

CELTIC PARK SPEEDWAY

Celtic Park, which is the home of Celtic Football Club, is located in London Road, Glasgow. It is now solely a football stadium but at one time it was the classic oval shape which is ideal for the construction of a speedway track.

The new sport was almost a month old in Britain when, in March 1928, it was announced that Celtic Park would be a venue for the new sport, the announcement coming from no less a Celtic legend than manager Willie Maley.

The motorcycling correspondent of the *Glasgow Herald (Herald)* wrote: 'So the Australian dirt-track specialists are to come north after all and show us the real thing which attracts thousands to the trackside in the Antipodes. McKay and Galloway, who also are to promote meetings twice a week at the famous Celtic Park Grounds at Parkhead. These meetings will be open and the prize money to the amount of £200 per meeting will be forthcoming they say.'

The correspondent continued: 'The racing will be conducted according to the regulations approved by the ACU which prohibit betting and it will be interesting to see if the excitement and interest of the sport itself will prove sufficient to attract the Glasgow public although the promoters have no doubt on the matter. The track is to be loosened so as to allow 'broadsiding', a protective fence will be erected and electric lighting will be installed if necessary.'

Two-wheeled vehicles were a common sight at Celtic Park as it had a long history of cycle racing and was a popular venue for race events. Motorcycles, also, were not new to Celtic Park. A concrete track, probably used for cycle racing, had existed outside an inner racing track there for a period of time, which ended just before the First World War when it had been ripped up and replaced with a cinder version. Just before its destruction the concrete track was used by the well known London-based motorcyclist Harry Martin, who raced round the concrete track on his machine, establishing a track record for the circuit. (This was the same Harry Martin, who in 1915, rode his Martin/JAP round the banked cinder track at Paddington Recreation Ground in London, setting up one and five mile records in the process.)

The new track was ready for its opening fixture on 28 April 1928. *Motor Cycling* carried a two page report of the event and the crowd which turned up appeared to be encouraging.

Soon it was clear that the track was not rivalling the drawing powers of similar ventures down south and the twice weekly events were reduced to one. Even this was too frequent and, given an excuse, like The Prince of Wales' visit to the City, meetings were cancelled. On 21 July 1928 Celtic Park staged its very last speedway meeting.

The details of each meeting, where available, are given before the heat-details for each meeting which have been gleaned from a number of contemporary sources.

A report in a 1929 newspaper suggested that stadium alterations encroached on the track rendering it unsuitable for speedway. This effectively ruled out a return of the sport to this famous venue at that time.

A bid to bring speedway back to Celtic Park in 1963 appears to have been fruitless. Trevor Redmond, who was a partner with the Hoskins family, is reported to have sought to secure the rights to use the stadium. Now new stands, which have squared off the stadium, cover the site of the bends and render any return well nigh impossible.

1928 CELTIC PARK DETAILS

Meeting No. 1	Sat	28.04.1928	Opening Handicap	Stewie St. George
			Golden Gauntlet	Stewie St. George
Meeting No. 2	Tue	01.05.1928	Celtic Park Handicap	Norrie Isbister

			Big 8 Scratch Race	Norrie Isbister
Demonstration	Sat	05.05.1928	Celtic v Rangers	Half-time
Meeting No. 3	Sat	05.05.1928	All British Handicap	Andy Marr
			Flying 8	Ivor Creek
Meeting No. 4	Sat	12.05.1928	Celtic Park Handicap	George Cumming
			Golden Gauntlet	Ivor Creek
Meeting No. 5	Tue	15.05.1928	St.Andrew's Ambulance	
			Handicap	Harry Lewis
			Pearson's Big 8	Sprouts Elder
Meeting No. 6	Sat	19.05.1928	Celtic Park Handicap	Rained-off
			Keith McKay's Big 8	Rained-off
Meeting No. 7	Sat	26.05.1928	Celtic Park Handicap	Billy Galloway
			Golden Gauntlet	Billy Galloway
Meeting No. 8	Sat	02.06.1928	Celtic Park Handicap	Spencer Stratton
			Baxter's Big 8	Ivor Creek
Meeting No. 9	Sat	16.06.1928	Celtic Park Handicap	Allan Campbell
			Golden Gauntlet	Billy Galloway
Meeting No.10	Sat	23.06.1928	Celtic Park Handicap	Jimmy Valente
			Sprouts' Big 8	Taffy Williams
Meeting No.11	Sat	07.07.1928	Celtic Park Handicap	Harry Lewis
			Golden Gauntlet	Paddy Dean
Meeting No.12	Sat	21.07.1928	Celtic Park Handicap	Bill Dickie
			Golden Gauntlet	Buzz Hibberd

Saturday 28 April 1928

Crowd: 3,600

The now defunct magazine *Motor Cycling* had a reporter at this opening meeting and gave the event a big write up. The headline proclaimed: 'Glasgow sees the real thing - and likes it.' They published a few action photographs too.

Motor Cycling considered the crowd to have been 5,000.

The photographs show a few action shots and a fairly sparse crowd on the terracing. Compare this with the packed terraces in the photograph of Geoff Meredith in action as part of the demonstration given at the Old Firm match in May and the 3,500 crowd appears a bit closer to the mark.

Heat three of the handicap produced the thrills. Stewie St. George, off scratch, had to chase and pass the field to win. 'Of course it was an easy victory for Stewie who gave the crowd their first sight of broadsiding. Never before has Scotland seen a motorcycle 'laid over' till the near-side handlebar dug into the dirt. They had not believed it possible that a back wheel could travel sideways and yet propel machine and rider forward.'

Houston Anderson was a lucky winner in the next heat when first Geoff Meredith fell after passing him, then Billy Galloway fell when his motor failed to deliver the power needed to keep the back wheel turning fast enough to promote a slide.

A match race between Meredith and Keith McKay was a bit of a let down. McKay fell and Meredith retired back to the pits before completing the distance.

The second handicap semi produced thrills, as yet again Stewie had to come from a long way back. It took him five laps to catch Harry Lewis and on the last lap Lewis stayed close. 'Lewis clung on like a leech taking the corners very wide, while the New Zealander went round in a series of superb slides and bursts of speed. Then on the last lap Lewis almost wrenched the grip from his bar so hard did he twist it. He actually caught St. George on the last corner and they flashed down their final 25 yards neck and neck, but superior acceleration gave St. George the first place by only half a length.'

The Final went to Stewie after Lewis had a machine failure. Faulds and Dunlop were 50 and 150 yards behind him at the flag.

Having missed the Handicap event, Norrie Isbister made his opening appearance and the crowd cheered his efforts as he matched, then drew away from Alf Faulds in the heat of the Golden Gauntlet event. Faulds fell after Norrie had pulled away from him.

CELTIC PARK
SPEEDWAYS
REAL DIRT TRACK RACING!

OPENING
 TO NIGHT
 (Saturday)
 Racing to start 8.30

BROADSIDING
 You must see it!
 That thrilling new racing
 skid coming from Aus-
 tralia, never before seen
 in Scotland!

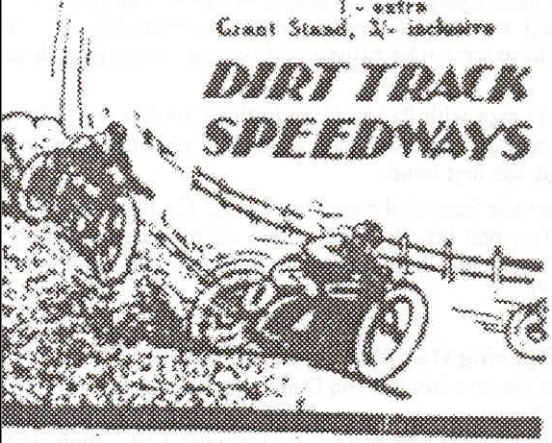
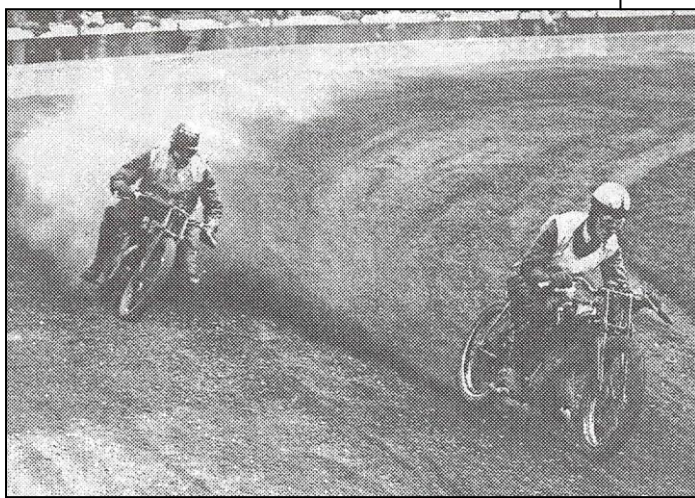
**AUSTRALIAN
 AMERICAN &
 BRITISH Speed Stars**

**PADDY DEAN
 BILLY GALLOWAY
 STEWIE ST GEORGE
 SPROUT ELDERS**

The Thrill of the Period!
 A skidding, roaring, flashing,
 dashing spectacle — that's real
 Dirt Track Racing.

Admission to Grand Stand, Tier 1/2
 Lower Stand and Covered Terrace
 1/- extra
 Grand Stand, 2/- inclusive

**DIRT TRACK
 SPEEDWAYS**

Norrie's win earned him a race against Stewie St. George. For two laps Norrie on his 350cc Rex Acme kept Stewie, on a 600cc Douglas, within his sights. 5 yards was the margin recorded. On lap three

Stewie increased the margin to 20 yards but a brave effort by Norrie reduced the margin and, to wild cheering, closed to within 15 yards of his more experienced rival at the flag. The picture captures Isbister leading the way on board his 350cc Rex-Acme.

Sprouts Elder, who was one of the big stars at this opener, managed to pass through to the semi-final of the Gauntlet thanks to a Billy Galloway bike failure. He was a victim of bike troubles and fell out of the contest at the semi-final stage. This left the way clear for Stewie to win the Golden Gauntlet from Harry Lewis. It was not an easy win. 'What a race! They passed the starter neck and neck on the flying start and clung together like the shells of an oyster until a few yards off the first lap, when by an almost superhuman broadside St. George scraped a couple of yards lead. But was Lewis to be done out of it? Not he! With impudent effrontery he actually passed the New Zealander, who nearly came unstuck on one bad, bumpy bit of track. Words fail when one tries to describe how St. George got out of that near one and then made up his lost lead and actually gained 25 yards on Lewis all in half a lap! But he could go no more than 25 for Lewis dogged him so doggedly and, if anything, gained a yard or two before the line was crossed.'

This completed the Stewie St. George clean up of the Celtic Park opener. *Motor Cycle* stated that St. George 'thrilled the spectators at each appearance with his spectacular riding.' It also said of St. George that, in heat 3 of the Handicap event, he 'provided the first demonstration of broadsiding at speed. Starting from scratch he caught and passed his three rivals with ease.'

The Kiwi's race with Paddy Dean in the Gauntlet was a thriller too, 'a neck and neck struggle' which had seen the pair almost collide at the first bend.

The columnist from rival magazine *Motor Cycling* summed up thus: 'Yes, real broadsiding! And if we may be permitted to borrow a popular expression of Sprouts, we 'don't mean Maybe!'

Opening Handicap (6 laps standing start)

Ht 1: Alf Faulds (10), Ralston Dunlop (14) (frm), [NI, 3min 1.6

Ht 2: Jack Hart (15), Ivor Creek (10) (frmf), [NI, 3min 35.8

Ht 3: Stewie St. George (scr), Harry Lewis (12), George Cumming (14), William Caig (15), 3min 55.2

Ht 4: Houston Anderson (16), Geoff Meredith (4) (f), Billy Galloway (?) (ef), Jimmy Valente (?) (ret) ,
3min 10.8

SF 1: Ralston Dunlop, Alf Faulds, Jack Hart, Ivor Creek, 2min 55.2

SF 2: Stewie St. George, Harry Lewis, Houston Anderson, 2min 41.2

Final: Stewie St. George, Alf Faulds, Ralston Dunlop, Harry Lewis (ef), 2min 36.4

Golden Gauntlet (4 laps flying start)

Ht 1: Sprouts Elder bt Billy Galloway (ef), 1min 43.5

Ht 2: Harry Lewis bt Ivor Creek, 1min 45.4

Ht 3: Stewie St. George bt Paddy Dean (ef), 1min 45.2

Ht 4: Norrie Isbister bt Alf Faulds (f), 1min 49.2

SF 1: Harry Lewis bt Sprouts Elder (ef), No Information

SF 2: Stewie St. George bt Norrie Isbister, 1min 45.2

Final: Stewie St. George bt Harry Lewis, 1min 44.4

Match Race (4 laps flying start)

Geoff Meredith (nf), Keith McKay (f) (Declared no race)

Tuesday 1 May 1928

Crowd: 2,000

There were two main talking points in some press reports of this meeting. The first was the form of newcomer Norrie Isbister who was the winner of both events, whilst the second was the failure of the two event winner of the opening meeting, Stewie St. George, to win anything.

The *Herald* writer noted: 'Unfortunately Stewie St. George was unable to show his paces properly because of his machine being temporarily out of action.'

No mention was made in the *Herald* of newcomer to the sport Norman Isbister, who, in what was his second professional meeting, cleaned up. In the handicap Norrie had a six second advantage over experienced Aussie Geoff Meredith, but had to pass Alex McColl who had had a six second advantage over Norrie. St. George's engine failure in the Final meant that Norrie was not able to gauge his progress from the previous week.

Norrie was lucky again in the Big Eight when in the semi he faced Ivor Creek. Yet again bike failure smiled in Norrie's direction as Ivor's bike expired. His Final win was over Geoff Meredith, who had come over as an experienced Aussie. A win over Meredith was not a fluke and showed that the man from the Isle of Skye was a quick learner.

Norrie was running a 350cc machine against Meredith who was mounted on a Douglas of at least 500, if not 600cc.

According to *Motor Cycle*: 'Great excitement was aroused by a keenly fought duel between Geoff Meredith and George Cumming in the second semi final of the Big Eight scratch race. Round the first lap Cumming stuck doggedly to Meredith's back wheel, and when he pulled level with the Australian, and even gained a short lead, the crowd rose to him, Throughout this lap Cumming held the advantage, but Meredith still had the race 'up his sleeve'. Regaining the lead by a magnificent broadside, he roared down the straight, ploughed round the last corner in a shower of dirt, and won by about a length.'

Celtic Park Handicap (6 laps standing start)

Ht 1: Norrie Isbister (10), Alex McColl (16), [NI, 2min 50.4

Ht 2: Ivor Creek (16), Geoff Meredith (4), [NI, 2min 40.2

Ht 3: Stewie St. George (scr), Harry Lewis (12), [NI, 2min 41.6

SF 1: Norrie Isbister, Alex McColl, Ivor Creek, 2min 59.0

SF 2: Geoff Meredith, Stewie St. George, Harry Lewis, 2min 54.4

Final: Norrie Isbister, Geoff Meredith, Alex McColl, Stewie St. George (ef), 2min 54.4

Big 8 Scratch Race (4 laps flying start)

Ht 1: Ivor Creek bt Stewie St. George (ef), 1min 54.4

Ht 2: Norrie Isbister bt Joe Dickie, 1min 48.8

Ht 3: Geoff Meredith bt Sprouts Elder, 1min 57.2

Ht 4: George Cumming bt Jimmy Valente, 1min 59.4

SF 1: Norrie Isbister walkover Ivor Creek (ns)

SF 2: Geoff Meredith bt George Cumming, 1min 51.2

Final: Norrie Isbister bt Geoff Meredith, 1min 47.6

Match Race (4 laps flying start)

Ivor Creek bt George Cumming, 1min 51.4

England v Scotland Match Race (4 laps flying start)

Norrie Isbister bt Harry Lewis, 1min 53.0

Saturday 5 May 1928

Crowd: 7,000

Reporting on this meeting *Motor Cycle* observed that there was a large number of women in the crowd.

They helped to swell the crowd to what was probably the biggest attendance figure for a Celtic Park speedway meeting. It was not, however, the biggest crowd to watch speedway action at Celtic Park.

The reason is that in the afternoon prior to this meeting the crowd which had turned up to watch the 'Old Firm' Glasgow Cup match between Celtic and Rangers were treated to speedway as a half-time entertainment. Maybe a few were tempted to return in the evening and thus swelled the crowd.

The fare on view was interesting to say the least with fallers actually hurting themselves. According to the *Times*: 'Since the inauguration of dirt-track motorcycle racing at Celtic Park, Glasgow, accidents have been fortunately infrequent though occasionally several riders have saved themselves only by good

manipulation of their machines when in difficulties. Keener competition of the racers has naturally led to increased speed, and on Saturday evening the outcome was two accidents. George Cumming, Scotland, in the first lap of the first race was trying just a bit too much at the corner when he came to grief.'

The *Times* continued: 'In the All British Handicap semi-final, Harry Lewis, England, was racing all out to catch Andy Marr when in the fourth lap an excessive skid was the cause of him falling on his head.' Both riders were taken to hospital. George Cumming was released that evening but Harry had a night in hospital and was released the next day.

The riders were on the mend but the same could not be said for their bikes. 'To have seen both machines after the spills would have led one to believe that the riders could not have possibly escaped serious consequences, and it is an illustration of the comparative safety of dirt-track racing that their injuries were slight.'

The progress of the home based talent was also worthy of some comment in the press. Again from the *Times*: 'On Saturday evening we had an example of the development of Scottish runners. A. Marr, J. Valente, C. Hughes, and N. Isbister treated the 7,000 spectators present with an illustration of what our home men can do. Every race was keen, but the third was the keenest of all when Isbister beat Creek for second place, J. Valente with a particularly good start, being an easy first.'

Due to the failure of riders to finish heat 1 of the Flying 8 (Dickie's machine broke a chain and McKay's machine lost a flywheel) and Harry Lewis' injury, there were no competitors from the top half of the draw to contest the first semi-final. As a result the two semi-finalists from the bottom half of the draw became the finalists.

All British Handicap (6 laps standing start)

Ht 1: Andy Marr (20), Peter James (?), George Cumming (?) (f), [NI, 2min 46.6

Ht 2: Chris Hughes (18), Harry Lewis (11), [NI, 3min 21.5

Ht 3: Norrie Isbister (8), Ralston Dunlop (18), [NI, 2min 49.2

Ht 4: Ivor Creek (11), Jimmy Valente (16), [NI, 2min 45.0

SF 1: Andy Marr, Peter James, Chris Hughes, Harry Lewis (f), 2min 52.8

SF 2: Jimmy Valente, Norrie Isbister, Ivor Creek, Ralston Dunlop, 2min 55.0

Final: Andy Marr, Norrie Isbister, Peter James, Jimmy Valente, 2min 49.4

Flying 8 (4 laps standing start)

Ht 1: Void. Keith McKay and Bill Dickie both failed to finish.

Ht 2: Harry Lewis bt Jimmy Valente, 1min 57.2

Ht 3: Ivor Creek bt Norrie Isbister, 1min 48.4

Ht 4: Geoff Meredith bt Ralston Dunlop, 1min 52.0

SF 1 and SF 2: Not staged

Final: Ivor Creek bt Geoff Meredith, 1min 47.2

Saturday 12 May 1928

Crowd: 5,000

The progress of the Scottish riders was gauged by their numbers. The *Times* writer noted that there were 14 home Scots on the bill for this meeting.

The *Herald's* columnist noted there was 'a large and enthusiastic crowd' which 'witnessed thrilling and daring racing.' Adding 'Ivor Creek of England on a Douglas machine won the honour (Gauntlet) in the fast time of 1 min 43.6 which constitutes a record for the track and the fact that he finished the last lap on a flat tyre gives an indication of the great pluck he possessed.'

Spencer Stratton appeared on a Harley Davidson at this meeting. *Motor Cycle* confirmed it was one of the famous Peashooters of that era.

George Cumming, who at the time was Captain of the Glasgow Nelson Club, faced Stratton in the Golden Gauntlet event. Unfortunately George fell on the first lap and retired from the event. (Stratton in turn fell in his semi where he faced Ivor Creek.)

When Celtic Park closed, garage owner George, who was born in Montrose, travelled down to Manchester White City to ply his trade. Norrie Isbister always refers to George as 'Monty', but he was referred to by the press as 'Scotty'.

Ayr's Andy Marr, who had won the Handicap event the week before off 20 seconds, had his handicap reduced to 12 seconds. This was quite a drastic reduction but, like Norrie, he was proving a fast learner. It was thanks to Andy's close attention that Creek established a new track record in the final of the Golden Gauntlet.

Celtic Park Handicap (6 laps standing start)

Ht 1: Ivor Creek (scr), Johnnie Walker (16), [NI, 3min 07.6
Ht 2: William McLaren (18), George Cumming (16), [NI, 3min 24.6
Ht 3: Andy Marr (12), Harry Lewis (11), [NI, 3min 15.4
Ht 4: Stewart Fraser (18), Houston Anderson (16), [NI, 3min 44.6
SF1: George Cumming, William McLaren, [Ivor Creek, Johnnie Walker, 2min 52.2
SF 2: Houston Anderson, Stewart Fraser, [Andy Marr, Harry Lewis, 3min 20.2
Final: George Cumming, William McLaren, Stewart Fraser, 2min 52.2

Golden Gauntlet (4 laps flying start)

Ht 1: Spencer Stratton bt George Cumming (f), 1min 48.0
Ht 2: Ivor Creek bt Jimmy Valente, 1min 49.2
Ht 3: Andy Marr bt Geoff Meredith (ef), No Time
Ht 4: Norrie Isbister bt Harry Lewis, 1min 54.2
SF 1: Ivor Creek bt Spencer Stratton (f), 2min 06.4
SF 2: Andy Marr bt Norrie Isbister, 1min 47.2
Final: Ivor Creek bt Andy Marr, 1min 43.6*

Tuesday 15 May 1928

Crowd: 3,000

This was the very first charity meeting at a speedway track in Britain. The beneficiaries were the very much appreciated St Andrew's Ambulance Brigade who provide a very valuable service to speedway (and perhaps the idea of a benefit meeting is well worth reviving.) The funds were required by the Association which had, by the time of the meeting, secured £24,000 of the £30,000 it was seeking to build a headquarters building.

The first beneficiary of the first aid attendants from the St Andrew's organisation was Norrie Isbister. 'Unfortunately Norman Isbister, who has quickly stepped into the limelight in this new form of sport, and who may be termed Scotland's best rider, came to grief in the second heat of his first race. He escaped with a slight injury but was unable to take part in any further events.'

According to the *Herald*, Norrie was not missed as 'thrills in plenty were supplied by the visiting cracks, who excelled themselves in breaking all previous records.'

Norrie was not the only faller. Ivor Creek had tumbled from his machine near the end of the Handicap semi-final when he had chased, and almost drawn level with Chris Hughes. Ivor had been almost a lap behind by the time he got on his way.

In the Final Geoff Meredith had put up what was described in *Motor Cycling* as 'hectic riding in an attempt to overhaul the earlier starters, an attempt which he only just missed being successful.'

The track must have been in good condition as the records tumbled over the seven races of the Pearson's Big 8 event. The stars pulled out due to bike problems of various sorts. Stewie St. George retired in his heat due to a burst tyre then Spencer Stratton pulled up in his heat when his chain broke. Stewie had wrecked his tyre when he had come into contact with the safety fence. Despite the damage he had continued for a lap before giving up the struggle.

On the track record front, Paddy Dean had started the ball rolling bringing the record down to 1min 42.6. Paddy then had to drop out of the event in the semi-final when, on the second lap, his machine failed.

Sprouts Elder equalled it in his heat, broke the new record in his semi-final and in the final broke his own record to leave it standing at 1min 41.0 at the end of the evening. The press reported that in the final Sprouts averaged 36 miles per hour.



Note: Pearson's Big 8 was named in honour of a Director of Dirt-Track Speedways Ltd. The man was an accountant who came from the home counties. Elder's win kept the money in the business. The photograph shows Houston Anderson biting the dust.

St. Andrew's Ambulance Handicap (6 laps standing start)

Ht 1: Geoff Meredith (6), Alex McColl (18), [Johnnie Walker (16), Bill Dickie (18), 2min 48.0
Ht 2: Harry Lewis (12), William McLaren (12), Norrie Isbister (6) (f), Spencer Stratton (scr) (f),
2min 56.4
Ht 3: Ivor Creek (scr), Chris Hughes (12), [George Cummings (8), John Morton (18), 2min 50.0
SF 1: Harry Lewis, Geoff Meredith, Alex McColl, 2min 47.6
SF 2: Chris Hughes, William McLaren, Ivor Creek (f), 2min 56.4
Final: Harry Lewis, Geoff Meredith, Chris Hughes, William McLaren, 2min 53.4

Pearson's Big 8 (4 laps flying start)

Ht 1: Paddy Dean bt Billy Galloway, 1min 42.6*
Ht 2: Geoff Meredith bt Stewie St. George (ret) (t), 1min 47.4
Ht 3: Ivor Creek bt Spencer Stratton (ef), 1min 59.2
Ht 4: Sprouts Elder bt Harry Lewis, 1min 42.6*
SF 1: Geoff Meredith bt Paddy Dean (ef), 1min 50.8
SF 2: Sprouts Elder bt Ivor Creek, 1min 42.2*
Final: Sprouts Elder bt Geoff Meredith, 1min 41.0*

Saturday 19 May 1928

Crowd: 3,000

In the afternoon of this meeting the new Marine Gardens venue had been opened to the public. The crowd was not quite as good as that in Edinburgh and there the weather stayed dry enough to complete the meeting. Glasgow fans were not so lucky as the evening turned wet and caused the meeting to be abandoned before the finals of each event were staged. Only eleven of the fourteen programmed heats were staged and the fans were deprived of the more interesting contests. According to the press the finals were to be decided the following week but there are no records of this having happened.

Stewie St. George was in the wars in this meeting. His fall in the match race Keith McKay's Big 8 event resulted in him sustaining bruised knees. Still, Stewie probably wasn't too bothered as he had won the big prize in Edinburgh, the Gold Helmet, and the the £5 weekly retainer that went with it.

The prize money which was on offer for the Handicap final, which was never collected, was as follows: 1st £20; 2nd £12 10/-; 3rd £7 10/- and 4th £2 10/-. This in a time when about £85 would buy you a new Douglas dirt-track bike.

Celtic Park Handicap (6 laps standing start)

Ht 1: Geoff Meredith (6), Johnnie Walker (18), [NI, 2min 54.6
Ht 2: William McLaren (15), Chris Hughes (14), [NI, 2min 50.6
Ht 3: Harry Lewis (12), Ivor Creek (2), [NI, 2min 58.0
Ht 4: Stewie St. George (scr), William Caig (18), [NI, 2min 43.2
SF 1: William McLaren, Chris Hughes, [Johnnie Walker, Geoff Meredith, 2min 45.2
SF 2: Harry Lewis, Ivor Creek, [Stewie St. George, William Caig, 2min 56.0
Final: Not staged

Keith McKay's Big 8 (4 laps flying start)

Ht 1: Harry Lewis bt Geoff Meredith, 1min 54.2
Ht 2: Billy Galloway bt Stewie St. George(f), 1min 45.2
Ht 3: Norrie Isbister bt Ivor Creek, 1min 51.6

Ht 4: Chris Hughes bt Paddy Dean (ef), 1min 52.0
Semi-Finals and Final not staged

Saturday 26 May 1928

Crowd: 2,000

This was the first Saturday afternoon meeting at Celtic Park.

The change of time did little to swell the crowd even though by now the football season was all over. However, it was quality, not quantity, and the crowd 'was treated to one of the best displays of motorcycle racing yet witnessed at these grounds.'

'Three competitors had nasty spills. In the first race of the programme Jim Fraser, an emergency rider (reserve), fell at the beginning of the fifth lap and had to receive first aid and in the third leg of the Celtic Park Handicap Harry Lewis, England, and William McLaren came to grief on the fourth lap.' McLaren had dropped his machine right in the path of the following Lewis.

Making his first appearance in the results was Jack Reilly, the Glasgow rider of that name. Belle Vue also had a Jack Riley but he was better known by the nickname 'Riskit.

The tit-bit of the meeting was the Final of the Golden Gauntlet which brought together experienced Billy Galloway (Australia) and Ivor Creek (England). The latter was the holder of the trophy. 'The Australian crack gained a very fine lead at the start but the Englishman gradually reduced this and only a few yards separated the riders at the end of the last lap when Creek fell.'

Earlier in the event Ivor regained the track record reducing Sprouts Elder's record by 1.6 seconds.

Harry Lewis had modified his Sunbeam machine prior to the start of this meeting. The machine was now much lower to the ground and the chain stays resembled the letter 'S'.

Celtic Park Handicap (6 laps standing start)

Ht 1: Billy Galloway (scr), Jack Reilly (18), [Jim Fraser (?) (f), NI, 2min 36.8

Ht 2: Norrie Isbister (10), Chris Hughes (14), [NI, 2min 43.6

Ht 3: Jimmie Pinkerton (15), William Caig (17), [Harry Lewis (?) (f), William McLaren (?) (f),
2min 05.6

Ht 4: Allan Campbell (18), Ivor Creek (2), [NI, 2min 57.8

SF 1: Billy Galloway, Jack Reilly, [Norrie Isbister, Chris Hughes, 2min 40.2

SF 2: Allan Campbell, Jimmie Pinkerton, [Ivor Creek, William Caig, 2min 50.4

Final: Billy Galloway, Jimmie Pinkerton, Jack Reilly (frm), Alan Campbell (?), 2min 38.0

Golden Gauntlet (4 laps flying start)

Ht 1: Jimmy Valente bt Chris Hughes, 1min 46.8

Ht 2: Billy Galloway bt Norrie Isbister, 1min 48.4

Ht 3: Johnnie Walker bt Ralston Dunlop, 1min 58.8

Ht 4: Ivor Creek bt Arthur Moser, 1min 39.4*

SF 1: Billy Galloway bt Jimmy Valente, 1min 45.2

SF 2: Ivor Creek bt Johnnie Walker, 1min 44.2

Final: Billy Galloway bt Ivor Creek (f), 1min 42.2

Saturday 2 June 1928

Crowd: 3,500

This meeting was staged in ideal weather for spectators, brilliant sunshine.

Popular Paddy Dean was missing but he had an able substitute in Spencer Stratton, who took the opportunity to try out Dean's Douglas machine for the first time. Spencer, more commonly known as 'Smoky' was in good form. 'The Australian crack on a scratch mark in the six laps handicap fairly thrilled the crowd winning brilliantly from Allan Campbell.' It had been a last gasp burst of speed that had clinched it for Stratton.

Riders listed to appear in the Handicap but who did not feature in the results included John Bissett (16); William Caig (17); George Cumming (16); Ralston Dunlop (18); Stewart Fraser (18); N. Fyfe (18); William McLaren (14); Jimmie Pinkerton (14); Laurence Michie (18); Jack Reilly (18); George Thompson (18) and Johnnie Walker (12) . This suggests that the Handicap heats featured five riders. Harry Lewis had also taken part but had fallen. A meeting reporter considered that due to the effects of the fall Lewis had lost out to Creek in the scratch semi-final.

The *Herald* writer noted: 'A feature of this programme was the clever display of broadsiding by Ivor Creek the English crack.'

The same scribe also commented 'A most unusual happening occurred in the fourth heat of the Big Eight event when Spencer Stratton and Norman Isbister were in competition. The New Zealander was leading by a large margin when his machine suddenly stopped 20 yards from the winning post. After several attempts to restart it the rider tried to 'crawl' over the line but was unsuccessful and Isbister was declared the winner. The incident caused much amusement for those present.'

Note: The Big 8 event was named in honour of Jimmy Baxter, a Director of Dirt-Track Speedways Ltd.

Celtic Park Handicap (6 laps standing start)

Ht 1: Spencer Stratton (scr), Arthur Moser (17), [NI, 2min 34.6

Ht 2: Allan Campbell (20), Jimmy Valente (14), [NI, 2min 54.6

Ht 3: Norrie Isbister (12), Bill Dickie (18), [NI, 2min 46.0

Ht 4: Ivor Creek (2), Houston Anderson (18), [NI, 2min 38.4

SF 1: Allan Campbell, Spencer Stratton, [Arthur Moser, Jimmy Valente, 2min 52.4

SF 2: Ivor Creek, Bill Dickie, [Norrie Isbister, Houston Anderson, 2min 36.0

Final: Spencer Stratton, Allan Campbell, Ivor Creek, 2min 30.0*

Baxter's Big 8 (4 laps flying start)

Ht 1: Ivor Creek bt Jimmie Pinkerton, 1min 42.2

Ht 2: Harry Lewis bt George Cumming, 1min 51.6

Ht 3: Arthur Moser bt Jimmy Valente, 1min 55.0

Ht 4: Norrie Isbister bt Spencer Stratton (ef pushed), No Time

SF 1: Ivor Creek bt Harry Lewis, 1min 38.8*

SF 2: Norrie Isbister bt Arthur Moser, 1min 49.4

Final: Ivor Creek bt Norrie Isbister (nf), 1min 38.4*

Saturday 9 June 1928

Rained-off

Riders due to appear who were thwarted by the weather included: Billy Galloway, Ivor Creek, Norrie Isbister, Harry Lewis, Arthur Moser, W. Duke (Bill Dickie?), Allan Campbell, John Bissett, Chris Hughes, George Cumming, Eric Burnet, Tom Shearer, Johnnie Walker, Jack Reilly, William McLaren, Alex Thorburn, Houston Anderson, George Thompson, Ralston Dunlop and Jimmy Valente. The Celtic Park Handicap and the Golden Gauntlet were the prizes.

Saturday 16 June 1928

Crowd: 2,000

Buzz Hibberd is recorded as having made his riding debut in this meeting. Like many Aussies he had come over to be a mechanic, but could not resist the lure of the sport. He did reasonably well reaching the Handicap Final and progressing past the heats of the Golden Gauntlet into the semis. In the semis he faced and was beaten by Billy Galloway.

Buzz's real name was a mystery for many years and it is thanks to Graeme Frost in Australia that he was finally identified as Geoffrey. Since he never used that name it is assumed that he wasn't very fond of it.

Arthur Moser was the only reported faller. He fell in the re-run of the Handicap Final. According to reports, Buzz Hibberd had been lucky in his handicap heat, as he just missed crashing into Harry Lewis who was attending to his bike mid track. Harry was a danger to everyone including himself.

This incident was reported in a brief report in the *Scotsman* which said: 'Several new overseas riders took part in some interesting racing and, with the exception of A. Moser, who twisted a leg in one of the heats of the handicap, there were no serious casualties.'

If the results are anything to go by, the overseas riders did not do too well, as the only one who appears in the results was Buzz Hibberd. The best race of the day was the Isbister versus Lewis contest for the Gauntlet semi-final. According to *Motor Cycling*: 'The best race yet was the comment of spectators when Norman Isbister just beat Harry Lewis after a keenly contested race. After the first three laps both riders opened out flat and indulged in some of the most hectic corner work yet witnessed in Scotland. Isbister proved to possess just that last ounce which would beat the Sunbeam man.'

Another newcomer to the line up for this meeting was one Bill Morris. Who the Englishman was we do not know, but, to be included in the Golden Gauntlet event, he must have been a sufficiently experienced rider. Saying that, many riders were one night wonders and Bill may have been a good bet following a practice session or odd meeting somewhere.

Celtic Park Handicap (6 laps standing start)

Ht 1: George Cumming (14), Houston Anderson (16), [NI, 2min 52.4
Ht 2: Jimmie Pinkerton (18), Buzz Hibberd (16), [Harry Lewis (?) (et), NI, 2min 45.4
Ht 3: Norrie Isbister (12), Allan Campbell (14), [NI, 2min 46.2
Ht 4: Johnnie Walker (16), Arthur Moser (16), [NI, 2min 46.2
SF 1: Jimmie Pinkerton, Buzz Hibberd, [George Cumming, Houston Anderson, 2min 53.2
SF 2: Allan Campbell, Arthur Moser, [Norrie Isbister, Johnnie Walker, 2min 46.0
Final: Allan Campbell, Jimmie Pinkerton (frm), Buzz Hibberd, Arthur Moser (f), 2min 53.2

Golden Gauntlet (4 laps flying start)

Ht 1: Buzz Hibberd bt Jimmy Valente, 1min 49.6
Ht 2: Billy Galloway bt Jimmie Pinkerton, 1min 47.0
Ht 3: Norrie Isbister bt Bill Morris, 1min 54.2
Ht 4: Harry Lewis bt George Cumming, 1min 48.4
SF 1: Billy Galloway (frm) bt Buzz Hibberd (ef), 1min 54.6
SF 2: Norrie Isbister bt Harry Lewis, 1min 44.2
Final: Billy Galloway bt Norrie Isbister, 1min 40.4

Saturday 23 June 1928

Crowd: 2,500

The *Scotsman's* (*Scotsman*) meeting report noted: 'The sport throughout was excellent.' It is only a pity that more did not turn up to watch it.

Norrie Isbister's participation in the meeting ended in the semi-final of the Handicap when 'he crashed in endeavouring to pass on one of the corners and sustained a slight hand injury.' It was not like Norrie to give up because of a scratch or two. The press report explained 'Norrie Isbister had his Rex-Acme machine wrecked' and it is difficult to continue without a bike.

The *Scotsman* reported the incident thus. 'In the second semi-final of the handicap N. Isbister, the Scottish rider, came down in a side-slip and could not get clear. H. Lewis crashed into him so badly buckling his front wheel that he was unable to continue. Isbister suffered severely from shock and was unable to take any further part in the meeting.'

A side-slip was a fall. This is just one of many words, like wobble, used in this era which are no longer in use by speedway scribes, which add to the colour of the meeting report quotations.

The *Daily Record and Mail* (*Daily Record*) for the day prior to this meeting carried details of the race card, which helps to give a reasonable record of the events as they appear to have been abstracted from a programme in race order. Listed as reserves for the Handicap were Alex Thorburn (16), Jimmie Pinkerton (11) and George Betteridge (16). Reserves for the scratch event were Jimmie Pinkerton, Allan Campbell and Johnnie Walker.

Celtic Park Handicap (6 laps standing start)

Ht 1: Andy Marr (10), John Bissett (16), [Houston Anderson (16), NI, 2min 38.8
Ht 2: Eric Burnet (18), Jimmy Valente (14), [Allan Campbell (8), Johnnie Walker (14), 2min 37.2
Ht 3: Harry Lewis(10), Chris Hughes(12),[George Cumming (12), Bill Dickie (16), 2min 45.2
Ht 4: Norrie Isbister (10), Buzz Hibberd (11), [Taffy Williams (scr), W. Crone (16), 2min 38.8
SF 1: Eric Burnet, Jimmy Valente, [Andy Marr, John Bissett, 2min 35.4
SF 2: Chris Hughes, Harry Lewis (frm), Buzz Hibberd, Norrie Isbister (f), 2min 49.0
Final: Jimmy Valente, Eric Burnet, Harry Lewis, Chris Hughes, 2min 48.2

Sprouts' Big 8 (4 laps flying start)

Ht 1: George Cumming bt Billy Galloway, 1min 52.8
Ht 2: Norrie Isbister bt Harry Lewis, 1min 43.6
Ht 3: Eric Burnet bt Andy Marr, 1min 57.0
Ht 4: Taffy Williams bt Buzz Hibberd, 1min 52.4
SF 1: George Cumming (wo), Norrie Isbister (no bike, ns), 1min 55.8
SF 2: Taffy Williams bt Eric Burnet, 1min 43.0
Final: Taffy Williams bt George Cumming, 1min 48.4

Saturday 7 July 1928

Crowd: 6,000

The crowd was bigger than usual for this meeting. At 6,000 it was the second biggest ever at Celtic Park. The meeting scheduled for the previous Saturday had been cancelled because the Prince of Wales, later to become Edward VIII, was in Glasgow. It is one of the more unusual reasons for cancelling a meeting.

This meeting saw two track records established. These were 2min 26.2 for the 6 laps of the Handicap event and 1min 37.0 for the 4 laps of the scratch event. They would never be beaten. Unfortunately, details of this meeting are very sketchy and some race times are not available.

Celtic Park Handicap (6 laps standing start)

Ht 1: Bill Barclay (?), Bill Dickie (14), [NI, (No information)
Ht 2: Harry Lewis (12), Norrie Isbister (?), [NI, (No information)
Ht 3: Buzz Hibberd (?), Chris Hughes (?), [NI, (No information)
Ht 4: Paddy Dean (?), Allan Campbell (10), [NI, 2min 26.2*
SF 1: Harry Lewis, Bill Dickie, [Bill Barclay, Norrie Isbister, 2min 43.4
SF 2: Allan Campbell, Paddy Dean, [Buzz Hibberd, Chris Hughes, 2min 50.4
Final: Harry Lewis, Bill Dickie, Allan Campbell, Paddy Dean (ef), 2min 55.0

Golden Gauntlet (4 laps flying start)

Ht 1: Ivor Creek bt Buzz Hibberd, (No information)
Ht 2: Harry Lewis bt Allan Campbell, (No information)
Ht 3: Paddy Dean bt Andy Marr, (No information)
Ht 4: Norrie Isbister bt George Cumming, (No information)
SF 1: Ivor Creek bt Harry Lewis, 1min 41.2
SF 2: Paddy Dean bt Norrie Isbister, 1min 39.2
Final: Paddy Dean bt Ivor Creek, 1min 37.0*

Saturday 21 July 1928

Crowd: Not recorded

The events of this meeting are probably the most poorly recorded of any of the Celtic Park events. It is not even given a mention in passing except in *Motor Cycle*. Sprouts Elder was supposed to have attended but he does not appear in the results.



Motor Cycle carried only a description of the match race. It went as follows: 'The match race was an unexpected addition to the programme being the outcome of a challenge between George Cumming and Norrie Isbister. The latter (pictured left) made the better start, and held a slight advantage until the middle of the third lap when Cumming pulled up level on the straight, plunged recklessly round the bottom corner and entered the fourth and last lap about a length ahead of his rival. Round the bends and down the straight they thundered Cumming holding level by sheer dare-devilry until a few yards from the finish the back tyre of the AJS gave up the ghost and lost him the race to Isbister. In the Handicap semi Bissett beat Williams by a wheel.'

No matter the lack of results, this was to be the very last meeting at Celtic Park for ever. Buzz Hibberd, who had come over to Britain to act as a mechanic, ended up as outright winner of the Golden Gauntlet. In all probability this trophy ended up as a prize somewhere else in the Dirt-Track Speedways empire.

Celtic Park Handicap (6 laps standing start)

Ht 1: Jack Reilly (?), Jimmy Valente (?), [NI, 2min 57.8
 Ht 2: John Bissett (18) (ef pushed), Taffy Williams (1) (ef pushed), [NI, No Time
 Ht 3: Bill Dickie (14), A.J.Ashwood (?), [NI, 3min 12.8
 Ht 4: Buzz Hibberd (?), [NI, (No information)
 SF 1: John Bissett, Taffy Williams, [John Reilly, Jimmy Valente, (No information)
 SF 2: Bill Dickie, Buzz Hibberd, [A.J. Ashwood, 2min 48.4
 Final: Bill Dickie, Taffy Williams, John Bissett, Buzz Hibberd, 2min 52.6

Golden Gauntlet (4 laps flying start)

Ht 1: Jack Reilly, [NI, 2min 31.0
 Ht 2: Jimmy Valente, [NI, 2min 04.0
 Ht 3: Norrie Isbister, [NI, 1min 48.0
 Ht 4: Buzz Hibberd, [NI, 1min 52.4
 SF 1: [Jack Reilly, Jimmy Valente, NI, 1min 54.8
 SF 2: [Norrie Isbister, Buzz Hibberd, NI, 1min 43.8
 Final: Buzz Hibberd, Jack Reilly, Jimmy Valente, Norrie Isbister, 1min 53.8

Match Race (£5 A Side Challenge) (4 laps flying start)

Norrie Isbister bt George Cumming (Burst tyre), 1min 55.8

CELTIC PARK SPEEDWAY RIDERS A - Z

A. Johnston Scotland	ASHWOOD	Scotland	Houston	ANDERSON	
1 Meeting	(?)		5 Meetings	(16 - 18)	
Bill	BARCLAY	Scotland	John	BISSETT	Scotland
1 Meeting	(?)		2 Meetings	(16 - 18)	

Eric	BURNET	Scotland	William	CAIG	Scotland
1 Meeting	(18)		4 Meetings	(15 - 18)	
Allan	CAMPBELL	Scotland	Ivor	CREEK	England
5 Meetings	(14 - 20)		9 meetings	(scr - 16)	
Winner Celtic Park Handicap	16.06.1928		Winner Flying 8		05.05.1928
			Winner Golden Gauntlet		12.05.1928
			Winner Baxter's Big 8		02.06.1928
W.	CRONE	Scotland	George 'Scotty' CUMMING		Scotland
1 meeting	(?)		9 Meetings	(8 - 16)	
			Winner Celtic Park Handicap		12.05.1928
John Patrick 'Paddy'	DEAN	Australia	Bill	DICKIE	Scotland
4 Meetings	(scr)		6 Meetings	(14 - 18)	
Winner Golden Gauntlet	07.07.192		Winner Celtic Park Handicap		21.07.1928
Joe	DICKIE	Scotland	Ralston	DUNLOP	Scotland
1 Meeting	(?)		4 Meetings	(14 - 18)	
Lloyd 'Sprouts' ELDER		USA	Alf	FAULDS	England
3 Meetings	(scr)				
Winner Pearson's Big 8	15.05.1928		1 Meeting	(10)	
Jim	FRASER	Scotland	Stuart	FRASER	Scotland
1 Meeting	(?)		2 Meetings	(18)	
Billy	GALLOWAY	Australia	Jack	HART	Scotland
6 Meetings	(?)		1 Meeting	(15)	
Winner Celtic Park Handicap	26.05.1928				
Winner Golden Gauntlet	26.05.1928				

Winner Golden Gauntlet 16.06.1928

Geoffrey 'Buzz' HIBBERD	Australia	Chris	HUGHES	Scotland
4 Meetings (11 - 14)		6 Meetings	(12 - 18)	

Winner Golden Gauntlet 21.07.1928

Norrie	ISBISTER	Scotland	Peter	JAMES	Scotland
12 Meetings (10 - 12)			1 Meeting	(?)	

Winner Celtic Park Handicap 01.05.1928

Winner Big 8 01.05.1928

Harry	LEWIS	England	Alex	McCOLL	Scotland
10 Meetings (10 - 12)			2 Meetings	(16 - 18)	

Winner St Andrew's Amb. H'cap 15.05.1928

Winner Celtic Park Handicap 07.07.1928	Keith	McKAY	Australia
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There were two riders called Harry Lewis.	2 Meetings	(?)
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This rider left England in late 1928 to work as a tea planter in Assam.

Andy	MARR	Scotland	Geoff	MEREDITH	Australia
4 Meetings (10 - 20)			6 Meetings	(4 - 6)	

Winner All British Handicap 05.05.1928

Bill	MORRIS	England	Arthur	MOSER	England
1 Meeting (?)			3 Meetings	(16 - 17)	

Jimmie	PINKERTON	Scotland	Jack	REILLY	Scotland
3 Meetings (15 - 18)			4 Meetings	(18)	

Stewart 'Stewie' ST. GEORGE	New Zealand	Spencer 'Smoky'	STRATTON	N.Zealand
4 Meetings (scr)		3 Meetings	(scr)	

Winner Opening Handicap 28.04.1928

Winner Celtic Park Handicap 02.06.1928

Winner Golden Gauntlet 28.04.1928

Jimmy VALENTE Scotland
9 Meetings (14 - 16)
Winner Celtic Park Handicap 23.06.1928

Johnnie WALKER Scotland
3 Meetings (12 - 18)

Aubrey 'Taffy' WILLIAMS Wales
2 Meetings (scr)
Winner Sprouts' Big 8 23.06.1928

Additional rider
John MORTON Scotland
1 meeting (18)