

The first flush of speedway, or to call it by its contemporary British name, dirt-track racing, was still in bloom when the manager of the newly constructed Carntyne Greyhound Stadium decided to try his hand at promoting the new sport. The track was located in the east end of Glasgow, not very far away from the other two early venues at Celtic Park and the Olympic Stadium. The dog track site had previously housed an approximately 'D' shaped trotting and running tracks, but was redeveloped to stage the new canine sport of greyhound racing.

Unlike other wannabe promoters, the Carntyne manager did not bother to go and visit either of the two rival venues. He just got on with building his own unique venue on the centre green of his brand new dog track. Jack Nixon-Browne, who was the son of a director of Scottish Greyhound Racing Company Ltd., laid the first Carntyne track inside the dog track, giving the sport a new slant by deliberately making each bend different. This ploy has been used elsewhere since, but not to the same extreme.

One bend had an inside white line configuration which was parallel to the inside edge of the dog track; a smooth curve. The other was designed somewhat like a hairpin bend, not at all conventional in dirt track terms. Riders would have to make a very sharp turn and the track builder's idea was to create a bit more spectacle.

Expecting fallers at this bend Nixon-Browne piled up moss and peat, used to cover the dog track, against the dirt-track fence to make the landing a bit softer for any rider failing to negotiate the corner. The meeting report for the first meeting mentions the hairpin bend in the description of the track.

By his own admission, Jack Nixon-Browne was not sure what he was going to do about the meeting format, but he eventually decided to adopt a format very similar to that used by the pioneer venue at Glasgow Nelson, rather than the handicap and scratch race events format adopted at Celtic Park.

A few small adverts in the local press, which merely advertised motorcycle racing at the stadium, heralded the opening meeting on Friday 25 May. All of 600 folk turned up to watch the meeting. Results are fairly scant in the press but they do record the three events, the 350cc and unlimited capacity solo races and the sidecar event.

Prize money on offer was not wonderful by Celtic Park terms. £10 for the 350cc, £5 for the sidecars and what the unlimited riders received is not known.

The stadium manager took part in this and the second and last event staged a week later on Friday 1 June. The same format was adopted, but the solo race distances were reduced from a long distance 10 laps down to a mere 6 lap event. Sidecar racers still had to do ten circuits.

Yet again a poor crowd turned out for the event and Jack Nixon-Browne, who had only taken over as manager in March 1928, decided to call a halt on his new venture. He later went on into politics to take a seat in the House of Commons as MP for Glasgow Craigton. He rose to become a Minister of State in the Scottish Office and was one of the MPs who spoke out against Entertainment Tax being levied on speedway. Later in life he was elevated to the House of Lords as Lord Craigton and became the only member of the Veteran Speedway Riders' Association with a peerage.

In the period between the first and second attempts to stage speedway the stadium was used for chariot racing which was featured in the trials for the very early television system.

## 1928 CARNTYNE DETAILS

Meeting No. 1	Fri	25.05.1928	350cc	Jimmie Pinkerton
			Unlimited	George Cumming
			Sidecars	Fred Alexander
Meeting No. 2	Fri	01.06.1928	350cc	Jack Nixon-Browne
			Unlimited	Jimmie Pinkerton
			Sidecars	Peter Coia

### Friday 25 May 1928

Crowd 600



The meeting reports in the press were very scant indeed. Only the *Glasgow Evening Times* carried anything other than a few results. The correspondent in the *Glasgow Evening Times* (Times) was not impressed.

'The opening meeting of Carntyne Speedway held last night attracted 600 spectators. A special track has been prepared inside that used for the greyhound racing but from last night's displays it was seen that many improvements will require to be made before any great feat can be obtained. The racing tho' interesting to a certain point was not such as was anticipated. The riders, perhaps from the lack of familiarity with the track,



appeared to hold themselves in and at the hairpin bend the tendency was for congestion rather than exhilaration. It is the intention to hold meetings at this venue every Friday night and at a later stage a club will be formed with new riders.' The photographs show two competitors from the opening meeting, namely Jack Hart (left) and Peter Coia (right).

#### 350cc (10 laps)

Ht 1: Jimmie Pinkerton, Jimmy Valente, [ NI, 5min 13.0

Ht 2: Andy McLean, Arthur Moser, [ NI, 5min 59.0

Ht 3: George Cumming, Jack Nixon-Browne, [ NI, 5min 15.0

Final: Jimmie Pinkerton, Arthur Moser [ NI, 4min 31.0\*

#### Unlimited Capacity (10 laps)

Ht 1: George Cumming, William Japp, [ NI, 4min 37.0

Ht 2: William Kennedy, Tom Shearer, [ NI, 4min 50.0

Ht 3: Arthur Moser, Jack Hart, [ NI, 4min 54.0

Final: George Cumming, William Japp, [ NI, 4min 33.0

#### Sidecars (10 laps)

Ht 1: Peter Coia (One finisher), [ NI, 4min 37.0

Ht 2: Frank Alexander, [ NI, 5min 20.0

Final: Frank Alexander, [ NI, 5min 10.0

**Friday 1 June 1928**

**Crowd: Not recorded**

There are no contemporary match reports for this event. The newspapers only carried a very brief set of results as set out below.

Clearly the crowds were not large enough to encourage Jack Nixon-Browne to continue. Writing some years later he was candid about his win in the 350cc event. He said the hairpin bend was difficult for riders but, with all day to practice on the track, he managed to master it and use his advantage to win. Nixon - Browne was mounted on a 350cc AJS machine.

The track surface was probably unchanged from the first meeting. One report likened the track to a ploughed field, and this probably gave Nixon-Browne further advantage. It certainly did little to encourage the riders present to race on it.

**350 cc (6 laps)**

**Ht 1: Jimmie Pinkerton, Arthur Moser, [ NI, 2min 43.0**

**Ht 2: Jack Nixon-Browne, George Wilson, [ NI, 2min 50.0**

**Final: Jack Nixon-Browne, Arthur Moser, [ Jimmie Pinkerton, George Wilson, 2min 53.0**

**Unlimited Capacity (6 laps)**

**Ht 1: Allan Tagg, Jack Hart, [ NI, 2min 47.0**

**Ht 2: Jimmie Pinkerton, William Japp, [ NI, 2min 40.0**

**Ht 3: Jack Nixon-Browne, George Wilson, [ NI, 2min 52.0**

**Final: Jimmie Pinkerton, Jack Nixon-Browne, [ Allan Tagg, NI, 2min 48.0**

**Sidecars (10 laps)**

**Peter Coia, James Alexander, 5min 20.0**

**CARNTYNE SPEEDWAY 1928 RIDERS A - Z**

**Frank ALEXANDER**

**James ALEXANDER**

**George CUMMING**

**Peter COIA**

**Jack HART**

**William KENNEDY**

**Andy McLEAN**

**Arthur MOSER**

**Jack NIXON-BROWNE**

**William JAPP**

**Jimmie PINKERTON**

**Tom SHEARER**

**Allan TAGG (real name Allan Campbell)**

**Jimmy VALENTE**

**George WILSON**

**To the best of the Author's knowledge all of the riders named above were Scots.**