

# The Speedway Researcher

Promoting Research into the History of Speedway and Dirt Track Racing

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NB: Pages 10 & 11 in 2/2 Supplement File

## St. Austell Remembered

When the Par Moor Stadium near St. Austell first opened its doors in 1949 with a season of "Open" meetings and challenge matches, fans in Cornwall were given the chance to see world class riders in action on a regular basis. They also saw a number of new riders who would go on to become stars in their own right.

With the "locals" first known as The Cornish Pixies, the racing made a change from the National League Third Division racing they probably watched at Plymouth and Exeter.

The stadium, with its 360 yards red shale track, was in an ideal setting. It was one of the few purpose built speedway tracks of its time. It was designed by some of the leading riders of the day.

On many a sunny Tuesday evening the action at Par Moor Stadium attracted a crowd made up of locals and speedway fans who were on holiday in the area. The promotion gave the fans a bit of razzle-dazzle racing which, sadly, seems to be missing today.

The closure at the end of 1963 Provincial League campaign did not end speedway activity as it was used for training purposes up to 1978. The track was then tarmaced over and used for go-cart racing and stock car racing. The stadium was finally killed off for redevelopment and is now the site of a supermarket.

However, to return to the memories, in 1950 St. Austell entered a team in the National League Division Three under the name of St.Austell Gulls. The race jacket featured a white gull on a dark blue background. (The 1990s St. Austell Gull is a pigeon!!) The team was led by captain and local hero - Norman Street (Ex Hastings), with Aussie Harold Bull, Ken and "Ticker" James from Poole, Polish wartime flier Max Reich (still resident in the Plymouth area.) (Anybody know "Ticker" James' real name?). They would later add Aussies Jack Gates, and Allan Quinn, Maury McDermott, Ray Ellis, Eddie Williams and Bill Sobey.

The team was managed by Charles Lobb. Although great value at home, they were very weak away. This cost them dear and they ended bottom of the ten team Division.

The Gulls were again in the Third Division in 1951. New manager **1**

John Luke had Street, the James boys, Bull and Quinn but added Les Trailer, Mick Mitchell, Stan Bedford and Ken Monk. This team did a bit better ending up in 8th place, thanks to the teams below them having poorer home records as the Gulls, yet again, didn't win away.

A year on and a gent called Chirpy Richards took over as general manager and the team entered the Southern League. With team manager and captain the same they tracked Quinn, Reich, Monk, Bull plus Dickie Harris and Johnny Bradford. They also added veterans in the shape of Lloyd Goffe and George Newton. 1952 was another wooden spoon season and a hat trick of failures on the away tracks.

Fans were given treats like match races between Belle Vue mates Jack Parker and Ron Mason. Once they'd raced each other they raced the men who had excelled in the league match. Parker brought his "pension book", the famous Gold Helmet, to show the fans.

St. Austell even staged an international when England C faced Sweden. Led by Olle Nygren the visitors won by 23 points over a team captained by Gulls skipper, Street, and boosted by George Wall and Pete Lansdale of Plymouth, Gog Hoskin of Exeter and Bob Jones of Swindon.

1953 and the last season in the Southern League saw newcomers in Kiwis Bob Duckworth and Bryce Subritzky, John Yates, Roy Thomas, Alf Webster, Maury McHugh and Kevin Book. Jack Gates and new captain Harold Bull were back in a team managed by George Newton. The side actually managed an away win at Plymouth, a result avenged later in the season. The upshot was one place above the bottom.

Like many tracks 1953 was the end of an era. 1954 saw a few open events and it stayed that way until 1957. It was a run of seasons when Par Moor Stadium staged the more relaxed open meetings. The fun element returned with a "Russian" called Igor Baranov showing his paces. Igor was a Trevor Redmond stunt but it worked and drew a crowd.

In 1962 Trevor's Neath team moved to complete its fixtures at St. Austell. The team retained the name Neath Dragons and finished second in the Provincial League. A best ever for a St. Austell based team.

Neath died and come 1963 the St. Austell Gulls were back at Par Moor for the last time. The team included Trevor Redmond, Ray Cresp, Glyn Chandler, Fred Powell, George Major, Ray Wickett, Chris Julian and Cornish adopted Canadian, Chris Blewett. The team finished fifth out of thirteen, the best ever Par Moor Gulls team ever.

Trevor Redmond moved on to front Glasgow Tigers revival and the others went various ways. Some followed Trevor north for varying periods of time.

These are still fond memories of **Eric Abbott** and **Fred Paul** who followed the Gulls over their life at Par Moor Stadium. The editors thank Eric and Fred for sharing their memories and welcome similar articles. **2**

Graham Fraser's History of the Portsmouth Area - Part One  
Chalton Speedway - 1928

The village of Chalton on the borders of Hampshire & Sussex, North of Portsmouth near Horndean, was an unlikely setting for a dirt track in the pioneer days of 1928. Indications were that this quarter mile dirt track was built by a Mr E L Jones who may have owned the field in which the track was built. Mr Jones (Club Sec.) established the Chalton Motor Racing Club to help local riders (charged 6d (2 1/2p) a head) and Southern Clubs to hold events and the track opened for practice in June 1928.

Perhaps encouraged by the growing interest in dirt track racing the Club organised pukka meetings the first of which ran on Sunday, 15th July 1928 attracting riders from across the South coast. Reports of that first meeting indicated that the track was banked, although the excitement of the new sport saw many riders crash. Like many early dirt track meetings racing was split up into categories: 350cc Winner: Redding (AJS) ; 500cc Winner: Redding (AJS); Unlimited Winner: Allbrook (Ariel); Sidecars Winner: Copps (Norton) and Cars Winner: Huxley (Morris). Unfortunately for the spectators no programme was produced which made it very difficult for them to follow the heats.

The Portsmouth press advertised the second meeting on Sunday, 29th July, with such interest that buses from nearby Petersfield meeting the train from Portsmouth at Rowlands Castle station to carry spectators to the track. A crowd of 2000 saw a meeting held in showery weather with a somewhat small number of entrants. Thompson (Velocette) won the 350cc category over 8 laps but with only two riders. The 500cc category was won by Marmon (Triumph) over Wilkinson (BSA), with the press report make great play of Marmon executing some 'hair raising' broadsides. The sidecar race was won by Johnson (Norton) after Stainer (New Imperial) flipped his unit over, a feat repeated by Johnson after passing the line. Marmon "thrilled the crowd between events with an exhibition of broadsiding raising 'oohs and aahs' from the crowd".

Despite a thorough search of local libraries and newspapers there is no record of any further meetings held at Chalton. A local farmer who still remembers the dirt track recalls that local residents did not think much of their peace being disrupted by noise and crowds and this is the most likely reason the Chalton Dirt Track was so short lived. The 5 acre field where the track was

built is still there today. Despite rigorous research, what happened to Mr Jones and his Club has still to be discovered.

**Read about the history of Belle Vue in "The Ace" Magazine.  
Collectors - you want The Collectors Club Magazine.**

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Portsmouth Copnor - 1929

In 1928 the Portsmouth Greyhound Racing Company opened a stadium in the Copnor suburb and International Speedways Ltd, under the guidance of A J Hunting built a dirt track at the stadium to introduce the new sport to the Hampshire harbour city, which was planned to open in September. For whatever reason ISL never ran speedway there and it was not until August 1929 that Copnor heard the roar of dirt track bikes, this time under the control of Dirt Track Speedways Ltd. Unfortunately because of the long period of disuse the track was very bumpy and full of potholes, caused by the clay on which the cinders were laid being broken up and uneven. Mr Baxter of DTS "tried to make the best of a difficult job by putting suitable and sufficient loads of cinder dust on top" of the 440 yard unbanked track.

The first meeting was finally held on Saturday 10th August 1929 in front of 'several thousands of spectators'. Star names booked into that first meeting included American ace, Sprouts Elder, Eric Lister, Ivor Creek, Tiger Stevenson, Tommy Cullis, Buzz Hibberd and Aussie, Col Stewart, who put up the best time of the day 91secs (38.5mph). The racing card included: Open Handicap - winner: Clarrie Eldridge (4secs handicap) / Match Race: Sprouts Elder beat Eric Lister over two heats; Golden Gauntlet - winner: Sprouts Elder.

The second meeting on Sat, 17th August saw Buzz Hibberd (5 secs) win the Open Handicap, Frank Arthur beat Tommy Cullis over two heats of a Match Race and Frank Arthur picked up the Silver Gauntlet. All the winners being seated on Douglas machines. The third meeting the following Saturday saw a new innovation, a three cornered Match race involving four Australians, Jack Bishop, Bluey Wilkinson, Col Stewart and Frank Duckett. Bishop beat Wilkinson in the first heat and Duckett beat Stewart in the second to set up a Duckett v Bishop final. That race saw Bishop leading into the last lap until he fell leaving victory to Duckett. Other events saw Ernie Rickman win the Open Handicap and Jack Bishop win the Scratch Race. The fourth and final meeting of 1929 took place on 31st August 1929 with names like Sprouts Elder, Frank Arthur, Bluey Wilkinson, Buzz Hibberd, Bruce McCallum, Del Forster, Les Maguire, Jack Adams and Don Taylor advertised to ride. Unfortunately a report on this meeting has yet to be traced and help from any 'south coast researchers' would be appreciated here.

Apart from the poor state of the track and lack of track banking, another criticism of the time was the lack of stands or surrounding buildings the absence of which was said to cause " a striking lack of noise"! Dirt Track Speedways management announced at the end that season they were to carry out the required track and stadium improvements for 1930.

#### **Vintage speedway coverage - The Vintage Speedway Magazine. 4 Newspaper Information**

**Cardiff** Newspapers- Continued : (88) South Wales Evening Express Sports Final Jan - May 1930; (89) South Wales Echo 1928 - May 1930; (90) South Wales Echo and Evening Express May 1930 - date; (91) South Wales Football Echo 1928 - May 1930; (92) South Wales Football Echo and Express Aug 1930 - date; (93) Weekly Mail and Cardiff Times 1928 - May 1955; (94) Western Mail 1928 - date. (Note : some of these papers carry details of **Pontypridd** and **New Tredegar** 1929 - 1930. May also carry details of **Caerphilly** and **Newport**.)

**Carlisle** : Track : **Kingmoor** is known to have staged one meeting in September 1937. The track is shown on the ordnance survey maps of the era. A 1928 venture at **Harraby** remains unconfirmed.

Newspapers : (95) The Carlisle Journal 1928 - 1965; (96) The Cumberland News 1928 - Aug 1968; (97) Cumberland Evening News 1928 - Aug 1968; (98) Cumberland Evening News and Star (Workington Edition) 1970 - date. This and the other Carlisle papers are likely to carry details of **Workington** both pre and post war.

**Coventry** : Tracks : **Foleshill** or **Lythalls Lane** which only operated in the pre war era and **Brandon** which has operated in both eras.

Newspapers : (99) Coventry Express Sept 1962 - Sept 1965; (100) Coventry Herald and Free Press 1928 - Nov 1940; (101) Midland Daily Telegraph 1928 - Nov 1941; (102) Coventry Evening Telegraph Nov 1941 - date; (103) Coventry Standard 1928 - Sept 1969.

**Crewe** : Track : **Midland Railways Sports Stadium** or **Earle Street**. Staged speedway pre war in August 1930 first meeting 13.8.30 featuring Belle Vue assets like Riskit Riley and Slider Shuttleworth. Details of any other pre war seasons not known. Ran in the post war era as Division Two venue 1969 - 1975. The Kings raced on one of the fastest tracks ever.

Newspapers : (104) The Crewe Guardian 1928 (Very good for **Crewe** 1930 and **Warrington** 1930) 1928 - Dec 1965; (105) The Crewe Chronicle 1928 - date. (Pre war coverage very poor.)

**Dartford** : For **Crayford** : Track : **Crayford**. There are indications in the early "Motor Cycling" that some form of speedway activity was taking place in this area before the war. The post war exploits 1968 onwards are probably well covered in the Speedway Star.

Newspapers : (106) The Dartford and District Free Press Dec 1929 - Nov 1937; (107) The Dartford District Bulletin Dec 1937 - Aug 1939; (108) Dartford Reporter 1968 - March 1971.

**Derby** : Track : **No details** (Graham Fraser has seen reports of a track here.)

Newspapers : (109) Derby and Chesterfield Reporter 1928 - March 1930; (110) Derby Daily Telegraph 1928 - Jan 1932; (111) Derby Express 1928 - Jan 1932; (112) Derby Football Express 1928 - Jan 1932; (113) The Derby Mercury 1928 - April 1933. (These may give some information on **Long Eaton** of 1929.)

**Doncaster** : Track : **Greyhound Stadium**. There is a suggestion in one source that this stadium was to run in late 1930. It did operate 1969 and 1970, firstly as the Stallions and secondly as the Dragons.

Newspapers:(114) The Doncaster and Thorne Advertiser 1928 - July 1970; (115) **5** The Doncaster Chronicle 1928 - Aug 1963; (116) Doncaster Evening Post 1969 - date; (117) Doncaster Free Press and Courier of Coming Events 1928 - date; (118) Doncaster Gazette 1928 - Dec 1950 and Oct 1967 - date. Also **Thorne** and **Stainforth** (The Doncaster papers give coverage, including the odd photograph, of the 1930 activities at nearby towns of **Thorne** and **Stainforth**.)

**Dudley** for **Cradley Heath** : Post war activity started in 1947 and lasted until 1995. Hopefully the Heathens will be back soon, they have been away too long as it is. (did you know they were originally Cradley Cubs and that a history of this track is currently in production ?)

Newspaper : (119) The Dudley Herald 1947 - date.

**Eastbourne** : Track : **Arlington**. Run by the Dugard family from day dot it has been a venue for speedway since pre war days. The records before its league days, which started in 1969, may be a bit hazy at times.

Newspapers : (120) Eastbourne Chronicle 1928 - July 1951; (121) Eastbourne Courier 1928 - May 1950; (122) Eastbourne Gazette 1928 - date; (123) Eastbourne Herald Oct 1938 - July 1951; (124) Eastbourne Herald Chronicle Aug 1951 - April 1967; (125) The Sussex County Herald 1928 - Sept 1938; (126) Sussex in Review June 1949 - Jan 1950; (127) Sussex Review Feb 1950 - Feb 1951.

**Ellesmere Port** : Track : **Thornton Road**. The Gunners staged speedway for many years starting in 1975 and finally closing at the end of 1985.

Newspaper : (128) Ellesmere Port Pioneer 1975 - date.

**Epping** :Track : **High Beech (or Kings Oak)** : The pioneer venue. The place where it all started on 19th February 1928 and a nice rural setting for the sport of dirt track racing. Meetings staged throughout the pre war era.

Newspapers : (129) The Epping Advertiser 1928 - May 1951; (130) The West Essex Gazette 1928 - May 1940.

**Exeter** : Tracks : **County Ground 1929** onward. **Alphington** and **Peamore**. The prewar history is documented in Tony Lethbridge's book and a post war version is due sometime. However, if you want to chase up details for yourself - here are the newspapers for Exeter.

Newspapers : (131) Exeter Post Jan 1970 - date; (132) The Western Times 1929 - Jan 1952; (133); The Western Times and Gazette July 1952 - date; (134) Football Express 1929 - Sept 1939 & Oct 1951 - Dec 1954; (135) Devon & Exeter Daily Gazette 1929 - Feb 1932; (136) Devon & Exeter Gazette March 1932 - June 1952.

**Farnham** : Tracks: **Aldershot Boxhall Lane** & **Aldershot Tongham**.

Newspaper : (137) The Herald for Farnham, Haselmere etc.; (138) Farnham Herald May 1950 - date; (139) Farnham Herald - Camp Edition 1928 - July 1965; (140) Surrey and Hants News 1928 - July 1965.

**Fleetwood** : Track : **Highbury Avenue**. The enigma of speedway. A track which flourished briefly 1948 to 1951. It has captivated many, especially programme and badge collectors.

Newspaper : (141) The Fleetwood Chronicle 1948 - date. This is held on microfilm at Colindale. Has meeting reports 1948 but no real match details.

**Grays** : Track : **Arena Es sex**. A most modern of venues. When it opened it was even more novel than usual with no safety fence at the track edge.

Newspapers : (142) Grays and Thurrock Express; (143) Thurrock Gazette.

## Read about the history of Stoke Speedway in "The Potter". 6

### 1929 English (Northern) Dirt Track League

Continuing the details of this obscure league. This table, compiled by Trevor James is the same as that published in Vol 1. No. 4 but including Warrington and Manchester White City results. We produce the last of 4 tables produced by Trevor in the next volume and in this edition we provide a table of results and match dates. If you have any heat details for any of the 1929 English League please pass them to Jim Henry who will compile them into a database. We will update this if necessary.

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
White City Manches	20	18	0	2	773	411	36
Leeds	23	17	1	5	777	589	35
Preston	23	15	0	8	770	603	30
Halifax	23	14	1	8	721	653	29
Rochdale	24	11	1	12	708	734	23
Leicester Stadium	24	10	1	13	684	748	21
Newcastle Brough Pk	20	10	0	10	622	610	20
Liverpool	20	10	0	10	580	598	20
Salford	23	10	0	13	654	708	20
Sheffield	21	6	1	14	507	741	13
Middlesbrough	20	6	0	14	503	669	12
Barnsley	22	8	0	16	529	755	12
Warrington	19	5	1	13	484	703	11

### TEAM COLOURS

**Sydney Dobson** of Swaffham has produced a list of team colours for the 1929 Southern League teams. Coventry - red and green; Crystal Palace - Orange; Hall Green (Birmingham) - Claret and Blue; Harringay - yellow;

Lea Bridge - black and white; Perry Barr (Birmingham) - pink and blue; Southampton - blue; Stamford Bridge - blue and white; Wembley - red and white; White City, London - red, white and yellow and Wimbledon - red.

Any offers for the English (Northern Dirt Track) League team colours for the same season ? What did the teams of 1930 use for colours ? Edinburgh is reported as having tartan in their colours that season.

On the same theme, maybe somebody would like to tell us a bit about early race jackets with team motifs. The first, we think, was Crystal Palace or was it Wembley or even Belle Vue. Most other teams used race jackets with numbers rather than motifs at first.

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### Roll of Honour

Roy EATHER	Australian	Exeter	Exeter	.03.53	
.03.53					
Jack EAVES	Australian		Bathhurst		
.54					
Frank ELMS	24 Australian		Sydney Ry.	21.12.35	21.12.35
Bertil ERIKSSON	32 Swedish	Stockholm	H-YStockholm	H-Y	
29.09.50	24 English		West Ham		West Ham
06.07.53					
06.07.53					
Tom FARNDON	25 English	New Cross	New Cross	28.08.35	
30.08.35					
Craig FEATHERBY	English	Milton K.	Peterborough	16.09.83	
16.09.83					
Ronald Keith FERGUSON	27 Australian		Townsville	10.09.48	16.09.48
Lex FIELDING	Australian		Bundaberg		
23.01.71					
Malcolm FLOOD	English	Norwich	Poole	02.04.56	
02.04.56					
Neils FLOOR	20 Danish		Silkeborg	01.07.51	01.07.51
FORNAL	Polish	Rzeszow	Rzeszow		
.05.78					
John FOUNTAIN	N Zealand				
.51					
John GARMSON	N Zealand		Nottingham		
.31					
Wayne GARRATT	23 English		Newcastle		Newcastle
13.09.92					
28.09.92					
Jimmy GAVROS	21 Australian		Adelaide	23.01.70	23.01.70
Joseph GILBERT	17 Australian		Ingham	18.08.28	19.08.28
Norman GILLESPIE					
Ernie GREENALL	English	Unattached	Copenhagen	26.04.29	28.04.29
Gordon GUASCO	29 Australian	Poole	Liverpool NSW		
11.70					
Dusty HAIGH	30 English	Hackney	Hackney	15.05.36	15.05.36
Jim HANSBURY	29 Australian		Sydney S.G.	07.03.53	11.03.53
Vic HARDING	27 English	Hackney	Hackney	08.06.79	09.06.79

Frank HARRIS 08.12.30	20	Australian	Sydney S.Gn	06.12.30		
Stan HART 25.08.37		English	Belle Vue Birmingham HG	25.08.37		
John HASTINGS .07.30		English	Leeds Leeds	.07.30		
Martin HEWLETT Buzz HIBBERD 30.12.30		English Australian	Newc'le G. Wentworth	30.12.30		
Bob HIBBERT		Australian	Sydney S.G.	10.05.46	10.05.46	
Trevor HOBBS		Australian	Claremont	20.02.70	20.02.70	
James HODGES 13.06.59		Australian	Rockhampton	13.06.59		
Kevin HOLDEN	26	English	Poole Poole	27.04.77	27.04.77	
Barry HOPKIN	27	Australian	Sydney Sh.G.	13.11.65	17.11.65	
Bob HOWES .11.51	21	English	Unattached Norwich	.11.51		
Ivor HUGHES 23.08.66	27	Welsh	Cradley H. Cradley Heath	20.08.66		
Alan HUNT .02.57		English	Birmingham South Africa	.02.57		
Ian HUNTER	21	English	Wimbledon Iwade	12.04.87	12.04.87	

### A SLAP ON THE WRIST

Glynn Shailes berates Jim Henry's comments about the boring Tamworth race jacket. Westy Westwood's Hounds had one with blue and white halves and a red leaping hound. OK so the 1949 one wasn't boring and Jim is prepared to admit he is wrong but the Tammies red T on the black background is poor.

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### TEAM NAMES 2

In a previous article I looked at team names. This article will round up with a few more and the announcement of my all time favourite.

Animals are a favourite team name. Dogs feature as Bulldogs (Bristol, Plymouth, Hall Green Birmingham) and Hounds (Tamworth). Big cats are also very popular. Lions were adopted by Cowdenbeath, Hackney, Wembley, Glasgow (1939), Leicester and Paisley while Tigers have raced out of Glasgow, Sheffield, Middlesbrough (as Teesside), Middlesbrough and Shelbourne Park in Dublin. Panthers have had a home in Wigan (Woodhouse Lane), Bradford (Odsal and Greenfields) and are currently residing at Peterborough. Bears came from Middlesbrough at one time. The junior version of many of these animals, Cubs, started at Cradley Heath and could be found jointly at Wolverhampton and Long Eaton as Shuttle Cubs. Cheetahs have a lair at Oxford.

Less fierce (?) animals are Wolves (Hackney, Walthamstow, Wolverhampton), Wolverines (Wolverhampton), Flying Foxes (Brafied), Badgers (Brafied), Rabbits (High Beech), Hares (Wombwell) and Lambs (New Cross). Scottish training track Bothwell had the Bulls while Belle Vue have the Colts and Doncaster the more mature Stallions. The horse shoe on Leicester's old body colour suggests a horsey connection with the name Hunters. A hunter is a type of horse I think.

Mythical beasts also feature with Dragons at Cardiff, Neath, Newport and, most oddly, Doncaster.

The insect world has not been ignored and the most famous must be the Bees. This has been used by Coventry since 1948 and by Dunroby (Belfast) in 1950. The Wasps started out at Wolverhampton and ended up at Newport where they have recently reestablished a colony. Hornets once had a nest at nearby Rochdale.

Birds of prey, raptors to give them a generic name, are popular. Hawks were based at West Ham and at Hackney until ousted by Kestrels from Crayford. Falcons have been based at Exeter for years while Eagles have nested at Motherwell, Chapelizod (Dublin), Weymouth and Eastbourne. Other birds include Robins (Swindon), Magpies (Newcastle), Ravens (Reading), Roosters (Rye House), Canaries (Harringay) and Gulls are at St. Austell.

Unspecified Flyers have been based in Fleetwood and Barrow.

Occupations have been a favourite. The only current artisans are the Potters at Stoke. There have been Glaziers (Crystal Palace), Cutlers (Sheffield), Colliers (Wombwell), Foresters (High Beech), Academic Dons (Wimbledon), Hatters (Luton). Senior citizens were based at Stamford Bridge and were known as The Pensioners. Belle Vue were to call

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(This article concludes on page 12)

their British League Division Two 1968 team The Babes but the Control Board would have none of it.

Nearing the end we have geographical names in the Brummies (Birmingham), Northern (Odsal Bradford), Teessiders (Middlesbrough) and a 1930s Belle Vue Junior team called the Merseysiders who were based at Liverpool. The Islanders are located on the Isle of Wight which was known as Vectis to the Romans.

Weather, a great topic of conversation, has given us the Scorchers at Weymouth in the mid 1950s and more recently Lightning has been flashing at Linlithgow which was, for a season, called Lathallan.

Colours too have been used. Birmingham, it seems, once had The Blues. Continuing in the football vein we had United at Cradley at one time too.

At the start of the first article I said I would tell you my favourite oddball name. There are two contenders for the title and the runner up is The Chads

which was used by Liverpool in the post war period. Chad was a wartime cartoon character of a nose and eyes looking over a brick wall and it is, in my opinion, a daft name for a team.

Winner, however, is The Lizods. What a Lizod is is anybody's guess (Feel free to advise or suggest the reason - most amusing will be published) and was the team name used by Chapelizod in Dublin for one season only.

If I have missed any team names - please let me know and I'll add them to the list.

## WANT TO SEE YOUR WORK IN PRINT?

**Peter Oakes, The Old Bakery, 4 The Green, Yaxley, Peterborough. PE7 3LT. Tel. 01733 243988** writes to tell us that Sportsdata Books are interested in publishing new speedway books. If you think you have a possible publication for consideration then please forward a synopsis of the book, 12 sample pages and a stamped addressed envelope to Sportsdata Books at the above address. He is interested to continue publishing books in a similar format to the "Who's Who of British Speedway" and the "Ultimate Speedway Guide 1999", that is with full colour front and back covers, professionally printed and wire bound.

He is also interested in publishing a major volume on the history of the sport, probably in Encyclopaedia form, which would be a hard back publication on sale in the Millennium. If you think you could provide information for this publication then please contact us outlining your specialist field.

It is his intention to work closely with enthusiastic researchers to provide a full and comprehensive history of the sport but he accepts that this is a long-term project. (Fax 01733 243790.)

**12 !!!!! GET  
YOUR SLEEVES ROLLED UP!!!!**

As ever we give you some suggestions for research work. The venues are pretty hazy and there is scope for some original work. If any take your fancy, give Jim Henry a call and he'll help you as much as he can.

**Bolton**, probably better known as a football hotbed, had speedway in the pioneer year at a stadium known as **Raikes Park**. They opened sometime in 1928 and entered a short lived team in the 1929 Northern or English Dirt Track League.

**Salford**, the track in the town (now to all intents and purposes a part of Manchester) immortalised in the song "Dirty Old Town", is yet another track which opened in 1928. It was an early base for Aussie star Ron Johnson and pioneer promoter John S. Hoskins. Albion Speedway entered a team in the

1929 Northern or English Dirt Track League but ran into financial trouble towards the end of that season. The local Salford paper does give meeting reports.

**Seaforth** is an area of Liverpool and staged speedway at the local stadium in the 1930s. It is mentioned in passing in Motorcycling. Full details of its history are in need of some digging.

**Stockport (Hazel Grove)** south of Manchester, had its own track in 1937. Yet again it is given passing mention in the Motorcycling magazine of the day. The stadium was a greyhound stadium located between two huge brick railway bridges to the east of the road south out of the town. The Stockport papers don't carry anything about **Hazel Grove**, so where details will come from is a bit of a worry. Maybe there is a local history society able to help.

The big **Audenshaw** track in Manchester is an interesting project for someone. It was a bit of a danger venue with a bad record of fatalities. Some contemporary photographs confirm the track missed bits of a safety fence. It staged meetings outwith the ACU because of the lack of a complete fence and many of the riders used aliases. An example is Dan De Lyon. In 1929 the ACU banned every rider who took part in a Sunday meeting at Audenshaw. Some apologised and were returned to the fold other just kept going with the alias on the unlicensed circuit.

Luton is the home of the famous Luton boather hat but in speedway terms the most famous person we know raced at **Luton** was Tommy Price (the Wembley man, not the Liverpool based rider.) This circa 1935 venue is in need of research as we don't know much about it.

Our next issue will encourage you to think about work on **Rochester** in Kent, **Blackpool** which is supposed to have had two tracks, **Droylsden** near Manchester, **Northampton** which had two venues and **Smallford** which is located to just to the north of London.

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## TRACK RECORD UPDATE

We continue to serialise John Jarvis' records of tracks. As ever we welcome any updates. These must be accompanied by details of the source of the information. (Errata Aldershot Boxhall Lane 8 meetings 1929.)

AMMANFORD: (Wales) Long track venue used 12.9.1970. Need details.

ASPATRIA : Brayton Domain Speedway near Aspatria. Track length : Not known. 1st meeting : Not known. Years of Operation : 1971 as a training track. Located in a quarry on Forestry Commission land. (N)

AUDENSHAW : Ashton Old Road, Audenshaw, Manchester. Track Length : 880 yards 2 inches. 1st meeting : 3rd March 1928. Years of Operation : 1928 -

1931 Open meetings only. The track was originally a trotting track known as The Snipe. It was later used as a greyhound stadium about 1932 before it was redeveloped for housing. For other snippets see page 13. (U)

AYCLIFFE : Alternatively Newton Aycliffe. : Aycliffe Trading Estate, County Durham, Near Darlington. Track Length : 370 yards. 1st Meeting : Not known. Years of Operation : 1952 Training Track. The grass inner surface of the dog track was used for a demonstration in 1948. The track was built in 1952 using power station ash from Darlington Power Station. It was subsequently used for stock car racing. (U).

AYR : Dam Park, Ayr. Track Length : Not Known. 1st Meeting 19th July 1937. Year of Operation : 1937 Open (2 meetings 19.7 & 18.8.) A cinder track was laid for the events promoted by the Stobart Brothers. Second meeting featured a Workington v Lancaster team match. The stadium was later used for athletics. (N).

BARNET : Practice Track used 1929. Further details needed.

BARNET : May's Lane, Barnet (Bottom of Barnet Hill.) Track Length : Not Known. 1st Meeting : Not Known. Years of Operation: 1928 - 1938 Open meetings. A wee bit of confusion as to the status in the early years. May have been two tracks here, a grass track and a dirt track speedway. May have been known as Watford Speedway in 1938. Used on Sunday afternoons. Some local newspaper detective work needed.

BARNSLEY : Lundwood Stadium, Nr Barnsley. Track Length 1928 - Over 500 yards. 1930 380 yards. 1st Meeting : 29th May 1928. Years of Operation : 1928 Open; 1929 English Dirt Track League; 1930 Northern League.

Reportedly built on a hillside with the safety fence built using turf removed from the line of the track. Closed mid season 1930.

BALLYMENA : Showground. Track Length : 440 yards. 1st Meeting : 13th July 1982. Year of Operation : 1982. One meeting staged at this Irish venue which was a stock car and hot rod track. Ivan Mauger Select 38 Cradley Heath 40.

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BARROW : Location not known. Track Length : Not known. 1st Meeting : Not known. Years of Operation : 1952. Training Track. Cliff Hindle, a rider himself and father of Barrow and Workington rider Ian Hindle, was involved in this venture. Further details needed. (N)

BARROW : Holker Street, Barrow in Furness. Track length : 415 yards. 1st Meeting : 19th June 1930 \* A week before a grass track event had been staged at the stadium to see what interest there was in speedway.

Years of Operation : 1930 Open; 1972 Open Then British league Division Two (BL2). 1973 - 1974 BL2. Built round the Barrow F. C. football pitch the Holker Street track was wiped out by stadium development in 1976.

BARROW : Little Park, Roose, Barrow in Furness. Track Length : 0.2 Mile. 1st Meeting : 1st June 1931. Years of Operation : 1931 - 1932. Open. Stadium was on a site used by the local rugby league club. Now a housing site. It opened, was closed down almost immediately due to track problems, and reopened once the ACU was happy with the venue. (U)

BARROW : Park Road Industrial Estate, Barrow in Furness. Track Length : 300 yards. 1st Meeting : 16th August 1977. Years of Operation : 1977 Open; 1978 National League; 1981 Home for homeless Berwick Bandits 18.4 - 6.6); 1983 Training Track; 1984 Open; 1985 Open. Since used on informal basis by Grant McDonald. Team nickname : (Furness) Flyers and Blackhawks. Track has now gone. (U).

BELFAST : Dunmore Park, Alexandra Park Avenue, Antrim Road, Belfast, BT15 3ED. Track length : 316 yards. 1st Meeting : 20th May 1950. Years of Operation : 1950; Open; 1968 - Open. Team Name : Belfast Bees. Built inside a greyhound stadium. There are reports of meetings in the some of the contemporary speedway press. (U).

BELFAST : Gibson Park. Address not known. Track length : 440 yards. 1st Meeting : 1947. Years of Operation : 1947 Open. 1947 Training Track. Hazy daisy on this. Need some work as we said in an earlier issue.

BELFAST : Windsor Park. Address not known. Track length : Not known. 1st Meeting : 29th September 1928. Year of Operation : 1928 Open. Three meetings known about in 1928. Norrie Isbister raced here and faced Fay Taylour in a match race. Norrie hated the place!!!This is another in need of a bit of hard digging. Did it run any other seasons ? (U)

BELLE VUE : Greyhound Stadium, Kirkmanshume Lane, Gorton, Manchester. (We make an exception to our rules for Belle Vue - they are a bit special and deserve special treatment.) Track Length : 440 yards. 1st Meeting 28th July 1928. Years of Operation : 1928 Open; 1988 - 90 British league; 1991 - 94 British League Division One; 1995 - 96 Premier League; 1997 - 1999 Elite League. This the original Belle Vue track which lay dormant as a speedway venue for fifty years before called to serve the sport again. Wrongly identified as the first greyhound stadium to open in the UK. (U).

15 BELLE VUE : Zoo Gardens, Hyde Road, Manchester. Track Length : Varied from 426 yards to 416 yards over the years. 1st Meeting : 23rd March 1929. Years of Operation : 1929 English Dirt Track League, 1930 Northern League; 1931 Northern and Southern Leagues; 1932 - 33 National League (NL); 1934 : National League Division 1 and 2 (NL1&2); 1935 - 36 (NL) 1937 NL and Provincial League; 1938 NL and Reserve League; 1939 NL1 & 2 and ACU Northern Cup; 1940 - 1945 Open; 1946 (NL); 1947 - 56 NL1; 1957 - 64 NL; 1965 - 1967 British League (BL); 1968 - 1969 British League

Divisions 1(BL1) and 2; 1970 - 74 (BL1); 1975 - 87 (BL). A glorious history. Sadly missed. Now the site of a car auction operation.

**BERWICK** : Berrington Lough Stadium, Arncroft, Near Berwick Upon Tweed. Track Length : 253m. 1st Meeting 24th April 1982. Years of Operation : 1982 - 90 National League; 1991 British League Division One; 1992 British League Division Two; 1993 Open; 1994 British League Division Three; 1995 Amateur League. Built to replace the Berwick Bandits home at Shielfield, this deep rural venue closed when speedway returned to Berwick. Now just mouldering away. Had a small training track immediately to the east of the main stadium track. (Length 120 yards operated 1989 - 91 and 1993.) (N).

**BERWICK** : Shielfield Park, Tweedmouth, Berwick Upon Tweed. Track Length : 443 yards. 1st Meeting : 18th May 1968. Years of Operation : 1968 - 74 British League Division Two; 1975 - 76 New National League; 1977 - 80 National League; 1995 - Noise Test. 1996 - Conference League; 1997 - 98 Premier League. A big track round the Berwick Rangers football pitch. Originally operated by the Taylor Family then David Fairbairn. Closed after a dispute with Berwick Rangers F. C. Reopened by Mike and Yevette Hope. (U).

**BETHERSDEN** : near Ashford, Kent. Track Length : 320 yards. 1st Meeting : Not Known. Years of Operation : 1968 - 1971 Training Track. Opened by Reg Luckhurst. Closed down due to noise complaints. (N).

**BIRMINGHAM** : Birmingham Wheels Project, Bordsley Green, Birmingham. Track Length : 330 metres. 1st Meeting : 2nd September 1984. Years of Operation : 1984 Open; 1985 - 86 National League. The stadium was meant to be used for a number of motor sport uses. Still in use as a stock car track and features on cable television. (N).

**BIRMINGHAM** : Motordrome - Greet, Colebrook Road, Birmingham. Track Length : 350 yards. 1st Meeting : 6th August 1928. Year of Operation : 1928 Open. Not used for many meetings in 1928 the track was built by the Birmingham Motor Cycle Club in the grounds of the BSA factory and used as a test track for the factory dirt track bikes. (U).

### **Support Britain's only weekly Speedway Magazine**

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YOU HELP ??**

**16 CAN**

We will provide names of those searching for information. If the person has not been mentioned in **The Speedway Researcher** in earlier editions we will also give their address. Please ask for specific information if you can. This makes it much easier to assist you.

Joint Editor **Jim Henry** would like the help of someone with a knowledge of London. Can anyone tell me the areas in which each London track was based in relation to the British Library Catalogue. The information is needed to allow the compilation of the newspaper information for the London tracks.

**Chris Byles** is looking for information on the "Chipchase" JAP. We think this is a normal JAP in a frame made by Mr Auddy Chipchase - in the post war era umpteen folk made frames - but maybe somebody could do us an article about frame builders.

**Keith Farman** is looking for a photograph of Jimmy Golding who rode for Yarmouth 1952 - 53.

**Bob Ozanne** (See Our Friends Out There) is seeking heat details for Coventry v Belle Vue 26.5.1932.

**Alan Bates** is still seeking heat details for Walthamstow's away matches at Aldershot 6.9.50; Dublin Eagles 23.5.51; Wolverhampton 31.8.51 to complete his records of the Wolves history.

**Bernard Brinkley** is seeking information about the plastic badges which featured portrait pictures of speedway riders. He would like to know who produced them and the period of time over which they were produced. Bernard is also interested in Ipswich Speedway, especially the 1950's era.

**Mike Craven** is seeking details of Angus McGuire (came from Hamilton, Scotland was a wartime paratrooper and post war Glasgow junior), Jeff Crawford, Russ Pursehouse, Alf Parker, Ray Harker, Archie Cowells and Geoff Culshaw, after Fleetwood closed in 1952.

**Michael Gardner 65 Lindley Street, Norwich NR1 2HF** is looking for Date (D), Place (P) and Country (C) of birth for the following riders : John Mills DPEngland; Roger Mills BPC; Peter Moore P; Gote Nordin DPSweden; Paul O'Neil DPC; Brian Paddington DPC; Nils Paulsen DPNorway; Geoff Penniket P; Tony Pilotto P; John Poyser P; Alan Rivett PC; Jim Ryman DPC; Alan Smith DPC; Mitch Shirra D; John Stokes P; Peter Swain DPC; Peter Taylor D; Roy Trigg DPEngland; Doug White D; Eric Minall DPEngland; Tommy Sweetman DPEngland; Graham Coombes DPC; Don Smith DPC; Maury McDermott DPC; Sandy McGillivray DPC; Les McGillivray DPEngland; Ray Cresp DPAustralia; Gordon McGregor Dunfermline, Scotland; Brian Osborn PC; Ken Vale PC; Ken Adams DPEngland; Bill Andrew DPNew Zealand.

**17 Research Progress**

The maifesto in Vol. 1 No.1 set up a list of tasks. Here we look at the progress to date and indicate who is doing the work.

1. The establishment of a record of all tracks which staged speedway racing in Great Britain and Ireland. The record would include details of track address,

years of operation, details of track dimensions and the promotions organising the events staged at the track.

John Jarvis of Bristol is working on this. John's fine records are being serialised in **The Speedway Researcher**. Thank you John.

2. The establishment of a map record of the location of each track on a common map base. (Suggest a 10,000 Ordnance Survey base.) Again John Jarvis has been building up this record.

3. The establishment of a record of all meetings (to include rain offs). It is suggested this record would provide brief details of day, date, result of principal event. Details of the source/s of meeting information would be required in support of this record. Barry Stephenson of Workington is working on this task and has a fair few thousand meetings on record.

4. The establishment of a record of riders who took part in meetings. It is suggested this is compiled on a meeting by meeting basis if possible. It is suggested that an attempt is made to obtain a photograph of each rider. Nobody has made a claim to compile this record. Any offers ?

5. The establishment of a record of photographs of speedway racing and riders published in contemporary newspapers and from non speedway published sources. (Copies can be expensive so it is suggested the record notes the publication title, date, page number, and a description of the contents.) Colin Parker of Kenilworth.

6. The establishment of a record of programmes issued for events. This would indicate whether, for example, new or reissued programmes were used. Mick Bird is working on this. Details of Mick's record system will be published in the next edition.

7. The establishment of a record of badges. Robin Playstead offered to do this task.

8. The establishment of a record of film of speedway racing. No one has offered to do this. Do you want this task ?

9. The establishment of a record of videos of speedway racing. As 8 above nobody seems interested in compiling this record. Do you want this task ?

10. The establishment of a record of machines used for speedway racing. We have some interest but need volunteer/s to increase this aspect.

11. The establishment of a Roll of Honour which would carry the names of those riders killed or fatally injured on speedway tracks. Editors are keeping this record. It is being serialised in **The Speedway Researcher**. In the next issue or so we will reiterate who is researching what.

**FRIENDS OUT THERE**

**18 OUR**

PHILIP PIKE Arthur House, Tai Arthur, Penisarwaen,

Caernarfon, Gwynedd, LL55 3PN

Telephone : 0286 870213

(Update 12.2.2005 Philip sadly died some time ago)

Philip is based in the depths of North Wales but is interested in gathering the records of Birmingham Brummies from 1946 to 1986. He is currently concentrating on 1952 to 1956 and attempting to find out who scored some missing points. (The editors have referred Philip to Peter Morrish's book on the history of the post war speedway leagues as a first port of call.) Philip is trying to account for 23 points 1952, 30 points 1953, 53 points 1954, 32 points 1955 and 51 points 1956. He is looking for details of the meetings raced by an Arthur Duncan in 1956.

IAN MOULTRAY

24 Moredun Park Gardens, Edinburgh.

Telephone : 0131 666 2826

Ian's passion is Edinburgh's Speedway History and has been heavily involved in working on the history of the tracks used in the city from Marine Gardens to Powderhall. and elsewhere. Co-researcher, with Jim Henry, of the Marine Gardens book, Ian has been busy working on the history of the Edinburgh Monarchs 1948 - 1954 era and is busy working on the 1960s follow on. Once that is done Ian will move on to the Powderhall era. Ian has been responsible for The New Monarchist (which flourished briefly a few years ago and is now out of print) and the Edinburgh Monarchs Handbooks which have appeared annually since 1994. He has been heavily involved in all the Tales From Scottish Shale so far and forthcoming publications of this. On top of all this Ian is working on the history of Ashfield as a mere sideline when he has nothing else to do.

## TAMWORTH PRE WAR UPDATE

**Roger Beaman** considers the 1932 - 33 Tamworth Speedway was licensed but Mile Oak was not. Mile Oak - 1932 17.07; 1.08; 4.09; 23.10. 1933 - 5.06; 11.06; 2.07. 1934 - 27.05; 3.06; 10.06. Tamworth - 1932 1.08 (abn); 7.08; 14.08. 28 -23 v Nottigham; 21.08 (abn); 28.08; 2.10.(postponed); 9.10. 1933 - 17.04; 23.04 (abn); 30.04; 7.05; 14.05 (Golden Helmet); 21.05 Arthur Ryder's Team v Tom McDonald's Team; 28.05 (Big 6); 25.06.(abn); 2.07; 9.07; 30.07. To check other years. Source Tamworth Herald in Tamworth District Library.

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**Correction :Deborah Cherry Email: dcherry@court0.demon.co.uk  
Havers\* and Blethers\*\***

According to the journal "Motor Cycling" 20.6.1928 the Daily Mirror put up a prize of £10 for a new name to replace Dirt Track Racing. The ideas included : Dracking; Turfing, Rough Road Racing, Slideascoot Racing, Slagscrapping,, Cinderskiing, and Terraracing. Can anyone in Colindale have a look in the Daily Mirror and find out any of the other suggestions ?

Graham Fraser has been in touch with veteran Aussie Stan Lupton who rode for Plymouth, amongst others, in the early 1930s.

Jack Williams, our academic researcher from Liverpool John Moores

University, tells us he has found some details of speedway companies which are held at The Public Record Office at Kew in London. Records of Belle Vue for 1935 show a total income from gate receipts of £15,214-11-4. Start fees for riders were £2741-14-0; prize money £3570; bonuses £81-10-0 and riders' expenses £1184-10-0. The speedway manager was paid £1250 - not a bad income in that era. Jack has also dug out information about Dirt Track Speedways Ltd which shows Sprouts Elder as a director and answered a mystery of who an event a Celtic Park was named after. Until Jack's letter the Pearson, of "Pearson's Big 8" was a real mystery. Seems William Benjamin Pearson was an accountant from Essex and a director of Dirt Track Speedways Ltd. Unfortunately many of the records of defunct companies have been disposed of.

The Poole v Motherwell match of 9th August 1954 featured 2 dead heats. Norman Strachan and Cyril Cooper deadheaded in heat 8 sharing 3 points while in heat 14 Ken Middleditch and Ron Phillips tied for first splitting five points between them. Is this a unique happening ?

(For the benefit of those south of the border and further afield \* A haver is normally equated in Scotland to someone who talks rubbish but a haver is actually a non biased expert court witness - \*\*A blether is someone who talks a lot (usually a lot of rubbish) ergo blethers are just stories.

According to ex-Monarch Gordon Mitchell, Igor Baranov (see page 2) was a one time Scottish Junior known as Jack Jones. Seems Gordon met him in the speedway office at Stoke in 1961 and realised he had raced against the "Russian" on the Scottish tracks in the early/mid 1950s.

**Next Issue Published December 1999. Copy deadline is the middle of November 1999. Remember we are pleased to help you tell your history story - don't be shy - others will be interested.**

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