

The Speedway Researcher

Promoting Research into the History of Speedway and Dirt Track Racing

Volume No.8 No.2 September 2005
Edited by Graham Fraser and Jim Henry

Spinning The Web

The www.speedwayresearcher.org.uk web site is coming along nicely and we'd like to than our host Ron and everyone who is chipping in whether it is by passing on match details or by checking what is there. The pre-war dimension continues to grow apace thanks to **Bob Ozanne** and **Peter Jackson**. Peter has very kindly provided access to his 1933 to 1939 Speedway Archives and this provides a complete record of the Division One fixtures for this era. Peter, who is about to publish a series of his **Speedway Archives for 1957 through to 1964** deserves our sincere thanks. Joint Editor Jim Henry is busy compiling Bristol has placed the 1946 information provide by **Hugh Vass** on the web. Jim is also working on Hugh's 1947 Bristol data and Halifax 1948 – 1951 as his summer task, a task which is likely to trickle on into the winter. We know the site is generating interest and ask you to see how you can chip in with heat details if you can spare them.

Other forthcoming sections are Leicester – which will emerge after **Alan Jones** publishes the last in his Leicester trilogy about the Lions which is out just about now. (We live in hope that speedway will return to this area and give Alan the chance to do Volume Four.)

We must give **BIG BIG Thank You** to **Roger Hulbert** for very unselfishly giving of his Hull records which he has gathered over the years.

We have, thanks to the efforts of **Colin Pike**, (dare we say it Herculean efforts and be assured that these are very much appreciated Colin!) been able to put a cumulative index onto the web site. We are very grateful to Colin and hope he will update the index as we go along. Colin has also reformatted some Fleetwood files and **I** improved the quality no end, so thanks for that too. Also we must

say thanks to **Mark Aspinell** for very carefully checking the information in the files. This type of work is really appreciated. Finally – if anyone is prepared to undertake the compilation of A – Z files for the tracks featured other than Fleetwood, we would be pleased to hear from you.

Editors

Aussie or Ossie Powell

Ivor Powell who rode before and after the war was often programmed as Aussie or Ossie Powell. Despite the suggestion Ivor was English and it seems he was given the nickname because he had turned out for Australia in some bounce international event. The nickname stuck but programme editors and the speedway press of seemed to be confused about which spelling to use.

There were another couple of riders who were given similar nickname. Al or Albert Rossenfeldt who rode for Leeds before the war and was fatally injured mid 1946 was referred to as Aussie or Ossie. Can anyone shed light on just why he was given this nickname? Another of the immediate post war era was Ossie Osborne who also had Bradford links and links with the Hoskins tracks 1945. Yet again, who was Ossie Osborne – for some reason I don't think it was Bill, he of the weird and wonderful handlebars, of Walthamstow and Oxford fame (and more importantly the man who "won" my Mother a box of chocolates when I was a boy. Ian Hoskins used to run programme competitions. One week the picture was a rider in a Monarchs race jacket I could not recognise. On checking my records Bill was they only one I couldn't recognise and hence Mum, who subbed me for a postcard and stamps, won the box.) **Jim Henry**

Can You Help?

Roger Stevens would like to know if anyone has knowledge of programmes being produced for the England & Australia v USA & Canada due to have been staged on 28.9.1938 and England v Australasia due to have been staged at Poole on 13.8.1958. (In respect of the last named I have heard that the bulk of the run was pulped but at least one is known to exist.)

Brian Collins, 22 Janestown Court, 1 – 3 Wilbury Crescent, Hove, East Sussex, BN3 6FT Email internationalspeedway@yahoo.co.uk **2**

is seeking heat details of England v Dominions at Exeter Alphington 19.7.45 & 2.8.45 and England v Dominions at Bell End, Holbeach 15.9.46.

Nigel Bird, 38 Blakemore Drive, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands, B75 7RN Tel: 0121 329 3942 is seeking details of the York team colours and the design of the team race jacket design. (York based historian David Poole did an item on York which was published in early editions of Vintage Speedway Magazine.)

Nigel also wonders if anyone has a copy of the promotional film made in 1937 by the Birmingham Hall Green promotion. This was shown in two of the Birmingham city centre cinemas for one week.

Colin Parker, 59 Clinton Lane, Kenilworth, Warwickshire, CV8 1AS Tel: 01926 854852 is seeking details of the men who were allocated the following riding numbers in 1929. : 29, 30, 39, 46, 48, 50,55,57,58,59,61,64,65,70,73,75,76,78,79,81,85,86,87,94,95,102, 103,104,105,106,117,118,119,120,121.

Jim Henry (Joint Editor) is seeking the following Sheffield items: Home 1945 – 13.9. Bluey Wilkinson Trophy Times heats 9,10,11,15. Home 1946 – Meeting Details for 18.4. Owlerton Cup; Second half details for : 25.4. v Glasgow; 9.5.v Glasgow; 30.5 11.7.Sheffield Telegraph Cup; 11.7. v Norwich; 25.7 v Norwich; 25.7. v Glasgow; 12.9. v Norwich; 19.9 v Newcastle; 3.10. Langton’s Team v Parker’s Team. 4th Placed men: 18.7. British Riders’ Championship. 4th Placed men and second half: 30.5. Sheffield Supporters’ Trophy; 26.9. v Middlesbrough; 10.10. Sheffield Best Pairs. Away Meeting Details 20.6. Bradford v Sheffield National Trophy. 4th Placed men 24.7. Glasgow v Sheffield NL.

Don Gray, Old Orchard, High Street, Waterbeach, Cambridgeshire, CB5 9JU Tel: 01223 862279 would like to see full details of the British Match Race Championship for the pre-war era from early 1932 to 1935 when it was terminated as a mark of respect following the death of Tom Farndon. (We have information from Keith Farman which we will publishing soon Don.)

Paul Baston, 23 Bramber Way, Burgess Hill, Sussex, RH15 8ER Tel: 01444 253687 email : paul.baston@sussexfa.com would like to know if the 2004 Junior League competition comprising Eastbourne, Sittingbourne and Wimbledon was ever completed and, if so, can anyone supply heat details?

Hugh Vass, 111 Arthur View Crescent, Danderhall, Dalkeith, Midlothian, EH22 1QS Tel : 0131 663 6974 is looking for contacts with an interest in Southern Area League tracks.

Sydney Dobson, 59 Longfields, Swaffham, Norfolk, PE37 7RJ Tel: 01760 722325 is seeking information about the pre-war brothers match race competition between the Langton Brothers, the Parker Brothers, the Milne Brothers and the Duggan Brothers.

Colin Greenwell, 71 Skippers Lane, Normanby, Middlesbrough, Cleveland, TS6 0JE Email Colglen@aol.com is seeking photographs of Middlesbrough riders from the 1945 – 1948 era and also from the pre-war era. In particular he is also looking for a team photo for 1929 and 1939.

Brian Collins, 22 Janeston Court, 1 – 3 Wilbury Crescent, Hove, East Sussex, BN3 6FT Tel: 01273 207280 Email :

internationalspeedway@yahoo.co.uk is seeking heat details for the two England v Dominions at Exeter Alphington staged on 19.7. and 2.8. in 1945. (Mentioned in Tony Lethbridge’s book on Exeter Speedway Volume 1.) He is also looking for heat details for England v Dominions staged at Bell End, Holbeach on 15.9.1946.

Ian Moultray, 24 Moredun Park Gardens, Edinburgh, Tel : 0131 666 2826 is looking for full heat details for the meeting on 14th September 1961 Battle of Britain Trophy at Middlesbrough won by Graham Warren.

Vic Butcher, 7 Derwent Close, Tangmere, Chichester, PO20 2FQ is seeking heat details for the Southampton v Tamworth meetings staged in Italy in 1949.

Brighton Speedway

Brian Collins updates the item by Graham Fraser in Vol2.No.1. on the short lived Brighton venue.

It seems that Johnnie Hoskins was involved with the Brighton track for all of its’ six meetings during June and July 1928 and did not withdraw after the first meeting. He was credited as the General Manager then he made comments in the local press for later meetings. The lack of success at the venue (crowds declined from 8,000 to 4,000 over the five week period of meetings) was probably due to the poor track. The report of the opening meeting in The Motor Cycle was headed “Brighton Track Opened though 4

Unfinished” and said the track was very bumpy. “It required rolling, raking, and watering continually, and the arrangements for rolling and raking last Saturday – consisting of a Ford van towing a length of angle iron – were totally inadequate. Doubtless our English summer will provide all that is necessary in the way of watering” (I miss that droll sense of humour in today’s speedway press! (BC)) [I agree with Brian – half the fun of researching the early pioneer days is the style of journalism. (JH)]

Brian can find no evidence of any meetings at Brighton in 1929, despite rumours to the contrary. The speedway track was later turned into a 440 yards athletic track, which was used until the 1960s. Last serious attempt to re-start racing there appears to have been in 1976 when the Dugard family, having received provisional planning permission from the local council, even asked Sussex University to come up with a solution to the noise problem.

Much of the former stadium spectator area has now been sold and demolished. Only a large grandstand on one straight surviving. A stadium built in 1928 with a capacity of 30,000 now can hold a mere 2,200.

Wot? No Clutches?

R.M. (Sammy) Samuel’s wee book published before the start of the 1931 season provided “Useful General Information” including:

No Clutches Permitted – After fluctuating for and against for some time, the promoters have now definitely ruled out the use of clutches in 1931. It has been agreed, however, that as many riders claim that they act as shock absorbers, they may be fitted, but in no circumstances can they be used. It is felt that this will go a long way to cutting out the nuisance of false starts which have caused so much trouble in the past.

(It seems that rolling starts were fraught with problems as riders sought to gain advantage and many races were restarted several times.)

Other gems from the book are: Big and Little – The track with the largest accommodation is, of course, Wembley, which holds 93,000 people. On the other hand, the smallest is High Beech, but here the restricted size is more than set off by the beauty of its surrounding **5** and the garden party atmosphere which exists at its meetings.

Team Lists

We are often asked to provide details of riders and their teams – Yet again drawing from Sammy Samuel’s book of 1931 we give you the following:

Belle Vue: Jim (Indian) Allen; Sid Allen; Clem Beckett, Harry Bentley; Hilary Buchanan; Frank Burgess; Jack Chapman; Frank Charles; George Corney; Ivor Creek; Fred Davenport; Lionel Davey; Broncho (Jack) Dixon; Acorn (Stanley) Dobson; Percy Dunn (rode for Glasgow WC); Sprouts Elder; Dick Fletcher; S.W.Fletcher; Arthur Franklyn; Max Grosskreutz; Dusty (Herbert) Haig; Broadside Hall; Bob Harrison; Norman Hartley; George Hazard; F.A Hicks; Sid Hicks; C.B.(Cliff?) Hindley; Bob Hipworth; Sid Hipworth; L.Holmes; Walter Hull; Dusty (Stan) Jenkins; Arthur W Jervis; Eric Langton; Oliver Langton; Bruce McCallum; Arthur Moore; Chun Moore; G.B. (George) Mortimer; Wilf Mulliner; Len Mysercough; W.E. (Gus) Platts; R.A.Pratt; Ian Ritchins; J.O. Rowley; A.E. Simons; T.A. Simpson; Fred Strecker; Fran Varey; Cliff Watson; Fred Wilcock; Dicky Wise; and Len Woods.
We’ll do another team next time round.

Tamworth’s Speedways

Some editions ago **Roger Beaman** did an article on Mile Oak, Tamworth. **Nigel Bird** from Sutton Coldfield adds a bit more to the story of speedway in Tamworth. We reproduce all of Nigel’s note. Tamworth Pirates. Mile Oak

This track was built by Alan and Eric Butler and brother in law Jack Moulton (Fruiterer from Tamworth) in 1932 on farm land owned by George Moulton (Farmer Mile Oak) . It was originally built solely as a training track. The track was located in the vicinity of Mile Oak crossroads (old A5 and A453) Fazley. The track was on the small side and a bit rough. First meeting 17th July 1932 - 3 meetings. 1933 - 3 meetings. Track record 62 seconds Baggy Trimnell. Len Parker of Bristol rode 9.6.1933. The Mile Oak Farm still stands but not owned by Moultons.

Tamworth Speedway – This track was located on the Fazley to Tamworth road (A4091). First meeting on 1.8.1932 was abandoned after first heat because of rain, 6 meetings in 1932. Reopened **6**

17.4.1933. The track was closed for three weeks in June 1933 while it was re-laid and a water bowser was obtained to solve the major dust problem. It was during this period that Mile Oak staged two or three meetings. Some 10 meetings staged. The track was referred to as the Full Size Speedway in order to differentiate it from the smaller Mile Oak circuit,

There is a poster which can be accurately dated to 1st August 1932. Baggy Trimmell is the star. At the meeting of 14th May 1933 the Golden Gauntlet was presented by boxer Tiger Smith. [Nigel wonders who built this track and operated it. Was it the Trimmells? Was a nearby housing development the reason for it closing?] The New Mile Oak – Nigel believes this is a revamp of the small Mile Oak enlarged to 275 yards per lap. The track record appears to have been 70 seconds. Details of three meetings uncovered so far. First meeting 3.5.1934. Promoted by C.H. Trimmell and G.B. Mountford. {Nigel observes that the Butlers and Trimmells were obviously friends.}

Meeting Formats

From time to time we look at meeting formats to help fellow researchers who are looking at past eras. This time we feature the National League of 1955. 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 3,5; Ht13 3,7 v 4,6; Ht14 4,6 v 3,7; Ht15 3,5 v 1,4; Ht16 1,6 v 2,5. It appears that a tactical substitute rule was operating allowing replacements once a side became six points adrift. Details based on Birmingham v Norwich 9.7.1955 programme. **Jim Henry**

Ladies on Shale or Cinders

Nigel Bird has mentioned a couple of ladies who appeared on the pioneer ventures in 1928. One was the exotically named Baroness Fern Andra who challenged Fay Taylour at Crystal Palace and Doris Webster who is recorded as riding at Perry Barr (SUNBAC) on 25th August 1928. **Deborah Cherry** from Preston is still working on her 7 lengthy, and ever growing, list of lady riders.

All I Can Say is “Thank Goodness for Starting Gates”

You may be Sammy Samuel’ed out by the end of this edition his 1931 book is a veritable mine of interesting items. The following prompted the heading.

“Rolling Starts in 1931 – A New Regulation

In the past there has been great difficulty in ensuring fairness in rolling start events. This problem has been the subject of very earnest consideration by all tracks and the ACU, and the new principle outlined below will be given a thorough trial at the beginning of the season.

Two lines will be marked across the track. One is the actual starting line; the other will be fifteen yards behind the starting line and known as the ‘back line’.

During the preliminary lap the speed must be set by the inside man, who will travel at approximately half-speed.

Any rider experiencing trouble during the preliminary lap can claim a re-start provided he holds up his hand before the ‘back line’ is reached. This he can do only once.

Having reached the ‘back line’, the riders will continue at the same pace to the starting line. The inside man, who is responsible for setting the pace, must not accelerate until the starting flag drops.

The starter will not give the signal unless he is satisfied that all riders crossed the line approximately together and that the inside man has not accelerated in the meantime. He will also withhold the signal if any of the riders are in front (but not behind) the inside man at the starting line.

For any offence the offender will first be cautioned, and if repeated, will be fined.

The starter, may not vary these regulations, no matter how many false starts there may be.”

Samuel went on “Do Not Be Misled – Now to explode once again a popular myth : the man with the gun does not start the races. He is merely a means of advising the spectators that the race has commenced. The real starter is the man with the flag, whom you see at the starting line. I have known occasions when the gun-man has been carried away with excitement and has fired without waiting to see the flag dropped. The subsequent restart has caused dissatisfaction amongst the people in the crowd who imagined that **8**

he was the official starter. It is in the power of the ACU Steward to stop a race after the Starter has signalled the 'right away' if he does not consider the start to have been a fair one. It is not within the power of the Clerk of the Course to stop a race except in the case of an accident in a position which would endanger the other competitors – and even then he consults with the Steward if possible.”

So there you have it. Aren't you glad we have a starting gate? By the way I can go back to the days when breaking the tapes was not such a crime as it is today and it was a fine rather than greater punishment of exclusion or a handicap.

Jim Henry

Publications

Graham Fraser reviews **Stoke Speedway: The Official Stoke Potters & Spitfires 2004 Handbook** by **Howard Jones** and published by Speed-Away Promotions, 19 Arundel Road, Lytham St Annes, Lancs FY8 1AF priced £5.00 (Post Free).

Many of you will be well aware of Howard Jones's many and varied speedway publications and his affection and long time support for Stoke Speedway, including his partwork history of speedway in the Potteries town. This is a pocket-sized handbook of the 2004 season for Stoke Premier and Conference League teams. It details all the results and rider scores on single page grids, plus league tables and some commentary of the teams' seasons. If I have any criticism it is that of the 32 pages an equivalent of nearly 24 are taken up by photographs as I'd have liked a bit more text. This is probably one for the Stoke fans.

Hull Speedway Craven Park - The First Ten Years by **Roger Hulbert**

- Pub. By Tempus Publishing Ltd, The Mill, Brinscombe Port, Stroud, Gloucs GL5 2QG @ £14.99 + p&p

Our old friend and subscriber Roger Hulbert has produced this companion volume to his earlier publication **Hull Speedway 1930 - 1981** which covered the White City, Hedon and Boulevard days. This Tempus publication takes the story from the resumption of the sport in the Humberside city in 1995 until the fantastic treble-winning season in 2004.

The format is a chapter per season, including end of season league 9 table and rider averages, followed by biographies of every Hull

rider during this ten year renaissance of Vikings speedway and a complete head to head listing for every league/cup opponent, plus individual meetings. What I liked about this book is Roger's easy to read style and complete records of the goings-on at Craven Park each season and the inclusion of rider biographies (with a helpful photo that will no doubt assist future researchers). Reviewed by **Graham Fraser**

Penhall: World Speedway Champion by **Steve Johnson** - Pub. By Tempus Publishing Ltd, The Mill, Brinscombe Port, Stroud, Gloucs GL5 2QG @ £14.99 + p&p

Books about American Speedway legends seem to be very popular at the moment with recent Tempus biographies on Billy Hamill and Sam Ermolenko and now the showman that was Bruce Penhall.

For many people Penhall brought the American glitz to the traditional working class sport of British Speedway. What was perhaps most surprising was that Penhall chose unfashionable Cradley Heath as his launch pad into world speedway stardom. If you want to know how Penhall opted for downtown Dudley Wood or why Penhall chose to retire from the sport at the height of his career then this is the book for you.

It follows the traditional biographical route of childhood, entry into the sport, 1973-1982 rise to fame, World Speedway Champion and then..... His post-speedway life to the present day is detailed and much of it is in Penhall's own words.

It certainly doesn't seem 23 years since he was lost to the sport for good and I am sure for many speedway traditionalists he wasn't everyone's cup of tea but he certainly lifted the profile of the sport and speedway has not seen anything like him until the advent of the televised Grand Prix superstars of today. Bring on the Tony Rickardsson biography! Review by **Graham Fraser**

The Speedway Regulations, Speedway Competition Rules and Sporting Code 2005 - Pub: Speedway Control Bureau, ACU House, Wood Street, Rugby CV21 2YX - Price: £5 + P&P

This may seem like a strange book to review but it may open up a whole new area of interest for one of you budding researchers out there! This thin booklet of 72 pages is the bible of the sport for the British 2005 season - it defines the rules for tracks, bikes, tyres, engines as well as team and competition rules, meeting rules and formats, in fact everything a well read referee needs to know to **10**

run a speedway meeting. OK, so it's a bit of a dry read and it may completely confuse you but it does define the way the sport is run today. Now, these rule books regularly crop up in speedway auctions and collectors fairs going back many decades - I have a few from the 60s, 70s, 80s and 90s myself and it can be interesting to see how the sport and its rules changed decade to decade and year to year. Its worth picking them up if you see them as they are usually pretty cheap and then check out the way the rules of the sport have changed over time. The Editors would welcome an article from any readers who fancy having a go at this. Oh, one point - in recent years the sports ruling bodies from the FIM to the SCB have a nasty habit of making small changes to the rules periodically during the season and unless you are a referee or promoter it can be difficult for the layman to get hold of these. What present aspect of the sport would I change - bring back the concrete starting gate! Review by **Graham Fraser** **2005 British Speedway Who's Who** - Edited and published by Peter Oakes - 4 The Green, Yaxley, Peterborough PE7 3LT (Tel: 01733 243988) @£13.99 + P&P

A much enlarged and expanded version of Peter Oakes small spiral bound booklet from last year this really does tell you just about everything you wanted to know about every currently licenced speedway rider in Britain and a lot of things you probably didn't want to know! Each riders biographical info has been reduced and replaced by increased statistical information including speedway career details, honours and a section called 2004 (personal) landmarks for every rider including those household names in the sport and other just starting their careers. There appears to be a colour photograph of every rider in a section at the back of the book - I didn't check every rider was included but a random sample all seemed to be there. In 40 or 50 years some budding speedway historian will find all the information in this book invaluable - do you want to wait that long when you can have it all now! Definitely a book for the completist. Review by **Graham Fraser**

Oh Brother!

Nigel Bird suggests the four Trimmell Brothers, Harold, Norman (Percy), Charles and Baggy were probably the first to appear as four brothers in **11** the one race when they met at Perry Barr in Birmingham in 1930.

It set us thinking as to what other families could have achieved this. For what it is worth I can only think of the Serrurier Brothers – from South Africa of the early 1950s era and the Collins Brothers – Peter, Les, Phil, Neil and Stephen. Can you add to this? I'm sure there are a few more where three brothers could have taken part – Williams (Freddie, Eric, Ian). Beaton (Bobby, Jim, George), Karlsson (Peter, Michael, Magnus), Tolley (Dick, Les, Jim) to name but four. Pairs of brothers are legion: Templeton (Doug and Willie), the Templeton's nephews the brothers McMillan (Bill and Jim), and Branney (Craig and John) are but three of many. There are even twin brothers like Tim and Tony Swales on record. Never let it be said that we don't set up Aunt Sallys for you to have a go at. However, it would be interesting to see a list of brothers and invite you to give us an article.

Editors

Rider Grading

I know we have the habit of letting things slip but with the help of **Vic Vanni** from The Dear Green Place (Glasgow to you who didn't know it by its old name) and the 1946 Stenners Annual for your information the riders were graded as follows: Grade 1: Jack Parker, Norman Parker, Bill Kitchen, Ron Johnson, Alex Statham, Eric Chitty. Grade 2: Oliver Hart, Bill Pitcher, Ron Clarke, Les Wotton, Bill Longley, Malcolm Craven, Tommy Price, Geoff Pymar. Grade 3: Ernie Price, Lloyd Goffe, Norman Evans, Phil Bishop, Dick Geary, Wally Lloyd, George Wilks, Charlie Spinks, Keith Harvey, Roy Dook, Fred Tuck, Phil Hart, Frank Hodgson, Bert Spencer, Wal Morton, Stan Williams, Colin Watson, Jeff Lloyd. Grade 4: Ron Mason, Mick Mitchell (shown as G.(George) Mitchell), Cyril Brine, Jim Boyd, Mike Erskine, Bob Wells, Ron Howes, Ted Bravery, Joe Crowther, Syd Littlewood, Maurice Stobart, Stan Dell, Wilf Plant, Tommy Allott, Wilf Jay, Len Tupling, Will Lowther, Bob Lovell, Geoff Godwin, Jack Bibby, Fred Curtis, Sid Hipperson, Tommy Bateman. Grade 5: Benny King, Alf Kaines, Jack Cooley, A.Gray, Les Webbon, Ed Pye, Frank Lawrence, Eric French, Laurie Packer, Ernie Appleby, Percy Brine, Don Hemingway, Paddy Mills, G.Dykes, A.Hutson, Stan Beardsall, Lionel Stanger, Reg Lambourne, Harwood Pike, Leo Lungo, Kid Curtis (Fred and Kid were one and the same), J.Williams (Butch?) and Doug McLachlan. Riders were paid according to their grading with the top men clearly receiving the greatest rewards. It is odd that the list includes men from both Divisions on similar gradings.**14**

Who Organised the First Events in Wolverhampton?

Nigel Bird from the depths of the Midlands has written to say he disagrees with **Mark Sawbridge** views on who organised the first meetings at Monmore Green, Wolverhampton, away back in the pioneer days. Nigel says he has read in a number of local newspapers the first event was "Hastily arranged by the Birmingham M.C.C". and this view is backed up by the adverts of the day for these meetings. Nigel also notes that a local scribe of the day bemoaned the fact that the Wolverhampton club (MCC presumably) does not seem interested in running dirt track events.

G. "Jimmy" Baxter

A loan of the Liverpool Speedway Official Yearbook 1949 has yielded an interesting item about the pioneer organiser.

Educated at University College School, London and Sevenoaks Grammar School, Kent. In early 'Teens' attended the London Polytechnic for a three year course in Motor and Electrical Engineering, after, was apprentice to Messers J.A.Wilding, Engineers, London.

Granted a Commission in World War 1 in the Royal Navy Air Service, went through the Flying School at Eastchurch in 1915 but failed due to ill health. Qualified at Calshot, and took the Royal Aero Club Certificate.

After the First war, joined the Martinside Aircraft Co., later opened a Garage at Richmond, this was in 1920. Was Competition Rider for Harley Davidson Motor Co. from 1921 to 1924. Opened a Motor Business at Marble Arch, London with Claude Temple, who was at that time the World's most famous Motor Cyclist. Temple held 80% of World's Motorcycle speed records at that time. Their Company manufactured the "O.E.C. Temple" Motorcycle, the fastest in the world at that time. Temple did the Brooklands speed events, Jimmy, the Road Trials, Hill Climbs, and road speed events. The O.E.C. Temple was the first Motorcycle to do 100 miles per hour on the road, also 100mph with a sidecar and passenger over the flying mile. Temple also covered 100 miles IN THE HOUR.

It was during a motorcycle tour of the world and while in Australia that Speedway racing was discovered. Jimmy at once got busy to introduce the sport to Britain. All plans were completed by the end of 1927, and his 15 first Contract, Australians Billy Galloway and Keith MacKay were

in England before Christmas 1927. These riders took part in the first meeting ever at High Beech, London, in February 1928. This meeting was run jointly by the Ilford Club, under Mr Bailey and 'Jimmy's' Club, The Metropolis. Incidentally 'Jimmy' Baxter was the founder of this club, the second largest in London, with Headquarters at Paddington. Shortly afterwards, Jimmy obtained an option on West Ham Stadium, then being built, hoped to open there early in 1928 but the builders were slow owing to short delivery of steel, and it was not ready until July, 1928. In the meantime, he opened a track at Celtic Park, Glasgow, in April, 1928, and moved to West Ham when it was ready. Opened Southampton in October 1928, at the same time operating a track as Red Star Stadium, Paris. This was not a success, so moved during 1949 to Buffalo Stadium, Paris. Later, disposed of his interest to Stadium authorities and settle down to West Ham and Southampton only. In 1932, opened Lea Bridge, London. This was a success. Later, moved to Woudestein, Rotterdam, Holland, and enjoyed two good seasons at the old trotting track. Closed down when the track was sold for building. Upon returning from Holland, interested in Midget Car Racing, and opened two tracks. Lea Bridge was on the market again, and not being able to get another licence for motor cycle speedway, he opened it as a midget car track, together with Brandon, Coventry. This venture was a success and continued until the war came in 1939. On the RAF Reserve of Officers, Jimmy was called back to service in June 1939. This put paid to his midget cars. Served in the RAF until 1945, being demobbed in December of that year. Back as a civilian, began to look around for fresh Speedway activities, and arranged a lease with Plymouth (Pennycross Stadium) during 1946, later fixed with Southampton, and opened these two tracks early in 1947. Liverpool seemed to want speedway racing, so he travelled to this city during 1948 and arranged matters with Mr Bilsland, Liverpool opened early in April 1949. (To be continued.)

Collectors' Corner

Those of you that collect programmes might be interested to know the Monarchs at Armadale have featured two programme cover designs this season and so has Glasgow. Any other tracks used different covers during the season? Let us know and we can pass it on.

Jim Henry

Get your pen out and tell us about your team. 16

Red Card Debate

There has been a bit of debate in recent years about the merits of introducing a disciplinary code for speedway that is similar to football. You know what I mean – the yellow card is a caution, two yellow cards become a red which, like a red on its own, means you are off. Exclusions could be considered to be yellow cards but unless it was for unfair riding, there appears to be little merit in having any sort of cumulative form of punishment involving bans from subsequent races.

Anyway, the reason for this little item is my looking at a 1975 Paisley programme for the meeting dated 16th August when Newcastle Diamonds came visiting the Lions at St Mirren Park in the town's Love Street. (As an aside the stadium is due to be demolished to make way for a supermarket which will provide cash for St Mirren F.C. to relocate to a new stadium which probably won't provide for speedway racing. The lateral connection of this digression is that Lions were linked in promotion with Birmingham Brummies who lost their stadium to a supermarket also.)

The first heat took three efforts to run it and for his indiscretions Tom Owen was excluded. So annoyed was the referee with Tom's actions that he was excluded from not just from the race, but for the whole meeting. I recall it caused a bit of a stushie and the visiting promotion was very taken aback as were many of the speedway regulars in the crowd.

As far as I recall of the events of some 30 years ago the referee was right to exclude Tom from the race but, on reflection, an exclusion from the meeting was probably a bit over the top. However, despite the protests, the referee stuck to his guns and refused to allow Tom back into the meeting. As far as I am aware, it has never happened again but maybe you know differently.

After writing the above piece I came across an interesting item in a photocopy of a meeting at Bristol in 1947. In the opening heat of the Junior Best pairs event on 24th October Johnny Hole was lying third when he reared and crashed into George Craig. Johnny Hole had to pull out of the meeting injured while his pair, brother Graham Hole, soldiered on with a H.Hughes. The programme has no score entered against the Hole Brothers and a note saying the two had been excluded owing to the altercation as J.Hole was injured. Whether they were excluded because they effectively were no longer a pair or whether it was due to the injury
17 reducing the pair to a pair plus reserve.

Jim Henry

Apfelbeck

Phil Smith from Sheffield provides us with a bit more information on the unusual machine discussed in a recent edition.

A bit more about LUDWIG APFELBECK who was from Graz in Austria and I think during the war worked for BMW on aircraft engine design. Subsequently he designed a prototype HOREX racing twin which was very similar to the NSU REEMAX of the period and this appeared in July 1954. It showed some promise but HOREX withdrew from racing at the season's end but it shows what an accomplished engineer he was. Later he worked for BMW on car cylinder head design.

Phil goes on to tell us about the Austrian KILLMEYER brothers who were Leopold (or "Poldi", his nickname) the elder, and Karl. Leopold was quite successful on the dirt tracks in Austria, Bulgaria and Romania in the 1933 /34 period usually riding on a Rudge.

Finally **Phil** points out the correct spelling for the producers of Trawler Club Member etc cards was J.A.PATTEREIOUEX.

Speedway Postcards

Phil Smith has sent in a list of riders featured on the postcards published by Robert Sneath (Postcard Publisher) 3 Paradise Street, Sheffield. The names with * are the names as on Robert Sneath's published list.

1 Frank Arthur (Harley); 2 Joe Abbott; 3 Tommy Allott; 4 Eva Asquith; 5 Arthur Atkinson; 6 Dennis Atkinson; 7 Stan Baines; 8 Jack Barber; 9 * B. Barraclough; 10 Clem Beckett; 11 Frank (Broncho) Bianchi; 12* H.Bingley; 13* Buz Boden; 14 Alec Bowerman; 15 *Maurice Bradshaw; 16 Buster Breaks; 17 Johnny Broughton; 18 A. Brown; 19* Buster Brown; 20 G.Brown; 21 *N.Brown; 22 Ham (Hamlet) Burrill; 23 B. Burrows; 24 Squib Burton; 25 J. Chambers; 26 Jack Chapman; 27 Frank Charles; 28 Frank Chiswell; 29 Bert Clayton (Velocette); 30 George Crawshaw; 31 Harry B. Credland (James); 32 Scotty (George) Cumming; 33 Broncho (Jack) Dixon; 34 Jack Dudding; 35* G.W.Dykes; 36 Sprouts Elder; 37 Billy Ellmore; 38 Arthur Franklyn; 39 Roger Frogley; 40 Jimmy Gent (Norton); 41* Joe Gooding; 42 George Greenwood; 43 Broadside Hall; 44* D. Hayman [Dick]; 45 Wally Hicklin; 46 Cliff Hindley (BSA); 47 Joe Hindley (BSA); 48*A. Humphries [Arthur]; 18

49 Vic Huzley; 50 Ernest Ingham; 51 Sid Jackson; 52 Dusty (Stan) Jenkins; 53 Arther Jervis (Rudge); 54 Ron Johnson; 55 Dave Jones; 56* N.Joseph; 57 N.Kendrick [Nobby]; 58 * Nobby Key; 59 Eric Langton (Rudge); 60 Fred Ledger; 61 Harry Lomas; 62* F.Longley (Rudge); 63 Reg Marshall; 64 * R.May [Roger]; 65 F.Meynier France; 66 Scotty Mickie (Michie); 67 A.Moore; 68 Len Myrescough; 69* L.Norman; 70* B.G.Otter; 71* Len Parker; 72 Syd Parsons; 73 W Ewart Platts [Gus]; 74 W Ewart Platts [Gus] (BSA); 75 The Preston Team 9.10.1929; 76 Len Reynard {George?}; 77 Riskett Riley [Riskit]; 78 Bert Round; 79 Bert Round "In Memory"; 80 A.Shirlock [Arthur Sherlock]; 81 W.F.Shuker; 83 Slider Shuttleworth (Rudge); 84* Frank Smith; 86 Smoky Stratton [Spencer]; 87 Fred Strecker (AJS); 88* W. Styring; 89* Jack Sweeney; 90 Harry Taft; 91 Fay Taylour; 92 T.Thomson; 93* Ben Unwin; 94 Frank Varey (Norton); 95 Frank Varey (Scott); 96* E.Waits; 97 Charlie Ward; 98* L.C.Ward; 99 Cliff Watson; 100* Westy Westwood [Arthur]; 101 Nev Wheeler; 102 George Wigfield; 103 Fred Wilkinson; 104* Joe Wilson. I have added the name of the machine where it is not a Douglas or not specified. Most riders featured used the flat twin Douglas. Where I know the Christian name, I have added it and I have corrected a few spelling mistakes I have noticed.(JH).

Phil wonders if anyone can shed any light on who Robert Sneath was. As far as he is aware Robert Sneath only took photographs at Sheffield in 1929. Was he related to J.M.B. Sneath who held various positions at Sheffield Speedway in this era?

Second Half Matches

Thanks to **Colin Rugg** sending me a Plymouth v Halifax programme I was able to let **Vic Butcher** know about the second half event which was a five heat match Plymouth v Southanpton. I am still looking for details of a five heater at Tamworth when they raced Fleetwood with disastrous results for the Flyers and have details of the Lanarkshire Eagles v Edinburgh Monarchs event which was the second half of an Eagles v Cradley Heath League match.

It struck me to pose the question – how common were these mini matches and which if any track made a regular feature of these types of event? [By way of an aside Edinburgh featured some mini matches at Old Meadowbank in the early 1950s, usually v Glasgow, as part of Charities 19 event sponsored by the local newspapers. The evening featured five

a side football and other events. Before you ask, yes, programmes were produced for these events giving details of all the events including the speedway races. Similar events were staged at Marine Gardens in the pioneer days.]

Jim Henry

He's Behind You

A bit of holiday musing has set me thinking. Big deal I hear you say. Well, into my head came a thought that at one time it was against the speedway rules for a rider to look behind during a race. The punishment for the action was exclusion. Can anyone shed any light on this? When was the rule introduced, and when was it taken out of the rule book? Also do you think it was a good or bad rule?

Jim Henry

Clapton Speedway 1933 Part 1

Alan Bates from Folkestone has sent us this interesting item. For the 1933 season Clapton hoped to fare much better than their first from bottom spot in 1932. The new year heralded with admission charges set at 1/6 (7.5p) standing [1/0 for members] and 2/6 (12.5p) seated [2/0 for members]. The opening match on Saturday 29th April was a challenge against a team called The Rest and, after losing the first heat 1 – 6 (it was 4 points for a win that season), they hit back with a 6 – 1 and didn't look back finishing up as winners by 36 – 26. Jack Parker made a bad start with an engine failure and a last and was replaced in his third ride. Phil Bishop on the other hand, scored a maximum. The first League match was at Plymouth and was staged in heavy rain. However, this did not bother Clapton and they romped away to a 42 – 20 success thanks to four 6 – 1 heat wins and a 6 – 0 win. They followed this up with a home win against the same opposition four days later, by 40 – 23 with Wally Lloyd getting a maximum. On May 10 Clapton gained another huge 45 – 18 away win, this time at Sheffield. The visitors won eight of the nine heats. In this match Jack Parker at last got the lot, and Wally Lloyd scored his second maximum in a row. Sheffield were slaughtered in the return fixture at Lea Bridge on May 13 when only a second place by Dusty Haigh prevented a whitewash. In Clapton's blitz both Jack and Norman Parker returned maximum returns. Away at Coventry on May 18, Clapton got off to a great start with Jack Parker breaking the track record in the first heat. **20**

He further improved on this time in heat 7. The visitors won the first five heats in their 38 – 25 success and only Roy Dook, with 10 points, put up any opposition for the home side. Jack Parker, not surprisingly, notched up his third maximum in a row.

Clapton continued to overwhelm all opposition and it was a shock when they thrashed Wembley 44 – 18, with only Wally Kilmister winning a race for the Lions. Yet again the Parker brothers were unbeaten.

On May 24 Clapton became the first team in many years to win at Belle Vue when they came away with a 36 – 27 victory. Norman Parker achieved another maximum.

At this stage Clapton were top of the League table having won all their seven matches. However, all good things must come to an end and in the first match with Crystal Palace in a double header on May 27, things went badly wrong in the afternoon meeting at the Palace. In the first heat Roy Barrowclough was stretchered off after a heat 1 crash as Palace began with a 6 – 1. This was followed by another home 6 – 1 and then a 6 – 0. Trailing 18 – 2, Clapton hit back with Jack Parker and Phil Bishop each winning two races, but Crystal Palace won the day 40 – 20.

This defeat proved to be only a temporary setback as Clapton won the return encounter in the evening by 37 – 21. They started with a 4 – 0 and a 6 – 1, but lost Wally Lloyd, who broke a bone in his left wrist, following a fall in heat 7. Clapton had lost two riders to injury in the one day. In the next match Clapton demolished Nottingham 48 – 13 but took another casualty in the shape of Norman Parker who sustained concussion and a cut eye after a fall in heat 4. As a result Norman took no further part in the meeting. Clapton recorded five 6 – 1's and a 6 – 0 in this victory.

On Monday June 5 West Ham came to Lea Bridge to face the Clapton side without Barrowclough, Lloyd and Norman Parker and they led by two points after heat 5. However, the home side fought back and were 29 – 26 with one heat to go. The Hammers, however, gained a 5 – 2 in the final heat to draw the match 31 – 31. Tiger Stevenson became the first rider to record a maximum against Clapton in the season so far.

The following evening at West Ham's Custom House Stadium, Clapton led 19 – 9 after four heats, but suffered cruel luck when Phil Bishop fell in heat 6 and then Arthur Westwood came down when he and Jack Parker were looking good for a 6 – 1 in heat 7. The Hammers took the last two heats 6 – 1 and 5 – 2 respectively to win 34 – 29. Despite this Jack Parker **21** scored another maximum.

On Saturday June 10 Clapton suffered their first home defeat of the season when they lost 27 – 35 to Wimbledon. Still plagued with problems, they lost Phil Bishop who collapsed after his second ride and Alf Foulds rode despite a damaged leg. Added to this, Norman Parker, who came back prematurely, fell in his first race. Wimbledon also won the return at Plough Lane on the Monday thanks to a 36 – 27 scoreline. A late burst carried Wimbledon clear as there had been only one point between the sides with two heats to go. Yet again Jack Parker did well scoring a maximum but Billy Dallison was the only other Clapton rider to win a race. This was the fourth defeat in a row for the injury hit Clapton. After an abandoned National Trophy with Coventry, Clapton returned to the winning trail with a comfortable away success at Plymouth by 38 – 24 on June 27. Jack Parker notched yet another maximum and fit again Norman Parker added 8 points. On Saturday July 1 Clapton were back at full strength and they easily beat Sheffield 41 – 22 with Norman Parker scoring a full maximum. July 4 saw Clapton go down narrowly to the Hammers by 30 – 32 at West Ham after leading 26 – 23 with two heats to go. In the last two races Norman Parker suffered an engine failure and in the last race Wally Lloyd fell off. Norman's brother Jack notched another maximum in this fixture.

The National Trophy at last got underway on July 6 with an away match at Coventry where the home side suffered numerous falls and engine failures. The outcome was that they only defeated Clapton 63 – 61. Dicky Case had five wins and a fall. There were four falls in the last two heats alone. Clapton won the return leg at Lea Bridge two days later by 69 – 65 to progress into the next round by eleven points on aggregate. Dick Case scored 20 for Coventry while the Parker brothers scored 32 of the home points.

Returning to League action, Clapton suffered two defeats on consecutive evenings. They made an excellent start at home to Belle Vue on July 12 in front of a large crowd with a 6 -1 and a 5 – 2, but the Aces hit back to level after heat 4. They then won four of the last five heats to take the points thanks to a 35 – 28 scoreline. Bill Kitchen and Eric Langton each scored 10. The following evening Clapton were annihilated by Wembley at The Empire Stadium by 49.5 – 13.5. Gordon Byers, Ginger Lees and Wally Kilmister all scored maximums for the Lions.

The next Saturday Clapton returned to their winning ways with a big victory over Plymouth. However the 45 – 18 win was marred by several crashes. Two Plymouth riders were stretchered off and, following a **22**

crash into the fence between Bill Stanley and Phil Bishop, a girl spectator was injured. Billy Dallison achieved his first maximum of the season as Clapton defeated Plymouth for the fourth time in three months. (TBC).

Speedway Research on the Internet

Brian Collins provides us with his thoughts on the topic.

One of my particular areas of speedway interest has been the international aspects of the sport. I have also preferred team racing to individual racing. So it seemed logical, in the 1990s, to try and pull together all the information I could find on international team racing – Test and International matches – not just from the UK, but from all round the world. I was never in doubt that there were huge gaps in my knowledge, since it had been largely compiled from British speedway publications. How best to research international speedway? Unlike my previous research on domestic results, I wasn't going to find much information by going to the local library.

In 1997, I bought, and taught myself to use (eventually), a personal computer and gone "on line" (as us "silver surfers" say). It was soon apparent that increasing numbers of speedway fans from around the world would be doing likewise, and in 2002 I decide to tap that vast resource of knowledge by putting my information onto a website and then asking for help with further information. Using a free disc containing a website programme (from a computer magazine), free web space from my internet service provider, and copious amounts of my own free time, I set about transferring all my information onto a website. Two years later (!) in July 2004, the website – "International Speedway" – went "on-line!". Since then, I have made contacts (and friends!) with many people from around the world ... researchers like myself, fans, journalists, riders, collectors. All with information to share – maybe a missing date, maybe a whole Test series that I was previously unaware of, maybe a programme cover (of which I also have a large collection on the site.)

The site now is very much a team effort. For example, I had little information on the England v Dominions series of 1938 and 1939., but with the help of no less than EIGHT contributors from 6 countries, the 23 site now has full details of both series, including all heat details and

most programme covers! Now, if anyone can help with the matches at Exeter Alphington in 1945....

Some of the information has not been published in the UK (or Europe) before. Excellent research in various parts of the world has revealed details of unofficial pre-war series ridden by England teams in Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa; by America in Australasia pre-war; Poland v Germany and Overseas 1935; many long-lost results from behind the Iron Curtain of the 1960s; and much more – many of these have full heat details. Not to mention an ever-growing display of programme covers.

But it's not all facts and figures, there is a human side too. My Scotland v England pages include a photo of a medal presented to Billy Bales at the White City, Glasgow match of 1949. I found the photo when the medal was on an internet auction site. Billy's youngest son contacted me, asking if I knew who had bought it, as his Dad hadn't seen it since it was sent to be engraved after the match.! Unfortunately I was unable to help him. But for the man who searched the web looking for his father's name and found it on my website, I was able to supply some details of his speedway career. His father was Bruce Ovenden. Another chap wanted some details of Jack Ormston, a former resident of a Durham village for which he was setting up a website. Jack, by the way, is still going a 95! And just a short time ago, ex-Test rider Bob Andrews contacted me with some memories of past international matches, plus some details and programmes too.

So, researching on the internet is hard work, but very worthwhile, and rewarding too. I can think of no other way that so much information from all parts of the world could be gathered, for the internet offers unrivalled communication with any part of the globe virtually instantly for a few pounds a month. Ideal, in fact, for researching international speedway. Brian's International Speedway website
<http://myweb.tiscali.co.uk/intspeedway/> .

Deadline for the next edition is 31st October 2005

See www.speedwayresearcher.org.uk site. Web Master Ron McNeil

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FESTIVAL OF BRITAIN TROPHY 1951

Central Zone

Away Team	Rayleigh	Swindon	Cardiff	Long Eaton	R	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Home Team											
Rayleigh	xxxxxx	77 – 43	66 – 54	82 – 38	6	5	0	1	414	304	10
Swindon	51 – 67	xxxxxx	60 – 60	86 – 34	6	3	1	2	369	349	7
Cardiff	61 – 59	59 – 61	xxxxxx	83 – 36	6	2	1	3	375	344	5
Long Eaton	57 – 63	52 – 68	62 – 58	xxxxxx	6	1	0	5	279	440	2

South Zone

Away Team	Poole	Exeter	Aldershot	Plymouth	R	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Home Team											
Poole	xxxxxx	70 – 50	72 – 48	74 – 46	6	5	0	1	395	325	10
Exeter	67 – 53	xxxxxx	71 – 47	81 – 39	6	3	0	3	350	367	6
Aldershot	57 – 63	89 – 30	xxxxxx	82 – 38	6	2	0	4	374	343	4
Plymouth	57 – 63	69 – 51	69 – 51	xxxxxx	6	2	0	4	318	402	4

FINAL First Leg 20.5.1951 Poole 70 Rayleigh 50 Second Leg 9.6.1951 Rayleigh 63 Poole 57 **Poole win 127 – 113 on aggregate**

SOUTHERN LEAGUE 1953

Away Team	Exeter	Ipswich	Oxford	Plymouth	Rayleigh	St Austell	Southampton	Swindon
Home Team								
Exeter	xxxxxx	69 – 15	54 – 30	59 – 25	29 – 35	56 – 28	50 – 34	58 – 26
	xxxxxx	53 – 31	57 – 27	51 – 33	60 – 24*	61 – 23	60 – 24	49 – 35
Ipswich	41 – 43	xxxxxx	58 – 26	48 – 35	42 – 42	43 – 41	47 – 36	55 – 29
	59 – 25	xxxxxx	64 – 20	38 – 46	49 – 35	60 – 24	42 – 42	52 – 32
Oxford	51 – 33	49 – 35	xxxxxx	50 – 33	39 – 44	54 – 30	56 – 28	42 – 42
	46 – 38	39 – 45	xxxxxx	39 – 45	41 – 43	60 – 23	44 – 40	49 – 35
Plymouth	41 – 43	48 – 36	44 – 40	xxxxxx	38 – 46	37 – 47	47 – 37	42 – 42
	36 – 48	51 – 33	49 – 35	xxxxxx	38 – 46	46 – 38	38 – 45	41 – 43
Rayleigh	39 – 45**	62 – 33	46 – 38	52 – 32	xxxxxx	59 – 25	54 – 30	59 – 24
	53 – 31	53 – 31	43 – 40	51 – 33	xxxxxx	60 – 24	56 – 27	58 – 26
St Austell	40 – 44	40 – 44	50 – 34	32 – 52	42 – 40	xxxxxx	40 – 43	47 – 37
	43 – 40	34 – 49	47 – 37	47 – 37	35 – 49	xxxxxx	47 – 37	61 – 23
Southampton	39 – 45	47 – 37	60 – 24	47 – 36	34 – 50	61 – 22	xxxxxx	35 – 49
	42 – 42	54 – 30	45 – 39	51 – 31	57 – 27	63 – 21	xxxxxx	53 – 31
Swindon	41 – 43	43 – 40	46 – 36	49 – 35	44 – 40	60 – 23	51 – 32	xxxxxx
	41 – 43	47 – 37	51 – 33	46 – 38	39 – 45	62 – 22	43 – 41	xxxxxx