton. Dave is absolutely certain that no racing took place that day and that his programme is endorsed 'Meeting cancelled due to Snow.'

Did You Get Them Right?

In the last edition we posed some questions - now we give the answers.

Q1. These pre-war Tigers finished life as post-war Lions. Answer - The Leicester (Southern League 1930) was known as the Tigers and in 1983 the team was known as the Lions. (Aside - When did the Leicester Rugby team become the Tigers?)

Q2. These pre-war Lions became post-war Tigers. Answer - Glasgow White City selected Tigers after being refused permission to register as the Lions. (Aside - they turned down the suggestion that they should be called the Dynamos.)

Q3. These Canaries became pre-war Tigers. Answer - Harringay the birds of 1929 -31 returned in 1934 as big cats. Post-war they were known as The Racers.

Q4. These Wolves finished as post-war Lions. Answer - Hackney Wick Wolves came back as London Lions in 1996 after being Hawks and Kestrels in between times. (Or should I say 'Ackney 'Awks?)

Q5. These pre-war Tigers became pre-war Panthers. Answer - Plymouth. Plymouth also used Devils and Bulldogs as a team nickname.

Q 6. Racing Suits - Name the four pre-war teams that wore the four suits on their race jackets (Clubs, Diamonds, Hearts, Spades.) Answer - Belle Vue (Clubs) (Although some ill-informed race jacket manufacture once produced a race jacket for Belle Vue with an ace of spades.) Newcastle (Diamonds), Halifax (Hearts). Sheffield (Spades.)

(Other quizzes will be welcomed for publication but they must come complete with the answers for the next edition.

The Only Saturday Night Track in Manchester

We start **Graham Fraser's** short history of Salford Speedway with a look at the 1928 action. As if Manchester did not have enough tracks already in the pioneering days of 1928 (Belle Vue and White City were major venues in the city) a track was created inside the Albion Greyhound Stadium in the Pendleton area of neighbouring Salford. It was a traditional quarter mile size and is reported as egg-shaped to mirror the greyhound track. The track surface was reputed to be 'of a material hitherto not utilised, but which has been subjected to several tests with very satisfactory results.' what the surface was comprised of was not declared.

A limited liability company was formed to promote the speedway and, according to press reports, from the start built connections with 'the biggest dirt track racing organisation in existence' to enable the Albion Speedway to field the best Colonial and British riders available. The same promoting company was also to open tracks at Middlesbrough and in Berlin.

So, on Monday 27th August 1928 Salford's Albion Speedway opened before a crowd of over 20,000 and the meeting featured pioneers such as Eric and Oliver Langton, Lionel Wills, Fay Taylour. The action took place under floodlights with, for the time, the novelty of results being announced over loud speakers. It appears that nothing was spared to attract the crowds to Salford speedway. A successful beginning.

A series of individual meetings took place twice a week until November of that year. The format generally included a mixture of the following events Junior and Senior Scratch Races; Handicap Races; 'City Hall' Cup Races or the Golden Helmet / Gauntlet and something called the Corinthian Column Races. Interspersed with these individual race events Salford anticipated the establishment of team / league speedway by holding a number of 'inter-track' meetings. These usually comprised of six rider teams and the matches were raced over 3, 4, or 5 heats.

The results of the events staged were Salford 12 Barnsley 6; Salford 15 Middlesbrough 7; White City Manchester 15 Salford 12; Salford 5 White City 10 (Abandoned rain); Salford 10 White City 17 and White City 16 Salford 11.

The riders who represented Salford in these team challenge events included the Langton brothers, Alec Jackson, Cliff Watson, Harry Whitfield, Johnnie Broughton and 'Acorn' Dobson.

The inaugural season at the Albion Speedway finished on 10th November with the re-run of the previously abandoned 'inter-track' match against White City. It had been a highly successful opening season with big crowds, good weather and exciting speedway. Things were looking good for 1929.

(To be continued.)

Munich Information

We reported recently that **Keith Farman** had managed to obtain heat information for a World Championship Qualifier in Munich on 15th June 1952. We publish the heat details which we hope will be of interest to others. Sorry for the lack of race times.

Walter Dirtl	0	0		0	Theo Bischops	2	2	0	2	1	7		
Karl Killmeyer	1	1	2	0	1	5	Tinus Metzelaar	3	2	1	3	2	11
Fritz Dirtl	3	3	3	3	3	15	Leopold Killmeyer	2	3	2	2	2	11
Franz Neubauer	1					1	Reg Morgan	0	0				0
Josef Hofmeister	2	0	0	1	2	5	Ake Lindquist	0	1	3	1	3	8
Albin Siegl	1	3	1	3	1	9	Josef Kamper	3	3	2	3	3	14
Bob Mark	3	2	2	0	0	7	Gerrit Jonker	0	0	3	2	0	5
Alfred Abrel	1	0	1	0	2	4	Swen Skoglund	2	1	3	2	3	11
Gosmann (res)	2	1	0	0		3	Muller	0	0	0			0

Ht1 Metzelaar, Bischops, K.Killmeyer, W.Dirtl

Ht2 F.Dirtl, L.Killmeyer, Neubauer, Morgan

Ht3 Kamper, Hofmeister, Siegl, Lindquist

Ht4 Mark, Skoglund, Abrel, Jonker

Ht5 F.Dirtl, Mark, W. Dirtl (nf), Hofmeister (nf)

Ht6 L.Killmeyer, Bischops, Lindquist, Jonker

Ht7 Seigl, Gosmann, K.Killmeyer, Abrel

Ht8 Kamper, Metzelaar, Skoglund, Morgan

Ht9 Skoglund, L.Killmeyer, Siegl, 3 only

Ht10 F.Dirtl, Kamper, Abrel, 3 only

Ht11 Jonker, K.Killmeyer, Gosmann, Hofmeister

Ht12 Lindquist, Mark, Metzelaar, Muller

Ht13 Kamper, Jonker, Muller (nf), Gosmann (nf)

Ht14 Siegl, Bischops, Mark (nf), (3 only)

Ht15 F.Dirtl, Skoglund, Lindquist, K.Killmeyer

Ht16 Metzelaar, L.Killmeyer, Hofmeister, Abrel

Ht17 Linguist, Abrel, Gosmann (nf), (3 only)

Ht18 Skoglund, Hofmeister, Bischops, Muller

Ht19 Kamper, L.Killmeyer, K.Killmeyer, Mark (nf)

Ht20 F.Dirtl, Metzelaar, Siegl, Jonker

Advance Australia Fair

Let us pass on congratulation to the **Queensland Heritage Council**. They have listed the famous Brisbane Exhibition Grounds - speedway track and all - as a Heritage site. What do we do in Britain ??? The silence is deafening. In Scotland I asked an officer of Historic Scotland to protect Celtic Park from being squared off and to protect Powderhall - both locations were worthy of Heritage status - but they did nothing. (Celtic Park for it being the first proper stadium dirt track venue in Britain and Powderhall as a very fine example of a greyhound stadium.) Speedway heritage in the UK has been ignored which is a pity as it deserves some form of recognition. Maybe when the nature centre building at High Beech comes to the end of its useful life the site could be reinstated (with a bit of lottery dosh) and become a speedway heritage site? (Here endeth the sermon on the mount and I'll get off my high horse.)

Jim Henry

Compilation of Records

Following the suggestion by **Roger Hulbert** that an effort should be made to compile a record of results and place them on the internet **Vic Butcher** from Southampton has rightly pointed out that many of the records to be found in the magazines often contain many inaccuracies. This is a fair point and any compilation of results from magazines for the net should be checked for accuracy.

Philip Pike

We are saddened to pass on the news that Philip Pike, who was a keen historian of the midlands venues of Tamworth and Birmingham, and a contributor to The Speedway Researcher, passed away in October 2002.

Editors' Quandry One

We are in a bit of a quandry. The reason is we have been sent an item on the history of grass track action in the Poole area. Now we have as our sub heading Promoting Research into the History of Speedway and Dirt Track Racing which does not make any mention of grass track racing. We do cover grass track items, like the item on Oldham, where it helps clarify a bit of speedway history. Could we have your views on the questionnaire sheet on extending our coverage to grass track racing and its history? We value your views.

Editors' Quandry Two

As you know we have, over the years, strenuously avoided crossing the path of the Collectors Club. However we have discovered that the club is now defunct. We have always maintained that historians and collectors should work together as historians can shed light on previously unrecorded meetings while collectors can furnish information from programmes in their collections. Whilst we don't see The Speedway Researcher expanding to take over the role of the Collectors Club magazine, we do wonder if there is any interest in covering issues that may be of interest to collectors.

As always we value your views and included a question on the questionnaire.

The Demon Barber of Cessnock (Australia)

The character who was given that nickname was one of the pioneer Aussies and, over his short Scottish and UK career, was probably the biggest favourite in Glasgow ever. I refer to the one and only Billy Galloway.

Now I know that title, the favourite Glasgow Aussie is indeed an honour. I feel sure Glasgow fans over the years could put forward as contenders Col Stewart, Gruff Garland, Ken Le Breton, Merv Harding, Junior Bainbridge, Charlie Monk, Bluey Scott, Jason Lyons, Shane Bowes. Even in modern times Mick Powell would merit inclusion in that list.

I base my claim that over the three seasons Billy was the Aussie who helped draw in more supporters than the others but would concede that some of the others might run him close. Billy learned his track and hairdressing crafts in his home land and set sail (as ships barber) to the British Isles as a harbinger of the new sport which would sweep Britain. He appeared in the 19th February 1928 opener at High Beech and his spectacular fall is recorded in many a newspaper. So much for these crack Aussies but in Billy's defence he was mounted on a far from suitable bike even tho' it was a Douglas machine.

As a Dirt Track Speedways Ltd asset he appeared at the Celtic Park opener on 28th April 1928 and yet again failed to show that he was top class material. However, he came back and won the Gold Gauntlet on his two other visits and the Handicap on one of those visits.

The Scratch events at Celtic Park were staged in Match Race format and Billy's record is lost to Sprouts Elder and Paddy Dean. Beat Norrie Isbister twice, and beat Jimmy Valente, Ivor Creek, Jimmy Pinkerton, and Buzz Hibberd once each.

Over at Marine Gardens Billy appeared twice and missed out of the big prizes both times. His first visit produced an engine failure and nothing but appearance money. In Match Race format events he beat Sam Reid and Charles (Tiger) Sanderson and lost to Stewie St. George.

Track	M	R	1	2	Upl	F	EF	%Wins
Celtic Park	4	14	9	0	3	0	2	64.28
Marine Gardens	2	5	2	0	1	1	1	40.00

1929 was to be Billy Galloway's big season particularly at Glasgow White City. He appeared in the opener then departed. He came back a couple of weeks later, and due to public demand, was contracted as a full time Glasgow asset. Thereafter, apart from a spell out due to injury in early July, Billy was a permanent fixture at the Paisley Road West track that season. Out of 52 fixtures staged, Billy featured in 33.

As a scratch rated rider the Handicap event had him eating dirt in all his races and he won only four finals. Three were won on the trot during his phenomenal run in May. He won through to the Handicap Final on 16 occasions.

The manufactures of Duraglit must have loved Billy as he won a stack of Scratch event trophies. Scottish Silver Helmet (x3), Scottish Silver Gauntlet (x3), Scottish Silver Sash (x6), Scottish Gold Armet (x4) making it 16 event wins in all. Billy also won the 1929 White City Open Scratch event which featured Vic Huxley and Jack Ormston, Harry Whitfield, Charlie Barrett, Charles Sanderson, Dick Hayman and another Belle Vue man 'Smoke' (not Smoky) Robinson in addition to the top Glasgow based riders. He appeared in 24 Scratch Race Finals out of 32 as one meeting only survived to the end of the Handicap event before the meeting was washed out.

For some strange reason when team racing was introduced to Glasgow Billy was not in the line up. He was however involved in the Glasgow versus The Rest Scratch event which was raced on the usual knock out basis but had two riders from Glasgow and two visitors in each heat with points being awarded as it were a team match. Billy was also involved in a relay race event which featured four Glasgow riders racing four Visitors. Anchor man Billy lost to Billy Lamont.

Billy raced in 20 Match Race events and special races billed as match races but featuring more than two riders. On a head to head basis he faced and beat Ivor Creek, Norrie Isbister (x2), Buster Frogley, Sprouts Elder (x3), Drew McQueen, and Vic Huxley. He lost to Drew McQueen (x3), Sprouts Elder (x2) and Billy Lamont.

In three rider events he failed to beat Sprouts Elder and Frank Varey and also failed to beat Billy Lamont and Arthur Atkinson.

	M	R	1	2	Upl	F	EF	%Wins
White City	33	185	114	30	33	5	3	61.62

The 1929 season for Billy Galloway was his best ever in Scotland. In addition to his superb showing at White City in Glasgow he performed well at Marine Gardens in Edinburgh.

In fact he was given the ultimate honour for any rider in the entire history of the Edinburgh track. It may well be that the honour is unique in the history of the sport as for one meeting in Edinburgh Billy was handicapped to -2 (minus two) seconds. Unfortunately the handicap was a bit severe and Billy did not progress to the semi-final stage.

In the Scratch events at the seaside venue Billy had a firm grip on the Scottish Gold Sash winning this trophy three times but all the others eluded his grasp. His Match Race record at Marine Gardens was defeats from McQueen, Vic Huxley and Billy Lamont.

Billy was a big favourite for the 500cc Scottish Championship of 1929 and he qualified for the Final with Drew McQueen and fellow Aussie Ned (Les) Kelly. Drew made his usual fast start and Billy set off in hot pursuit with Ned in their wake. As he attempted to round Drew, Billy blew it and ran off the track onto the grass. Nowadays that would bring about an exclusion, but not then, so he returned to the cinders and had to pass Ned to snatch second place. Billy and Ned celebrated by dousing everyone with the changing room fire hoses.

Sour grapes in the Glasgow press suggested the re-laid track was a ploy to favour McQueen but I just think that it was Drew's skill on the day. Billy himself did not complain so that is that.

1929 record	M	R	1	2	Upl	F	EF	% Wins
Marine Gardens	11	51	22	14	11	1	0	43.13

The 1930 season was not to be as memorable as 1929 and it was not helped by the injury sustained in his only visit to Marine Gardens which would also be his last ever outing in the Capital. A miserable afternoon of 5 races which recorded a second place, three unplaced rides and an injury causing fall says it all.

Over at White City things were a bit rosier as he won the Gold Armlet, Silver Gauntlet once each and three Handicap Finals.

Billy took part in 3 League matches at home collecting 25 (paid 26) points from 9 rides to give an average (CMA) of 11.52. He also raced in a few away matches but a full record is not to hand to provide the details of his average. In three challenge matches he raced in 8 races scoring 13 points to average 6.50. Needless to say the injury did not help the Glasgow League cause either home or away.

His opening League match saw him collect a maximum against Leicester Super in a 23-13 win for Glasgow and against the all conquering Belle Vue he only lost out to Frank Varey as he collected 8 of his side's 16 points. Belle Vue collected 20 with Varey, Arthur Franklyn, Bob Harrison and Dusty Haigh in their side. His last League appearance was against Preston and he followed home Arthur Moser and Joe Abbott in his last race to blow the perfect record. (Joe would not have been in the race but he was the only Preston rider with a bike that was running the Glasgow promotion agreed that Joe should go out to make a race of it.)

The last meeting Billy raced in took place at White City on 23rd September 1930 when he was a member of the Glasgow side which lost 8-10 to a Blantyre side. No need to look for a Blantyre track from these days. A group of riders, including Billy Llewellyn, lived in Blantyre and were known as the "Blantyre Crowd". A return was scheduled for Paragon Speedway, Motherwell and was advertised in the local press. Whether this happened or not is not known. In Match Races he lost all three to Squib Burton, Eric Langton and Frank Varey. He was also in the Glasgow team which lost the relay race against Belle Vue.

Referred to as 'Stralia' the wee Aussie was a columnist in the Daily Record in 1930. His column was axed when White City closed down in 1931.

1930 Record	M	R	1	2	Upl	F	EF	% Wins
White City	15	76	40	16	16	3	1	52.63
Marine Gardens	1	5	0	1	3	1	0	0.00

The dirt track career record of Billy Galloway in Scotland is quite superb. Billy probably packed it in because his new wife was not too keen on his riding which is a pity really. Billy probably could have gone on for a few more years and would have been a greater star than he was. His retirement probably contribute to the demise of White City in 1931 as he was certainly a big draw for the Glasgow fans.

I hope I have given the facts and figures necessary to evaluate his performance in a time when there was no real league average data to base a comparison. It would be great if some day we could get all the data on the top names data in a similar format.

Note One of the stations on the Glasgow Underground is (or was at one time) called Cessnock.

Jim Henry

Publications

Speed-Away Promotions, 16 Poachers Trail, Lytham St Annes, Lancashire, FY8 4FF has brought out a new magazine called *The Speedway Years*. The opening edition looks at 1968 when I saw very little speedway thanks to the City of Edinburgh Corporation taking over Old Meadowbank Stadium and pulling it down. I could only manage a few trips to Coatbridge and a few trips down to Berwick.

On the basis of the opening edition you cannot expect a massive and detailed coverage of all the action in any particular year, but, if you want a good idea of what happened, then this magazine is worthy of a subscription.

£12 will buy you the first volume of four editions which will be published on a quarterly basis. Stop Press the second edition which deals with 1950 has just been published.

Speed-Away publications also produce publications in a series entitled *The Pocket Size Histories of Defunct Speedway Tracks*. To date they have covered Doncaster, Paisley, Rochdale, Nelson, Sunderland (£2), Crayford (£3), Romford (£3), and Belle Vue Colts (£3). (The first 4 editions are now sold out.)

The latest edition, also priced £3, provides an overview the action at this very smart London White City stadium which fell victim of the BBC's expansion plans. It briefly covers the pre-war action concentrating on the short life in the mid to late 1970s and gives the reader a sound understanding of the shale action at this venue better known for its athletics pedigree.

Owlerton Legends is a superb glossy publication by **Matthew (Matt) Jackson** and **Paul Rickett** and is a very comprehensive Who's Who of the riders who have worn the Sheffield colours since 1946. It is packed with photographs of instantly recognisable stars and a few more I did not remember. Each rider has a pen pic and I was greatly taken by the information on a couple of obscure men namely Norman Clark and Frank Taylor who I'd come across in my Glasgow researches as brief stay Sheffield Tigers of 1946. It also gave me Freddie Woodcock - another obscure name from the past I'd been looking for, for some time. Now, when you find references to obscure guys like these it brings it home that Matt and Paul have really done their homework and their claims about the book's comprehensiveness cannot be refuted.

If you want to know a bit about everyone at Sheffield this is certainly THE book to acquire. The book does not claim to cover the pre-war era but it has few priceless photographs from that era and that is another added bonus which makes commending this book all too easy. I for one will probably be dipping into it quite often.

Owlerton Legends is available priced £12.99 inclusive of postage and packaging from Pendragon Books, 22 Stone Crescent, Wickersley, Rotherham, S66 3HT.

Jim Henry

Clay Country Speedway

Tempus Publishing have taken yet another foray into speedway books and this book is a potted history of speedway at the newest St Austell track covering its beginnings in 1997 up to 2001. It is not so much a history as a homage to the efforts of enthusiasts to bring speedway back to Cornwall since the demise of the original Gulls in 1963 and the Cornish Stadium in 1987. This then is recent history and could be used as a handbook by would-be promoters at other potential sites that seem to spring up every week these days.

It starts off with the building of the speedway track at the Clay Country Moto Parc and catalogues the opening season in anecdote, fact and statistics. This approach is followed up to 2001. As speedway was expected to move from this site to another in Cornwall for 2002 I

imagine that the authors saw this book as a tribute to the hard work put in to develop the sport at a most unlikely location for four years. (St Austell's track must have a truly unique setting - located in a partially infilled china clay quarry high in the moors about the town. (No matter how exasperated you are you can't climb the walls - notices strictly forbid climbing the quarry walls.)) At one end there is a beautiful azure blue lake which is many metres below the level of the track. Ignoring the setting it is a cracking wee track which produces some good speedway.)

As is often the way of these things the move never took place. The new site approval fell through and Premier League speedway continues to this day at the Parc. It may prove frustrating to those buying this book that by the time they get it a second season of additional racing will have started and, of course be uncharted in a single publication like this. Perhaps the authors will bring out a second part of the Gulls / Trelawney Tigers modern history in due course. (Trelawney is something to do with a Cornish battlecry I think JH)

22 The book is an interesting read, particularly for those of us who have seen speedway in the quarry (and watched with amazement as the mists have descended after the racing is over). It may not attract some speedway fans but should sell well to historians and completists like myself, plus, ofcourse speedway fans from the south west.

Clay Country Speedway by Robert Bamford and Dave Stallworthy is published by Tempus Publishing Ltd., The Mill, Brimscombe Port, Stroud, Gloucester, GL5 2QG and is priced £14.99 plus P & P. **Graham Fraser**

Stars In My Eyes - A Pocket History of Sunderland Speedway

Crazy Jack - The Jack Millen File

Millen - Both Sides of the Track

Bob Ferry is a man with a mission - to relive the 'glory years' of Speedway at the lovely little East Bolden Stadium and the career of 'Crazy' Jack Millen. He also maintains the Sunderland Speedway web site www.sunderland Speedway.co.uk and campaigns for a return of speedway to his beloved Sunderland.

These are three booklets which are full of excellent black and white photos and between the first and third booklet the quality markedly improves. Bob has researched his subjects thoroughly and mixes anecdote and interviews with statistics to produce an easy read whilst packing in lots of details and previously unpublished facts. Well worth the modest price and I'm already looking forward to his next production Memories of North East Speedway. If you like reminiscing you'll enjoy Bob's booklets.

All three cost £10 plus £0.50 for P & P. They are available from Bob Ferry 13 West Drive, Cleadon, Sunderland, SR6 7SJ Tel.0191 536 5064

Review by **Graham Fraser**. (Sunderland was a cracking little track and it would be a great addition to the speedway family - I still recall two meetings I saw there with great pleasure. Jack Millen was a Monarch in 1977 and kept the fans at Powderhall amused. Jack will be best remembered for the incident when he demolished his blue exclusion light with a track rake after what he felt was an undeserved exclusion. I particularly remember him asking an aged referee who wore glasses like the bottom of milk bottles "How the F..... did you manage to get here without a guide dog." Jim H.)

There a few more books out – Wolverhampton's History by Mark Sawbridge and a History of Hackney Speedway plus a few new ones in the pipeline like the second part of the Cradley History and a History of Speeday in the South East. Also coming soon is the first part of the History of Belle Vue plus we expect a publication on the pre war era of Leicester's speedways. We will review these publications next time round and ask you to keep spaces in your bookshelves for these books. All we say is - keep up the good works lads and lassies.

Programmes Fillers

I make no excuse for giving information which has come from my researches into the Scottish tracks. So why break the habit of a lifetime. In 1950 Glasgow Tigers had as their mascot a

film star called Dorothy Lamour (famous for the Road films in which she co starred with Bob Hope and Bing Crosby). In the lady's honour the ever enterprising Ian Hoskins instituted a second half competition called the Dorothy Lamour Progressive Match Race. Dorothy replaced a real Tiger at Glasgow Zoo that had indulged in a bit of keeper munching and had to be put down.

It is difficult to describe the format but suffice to say the competition started with the lower echelons, with the better riders entering the contest as it progressed.

Ken McKinlay, beat Willie Gordon on 12.7 and in turn was beaten by Kiwi Peter Dykes on 26.7. Peter went down to Tommy Miller on 2.8. Tommy then claimed the scalps of Jack Hodgson on 9.8., Norman Lindsay on 16.8., Frank Hodgson on 7.9., before meeting Gordon McGregor in the final on 20.9. Miller took the final with two straight wins over McGregor. Let us know of any unusual second half events you've come across. You never know if it is just the idea a modern day promoter is looking for to spice up his meetings. Any zany interval events would also be of interest - Ian Hoskins was also a master of this feature of a meeting in his Edinburgh and White City days.

Jim Henry

Thora Hird Remembers

Browsing as I was in the bookshop the other day I came across a book about Dame Thora Hird (Oh no I'm not a woose). Now was only interested in this well known actress as she appeared in the speedway film Once a Jolly Swagman. Unlike Dirk Bogard, who starred in the film and devoted all of a line or two to it in his autobiography, Thora gives the film more than just a passing reference. The book includes a page setting out her memories about the film together with a still from the movie. If I remember correctly Thora teamed up with Bill (Compo) Owen (who played the delightfully named Lagg Gibbon) in Last of the Summer Wine - wonder if they ever discussed this cinder epic ???

Jim Henry

Deadline for items for next edition is 30th April 2003

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1950 Regional Second Division Competitions

Away Team	Ashfield	Edinburgh	Fleetwood	Glasgow WC	
Halifax	Newcastle	Sheffield	Stoke		
Home Team					
Ashfield	xxxxxx 33 - 51	58 - 25	44 - 40	41 - 42	
57 - 27	43 - 40	50 - 34			
Edinburgh	38 - 44	xxxxxx 58 - 26	63 - 21	56 - 28	
44 - 40	58 - 25	56 - 28			
Fleetwood	43 - 39	43 - 41	xxxxxx 47 - 37	33 - 49	
52 - 32	41 - 42	38 - 46			
Glasgow WC	41 - 43	47 - 37	55 - 28	xxxxxx 51 - 33	
41 - 43	47 - 37	34 - 50			
Halifax	54 - 30	46 - 38	56 - 28	50 - 34	
xxxxxx 51 - 33	53 - 21	49 - 35			
Newcastle	38 - 46	48 - 35	54 - 30	56 - 28	49 -
35	xxxxxx 50 - 33	41 - 43			
Sheffield	53 - 31	31 - 53	52 - 32	53 - 31	30 -
54	45 - 39	xxxxxx 56 - 28			
Stoke	36 - 47	41 - 41	49 - 34	55 - 29	52 -
31	61 - 23	56 - 28	xxxxxx		

Away Team	Coventry	Cradley	Norwich	Plymouth	
Southampton	Walthamstow	Yarmouth			
Home Team					
Coventry	xxxxxx 47 - 37	50 - 34	53 - 31	46 - 38	
57 - 27	55 - 29				
Cradley	57.5-27.5	xxxxxx 45 - 39	51 - 33	46 - 38	
49 - 35	49 - 35				
Norwich	47 - 37	37 - 46	xxxxxx 60 - 24	46 - 38	
38 - 44	54.5 - 29.5				
Plymouth	55 - 29	37 - 46	48 - 36	xxxxxx 54 - 30	
58 - 26	63 - 21				
Southampton	51 - 32	45 - 39	55 - 29	41 - 43	
xxxxxx 37 - 47	45 - 39				
Walthamstow	41 - 42	60 - 24	57 - 27	51 - 33	49 -
35	xxxxxx 56 - 28				
Yarmouth	41 - 43	45 - 39	39 - 42	43 - 41	45 -
39	48 - 35	xxxxxx			

Divison One Spring Cup

Away Team	Belle Vue	Bristol	New Cross	Wimbledon
Home Team				
Belle Vue	xxxxxx 88 - 32	58 - 61	70 - 50	
Bristol	56 - 64	xxxxxx 59 - 61	74 - 48	
New Cross	65 - 50	72 - 47	xxxxxx 65 - 55	
Wimbledon	50 - 67	78 - 42	42 - 78	xxxxxx
Away Team	Birmingham	Harringay	Odsal	West Ham
Home Team				
Birmingham	xxxxxx 65 - 55	51 - 69	47 - 72	
Harringay	75 - 45	xxxxxx 81 - 38	67 - 57	
Odsal	81 - 34	71 - 48	xxxxxx 55 - 65	
West Ham	83 - 37	68 - 51	59 - 61	xxxxxx

Thanks to Chris Durno for filling a few gaps and Barry Wallace for helping clear up the Fleetwood v Newcastle mystery