

The Speedway Researcher

Promoting Research into the History of Speedway and Dirt Track Racing

Volume No.3 . No. 1 June 2000

Subscribers : 140

THANKS FOR THE SUPPORT

It is very heartening to report that we have 140 subscribers for this new volume and we hope that we won't let you down in the editions to come. We are also very pleased by the kind comments about the quality of the magazine but we can't take all the credit. As ever we are grateful for your contributions and suggestions as they are vital to The Speedway Researcher.

In the annual questionnaire we asked if you wanted us to carry collectors adverts. The reception was mixed but the message was strong from those who opposed adverts - their concerns were that we would compete with other publications and that adverts would take away vital text space.

We offer the following compromise.

Since the weight of The Speedway Researcher is within the limit for current postage we are prepared to distribute your adverts, as inserts, in the envelope. These will be completely separate from the magazine and advertisers must supply their own fliers for inclusion.

We have decided to set a maximum flier size of A5, limit it to 80gm/sqm paper, and set a deadline of one month before the publication date for receipt of the advert. Adverts will be free of charge and inserted on a first come first served basis. We'll see how it goes over this volume and review the situation at the end of volume three. If you wish to use this service, please contact Graham for details of the number of fliers needed for circulation to all current subscribers..

The other message was that you want to find out about the history of bikes. An article on the subject will appear in Vol.3 No.2 and we'll take it from there.

As ever we welcome your contributions on this topic or any other subject for that matter. As editors we want to edit, not write too much and will welcome your contributions. Don't be shy. There are lots of topics we can cover. Often an article will help set the memory cells going and bring to mind items you'd forgotten you once knew.

Perhaps we should have as our motto

If it isn't in, you havn't sent it.

Seriously though. Thanks for your support it is appreciated.

ROLL OF HONOUR

Zbigniew RANISZEWSKI	29	Polish	Bydgoszcz Vienna	21.04.56	21.04.56
Ernie RAWLINS		English	South'tonSouth'ton	18.09.56	18.09.56
Roy SIMS-REEVES	22	English	L'ter S.Leicester S.	21.09.29	21.09.29
Henry RENNIE	19	Australian	Cessnock	25.11.25	25.11.25
Russell REES		Australian	Bundaberg	28.06.80	26.06.80
Eddie REYNOLDS	26	English	G'gow WC G'gow WC27.	05.30	27.05.30
Ernie ROCCIO	25	American	Wimbledon West Ham	22.07.52	23.07.53
Harry ROGERS		English	Unattached Dagenham	19.05.38	19.05/38
Mike ROGERS	21	English	W'ptonWolverhampton	05.06.53	05.06.53
Marcin ROZAK	23	Polish	Gneizno Tarnow	12.05.77	08.06.77
Stanislaw ROZANSKI	23	Polish	Rzeszow Rzeszow	14.07.58	15.08.58
Albert ROSENFELD	32	English	Odsal Odsal	06.07.46	16.07.46
Marian ROSE	36	Polish	Stal TorunRzeszow	18.04.70	19.04.70
George ROWLANDS	28	English	Unattached Audenshaw	.06.29	.06.29
Rif SAITGAREEV	36	Russian	Ostrow Ostrow	06.08.96	18.08.96

Tony SANFORD	30	English	Exeter	Exeter	08.09.81	08.09.81	
Sigmund SCHLAM		Australian		Perth		01.11.30	
Martin SCHNEEWEIS		Austrain		Gratz		.09.47	
Jim SERLE		Australian		Brisbane	24.11.51	24.11.51	
Hans SIEGEL		German					
Jack SHARPE		Australian		Sydney Sp.G.	22.10.48	24.10.48	
Ray SHARP		Australian		Brisbane	18.09.65	25.09.65	
John SHEAD		English	Halifax	Norwich	01.07.50	01.07.50	
Stuart SHIRLEY	20	English	E'mere P.	Ellesmere Pt.	03.12.77	03.12.77	
Des SIMON		Australian		Brisbane	01.12.62	03.12.62	
Erki Ali SIPPOLA		Finland		Helsinki		.06.58	
Christer SJOSTEN	31	Swedish	Visby/Poole	Brisbane	01.12.79	08.12.79	
Leif SKOGLAND		Swedish		Gothenburgh		24.07.51	
Jack SMITH	26	English	Preston	Preston	10.08.29	10.08.29	
Grzegorz SMOLINSKI	20	Polish	Gniezno	Poznan	12.04.87	21.04.87	
Mick SPEARS	19	English	Long Eaton	Long Eaton	25.08.83	25.08.83	
Bogdan SPLAWSKI		Polish	Zielona G.	Zielona Gora		09.81	
Gerard STACH		Polish	Opole	Opole	13.10.74	13.10.74	
Bob STAPLES				Sydney			
Ted STEVENS	26	Australian	Plymouth	St.Austell	14.04.53	14.04.53	
Paul STEWART	24	Australian	Un'hed	Pioneer Park	10.10.98	10.10.98	
Fred STILLEY		Australian		Wentworth	27.09.30	27.09.30	
Peter STIRLING	24	Australian		Adelaide	17.12.65	27.12.65	
Charlie STOCKDALE		Austraian		Wayville	17.11.28	18.11.28	
H.J. STOCKDALE		Australian		Penrith	28.03.25	23.03.25	
John STOCKDALE	22	English	Preston	Preston	11.05.29	11.05.29	
Robert STOCKER		English		Unattached Rye House		.07.50	.07.50
Jerzey SUFFNER	21	Polish	Ostrow	Ostrow	07.09.79	07.09.79	
Konstantin SVINKIN		Russian	Lovov	Pinsk		06.88	

Newspaper Information

We continue the details of the newspapers for speedway towns held in the Colindale Newspapaer Library of the British Library. The reference numbers are ours and will be used to cross reference to other holdings of the newspapers in other libraries.

Newport: Tracks : **Somerton Park** and **The Haley Stadium**. 1964 - 1977 was the reign of the unusually shaped Somerton Park which was round a football pitch. The purpose built Haley Stadium which is located in an industrial estate is more recent starting in 1997 and is a model for new speedway stadia.

Newspapers : (288) The South Wales Area and Monmouthshire Daily Leader 1964 - Date; (289) South Wales Argus (Football Edition) 1964 - Sept 1967; (290) South Wales Football Argus Sept 1967 - Date; (291) Weekly Argus 1964 - date.

Newport Pagnell for Milton Keynes.

Newspapaer : (292) Bucks Standard and Milton Keynes Observer 1978 - Date.

Northampton: Tracks : **Northampton, Red House (Hannington), Earls Barton and Brafield on the Green**. Busy speedway place this. The first was a short lived venue as was the Red House venture. The third venue was a post war train ing track while Brafield, which operated in the early 1950s and again in the late 1960s, was a possible returnee in the late 1990s. Most are quite hazy ventures.

Newspapers : (293) Northampton Daily Chronicle and Evening Herald 1928 - Oct 1931; (294) Football Echo 1928 - Sept 1939; (295) The Northampton Herald 1928 - Oct 1931; (296) The Northampton Independent 1928 - Oct 1931; (297) Northampton Mercury 1928 - Oct 1931; (298) Daily Echo 1928 - Oct 1931.

Norwich : Tracks : **Firs Stadium and Hevingham**. The Firs has a long history but was pulled down after the 1964 season. Revivals have been resisted and Hevingham was a one meeting wonder.
 Newspapers : (299) Eastern Daily Press 1928 - Date; (300) Eastern Football News 1928 - Sept 1930 & Aug 1946 - Date; (301) Norfolk Chronicle 1928 - Nov 1955; (302) The Norfolk Chronicle (County Edition) Oct 1933 - June 1939; (303) Norfolk News and Weekly Press 1928- May 1949; (304) The Norfolk News and Norwich Mercury June 1947 - Nov 1955; (305) The Norfolk News, Norfolk Mercury and Journal Dec 1955 - Dec 1961; (306) Norwich Mercury, Norfolk News Jan 1962 - Date; (307) Norfolk News and Weekly Press (Lowestoft Edition) 1928 - Dec 1940; (308) North Norfolk News June 1949 - Nov 1955. (308) North Norfolk News June 1949 - Nov 1953; (309) North Norfolk News, The Norfolk Chronicle and Journal Dec 1955 - Date; (310) The Norwich Mercury (south Norfolk & Diss Edition) Jan 1932 - May 1949; (311) South Norfolk News & Diss Mercury Oct 1953 - Nov 1955; (312) South Norfolk News, Diss Mercury and Journal Dec 1955 - Date.

Nottingham : Tracks : **Trent Lane**. A pre war venture from 1929 to 1938. (Post war Nottingham was Long Eaton.) May also carry **Long Eaton** information
 Newspapers : (313) Nottingham Advertiser & Bullwell Local News 1929 - Sepr 1930; (314) Nottingham Advertiser, Bullwell Local News and Echo Oct 1930-April 1933; (315) Nottingham and Arnold News & Echo May 1930 - Date; (316) The Football news 1928 - Sept 1939; (317) The Football Post 1928 - Sept 1939; (318) Football Post & News Aug 1963- Date; (319) The Midland Sporting Gazette 1928 - Nov 1961; (320) Nottingham Announcer April - Nov 1932; (321) Nottingham 3 Journal 1928 - Sept 1953; (322) The Nottingham Guardian 1928 - Sept 1953; (323) Nottingham Evening News 1928 - Oct 1948; (324) The Nottingham Evening Post 1928 - July 1963; (325) The Nottingham Guardian and Midland Counties Advertiser 1928 - Dec 1969; (326) South Notts Echo 1928 - Date.

Oldham : Track : No name known possibly about 1930 ish. Some carry Rochdale information and possibly other obscure information.
 Newspapers : (327) Green Final, Oldham Chronicle Sports Edition 1928 - Date; (328) Oldham Chronicle 1928 - 1939.

Oxford : Track : **Cowley**. Started about 1938but there may be more ancient action.
 Newspapers : (328) East Oxfordshire Advertiser April 1971 - Date; (329) Oxford Mail Dec 1928 - Date; (330) The Oxford Times and Midlands Counties Advertiser 1928 - Date; (331) Sports Mail Jan 1955 - date.

Peterborough: Track : **Alwalton**. This venue dates from 1970. Other possible venue at Fengate which may be a grass track.
 Newspapers : (332) Motor Cycle News Nov 1955 - date; (333) Peterborough Standard May 1931 - date; (334) Peterborough Citizen and Advertiser May 1946 - date.

Plymouth : Track : **Pennycross**. A long lived venue now a site for a school.
 Newspapers : (335) Plymouth Herald 1928 - Sept 1939 & Aug 1946 - date; (336) Plymouth Post Jan 1970 - date; (337) Sports Post 1928 - Dec 1936; (338) Western Evening Herald & Western Evening News 1928 - date; (339) Cornish Evening Herald July 1944 - Dec 1954; (340) Western Evening Herald & Western Evening News (Cornwall Edition) Jan 1953 - date; (341) Western Independent 1928 - Feb 1960; (341) The Independent March 1960 - date; (342) The Western News 1928 - Oct 1939.

Pontypridd : Track : **Taff Vale Park**. An early Welsh venue 1929 onwards for a short spell. Still quite a hazy venue which needs some work done. Also try South Wales Echo.
 Newspapers : (343) Glamorgan Free Press & Rhondda Leader 1929 - Nov 1929; (345) Free Press & Rhondda Leader Dec 1929- Feb 1944; (346) The Rhondda Gazette 1929 - Feb 1944; (347) Pontypridd Observer Dec 1928 - Feb 1944; (348) Rhondda Fach Gazette 1929 - Feb 1944.

Poole : Track : **Poole Stadium**. The track opened in 1948 and has run since then.
 Newspaper : (349) Poole and Dorsetshire Herald 1948 - date.

Portsmouth : Tracks : **Copnor** and **Tipner**. Both pre war venues in the city. Both are somewhat hazy venues.
 Newspapers : (350) The Evening News 1928 - Jan 1959; (351) The Football Mail 1928- Aug 1939.

Preston : Track : **Farrington Park**. A track being chronicled by Graham Fraser. Some possibility that a track operated at **Acregate Dog Track** circa 1937.
 Newspapers : (352) The Lancashire Daily Post 1928 - date; (353) The Preston Herald 1928 - Dec 1964. Also Northern Daily Telegraph (Blackburn)

Pudsey : Track : **Post Hill**. Another odd ball venue at the foot of a famous hill climb track. Ran 8 known events in 1928 and programmes have also turned up. Also see Leeds and Bradford newspapers. Newspapers : (354) Pudsey and Stanningley News 1928 - Jan 1949; (355) Pudsey Advertiser and Stanningley and Farsley Times 1928 - Sept 1932. 4

Track Record Update

Further extracts from **John Jarvis**' excellent record system.

CRADLEY HEATH : Dudley Wood Sports Stadium, Dudleywood Road, Dudley, West Midlands, DY2 0DH. Track Length : 367 yards. 1st Meeting : 21st June 1947. Nicknames : Cubs, Heathens, United. Years of Operation : 1947 - 48 - National League Division Three; 1947 - 52 - National League Division Two; 1959 - Open; 1960 - 64 - Provincial League; 1965 - 67 - British League; 1968 - 74 - British League Division One; 1975 - 90 - British League; 1991 - 94 - British League Division One; 1995 - Premier League. The track was closed at the end of 1995 and demolished with a view to redevelopment for housing. The fight to save the site is still ongoing. Let's hope Cradley Heath does not die. (U.)

CRAYFORD : Greyhound Stadium, Stadium Road, Crayford, Kent, DA1 4HR. Track Length : 300 yards 1968 - 69; 265 yards 1970 onwards. 1st Meeting : 21st April 1930 (Grass Speedway). Years of Operation. (1930 Grass Speedway); 1931 - Amateur Open; 1935 - 37 - Amateur Open; 1968 - 70 - British League Division Two; 1975 - 76 - New National League; 1977 - 83 - National League. Team transferred to Hackney for 1984. Site redeveloped as greyhound stadium and still in use. (U.)

CREWE : British Railway Sports Ground, Earle Street, Crewe, Cheshire. Track length 470 yards (1969 - 70); 430 yards (1971 - 75). 1st Meeting : Years of Operation : 1929 - 32 - Open; 1969 - 74 - British League Division Two; 1975 - New National League; 1976 - 77 - Open and Training; 1978 - 79 - Training; 1980 - Sidecar Speedway. Was used for stock cars up to 1993. Site, which was owned by British Rail was subsequently redeveloped for a supermarket. (U.)

(CREWE ALEXANDRA - There is a suggestion that Crewe Alexandra's football ground was used for unlicensed speedway in 1930. This could be the above stadium as it appears Crewe Alexandra had a bit of a nomadic existence in this era. As ever, if anyone can shed some light on this, please tell us your information.)

CRYSTAL PALACE : Crystal Palace Grounds, Sydenham, London. Track Length : 441 yards (1928); 449 yards (1929). 1st Meeting : 19th May 1928. Years of Operation : 1928 - Open; 1929 - 31 - Southern League; 1932 - 33 - National League; 1936 - 38 - Open; 1939 - National League Division Two; 1940 - Open. Attempts to revive in post war era failed.

DAGENHAM : Ripple Road, Dagenham, Essex. Track Length : 320 yards. 1st Meeting : ?. Years of Operation : 1932 - 1937 - Open. 1938 Inter Club Speedway League. 1939 - Open; 1946 - Open; 1947 - Training. According to Terry Stone, half of the track was left and he used the half for practice runs. The site of the track was later to become a car park at Dagenham Dog Track and is now part of a cold store complex. (U)

EARL'S BARTON : Greyhound Stadium, Earl's Barton, Nr Northampton.

Track Length : 280 yards. 1st Meeting : None. Years of Operation : (1947 Grass track); 1949 - 1950 - Open; 1951 - 53 - Training; 1957 - Training. Site now used as cricket pitch.

EASTBOURNE : Arlington Stadium, Polegate, Nr Eastbourne. Track Length : 342 yards 352 yards (1937 - 1947). 1st Meeting : not known. Years of Operation : 1928 - 31 - Open; 1932 - 37 - Amateur Open; 1938 - Inter Club Speedway League; 1939 - Amateur Open; 1946 - Open; 1947 - National league Division Three; 1948 - 53 - Amateur Open; 1954 - 57 - Southern League; 1958 - Open, 1959 - Southern Area League; 1960 - 63 - Open; 1964 - Metropolitan League; 1965 - Training; 1969 - 74 British League Division Two; 1975 - 76 - New National League; 1977 - 78 -

National League; 1979 - 84 - British League; 1985 - 90 - National League; 1991 - 94 - British League Division One; 1995 - 96 - Premier League; 1997 - 99 - Elite League. (U.)

EASTBOURNE : Training Track at Arlington Stadium. Track Length : 185 yards. 1st Meeting : Not Known. Years of Operation : 1981- 82 - Training; 1983 - 89 - Open & Training; 1990 - 99 - Training. Schoolboy training venue. (U.)

EDINBURGH : Craigmiller Trotting Track. Now demolished the track has been used for unsupervised training in the 1950s and the 1970s.

EDINBURGH : Gyle Trotting Track, Glasgow Road, Corstorphine, Edinburgh. Track Length : 320 yards. 1st Meeting : Training started 14th December 1968. Years of Operation : 1968 - 70 - Training. Now site of Royal Scot Hotel. (U.)

EDINBURGH : Marine Gardens, Seafield Road, Portobello, Edinburgh. Track Length : 440 yards. 1st Meeting : 19th May 1928. Years of Operation : 1928 - 29 - Open; 1930 - Northern League; 1931 - Open; 1938 - Open; 1939 - ACU Northern Trophy; 1953 - Training. Read the History of this track in A History of Edinburgh Speedway : Part 1, The Marine Gardens Years. (U.)

EDINBURGH : Old Meadowbank Stadium, Clockmill Road, Edinburgh. Track Length : 368 yards reduced to 363 yards. 1st Meeting : 17th April 1948. Years of Operation : 1948 - 53 - National League Division Two; 1954 - National League Division Two - Resigned; 1957 - Training; 1959 - Open; 1960 - 64 Provincial League; 1965 -67 - British League. Original stadium on site dates to before war. Redeveloped after war and track built 1948. Half of site covered by Meadowbank Sports Centre and half by all weather playing pitch. The Commonwealth Game Stadium built on site of the former running track called New Meadowbank. Sadly missed !!!!!!!

EDINBURGH : Powderhall Stadium, Beaverhall Road, Edinburgh, EH7 4JE. Track Length : 335 yards. 1st Meeting : 15th April 1977. Years of Operation : 1977 - 90 - National League; 1991 - 94 - British League Division Two; 1995 - Premier League. Site inside greyhound track which was built in 1927. Mooted for speedway many times but GRA not keen until financial problems forced them to look to other income. Stadium demolished after outline planning permission for housing and office use in 1997. Attempts to gain full permission still having problems. (U.)

EDINBURGH : Stenhouse Greyhound Stadium, Stenhouse, Edinburgh. Was both greyhound stadium before war. Used for a demonstration event in 1935 but nothing came of it. Described in contemporary item as pony track - location confirmed by authoritative source. Proposed second track for Edinburgh 1949 but licence refused by Speedway Control Board. Site redeveloped some years ago. (N.)

ELLESMERE PORT : Thornton Road Stadium. Ellesmere Port, Cheshire.

Track Length : 423 yards. 1st Meeting : 28th March 1972. Years of Operation : 1971 - Demonstration; 1972 - 74 - British League Division Two; 1975 - 76 - New National League; 1977 - 82 - National League; 1985 - National League. Greyhound track now on site of track. (U.)

ESSINGTON : Essington Hall Farm. Years of Operation : 1951 - 52 - Training. (N.)

EXETER : Alphington. Marsh Barton Stadium, Alphin Brook Lane, Exeter. Track Length : 250 yards later 333 yards. 1st Meeting : 5th July 1945. Years of Operation : 1945 - Open. 1948 - 51 - Training. Now site of warehouse. (U.)

EXETER : County Ground Sports Stadium, Church Road, St. Thomas, Exeter. Track Length : 420 yards (1929), 417 yards (1930), 443 yards (1948 & 1969). 1st Meeting : 9th March 1929. Years of Operation : 1929 - 1931 - Open; 1934 - Open; 1947 - 51 - National League Division Three; 1952 - 53 - Southern League; 1954 - 55 - National League Division Two; 1957 - 58 - Open; 1960 - Open; 1961 - 64 - Provincial League; 1965 - 67 - British League; 1968 - 74 British League Division One; 1975 - 79 - British League; 1980 - 83 - National League; 1984 - British League; 1985 - 90 - National League; 1991 - 94 - British League Division Two; 1995 - 99 Premier League and Amateur League. (U.)

EXETER : Exwick Fields, Behind Thatched House, Inn. Track Length : 360 yards. 1st Meeting : 21st May 1945. Year of Operation : 1945. Staged only one meeting. (U.)

EXETER : Haldon Racecourse, A38 at Kennford. Long Track Venue. Track Length : 880 yards. 1st Meeting : 8th October 1978. Years of Operation : 1978 - 80 - Long Track on speedway type surface. (N.)

EXETER : Haldon Racecourse. Track Length : 300 metres. 1st Meeting : 29th October 1978. Years of Operation : 1978 - 80 - Training. (N.)

EXETER : Peamore. Track Length : Not Known. 1st Meeting : Not Known. Years of Operation : 1950 - 51 - Training. Site now occupied by Frank Tucher (Commercial) Ltd. (U.)

SPROUTS - SOME EARLY INFO

In June 1928 Motorcycling was telling its readers "Eight years ago Sprouts, or Lloyd Elder began motorcycle racing on an Indian machine on dirt tracks at Fresno, California U.S.A. He also took part in hill-climbs, and it was not long before he was recognised as America's champion hill-climber - this, however, was on a Harley Davidson. The next step was on a board track at Beverley Hills, Los Angeles, U.S.A. This track is one mile in circumference, and Elder used to lap it consistently at 103.5 miles per hour. Later he decided to cross to Australia to ride on dirt tracks there, and he supported the activities at Sydney on a third-mile track riding Rudge-Whitworth, Indian and A.J.S. machines with considerable success. At Sydney he won the Golden Helmet three times on dirt tracks and five times on the concrete track at Maroubra, which is five-sixths of a mile in circumference. The track record for Maroubra is 103 m.p.h. and is held by Spencer Stratton (who incidentally is with Dirt Track Speedways Ltd.); Elder's best time was 100 m.p.h. on a 500cc Indian, while Spencer Stratton's record was on a 1000cc class. Sprouts is 23 years of age, he rides a Douglas, is an excellent mechanic, is one of the Directors of Dirt Track Speedways Ltd., and is quite one of the most popular of the visiting broadsiders in this country."

The Other Swindon The First Season of Swindon (Gorse Hill) Autodrome

In the pioneer days of Dirt Track racing in Britain, when tracks were opening the length and breadth of the country, Swindon wasn't left out and its speedway was built in Gorse Hill suburb of this Wiltshire railway town. Unlike most speedway tracks which were fitted into greyhound, football or rugby stadia, this was built from scratch on a large tract of meadow behind the Duke of Edinburgh pub in Crickdale Road.

The promoting company was the Swindon Sports Club Ltd. under the control of Mr W. Hobbs. In the summer of 1928, 5,000 tons of ash, chalk and earth plus a mile of fencing (including sprung fencing around the track!) were put in place to create an enclosed stadium with a 356 yard track. The stadium had car parking facilities for 3,000 cars, a phenomenal number in those days. The total cost of construction was put at between two thousand and two thousand five hundred pounds.

According to the local press it was the Company's intention to let other sports use the stadium such as football and tennis. Whether this ever happened is doubtful.

The Swindon Autodrome, as it was named, was officially opened on Saturday August 6th 1928. Spectators watched from a raised embankment and enclosure. The announcer and timekeeper operated from a box in the centre of the enclosure. Competitors prepared in a paddock to the rear of the enclosure.

The promotion appeared determined to cash in on the growing popularity of the sport and to find their own stars. They employed a trainer to encourage new riders into the sport.

One pioneer, Bert Hamblin, recalled riding at Gorse Hill in the early days and remembered that the track was very deep because, once when his engine stalled, he got off his machine and it remained standing upright!

The events staged in 1928 were all open meetings. They featured mainly club men who were identified by their distinctive coloured jerseys.

The opening meeting featured a match race between Swindon clubmen H Kemble riding a 500cc Radco (Rudge?) and R. Horrey on a 500 cc O.F.C. (OEC?) which was won by the former in 1 min 47 secs for 4 laps. The main events were the 350cc Swindon Scratch Race won by G Harman on a £50cc O.K. Supreme and the same rider won the 500cc Gorse Hill Scratch Race on the same machine.

A total of 12 meetings were staged between the beginning of August and Mid - October 1928.

The formula remained almost constant with Scratch, Handicap and Sidecar racing events.

The final meeting of saw the track record lowered to 80.2 by T R Wainwright of Thatcham. The promotion did start to attract up and coming riders like Percy Rye (Claude's brother) from across the south of England but "star" names and foreign riders never featured. It seemed to be the case of sticking with motorcycle club riders who fancied their chances at the new sport of dirt track racing. Despite the lack of star names the attraction of "broadsiding" was sufficient to attract crowds of between 4 and 5 thousand.

This club based approach is by no means unusual and the role of the motor cycle club is another worthy of some research.

There are reports in various publications of dirt track racing taking place at the Autodrome in 1929 and 1930. However, for what reason best known ly to the editors of the local press, a random search has not traced any reports.

As always The Speedway Researcher would be happy to add to the Gorse Hill story if such exists. There are no contemporary records of the track on Ordnance Survey maps and in all likelihood the track lies beneath housing. The pub, however, remains. Unfortunately none of the locals are old enough to have visited Gorse Hill's speedway.

Graham Fraser

Robert Bamford has published a booklet on Swindon Gorse Hill. Available from Robert directly.

Bike Bits

Our mention about the lack of articles on bikes has produced a good response and we are happy to be able to announce that we have a great article from **Chris Byles** which we will publish starting in the next edition of The Researcher.

Norman Best has sent us some interesting material he has received from **Allan Batt** in New Zealand. The material is extracted from a magazine called The Harley-Davidson Enthusiast and is dated 1933 and 1934. It features articles about dirt track Harleys and includes some very good quality photographs.

An article on Night Speedway from November 1934 features photographs of New Cross rider Goldie (Godwin) Restall and Benny Kaufman who also raced in the UK before the war.

According to the Harley magazine these two were the best riders on show in the east coast. Also from the article it seems that Goldie had a relative, Bill Restall, racing on the same circuits.

The photographs don't make it clear what type of machine these guys were using and it may be that the Harley Davidson speedway pedigree is a bit longer that we think. Harleys were, and probably still are, used on the big American flat tracks.

THREADS AND YARNS

There have been some odd speedway trophies over the years. Leeds once presented a bit of armour. However, the oddest must be that reported in Motorcycling in 1928 - A pair of silk stocks belonging to an actress called Miss Mai Bacon. Seems the International Speedways lads grabbed them on a visit to the Prices Theatre and Mai agreed to their being raced for at White City.

Who was the tallest speedway rider ? We'll open the bidding at 6ft 9 ins with Newcastle Gosforth's Harry Huntley. Can anyone better that ? Who was the shortest - ignoring schoolboys - ? Any offers ?

Buzz Hibberd created a bit of a stir in 1929 when he turned up at the track at Southampton with a pair of leathers secured by zip fasteners. Imagine not using good old fashioned buttons. Blackpool made the claim in 1928 to have the youngest rider. He was called Stanley Bryden of Leeds and was all of 14 years old. Claimed to be a pupil at West Leeds High School he reportedly had raced at Post Hill, Leeds Club Speedway and Pontefract. Post Hill staged 8 speedway meetings in 1928 - Leeds Club Speedway was a grass track but what was Pontefract ?

In 1930 there was a concerted effort to turn the clock back, re-introduce the Douglas, and to cut down speeds. The aim, to increase thrills. A few tracks tried out a Douglas only meeting and prepared a deep track. This did not deter the Rudge owners from turning up but they found things tough. Four valvers caused troubles even in those days ! (To be fair the Douglas was a four valver - 2 valves per cylinder. The standard Douglas was shortened by three inches in 1930 but it really didn't improve it's competitiveness. There was even talk of uprating the Douglas to 600cc to make them competitive but that came to nothing. The original Douglas had been 600cc and had to be reduced to comply with the 500cc target. The large, heavily cleated back tyre some riders fitted to their Dougies gave them a bit more edge but not enough for the slicker tracks.

As recently as 1999 now and the tale concerns a certain northern based referee who complained to the clerk of the course that he could not see out of the referee's box. Acting on the referee's request the clerk of the course collected a bucket of soapy water and trudged back to the pits where he offered the bucket, contents and cloths to the man in charge. The home promoter, bemused by this ritual, inquired why washing up kit had appeared in the pits and was told about the referee's concerns. In attempt to resolve the problem the promoter removed the referee's spectacles, shook them about in the soapy water and returned them, dripping and soapy to the referee's nose. Thankfully the referee saw the, albeit suddsy, funny side of the incident.

Tales From Past Publications

In Vol 1 No. 4 we told of books by Peter Stuart Westwood. Two other titles in the series were "Wheels of Fortune" and "Junie." Like those featured in the last edition, these were published in 1975 by Oliver & Boyd. The Edinburgh phone book suggests that the publishers no longer exist. Maybe these books are still in use in a school near you.

Did you know "veteran" (sorry Brian) racer Brian Bassett is pictured on his Rudge in action at Peterborough in a Heinemann Maths Book? Brian regularly races a Jim Gregory Douglas and his own Rudge at vintage events and was last seen on Ivor Thomas' OEC duplex (not centre hub) steering JAP at the Peterborough BMF Spring Rally 1999.

GLASGOW NELSON

If you look for the Glasgow Nelson track on the Ordnance Survey maps of about 1930 you must look for the stadium in Camlachie Street in Glasgow's East End, almost immediately north of Celtic Park, called The Olympic Stadium.

This 486 yard per lap trotting track is the pioneer Scottish venture which was organised by its own Motor Cycle Club - The Glasgow Nelson Motor Cycle Dirt Track Club. They read about the new sport and, in the space of three weeks had formed the club, found their venue and staged their first practice cum demonstration event.

The club staged four practice events 11th, 18th and 25th March and 1st April then opened for business on the afternoon of Easter Monday, 9th April 1928. The opener featured 250cc solo event won by Tom Shearer, 350cc solo event won by J.C. Allan, 600cc solo event won by Harry Potts and Sidecars event won by Peter Coia. The winners received a cash prize and gold medals.

Four other meetings were staged 21st and 27th April, 4th May and 11th May and then ran one meeting at White City on 29th June. They introduced Norrie Isbister, Jimmy and George Pinkerton, Bill Dickie, Jimmy Valente, George Cumming, Andy Marr, Peter Coia and Allan Campbell, all of whom were regulars in the pioneer days in Scotland, to the sport. Chris Hughes, an early Liverpool star, started at Nelson.

The track was board hard and skids were induced using brakes. It had a post and rail inner fence like Greenford and Blackpool Trotting Tracks and an upright railway sleeper outer fence.

Thankfully the outer fence was rotten as a sidecar crew who crashed into it found out.

A few programmes have survived and they are approximately half A4 size printed on card with effectively four pages. The cover design is quite bland and the back page carries a set of racing rules. The local Glasgow newspapers did carry results but you have to shop around to get a comprehensive set of results. Full details will be published in the book on Glasgow's Pre - War Speedways (1928 - 1940) which is currently in preparation.

The track flickered briefly to life in 1932 and staged at least one, if not two, meetings using the riders who were known as "The Blantyre Crowd" at White City. They operated the track in Motherwell that year under the Lanarkshire Speedways Ltd banner. The second meeting was organised for a week later, 23rd May, and advertised in The Daily Record and Mail, but no information has been found about it.

Glasgow Nelson must have been a fun venue. The maps show an very odd shaped track - bends of different radii and the name has given the owner - Mr Nelson - a spot in speedway history.

Jim Henry

Speedway Racing in 1929

Speedway racing had taken hold in 1928 and tracks had continued to open all over the country, in most cases generating profits to promoters and plenty of loose change for erstwhile amateur club motor cyclists. At the start of the new season 1929, the track owners formed an association and decided that some semblance of communal organisation be instituted in order to lessen the aura of circus entertainment and to present a serious and creditable professional sport.

To this end team racing, the creation of leagues was suggested by Jimmy Baxter, one of the foremost promoters. It was cautiously accepted by a number of tracks, albeit, in some cases, as a programme filler rather than the main event. In view of the travelling involved two regional leagues were agreed upon.

The Northern or English league included most of the tracks in the northern counties of England. The Southern League encompassed the Midlands, London and South Eastern clubs. Tracks in Scotland, the West of England and Wales declined to enter, electing to carry on with the familiar 1928 programme format. Later in the season some challenge matches against league teams were, however, undertaken at some of these venues.

In order to ensure even team strengths, star rated riders, which included the top overseas men and some of the better British lads, were not permitted to ride for the league teams. This embargo was partly lifted half way through the season in respect of the Britons but the star overseas riders were still barred from the league teams.

Numbers were allocated to riders and displayed on their machines; red for the top stars and black for the remainder. However, the number one was not used.

Clubs adopted team colours in the Southern League. These have been detailed in a previous Researcher.

In addition to bibs the riders also wore sleeves in the team colours on their forearms. Unlike today the home team wore red and white helmets while the visitors wore blue and plain yellow. The yellow and black helmet colour was not adopted until after World war Two. (Originally as circles and later as quarters - Eds.)

The Southern League commenced in May using rolling starts and a 4 - 2 - 1 scoring system. Initially the matches comprised six a side and six heats subsequently changing to nine heats and a 3 - 2 - 1 scoring system. Hall Green, Birmingham dropped out of the league when these changes were introduced at a point when they had won five out of seven matches.

Stamford Bridge were the eventual league champions, helped somewhat by home advantage where, due to the very narrow track, only standing starts were permitted in races with more than two riders. The track was widened for the 1930 season.

As with the Southern counterparts the Northern League adopted 4 - 2 - 1 scoring, but the first few matches were limited to four a side and four heats. This format was subsequently changed to six a side plus two reserves and match formats extended to nine heats. The scoring system was not. With the exception of the aforementioned Hall Green, all the Southern League tracks completed their fixtures but in the north, as we have seen from the league tables compiled by Trevor James and the results grid in another recent Researcher, things were less stable.

Bolton rode only one match which they won. Hanley (Stoke) took over Bolton's fixtures but, after losing four matches on the trot, decided to pack it in. Burnley folded in July notwithstanding they had a very strong team. Belle Vue resigned in July having won six out of ten matches and Warrington were expelled from the league in September.

In September both Liverpool and Belle Vue withdrew from the Northern Dirt Track Owners' Association. The Association retaliated by banning all riders from these two tracks from their venues and vice-versa.

Meanwhile White City Manchester opted out of the league at a time when they were sitting at the top of the table having won 19 matches out of 21 completed. Leeds, as the highest placed surviving club, were declared the champions with Preston runners-up.

The Northern League teams also competed in a Knock Out Cup and the scores for this tournament were featured in a recent Researcher. Preston won beating Halifax over two legs. The "Halifax" leg was staged at Sheffield because the Thrum Hall track in Halifax was not considered to be sufficiently up market to stage such a prestigious event.

The principal individual competition was the "Star" championship. This is another event covered in a recent Researcher.

Wembley warrant a separate mention. A.J. Elvin, the Wembley supremo was persuaded to run speedway at the Empire Stadium, but because of the late opening of the track, an annual occurrence due to the F.A. Cup Final, only a scratch team could be recruited. However, J. S. Hoskins was appointed manager and quickly looked to the north to strengthen his team. He came up with two first class riders in Harry Whitfield and Jack Ormston. Both these lads came from the north-east of England. From a shaky start, the team improved to finish in fifth place in the league. At the end of the season, following trials given to a number of northerners, Wembley recruited George Greenwood, Arthur Atkinson and Norman Evans. The nucleus of the mighty Wembley Lions was thus in place ready for the 1930 and subsequent seasons.

At the end of 1929 the ACU recognised sixty four tracks plus two controlled by the Scottish ACU which was independent of the ACU. The sport had travelled to the far corners of Britain and in addition to the "legitimate" venue, "flapper" tracks, mostly of a club run grass speedway type, were to be found in many locations.

Don Gray

SPEEDWAY RIDERS UNITE !!

Graeme Frost from Australia sends us an interesting item headed up Victorian Motor Cycle Association which was used to drum up support for a Speedway Riders Association. The document, produced in 1930, says "Is There someone among the riders who is game enough to organise the boys to get these conditions (same as in UK) ? You will be told that these things are impossible, but don't be misled by officials who are working with the Promoters. Would you do

what you were expecting them to do if you were employed on the speedway staff, and, in some cases holding shares, which were given free to silence you. Of course, these people do not appear in the company in their correct names and will deny everything in this pamphlet. Probably they will convince some of the easy ones that they are wronged and have been trying to bring about reforms as suggested by the Victorian Motor Cycle Association . Every other State and overseas bodies have got conditions by the riders themselves organising. The ACU of Great Britain neglected the Dirt Track boys until they placed the British Dirt Track Riders' Association on the map. You must do the same here, but be careful the meeting is not sacked and the official positions are not earmarked by men who are sent along to for such purposes. The only sure way is to see that riders only are eligible to hold office.

The most enthusiastic worker who has argued for your rights in the past was blacklisted. Many indiscriminate charges were levelled at him by the A.R.U. officials but no one was game enough to charge him personally, as he has proved over and over again that he has been innocent, and is willing to debate any charges levelled at him by the ACU officials at any time. This is, of course only bunk to keep you separated from him who they are afraid might, with your support, bring these reforms about. We notice all his old friends and clubs know the facts don't seem to bother about things. Is this not a reason why we should give him the benefit of any doubt until we also know the facts. Boys - don't be hoodwinked with this old argument. B.K. is not in this but has supplied the necessary benefits, so for your own selves unite and make one big Speedway Riders' Association." It goes on to set out a draft set of rules for the Association which we will include in the next issue.

They make interesting reading and are probably based on the British rules of the day.

I MAY BE GONE FOR SOME TIME

Mike Terran has come up with an interesting thought. He compiled the following which sets out the longest intervals between meetings. In ascending order - Crayford closed 1937 Reopened 1968 - gap 31 years; Bradford Greenfields 1928 - 1961 - 33 years; Crewe 1932 - 1969 - 37years; Rochdale 1930 - 1970 - 40 years; Barrow Holker Street 1930 - 1972 - 42 years; (White City Stadium, London, 1931 - 1976 - 42years if you don't count Festival of Speed Meeting 1957.); Glasgow Ashfield 1953 - 1999 - 46 years and Belle Vue Greyhound Stadium 1928- 1989 - 61 years.

1929 Southern Dirt Track League Table

The league tables for this season featured in the centre pages are set out below. Thanks to Mike Terran for compiling this information.

Team	R	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Stamford Bridge	20	17	0	3	767	406	34
Southampton	20	16	0	4	672	501	32
Coventry	20	14	0	6	658	534	28
Crystal Palace	20	11	0	9	584	568	22
Wembley	20	11	0	9	580	571	22
West Ham	20	8	0	12	539	612	16
White City (London)	20	8	0	12	543	651	16
Harringay	20	7	0	13	538	653	14
Perry Barr	20	7	0	13	499	650	14
Lea Bridge	20	6	0	14	550	599	12
Wimbledon	20	5	0	15	495	679	10
<i>Hall Green</i>	7	5	0	2	151	141	10

Wolverhampton : A Track with a Long Pedigree

Imagine getting the date of a birthday wrong ! That is what the 1978 Wolverhampton promotion did. They celebrated the 50th birthday on 25th August when it should have been 30th May 1978. **Mark Sawbridge** has sent us this article about the modern venue with the little known but long pedigree.

It may come as a surprise to many people to learn that Wolverhampton Speedway is one of the oldest speedway tracks. The meeting on 25th August 1978 celebrated the opening event staged by the British Dirt Track Racing Association.

The story begins on Wednesday 30th May 1928 when speedway began in the town in a meeting organised by Wolverhampton Dirt Track Motorcycle Club. The big attraction was a match race between Sprouts Elder and Ivor Creek who was billed as the holder of the Glasgow Golden Gauntlet. Unfortunately Elder's bike failed at the start and the crowd was left disappointed. Jack Parker, who would go on to become an all time great, also appeared in this meeting and is recorded as having been excluded for looking back.

The next meeting was held on 9th June. The stars were Elder, Stewie St.George, fellow Kiwi Spencer Stratton and Welshman Taffy Williams. Elder won the main event in a time of 97.82 while Bunny Wilcox won the local riders' event. Unfortunately the organisation was poor and the press and spectators alike were baffled by the lack of accurate announcements and annoyed by an error ridden programme.

The next meeting was organised by the Walsall Motor Cycle Club and was dominated by the local rider Tommy Deadman.

The opening "duel" was restaged on 23rd June and this time it was Sprouts who won. Tommy Deadman won the senior event and was runner up to Cyril Taft in the junior event.

A week later the meeting was enlivened by a few really local riders who appeared to be mastering the art of sliding a bike on the cinders. The junior final was won by an E.R.Jones who appeared to miss the start in order to display his ability to overtake others. Deadman won the senior event. This meeting was promoted by the third Wolverhampton Speedway promotion in a month, the Wolverhampton Motor Cycle and Car Club.

The Walsall club organised the event on 7th July. Harry Taft defeated Deadman in the senior. Tommy was involved in a very alarming spill with one L.Patrick and almost lived up to his name. In another event, the delightfully named W. D'Arcy Tremlett broke a collar bone. The Monmore Green track's first recorded accident victim. Star attraction of this meeting was the display of broadsiding skills given by Aussie pioneer Digger Pugh.

Organisers number four, Monmore Motor Cycle Sports Club, appeared on the scene. They organised practise sessions and a motor cycle gymkhana. The motor cycle version of the event usually associated with those horsey folk was usually a motorcycle muckabout with fun races, and things like tilting at buckets of water, grass surf boarding (man and board towed behind a bike) and so on.

Birmingham Motor Cycle Club arrived by 18th July to promote another meeting. This time Harry Taft cleaned up, watched by a comparatively small crowd.

On 19th August it was announced that Monmore Green was being taken over by the British Dirt Track Racing Association Ltd. (BDTRA) They immediately set about widening the track to accommodate five riders per race and promised to bring their star men to thrill the Wolverhampton public.

As mentioned earlier, the BDTRA opened on 25th August. The meeting was staged as an attraction in opposition to a football event involving Wolverhampton Wanderers and the boring game won. The result was a poor crowd at the cinder event. There are no records of who won the main final which appears to have ended with a three man pile up caused by Tommy Deadman.

In attempt to draw a crowd ladies were offered free admission to the meeting staged on 1st September. The anticipated rise in numbers did not happen but those who did turn up saw a

Staffordshire team beat Lancashire by two wins to one. Cyril Taft won the Golden gauntlet beating Lancashire's Geoff Taylor.

The billed stars of the meeting, Ivor Creek and Irvine Jones, failed to appear. The local press noted that fans were used to non appearances of big stars and maybe it was the promotion being less than honest. Aussie Billy Dallison won a match race after Harry Taft suffered machine failure then lost in a rematch.

A poorly reported meeting was staged on 15th September while the event a week later was given better coverage. A H Johnson (Alan who raced at Birmingham ?) won the Hough Challenge Bowl in the junior final. The senior final was originally won by Tommy Deadman. However, Bunny Wilcox claimed that Deadman had "fenced" him (forced him into the fence) and the steward agreed to re stage the race. Neither Deadman or Wilcox could have been happy as Harry Taft collected his third Golden Helmet win.

Some of the Wolverhampton events are covered in the Southern editions of Automotor Journal (Auto) which is held at Colindale. 1928 was certainly an eventful season and in the next edition we will look at 1929 and 1930 at Monmore Green. We thank Mark for this interesting insight into this pioneer venue.

Can You Help ??

Robert Bamford is looking for the Christian names of the following riders who appeared at Bristol in the 1928 - 30 era. H., C., and J. Bamford;

G.W., and S.G. Best; C.F. Bernard, H.G. Biggs, H.T. Blake, C. Body, E.K.J. Bucklitsch, D. Cameron, C.P. Clark. H.C. Cook, E. Edwards, M. Elliott, C. Ewens, A. Firth, G. Francis, R.C.T. Francis, T. Grout, N. Harris, J.W. Harrison, D.M. (Dennis?) Hitchins, C.J. and E.G. Hyde, W.H. and T.R.B. Jones, R.G. Kelly, "Holy" W.A. Joy, R. Lawson, J.K. Lucas, N.A. McEvoy (Charlie ?), W.J. Matthews, R. Morgan, A. Morrish, E.J. and N.D.J. Mountstevens, L. "Turnip" Owen, A.P. Palmer, A.J. Pardoe, H.J. Park, A.E. Paxton, J.E., and H. Percy, "Cigarette" Player, "Shep" Shepherd, "Skid" Skinner, C. Smart, P.C., and S.F. Smart, "Sunny" Somerset (Vera Hole ?), W. Spender, R. Stokes, R.J. Summerhayes, E. Taylor, A.C. Titt, W.S. Tregarthen, G.H. Tucker, M.W. Vowles, W.S. Waycott, S.E. Webb, B. Whitfield, A.J. Woodman, V. Worlock. Not many obvious stars there and it looks like a job for looking through the motor cycle club news of the local press and consulting Motor Cycle and Motorcycling.

Peter Harris, 127 Strathcona Road, Wavertree, Liverpool L15 1EB is looking for the dates of birth of a very long list of junior riders who have raced since 1994. Does anyone have lists of speedway licence holders issued, in recent years, by the Speedway Control Board which carries this information and who can loan them to Peter ?

Norman Best, Elm Cottage, Crophorne, Nr. Pershore, Worcestershire, WR10 3ND is looking for details of the U.K. career of a Swedish rider called Torsten Sjoberg. There is a mention in the New Imperial Owners Association magazine which suggests that he appeared at Wembley in 1936. Norman is trying to help a Swedish gentleman called Hakan Tyden who is restoring a 1929 New Imperial dirt track bike used by Sjoberg that year. The bike was used on ice and dirt until 1936.

Colin Parker, of Kennilworth is wanting details of the type and colour of paper (eg card, heavy grade etc.) used for the following programmes : 1928 - Blackpool 21.4; Brighton 7.7.; Lea Bridge 14.7 ; Belle Vue 21.8.; Rochdale 1.9.; Liverpool 2.11.; 1929 Preston 27.4.; Leeds 14.5.; Rotherham 23.5.; Gosforth 1.6.; 1930 Stamford Bridge 14.5.; Coventry Foleshill 10.6.; Halifax 5.6.; Wombwell 16.6.; Northampton 18.6.. This is an unusual request but we assume that the photocopy will not give much of an indication of quality. Maybe some collector might like to do us a list of programme paper / colour information.

Matt Jackson, of Sheffield is looking for biographical details - dates (d) and place (p) of birth, etc for Ake Andersson (Sweden); Joe Arlet, Peter Baldock, Billy Bates; Stan Beardsall (England);

Jim Blythe (Scotland), Alistair Bardy (Broxburn); Roger Commerford; Russ Dent (England) ; Nobby Downham (p); Jonny Faafeng (Norway); Kjell Gimre (Norway); Will Gordon; Eric Hanlin; Joe Hicks (New Zealand); Stuart Irvine (Scotland); Kevin Jalaca; Bo Josefsson (Sweden); Svein Kassa (Norway); Bernie Lagrosse (AKA Roy Williams); John (Larry) Lazarus; John Lockley; Arthur Malm (Australia); Jack Martin (d); Bill Murray; Len Nicholson (England); Paul O'Neil; Bruce Ovenden (New Zealand); Nils Paulsen (Norway); Eric (Bluey) Scott (Australia); Bob Sharp(d); Harold Sharpe(p); Ivor Smith; Jim Steward; Wally Thomson; Ken Tidbury(d); Bruce Vennier (Canada); and Alf Wells(d). All have Glasgow connections.

Sydney Dobson, Telephone 01760 722395 is still seeking details of the speedway meetings staged on tracks built by the army towards the end and after the end of the second world war. Known venues in Italy, Egypt and in Germany featured pre war riders and adventurers looking for some post war fun.

The Editors would quite like an article or two on speedway badges and cigarette cards which would be of general interest to our readers. We know a lot of people collect these and a history of these items would be of value to those who don't collect them.

Deborah Cherry is looking for information about yet another lady rider. This time she seeking information about a lady called Lotte (Charlotte) Cottrell who was mentioned by Len Steed in an article in the 1970s.

Jim Gregory is seeking heat details including second halves for the following meetings : 1954 19.4. Poole v Oxford; 22.4. Oxford vc Swindon; 29.4. Oxford v Bristol; 30.4. Bristol v Oxford; 6.5. Oxford v Poole; 8.5. Rayleigh v Oxford. 1950 4.6. Shelbourne v Exeter; 16.7. Shelbourne v Walthamstow; 15.10. Shelbourne - Open event. 1951 16.6. Odsal v Wimbledon.

Colin Parker wonders if anyone can help him with information of the years the American Putt Mossman's stunt troupe toured Britain and which year it visited Brandon Speedway.

Information Update

John Jarvis advises us that Coventry Brandon operated on open licence in 1934. John seeks confirmation of the Tredegar opening date as the information in the article in Vol 2 No.4. does not tie in with his records.

Gordon Day, Press and PR man at Poole adds to our Roll of Honour information re fatalities at Wimbourne Road. Reg Craven crashed 26.4.1948 and died 2.5.1948; Johnny Thompson crashed 9.5.1955 and died of an embolism 13.5.1955; Malcolm Flood crashed 2.4.1956 and died 3.4.1956; finally Kevin Holden crashed 27.4.1977 was pronounced dead at the scene of the crash.

Charles McKay of Bradford also adds to the Roll of Honour information as follows: Alan Hunt crashed at Wembley Stadium, Johannesburg 1.2.1957 and died 2.2.1957 (which is confirmed by the article in the recent issue of the The Vintage Speedway Magazine) ; Martin Hewlett collapsed following the Swindon v Stoke match 11.9.1982 and died 15.9.1982; Gordon Gausco, the Aussie star, died 16.11.1970; Jack Sharpe (see above) was fatally injured in a benefit meeting for Norman Gillespie. Noel Johnson was born 25.12.1907 and was 21 when he died and Con Cantwell was fatally injured at Aarhus in Denmark according to the Stenner Annual 1946. Note: Colin Clarke of the VSRA pioneered the Roll of Honour which has been added to by a number of sources too many to list but gratefully accepted nonetheless.

Finally. How is this for an odd ball headline. From the Daily Record 11th August 1949 "Queen Bess quoted in speedway case." It went on to tell of the court case in Lewes Assizes when lawyers for four residents opposed to speedway at Pilot Field, Hastings, quoted a then 360 year old charter granted by Queen Elizabeth I (of England) giving the residents "peace and quiet."

Who Is Doing What

140 Fosse Way, Syston, Leicester, LE7 1NG

James Gooderham Ipswich Speedway 1951 to date

3 Riverview Road, Harkstead, Ipswich, Suffolk, IP9 1BL

01473 327174

Bert Loader Early speedway tracks England & Scotland. Cigarette Cards.

1 St. Gregorys, Church Road, Castlemorton, Malvern, Worces. WR13 6BE01684 833851

John Wall Leeds (Fullarton Park) Speedway

25 Highfield Drive, Gildersome, Leeds, LS27 7DW

0113 2530983

Barry Bullock History Speedway Bikes.

Canterbury Speedway

Kinkle Cottage, 69 Northwall Road, Deal, CT14 6PW

Maurice Archard Pre-war Generally. West Ham

99 Pulleyne Avenue, London, E6 3NA

Geoff Parker Speedway History

24 Martinsfield, Covingham, Swindon, SN3 5BA

01793 6193582

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