

The Speedway Researcher

Promoting Research into the History of Speedway and Dirt Track Racing

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Nigel's Natters 5

Yet again we publish a series of articles by our man in Colindale – **Nigel Bird**. Despite being based in The Midlands, Nigel is down in North London on a regular basis digging out interesting facts.

The Trophy that beats them all?

We have had golden and silver gauntlets, gloves and a myriad of other items but this one must rank as the most unusual? The 'Silver Cuirass' raced for at Leeds 1929-31. A Cuirass is part of medieval armour; a breastplate or a breastplate and back plate fastened together. I would like to have seen this trophy on a rider!!

(A similar bit of material emerged on the late 1940s – early 1950s at Glasgow Ashfield. There are pictures of Ken Le Breton with a breastplate AND a knight's helmet. There is a tale that the helmet got stuck on Ken's head and it took a fair bit of effort to remove it, an effort not helped by a team-mate's bashing it on even harder.)

Aussies

To add to the late Don Gray's list (Vol. 9 No.3) - "Jack Sweeny" (1929) but it's not clear whether he was an Australian or a New Zealander. (Wilfred)'Bill Allen' is a mystery, is he English, a New Zealander or an Aussie?

Halifax

First meeting at Thrum Hall 1928 the races were only of 2 laps duration. Wolverhampton and Coventry (Foleshill) at times ran 5 lap races.

Nottingham Outlaws & Tamworth Pirates 1934

As Tamworth's 'New Mile Oak' track put up the shutters in late July or early August 1934, the Nottingham Motor Sports club, just 30 miles away stepped into the breach, led by the secretary Mr A.E. Piper and leading light Fred Strecker. The club ran seven meetings at the White City stadium that year. A crowd of 6,000 turned up for the first meeting on Sunday 12 August to watch a Nottinghamshire v Warwickshire match, with Notts losing 26 to 28. Bruce

Van Heigan, several seconds quicker than the rest of the low grade riders scored a 9 point maximum for Warwicks, he was of course non other than Fred Strecker. Fred at that time was also a member of the Birmingham (Hall Green) side. It is believed that Fred's best pal George Dykes rode as Bill Wykes? H. Herbert appeared at one meeting, this was probably former Leicester Super rider Hal Herbert who lived locally. Former Nottingham team men Archie Shelton & Buster Brown gave occasional appearances. Jack Riddle, believed to be from the Cambridge area was a regular visitor, an amateur speedway rider and possibly a grass track man, who had raced at Greenford 1931. It is also believed he appeared in the Southampton team 1937 and the Sunday league 1938. (*1)

Among the Mile Oak pirates who raced here are Les Cox, Rocky Burnham, Tony Johnson, Frank Rich, Eric Dale and Frank De Reske, who was Coventry man Les Brooke (*2), he was also having rides with the New Cross second team(*3) All but the last event 26th September were team matches against Counties plus scratch races. Sidecar racing also featured at every meeting. Good crowds came to the first and third meetings; the second had suffered from the rain and was abandoned. And then the weather worsened, rain, more rain!

And as the crowd levels plummeted in line with the wet stuff so did the clubs profits and a loss was made. Many of the riders may well have been local grass track men. Their names are unfamiliar, but these names may have been pseudonyms, is Dickie Pink one of those?

The Notts Club were affiliated to the ACU, but in all probability these events ran without official sanction?... "Outlaws"

It appears Fred Strecker raced at the 'New Mile Oak' track, he was written in the programme as Von Eagan (*spelling mistake for Van Heigan*). Percy and Norman Trimnell is the same person (Hall Green Div II side). At the Tamworth Pirate track he often used the name Baggy Trimnell. New Mile Oak and Coventry Promoter C.H.Trimnell was not the father but the eldest of the 5 Trimnell brothers. Norman was the youngest. (b.1906)

(Ref*1 Bryan Tungate) (Ref *2 Colin Parker) (Ref *3 Bob Ozanne)

Newspaper match report

First meeting, Sunday the 12 August 1934.

Nottinghamshire 26. Warwickshire. 28

Narrow victory for the visitors.

Bruce Van Heigan collected Maximum points for the 'away' team winning each of his races and was largely responsible for Warwickshire winning the

match. Bill Roberts was the most successful of the local team, only dropping 1 point and having 2 firsts and a second to his credit. The away team held a lead of six points for the fourth, fifth and sixth races and the local riders did well to reduce this to two points by the last race. Bert Walton crashed in his first race and took no further part in the match; fortunately he was not seriously hurt.

Notts: Jack Trent 7, Jack Riddle 2, Bill Roberts 8, Buster Brown 1, C. Sansom 5, Rocky Burnham 2, T. Day 1.

Warks: Eric Dale 7, Billie Lee 1, B. Von Heigan 9, Bob Charles 2, Frank Rich 7, Les Cox 2

More of Nigel's Natters in the next edition.

Oxford Needs 1949

Oxford is not such an obscure venue but there are a fair few gaps to fill in the 1949 season as follows: Second Half Data 21.4 v Hastings; 28.4 v Yarmouth; 5.5 v Hull ;12.5 v Exeter; 26.5 v Liverpool; 9.6 v Rayleigh; 16.6. v Stoke(Hanley); 23.6 v Tamworth; 30.6 v Halifax; 7.7 v Plymouth; 28.7 v Hull; 4.8 v Liverpool; 11.8 v Cradley; 18.8 v Exeter; 1.9 v Rayleigh;8.9 v Leicester; 15.9 v Stoke (Hanley); v 29.8 v Poole; 6.10 v Tamworth; 13.10 v Halifax (+Time Ht14); v Plymouth; v Walthamstow. Meeting Details 30.7 Cheetahs v Dominion Riders; 22.9 Cheetahs v Plymouth (Abn@Ht10). All Times v Exeter 18.8

California in Reading Needs 1949

California in Reading, on the other hand is a bit more obscure but it would be interesting to see if anyone can provide the details for any of the meetings listed below, and, if they have details for any other meetings held that year but not listed. Meeting Details 17.4. Individual; 01.5 Easterners v Westerners; 15.5 Easterners v Westerners; 29.5 Easterners v Westerners; 19.6 California Trophy; 10.7 Peck's Team v Newell's Team; 24.7 v Hayes; 21.8 California Trophy; 04.9 Peck's Team v Newell's Team; 25.9 ?; 2.10 California Trophy; 16.10 Chalfonts v Amersham. The profile of this venue was raised when a reunion was staged near the site of the actual track.

Web Warblings

The web gives the opportunity to look at some details of who is using it and the stats show lots of hits from all round the world including a fair few from the

USA. It is likely that many may chance upon us looking for car speedway and don't stay long but it at least shows the search engines are giving us the help. We have a fair few links from a pile of sites and both the Yahoo and Google, plus other search engines know about us too.

The number of venues continues to rise and by the time you read this St Austell, Oxford, Leicester and a few more of the Third Division of 1949 and 1950 will be available to view. There are still a pile of gaps to fill and you could help by looking over the needs section on the site or, if you like, I'll email you a copy if you contact me at jjh1950@blueyonder.co.uk. We've sorted out a few problems with the copies of The Speedway Researcher Magazine with Volumes 1 – 4 now completely covered. All contributions, no matter how small, are acknowledged in the Contributors section. Whilst Jim has a fair amount of copies of programmes to be getting on with, nothing is refused.

Rider Replacement etc

We probably are all aware of the gag about that well known Norwegian Rider (Reidar) Replacement. However, to be honest it has been around so long it would be interesting if someone could pull together a potted history of this rule which surfaced in the early days of the British League in the 1960s. Equally, the Tactical Substitute (AKA Tacky Sub) rule which came in in the mid 1950s is worthy of a potted history too.

Now – what about going the whole hog and adding a section on Guest riders for good measure.

We open the pages of The Speedway Researcher for an article or articles on these topics.

Editors

Kevlars or Leathers – What do you prefer?

It is amusing to look at the photographs of yesteryear and the grab of those lads who sifted the cinders with the lag trailing behind them. Baggy leather trousers and equally baggy leather tops which did not look particularly stylish by any stretch of the imagination. Even in the immediate post war years the standard kit was the baggy leather two piece.

Move on and the leathers became one piece suits which, in their original incarnation, were baggy and padded at the shoulder and the various vulnerable joints such as elbow and knee.

Need less to say both the versions were generally available, like Henry Ford's Model T, in any colour as long as it is black. Exceptions of the post war era were the four lads at Ashfield – Merv Harding in red; Keith Gurtner in blue; Ken Le Breton in white and Willie Wilson in yellow and black. Eric Liddell had silver leathers just to add to the spectacle of this Glasgow based team.

A few riders followed in the colour club – Mike Broadbank was ever known as the Red Devil while Nigel Boocock and Gordon Mitchell favoured blue. Kenny Cameron resurrected the white leathers but nobody tried to emulate Willie “the wasp.”

Leathers did become more supple, svelte and multicoloured in the more recent era with imaginative use of stitching. Fine examples were the team leathers for the Mildenhall Fen Tigers and Rye House “Infradex” Rockets of the 1970s. However, all things must change and come the late 1990s the scrambles / enduro lads were seen to move over to the man made material known as Kevlar and the speedway Kevlar racing suit arrived. Well, when I say suit, some actually look to be two piece outfits which is a reversion back to the norm of the pioneer and immediate post war era.

The Kevlars added to the colour and made it possible to produce racing suits which dispense with the race jackets used to bring uniformity to the riders representing your team. The Kevlars look a great deal more comfortable than their predecessors and lot more stylish to boot but, despite the inner suits of padding that must be worn under them and the mandatory back protectors, are they safer than leathers?

I've heard it said that kevlar's don't give the protection afforded by leathers, especially where a rider dismounts at speed and slides for some distance along the track. I've heard that these high speed slides can cause burns and abrasions that would not happen with leathers.

I suppose it doesn't matter as long as there is an ever ongoing supply of tape to effect the patches where misadventure has split the leathers or kevlar's. Thank goodness someone invented electricity or we would never would have electrical tape.

Watching the antics of riders since the 1960s I can't say that I see much difference in the on bike mobility of riders who wore the old leathers compared with the modern Kevlar clad lads.

To be honest I suppose we have moved with the times and the days of leathers are long gone in the context of speedway racing. However, as ever, it would be interesting to hear some thoughts on the matter. **Jim Henry**

Preston Speedway 1929-1932

Part 2: 1929 - The League & Cup Campaigns

Graham Fraser continues his history of speedway in Preston.

In Part 1 of this history of Preston the start on the first season, 1929, and the English Dirt Track (Northern) League and Open meeting format was quickly established. Crowds varied in numbers apparently according to the weather and possibly the sporting public of the northern mill town found it expensive to attend two speedway meetings and then watch Preston North End FC in the English League First Division all in one week. Reports are of crowds as low as 2,000 and as high as 20,000.

After the home victory over Leeds in the opening league fixture, Preston faced their sternest test at Belle Vue whose line up included the legendary Frank Varey and the lesser known Riskit Riley. A Hyde Road crowd of 25,000 saw the Manchester giants sweep their opponents aside by 40 points to 21. A clear indication that Stern tests were to face Preston away from home in that initial season. As if to emphasise that point four days later Leeds were the league opponents at Fullerton Park and repeated the drubbing 42-21 in front of 5,000 spectators.

Respite soon followed back at Farrington Park three days later when a strong looking Salford side faced our boys (fresh from an afternoon meeting at Burnley) and after putting up a strong early performance faded to defeat, Preston running out winners 38-24, with the Chiswell brothers taking maximums. This was a different Preston team that included newcomers Findlay McCabe and local boy John Stockdale who replaced the injured Ham Burrill. Apart from the victory it was certainly not a happy night for local fans when John Stockdale, riding in the final of the Junior Scratch Race spun at the end of the first lap fell and was run over by a following rider and despite being rushed to hospital died on arrival. There is an interesting set of press reports about the coroners inquest that followed where a verdict of accidental death was pronounced with a recommendation that fewer riders per race would reduce the risk of such accidents in future (it was common for the second half races to feature five riders per race, so large were the number of budding dirt track competitors). The event also saw two riders suffer broken fingers during the league fixture.

Now the league fixtures were coming thick and fast with sixteen teams competing in the EDT League:

Barnsley; Belle Vue; Burnley; Halifax; Hanley; Leeds; Leicester Stadium; Liverpool; Middlesbrough; Newcastle; Preston; Rochdale; Salford; Sheffield; Warrington; White City (Manchester). Hanley were soon to withdraw, Bolton folded after one meeting and Long Eaton never raced a league fixture. Between league fixtures the Preston fans could see both their own favourites plus the cream of the northern riders and some special guests appearing weekly in Open meetings.

At the end of May Preston had successive Saturday night home fixtures against Warrington and Middlesbrough which was to really kick start the team's season. In part this was because of the arrival of new faces in the team who were to play a major part in the success of the Preston side. Those newcomers included Londoner Claude Rye and Northerner, Len Myerscough. In the first of these two fixtures Preston routed Warrington 47 points to 14 with no Warrington riders scoring more than four points. In contrast the crowd of 11,000 saw Ham Burrill and Jack Chiswell take 12 point maximums. A week later the feat was repeated as Middlesbrough were dispatched 46-15, again the Chiswell brothers Jack & Frank were to the fore with 12 point maximums. The team was now starting to gel as its members started to get regular places in the squad. There were normally two reserves allowed for each team in league encounters and press reports are so incomplete that it is not possible to be certain that the reporter always realised that a reserve had been put into a heat so full heat results are almost impossible to be sure about.

Preston's next league encounter away from home was at the Athletic Grounds, Rochdale with two changes to the normal line up, in came local boys Smoke Robinson and Jim Carnie, regulars around the Farringdon Park circuit in Open meetings. Although the blue and whites (the team race jackets were blue and white halves) lost 29-33 against a strong looking Rochdale outfit led by Squib Burton) who at the time was virtually unbeatable around the Athletic Grounds) it was a much closer thing than their early away defeats.

A week later Sheffield were the visitors to Preston and a crowd of 12,000 turned out to see a solid home team performance and a regular drubbing of the opposition in home league fixtures. Sheffield were dispatched 46-16 with Frank Chiswell top scoring with 12 points and three Sheffield riders top scoring with 4, Jack Barber, Gus Platts and Scottie Cummings. Just to show that speedway could be as predictable then as now a visit to White City on June 8th saw the home team turn then tables and thrash Preston 48-14 in what the Preston faithful hoped was just an off night. True, White City were a formidable side at home that season ably led by skipper, Arthur Jervis. On the same day an

Open meeting was held at Farringdon Park which attracted a crowd of 10,000 and saw Frank Chiswell take Ham Burrill's track record setting a time of 1 minute 29.8 secs, knocking 0.4 off the old record. This meeting also saw Tommy Price being formally "transferred" to the Liverpool team with Preston being allowed to keep Ham Burrill and Len Myerscough in return.

There was then a three week break from league racing with twice weekly Open meetings at the Preston Track attracting big crowds of anything between 8-12,000 speedway fans. During this interlude from league racing Frank Chiswell appeared in the local papers having been fined a pound for "driving a car negligently" in the town. He ran into the back of a car stopped at a crossroads junction and it was alleged by a witness he appeared to be driving looking up into the sky instead of at the road ahead. This was reportedly his fourth conviction for minor motoring offences!

The next league fixture was away at the Arpley Motordrome, Warrington, a side that a month earlier our boys had thrashed at home. Hopes were high for an away victory and so it turned out with the Preston team victorious 38-25. Press reports on the meeting are sparse but two incidents reported included W Anderton being thrown from his bike after a tyre burst in the first heat and Ham Burrill in heat 8 rode for two laps with his rear tyre and tube completely off the wheel rim but he still won the heat!

The day after Preston hosted Leicester Stadium at Farringdon Park and only one opposition rider, Slider Shuttleworth, won a race for Leicester his teammates filled a lot of the second places so that the 39-24 scoreline made the result look a lot less convincing than it was. Again the Chiswell Brothers scored heavily again with Jack picking up a 12 point max, and Frank eight and Len Myerscough picked up nine. In English Dirt Track fixtures for 1929 riders scored 4 points for a win, 2 for a second and 1 point for a third place.

Therefore 6-1, 5-2 and 4-3 heat results were the norm.

The League table at this point had Preston placed 4th on 14 points from 11 meetings, trailing leaders White City 22pts from 12, Halifax 18 from 11, and Leeds 18 from 12. Propping up the table was Hanley with 0 points from four meetings, an ominous warning for their impending demise.

Things were now hotting up as big boys Belle Vue were Preston's next opponents at home. The Preston side by now was looking fairly well established:

Ham Burrill; Crazy Hutchins; Frank Chiswell; Len Myerscough; Jack Chiswell and making his Preston debut, Joe Abbott following his move from the by now defunct Burnley.

Belle Vue lined up with Arthur Franklyn; Frank Varey; (former Preston rider) Ian Ritchings, Bob Harrison; George Hazard plus an unlisted sixth rider.

15, 000 dirt track fans saw a seesaw battle at the start with Ham Burrill, Jack Chiswell and Frank Chiswell winning heats 1, 3 and 5, in between which Belle Vue ace Frank Varey took two wins. Unfortunately for the Aces Varey had little support from his team-mates and by heat 5 Preston had pulled away to take a 23-12 lead. Over the remaining four heats the home boys pulled further way to record an impressive 42-21 victory, Burrill & Jack Chiswell top scored for Preston with 10 points each and Varey on a 12 point maximum was the only Ace to exceed 4 points.

Three days later with Claude Rye in for Joe Abbott our boys put in a fine performance after losing an opening heat 1-6 they were never behind from heat 3 and were 10 points ahead by heat six. Sheffield pulled some points back over the remaining three heats but Preston held on for a creditable 33-30 away victory.

The Open meeting on Saturday, 29th June was notable for the appearance of “lady rider” Eva Asquith who competed in the Senior Scratch competition and had three match races against Joe Abbott which she lost two races to one. Next up in the league for Preston were Salford at the Albion Speedway for a Monday night return fixture eager to avenge a 38-24 defeat at Preston earlier in the season. In an enthralling meeting Preston narrowly lost heat 1, pulled level in heat 2, dropped behind over the next two heats when it was 17-12 to the homesters. Gradually Preston pulled ahead by one or two points over the next three heats and by the penultimate heat they managed a 5-2 win to put them 30-26 ahead going into the final heat. In heat 9 nerves were frayed when Jack Chiswell fell leaving Ham Burrill to chase leader A J Ward for a second place that gave Preston the win by one point 32-31. The local Salford newspaper in its report glossed over the team defeat, hardly mentioning it, but covering the second half racing with several column inches!

Three days later on 4th July Preston visited a wet and rainy Leicester Stadium and despite leading by heat two and keeping the match to within two points by the final heat our boys could not hold on losing a last heat 5-2 and the match 34-29. Top scorers were Syd Jackson & Billy Elmore with 12 point maximums for the home team and Ham Burrill with 8 points from his three races.

By early July the league table looked like this:

White City (Manchester) 28 points from 15 meetings; Leeds 22 points from 14; Preston 22 from 16; Halifax 18 from 14; Rochdale 14 from 14; Sheffield

12 from 12; Belle Vue 10 from 9; Warrington 10 from 16; Burnley 8 from 5; Newcastle 8 from 8; Salford 8 from 16; Barnsley 8 from 14; Leicester Stadium 6 from 8; Middlebrough 6 from 14; Liverpool 4 from 5 and still bottom, Hanley 0 from 5.

As this shows for some teams their EDT League seasons had hardly started whereas for teams like Preston they were already half way through their league season. This was to become the pattern right up to the seasons end. Next up for Preston were Halifax who were chasing down their necks in the league table. Star men for the Tykes were George Reynard and Dusty Haigh, backed up by Bert Clayton, Frank Smith and Geoff Kilburn. In what the Lancashire Daily Post described as "the keenest struggle they (Preston) have had yet in a league match", Halifax surprised the homesters with an opening 5-2 heat win. Scores were level by heat two but a narrow 4-3 in heat three saw the visitors edge ahead. Preston must have thought their 6-1 advantage in heat 4 thanks to Ham Burrill and Jack Lund would see the match start to swing their way but 4-3 advantages to the visitors thanks to Reynard and Haigh wins chipped away at Preston's slender lead and by heat 7 the home boys were only one point ahead at 25 to 24, Reynard was going so well that he broke the track record in heats 5 and 7. Unfortunately by then he had run out of rides and therefore it was down to Haigh and the rest of the team to sustain the visitor's momentum in the final two heats for an unlikely win. Joe Abbott held off a determined challenge from Dusty Haigh in heat 8, hugging the vital inside line from the gate for a home 5-2 and a 30-26 advantage going into the final heat. Let me conclude this meeting by quoting again the Post newspaper report:

"The start of the last race was sensational. The visitors required first and second places to win. At the first corner Myerscough shot ahead at great speed and Frank Smith fell and collided with Frank Chiswell. Myerscough kept his lead and Chiswell remounted to finish third. It was the closest match yet seen at Preston and by their victory Preston have gained on one of their closest rivals"

Final result was 35-28 against a Halifax side that was to figure large at the end of the 1929 season. (To be continued.)

Feedback

Charles MacKay from Bradford passes on the following comments re times. Regarding "a sign of no times" in volume 10 no 2. In the book *The Story of Oxford Speedway* by Glynn Shailes and Robert Bamford they mention that in

1957 the SCB banned race times being announced as they claimed they didn't encourage team riding. In 1996 I believe this policy was tried again but didn't last. No times were announced at the first Belle Vue meeting but they were reintroduced at the second meeting, and the first time got the biggest cheer of the night.

Bob Ballard from down Somerset way sent in a newspaper cutting from a local "freebie magazine" called "The Visitor" covering Vintage Motor Cycling scriped by the well known Jeff Clew. It carries a really superb photo of Billie Dallison, Jack Parker and Freddie Dixon (all in civvies) admiring "one of the first Douglas dirt track models". The article is about a talk given to a local organisation by a member of the London Douglas Motor Cycle Club on the Douglas machines. Oddly enough the review of the talk doesn't actually mention the DT Douglas but a picture covers a thousand words as they say.

Speedway Specials

Charles Mackay sent the following about Speedway Special newspaper editions.

The days of local newspapers producing either weekly or one off special editions for sale at their local track seems to have disappeared one assumes due to lack of potential sales due to lower attendances.

Newspaper "speedway specials" could be divided into two main groups. Firstly a normal edition of the paper was produced with just an additional outer page or pages featuring speedway. These were either produced on a weekly basic or were one offs for special meetings.

The Bradford Telegraph and Argus produced a weekly speedway special edition, which was sold around the stadium from the re-opener in 1970 until I believe the end of the 1973 season.

The Barrow based North Western Evening News was to my knowledge producing speedway editions in 1973 and maybe in other years as well.

The Glasgow Evening Citizen produced speedway editions in 1970 and at least a one in 1971 for the Nordic British Final.

The London Evening News produced speedway editions in 1972 for the World Final and in 1973 for the final of the International Speedway Tournament.

The Exeter based Express and Star produced a special for the England v Sweden test match in 1993

National League Division One 1950

Away Team	Belle Vue	Birmingham	Bradford	Bristol	Harringay	New Cross	Wembley	West Ham	Wimbledon
Home Team									
Belle Vue	xxxxxx	49 – 35	46 – 38	63 – 21	61 – 23	40 – 44	45 – 39	60 – 24	62 – 21
	xxxxxx	43 – 40	40 – 44	59 – 25	54 – 30	61 – 23	40 – 44	47 – 37	39 – 45
Birmingham	37 – 37	xxxxxx	44 – 40	47 – 37	52 – 32	43 – 41	39 – 45	50 – 33	49 – 35
	41 – 43	xxxxxx	48 – 36	64 – 20	56 – 28	49 – 34	47 – 37	53 – 31	30 – 54
Bradford	47 – 37	48 – 36	xxxxxx	61 – 23	54 – 30	51 – 33	41 – 42	48 – 35	43 – 41
	47 – 37	53 – 31	xxxxxx	62 – 21	44 – 40	57 – 27	52 – 32	48 – 36	41 – 43
Bristol	49 – 35	55 – 29	49 – 35	xxxxxx	42 – 41	41 – 43	43 – 40	44 – 40	38 – 46
	47 – 37	48 – 36	44.5 39.5	xxxxxc	50.5 – 33.5	48 – 36	48 – 35	45 – 38	50 – 33
Harringay	37 – 47	51 – 31	39.5 – 42.5	56 – 28	xxxxxx	37 – 47	31 – 52	40 – 44	44 – 39
	37 – 46	61 – 23	52 – 32	37 – 47	xxxxxx	49 – 35	36 – 48	37 – 43	26 – 58
New Cross	59 – 25	60 – 24	53 – 31	64 – 20	51 – 33	xxxxxx	36 – 48	54 – 29	55 – 29
	54 – 30	47 – 37	59 – 25	62 – 22	47 – 35	xxxxxx	39 – 45	50 – 34	38 – 46
Wembley	48 – 36	60 – 24	59 – 25	58 – 26	51 – 33	43 – 41	xxxxxx	60 – 24	46 – 38
	39 – 45	59 – 25	52 – 32	54 – 29	54 – 30	45 – 36	xxxxxx	59 – 25	33 – 48
West Ham	46 – 38	44 – 40	59 – 25	51 – 33	36 – 48	45 – 39	33 – 51	xxxxxx	46 – 38
	51 – 33	59 – 25	54 – 29	54 – 30	52 – 31	55 – 29	51 – 32	xxxxxx	35 – 49
Wimbledon	41 – 43	53 – 31	52 – 32	50 – 32	55 – 29	42 – 42	34 – 50	35 – 49	xxxxxx
	41 – 43	49 – 35	60 – 24	64 – 20	39 – 45	61 – 23	41 – 43	44 – 40	xxxxxx

National League Division One 1950

Team	Home						Away						MatchPts
	R	W	D	L	PtsF	PtsA	W	D	L	PtsF	PtsA		
Wembley	32	14	0	2	820	517	10	0	0	683	656	48	
Belle Vue	32	12	0	4	809	533	7	0	9	622	721	38	
Wimbledon	32	9	1	6	761	581	8	0	8	663	675	35	
New Cross	32	13	0	3	828	513	3	1	12	573	767	33	
West Ham	32	13	0	3	771	570	3	0	13	562	774	32	
Bradford	32	14	0	2	797	544	2	0	14	530	811	32	
Bristol	32	14	0	2	742	597	1	0	15	434	906	30	
Birmingham	32	12	0	4	749	593	0	0	16	502	839	24	
Harringay	32	6	0	10	670.5	662.5	2	0	14	541.5	798.5	16	

Heat details for most of the meetings on www.speedwayresearcher.org.uk

The second type was where a newspaper produces one off special edition, which only featured speedway, and these were usually produced either for special meetings or occasions or pre season reviews.

The Coventry Evening News produced specials previewing the season ahead for the teams in Division One from 1978 to 1995. In addition it also produced a Speedway Championship Special in October 1979 for the league decider between Coventry and Hull, remember the days when the league championship was a season long event rather than a series of qualifying rounds and 3 play off meetings.

The Midland based Sunday Mercury produced a speedway special at the start of the 1994 season previewing the season ahead for their local teams Cradley and Wolverhampton.

In 1988 the Manchester Evening News produced a special commemorating 75 years of the Belle Vue Aces.

On a sadder note the Express and Star in 2005 produced a special marking the end of speedway racing at the County Ground.

Newspaper "speedway specials" are also produced in Sweden. Various tracks, Motala, Rospiggarna and Vetlanda to my knowledge have produced editions which preview the season ahead and a special was produced for the Intercontinental Final in Vetlanda in 1996.

[I can add Newcastle's Evening Chronicle to the list plus papers published in Bristol, Poole, and Leicester. Any more out there? JH]

Reg Craven - The Coroner's Court Report

The following extract from the Poole and Dorset Herald of Thursday 13 May 1948 reports Reg Craven's fatal accident at the opening meeting at Poole in 1948. The headlines were SPEEDWAY DEATH : NO-ONE TO BLAME : RIDERS DESCRIBE ACCIDENT

This was extracted from the newspaper by **Roger Beaman** and sent on by **Keith Farman**. It is an interesting insight into the thoroughness of the legal process and the issues the Coroner examines.

Verdict of accident death was returned at the inquest on Reginald Orron Craven, 37-year-old speedway rider, held at Poole Brough Coroner (Mr. J.W. Miller) in the Municipal Buildings on Monday.

Craven, riding for the Great Yarmouth team, crashed in the first race of the opening meeting at Poole speedway on April 26. He died in Cornelia Hospital eight days later, without regaining consciousness.

Dr. Thomas Brandi, senior house surgeon at Cornelia, said the cause of death was damage to the brain, due to the accident, which caused paralysis to the right side, which in turn produced bronchopneumonia.

John Oriol Ball, Green Cottage, Church Road, examiner of machines appointed by Poole speedway. Said he examined about 20 motor-cycles between 5 and 5.30 pm on April 26 and found them in order.

In answer to Mr. E. Fullbroke, representing Lloyds Underwriters. Mr. Ball said on the night of the meeting he was not licensed as an examiner by the Auto Cycle Union. His application was in the hands of the Speedway Control Board, but had not yet come through.

The meeting was the first at which he had acted as examiner.

Riders Evidence

Alfred Fredrick Elliott, of Oldfield Park, Westbury, Wilts, said he was riding in the race with Craven, Hayden and Paddy Hammond.

Three of them got away but Hammond stalled.

“Craven led into the first bend” said Elliott “and I did not know much more. I saw there was a collision between Craven and Hayden and I avoided them by throwing my machine to the ground.”

Manager of the Great Yarmouth team, Richard Wise, of 25 Overbury Road, Hellesdon, said when Craven’s machine was brought into the pits after the crash, the transmission chain was off.

Overslide

George Reginald Allen, of 227 Holdenhurst, Bournemouth, A.C.U. Steward in charge of the meeting though the accident was caused by an “overslide” by one of the riders.

Replying to the Coroner, Mr. Allen said in 21 years experience of speedway racing he had known only two fatal accidents, both of them last year.

Charles Hayden, 22 Littledown Road, Bournemouth, said he suffered concussion as the result of the crash and could remember little about it.

Came across

At the first bend Craven led and came across from the right to take the inside position, which was an advantage speedway riders always tried to get. “As he came across, he was only a matter of inches in front of me” said Hayden.

“Just as we were going into the bend he suddenly pulled up. My front wheel touched his rear wheel and I was immediately thrown-off. After that I don’t remember what happened.”

Ivor Powell, 110 Rothbury Avenue, Rainham, Essex, who built Craven's machine, said he had examined it since the accident and there were no signs of damage to the chain.

From this he concluded it had come off at the end of the crash and had been the cause of Craven pulling up suddenly.

Why he pulled up

In his opinion, Craven must have got into a overslide, which happened when a controlled skid was allowed to develop too much.

If this was so, his immediate reaction would be to close the throttle, which would cause him to pull up suddenly.

Summing up, the coroner told the jury there was no evidence of negligence on part of anyone connected to the track, machine or riders.

The jury returned their verdict without retiring, adding no blame could be attached to any of the riders.

(As an aside the system in Scotland is just a wee bit different. Here a Sheriff sits in charge of what is known as a Fatal Accident Inquiry and a ruling is issued at the end of the proceedings.)

Brisbane Smith

Over the years there has been speculation about a rider who is immortalised as one of the two riders in spectacular crash which was captured in a early photograph. **Graeme Frost** advises that Brisbane Smith's real name was Robert Brisbane Smith and he was a Londoner. The Brisbane was a long standing name with male family members going back generations so was nothing to do with speedway or him trying to pass himself off as an Aussie or anything like that. Graeme's comments backs up a recently published article which suggested Brisbane was not an Aussie despite the name.

The Scribes of Yesteryear

Nom de plumes were well used by the contributors to the early magazines and if you wonder who the men behind the by lines were – wonder no more as Sammy Samuel revealed all in his 1931 publication *The Speedway Guide*. The Daily Mail items were written by Tom Stenner; The Daily Express was Fowler Dixon; The Star was J.Harrison; The Evening Standard was Norman Rae; The News Chronicle was Frank Hardy; The News of the World was J.Barratt; The Daily Herald and The People was W.G.Morgan; Motor Cycling

was (Cintrax) Dennis May; The Motor Cycle was (Talmage) R.Morton; The Auto (Southern Section) J.W.Barber and H.L. Stevens while the Speedway News was Norman Pritchard.

How the Sport is Controlled

It might be a wee book, not much bigger than an average cigraette packet but the 1931 Speedway Guide by R.M. Samuel is what it says it is on the cover – A comprehensive Reference Book for All Enthusiasts. Not for the first time I take the liberty of dipping into its pages to repeat the information it carries. This time I look at the article headed as above.

“Just as horse-racing in this country is controlled by the Jockey Club, so speedway has its supervising body. This is the Auto-Cycle Union, which has its executive offices at 83, Pall Mall, S.W.1. Mr T.W.Loughborough is its Secretary.

Clearly to explain the position it is necessary to describe how the Auto-Cycle Union (or A.C.U. , as it is popularly known) comes by its authority. So far back as 1903 the Royal Automobile Club, which controls all motoring events in this country, recognised that motorcycling was becoming so popular that it was necessary to form a special section for its supervision. Accordingly several prominent members of the Club who were motor-cycling enthusiasts were invited together and take over control of the pastime. Thus the A.C.U. was formed, and it has operated ever since under the supervision of the Royal Automobile Club.

Until speedway racing was instituted the main activities of the A.C.U. centred round the supervision of motor-cycling trials, and so that this work might be adequately and expediently carried out by experiecned men, the General Council of the Union allocated the necessary powers to a smaller body known as the Competition Committee. Subsequently, when speedway-racing began to make headway, this Competitions Committee found it necessary to elect yet another body from among its own members. This was known as the Track Licensing Committee. Amongst its duties was the proper investigation of the conditions pertaining to new tracks and their subsequent licensing; the provision of rules governing the sport; the selection of stewards for the race meetings; the investigation of complaints and the supervision of speedway affairs generally.

At a General Council meeting of the Union held early this year it was decided that the Union should appoint an independent Track Committee to deal with

speedway matters. Accordingly the following eight gentlemen were elected, and they have taken over the powers which were previously in the hands of the Competitions Committee through its sub-body the Track Licensing Committee; The Rev. E.P. Greenhill, the Rev. J.M. Phillpott, A.J.M. Ivison, T.W.Monkhouse, Cecil Smith, J.Taylor, W.H.Wells and F.W.Pinhard. It will be observed, perhaps, with a little surprise, that the committee numbers amongst its members two clerical gentlemen. Both these are exceedingly keen motor-cyclists of long experience, and their judgement and ability have been of great service to the sport generally for many years.

In Mr. Cecil Smith will be recognised an active speedway promoter, whose interests lie in the Crystal Palace track. Mr.J.Taylor is the representative of the British Dirt Track Riders' Association.

Being a Committee on the Council, the new Track Committee has power to form sub-committees to carry out various branches of its work and to put on those sub-committees persons who by reason of their experience, are particularly well fitted for the position.

The following Sub-Committees have already been appointed: Arbitration Committee (for the settlement of disputes under rider's agreements with a promoter); General Emergency Committee; Northern Emergency Committee (to deal with questions of appeal from the Northern League Management Committee); Southern Emergency Committee (to deal with questions of appeal from the Southern League Management Committee); and, Liaison Committee (to deal with questions affecting the interests of the sport and the promoters or riders.) [The names of the individuals who sat on these committees are listed in R.M.Samuel's book and can be supplied if you really are interested. JH.]

Apfelback Revisited

The following was published in the Motor Cycling magazine 2.10.1952 and it sheds a wee bit more light on this unusual speedway engine.

MOTORCYCLISTS of a technical turn of mind have often been heard to say that when the speedway machine assumed its present-day standardized form, much of the interest in this particular branch of the sport was lost. Old hands recall with regret the early days of the dirt tracks, when mechanical variety was very much a feature of the "cinders."

It is interesting, therefore, to learn that there is at least one track where spectators may see a break-away from the present-day cast-in-one-mould type of mount. On the Vienna Speedway there appears regularly, and with

consistent success, a machine that is not only unusual as a speedway mount but also as a motorcycle. It is owned by Leopold Killmayer, who was runner-up in the World Championships held in Paris every year from 1933 to 1935. He also raced for Plymouth in the seasons 1933 and 1935.

His mount is called an Apfelbeck, and is named after the engineer who constructed it. The unit has practically double everything, except cylinders-four valves, two carburetters, two exhausts and two camshafts are involved. Its combustion chamber is exceptionally interesting for, at the forward end, there is a right-hand exhaust valve and a left-hand inlet valve. At the rear the arrangement is reversed, so it will be seen that the mixture enters and leaves by opposite corners of the head. One sparking plug is centrally disposed in a vertical position.

The camshafts are situated, transversely, fore and aft of the cylinder and the push rods are not enclosed within the tinning but protrude forwardly or rearwardly, as the case may be, into the rocker boxes. Each shaft operates one exhaust and one inlet valve. The horizontal down-draught carburetters, located above and at each side of the cylinder head are of Amal manufacture, but the float chambers were made by Killmayer.

The large "pans," which may be seen in the accompanying illustrations protruding over the carburetters, are air intakes designed to protect the engine from cinder dust. The general dimensions of the engine about the crankcase are the same as those of the J.A.P. 500 c.c. Speedway unit and thus, should it be necessary, the frame can accommodate a J.A.P. engine, either of 350 or 500 c.c., as well as various Continental units.

To strip the big-end, the primary chain, head and barrel are removed. By unbolting the left-hand side, not the complete half, of the crankcase, the flywheel assembly can be extracted and replaced without need for retiming ignition or valves. The frame has no tank rail, the tank itself being used as a substitute, and the tank-cum-frame section of the machine is continued rearwardly to form an oil tank, lubrication being on the total loss system.

Because of the bumpy nature of Austrian tracks, this machine employs a form of rear suspension in addition to the simple front telescopes. A swinging fork, controlled by rubber bands, gives some 2-3-ins. of movement and, in order to ensure exceptional rigidity, the fork ends are provided with stubs which work in radial slots cut in damper plates joining the extremities of the chain and saddle stays. These stubs are provided with friction discs which can be adjusted by nuts to bear on the slotted plates.

The machine is now two years old and has been very successful except that, like many "specials", it is sometimes unreliable. Killmayer, therefore, has a spare engine at hand when riding. (Not sure but I think Chris Biles should be attributed to the above article which is linked to the Yahoo web site which is mentioned in a following article.)

Huck Fynn

You may be aware of the Mark Twain character of this name but this one rode for Wimbledon but is probably better known as a maker of frames. There was a bit about Huck on the web recently and it is worth passing on the chatter.

George "Huck" Fynn was a boiler maker by trade who was recommended to Wimbledon by Norman Parker in 1949. Unfortunately Fynn never reproduced his Australian form in England. He was prone to crashing a lot.

Norman Parker was somewhat of a "talent scout" during his Winter escapades down under. As well as Fynn, he also was responsible for Lionel Levy and Ronnie Moore going to England. Not surprising Huck was on Wimbledon Dons staff and then joined Norwich Stars where he rode for the 1950 season. He only made a few (4) team appearances for the Stars in the Kemsley Southern League Shield in the early meetings that season. The rest of the season he was limited to second half races along with Wally Mawdesley among others. Seems that after his time specialising in Speedway Machinery Huck "invented" a machine for cleaning out "cattle trucks" after they had been used to transport animals around the U K. This was patented and made a good bit of money for Huck. Thanks to **Bryan Tungate** for this item.

(As a brief aside, as this is pulled together, the news has come through about the death of one of the best known frame builders – Maurie Mattingly.)

Meeting Formats

We've not looked at this topic for a while but as I've started covering the 1955 season (part of the exploits of the West Ham team are now on the site) for the web it is worthwhile having a look at the format adopted that year for League matches. It was the first time the team line up dropped to seven men and the number of races went up to sixteen. Six of the men were in the body of the team with one rider only as a reserve. Riders in the body of the team had five programmed rides while the reserves had two. Tactical substitutes were

introduced in this year, just to add to the fun and later in the year a supplementary reserve was added. The supplementary reserve was one of the main body of the team who could be called upon to act as the reserve if and when the programmed reserve was incapacitated.

Ht1 1&2 v 1&2; Ht2 3&4 v 3&4; Ht3 5&6 v 5&6; Ht4 2&7 v 2&7; Ht5 3&4 v 5&6; Ht6 1&2 v 3&4; Ht7 5&6 v 1&2; Ht8 1&2 v 5&6; Ht9 5&6 v 3&4; Ht10 3&4 v 1&2; Ht11 1&4 v 1&6; Ht12 2&5 v 3&6; Ht13 3&7 v 4&6; Ht14 4&6 v 3&7; Ht15 3&5 v 1&4; Ht16 1&6 v 2&5. **Jim Henry**

Flights of Fancy

One of the joys of working on the task of compiling the details of the meetings for the web site is getting a feel for the facts contained in the copies of the programmes sent to me by fellow historians and helpful collectors. For example I never realised that Split Waterman and Jack Biggs appeared in the West Ham team of 1955 or there was a rider called Mick Piquet (no relation to Nelson of the motor racing fame) who had a brief spell at Wimbledon, albeit as a second half rider, circa 1949 / 1950. I wouldn't have known that Belle Vue were very loyal to their novice riders giving them a season to see if they would develop and progress to the team.

HOWEVER. This pleasure has to be off-set by the massive downer you get from drawing on a filled in programme and only to realise that the contents are complete and utter rubbish. The first time I came across this was in an Edinburgh programme which recorded a World Championship round.

I mentioned to Ian Moultray that the event was won by Junior Bainbridge and was quickly put right on that score. The person who filled in the missing numbers in the blank programme was clearly a Glasgow Tigers fan indulging in a flight of fancy.

The next glaring example was in a hard to find Fleetwood programme for 1948. The match between Fleetwood Fliers and Sheffield Tigers had been illusive. However, this time the result was correct but the riders scores, whilst adding to the total, bore no resemblance to any of the three match details recorded in the contemporary magazines.

Now come the best one yet.

The other week I was looking at Nick Barber's auction catalogue and spotted a rare Wombwell programme for 18th June 1948 when the Middlesbrough Bears took on the Sheffield Tigers. Talk about eyes lighting up like organ stops I can tell you. A long sought after meeting this filling gaps in three files.

Thanks to **Nigel Bird** I was sent a digital photo (a great way of copying items) of the contents of the programme.

According to the details the event ended 42 – 43. A check of the scores column revealed an arithmetical error so the result could have been 42 all over the 14 heats. Smugness that I managed to get a feasible score rapidly turned to anguish as I checked a reputable source of speedway knowledge as the big BUT kicked in. The big BUT is that other records give the score as 53 – 31 . Do I feel really peeved? You bet I do and I really wish I could send someone on a flight of fancy, perhaps powered by hefty foot placed somewhere in the region of the perpetrator's big sorry BUTT. **Jim Henry**

Interesting Website

oldtimespeedway@yahoo.com which can be accessed via the Yahoo web site is worth a look and joining in. There are fair few knowledgeable folks using this site and some interesting items discussed. Not that I'm going to name drop of course so you can look for yourself. One of the recent debates trying to identify the rider who rode for the longest span of time.

Publications

Shifting Shale – 2006 A Race Odyssey by Jeff Scott (£20.00 inc P&P from Methanol Press, 2 Tidy Street, Brighton, BN1 4EL)

Another self published book by Jeff who rambles on about his wanderings BUT the book is a big read giving an insight into another angle on speedway in the UK. This book is an amusing “Bill Bryonesque” view of the tracks and their supporters which we don't really get from other writers. Jeff clearly loves his speedway and the people that are so much part of the sport. What speedway lacks in numbers on the terraces it by far makes up for in the richness of character of the fans and their willingness to help. This book has a fair number of photos but they are a bit on the wee side. The type size is small and in some places even smaller but, hey, it creates real value in what is a 350 page book.

There will be future social historians who will love this book but the good news is you don't have to wait for it. Dare I say it – this is an ideal way to while away an off-season hour or two (per night for a fair few weeks).

Review by **Jim Henry**

Where we all go Wrong!

Don Gray, bless him, gave me the gift of some early editions of Speedway News and they are a fascination insight into the early days of the sport. The following article was in the edition for 9th September 1932 and had been reproduced from a recent Crystal Palace programme. The article was written by W.F.Cliffe who was, at the time, Honorary Secretary of the Crystal Palace Supporters Club. Like Jeff Scott's book it is an interesting insight into speedway in 1932 and worth reproducing. An introductory paragraph sets the scene and suggests the Crystal Palace programmes were a serious bit of literature.

“It may be as well to remember that Speedway racing must be governed by rules in the same way as other national sports. The framers of the rules had difficulties to deal with which even now are not fully realised. They had no actual experience on which to make a beginning, and to complicate matters further they had to make provision for the fact that Speedway racing combines *the human and mechanical elements*. Whenever we feel inclined to find fault or to criticise we should do well to remember these very important factors which run like threads through the whole fabric of the sport.

Taking our points in their logical order we get first:-

THE START – Most of us follow the fortunes of an Association Football team during the winter months, but how many of us shout in unison if we see one of the forwards lying offside in the hope that a forward pass by a team-mate while in that position will go undetected by the referee? Again, how many of us adversely criticise the full backs who play well up the field, thus causing the opposing forwards to be pulled up for offside? The answer is, of course, that none of us do, simply because we regard this as perfectly fair and legitimate, *and human*, for one eleven to try and “put one over” the referee and their opponents if they can, The referee is there to stop it, but human nature being what it is, those eleven will go on trying so long as they are able to kick a football. Yet on the Speedway, we go to the length of saying a man is a dirty rider because he is *human* and *clever* enough to want, and to get, a flying start. If we, in our innocence, imagine that the two pairs of riders in a League Match are doing their best to give each other as good a start as they get themselves, we are wrong. Most decidedly and definitely wrong. They are watching each other like cats and mice, and are out *to catch each other* to the extent of getting the better start.

It is perfectly natural that they should do so, and their conduct is no more reprehensible than is the effort made by a British representative in the Olympic Games who endeavours to get a flyer in the 100 yards sprint. But the speedway rider has mechanical power, and this he can, and does, have adjusted to his own peculiar requirements. He may favour a very high acceleration to enable him to get to the first bend first, even if he loses a little on the straight. This is his preference, but he is no more dirty than is the right or left winger whose main reason for being in a football team is his outstanding ability to sprint down the wing faster than his fellows or his opponents. The whole spirit of competition, individually or in a team, is to get the better of someone else, and it cannot be eradicated. The Steward is there to see that no one gets an advantage at the start, but so long as human nature plays any sort of part in Speedway racing, the riders will continue to try. The whole angle from which we have been regarding the starts must be altered, and if we do the same as two of the sport's best known personalities, Mr. Fred Mockford and Mr. John Hoskins, we shall find in them one of the greatest attractions in Speedway Meeting. These two "pillars" know that each rider on the track is *out to win at the start* if he can, and they get their best thrills watching to see who gets the best of it."

More of the thoughts of W.F. Cliffe in the next edition.

Welcome to Northside

OK it isn't a new track but the Autumn of 2007 saw the first public meeting at the Northside training track in Workington. Not too far from Lonsdale Park and Derwent Park but over the river it is located to the north of the town. It is sited within a cleared area of coastal or near coastal scrubland which looks as though it was once a coal bing (colliery waste heap), the wee track gave a stage for the boys and lone lassie, Montana Jowett, who were taking their early steps a chance to strut their stuff. The spectator facilities are a bit basic but the short but wide track and apparently forgiving safety fence is ideal for learners. The pits appear to do the business and it is easy to see why Ivan Mauger gave it his seal of approval when he held a session there earlier this year. For the visitor there is plenty of car parking and suitable amenities. There is an excellent programme available for those of you who couldn't make it. (From a professional point of view I had the opportunity to study the nearby wind turbines (some of us have to earn a crust dealing with non-speedway

things) at first hand and in the moments of quiet I listened to see (OK I know you don't hear with your eyes) if I could hear much noise.)
If Northside does stage any further meetings – do get along to see the event(s) – it is a tidy, well run, operation and a credit to all those involved.

Jim Henry

We Can Blame Sheffield (Or Can We?)

Now I will put my hand up and say without regret – “I hate Best Pairs”. Maybe as someone from Edinburgh the reason is valid as both Marine Gardens and Old Meadowbank said au revoir to speedway with this type of event. (OK the outbreak of the Second World War was a contributory factor in the case of Marine Gardens as there was a meeting scheduled for the next week.)

Up until now I had never given a thought as to when they started but the 1932 Speedway News for 27th May reveals all – hence the headline. Headed up “A Novel Event at Sheffield” the article records that the week before the management of the day at Owlerton “hit on the idea of putting the best pair from each league team into a series of match races consisting of two heats and a final. Actually, however, the apparent intention was not carried out, for instead of Norman Parker and Vic Collins, Norman and Jack Parker Southampton and instead of Burton and Wigfield, the Sheffielders were Wigfield and Alec Peel”. So, the best pairs weren't a best pairs as we know it and Sheffield is off the hook. For the record Wigfield beat Norman Parker and Peel beat Jack Parker after Jack's bike had packed in. Wigfield went on to beat team mate Peel in the final. SO! Where did the first event we would recognise today as a Best Pairs take place? WHO came up with the idea?

Appeal

Can we appeal again for items for The Speedway Reseacher. We come to the end of another volume with the next issue but we are a bit disheartened that we have to pen (or type) a lot of the material. We dearly want to give space to others and again call for your help. Ideas on what you would like to see would be helpful and so forth but ideally your contributions – in any format you care to supply it, is what we need. Get the pens out – shake down the computers – and as they say everyone has a novel in them. **Editors**

Deadline for items for next edition is 31st January 2008

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