



The New Boy in the Pits

He was born Raymond Brown, but Wembley's 60,000 crowd call him Buster. He comes to the game from Cycle Speedway. He's the one out of a thousand riders who have made the grade to the dirt track.



All Ready for the First Race

He got the engine from Split Waterman. Buster repays him from his earnings. They average £28-£30 a week, and won't diminish now that he's getting an occasional chance of riding in the National League.

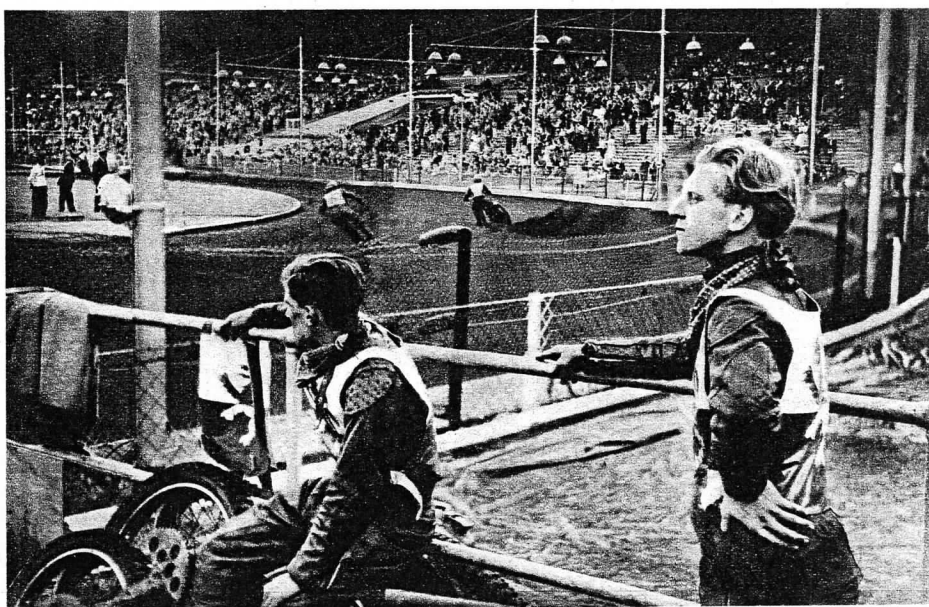
BUSTER BROWN: NEW SPEEDWAY ACE

EIGHTEEN-YEAR-OLD Buster Brown belongs to the generation that, until it finally subsides into some form of government service, always hopes to lead a life of adventure as a speedway rider. The profession combines all the advantages which were found by an older age in such callings as piracy, being a Bow Street Runner, or a job with the Fire Brigade.

But slim, golden-haired Buster, the only child of the manager of Lyons's Perivale Depot, proved to be a rugged individualist. The Wembley Lions could roar, the grandmothers could knit themselves sweaters with "God Save Bill Kitchen" embroidered across the front, the 100,000 crowd at the World Championship could raise the loudest cheer heard at any sporting meeting—Buster Brown wasn't interested. It wasn't that he had a soul above sport. He liked to watch ice-hockey—when he wasn't playing goal for his school or standing by as reserve for the Middlesex Schoolboys. And in the summer he swam.

He was a normal cheery schoolboy with an interest in mechanical things, which was to lead him through the Ealing Arts School to a desk in the drawing-office of a ventilating engineering firm. You wouldn't have given an ice-cream cone for his chance of becoming a household word before he was out of his teens. But one day Buster and his friend David Jones set off on an evening's pleasuring with no very clear idea as to how it should be passed. Buster opted for the cinema: David wanted

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The Other Chap's Turn

When you're a Junior, you spend the first half of the programme watching the big boys do their stuff. Today it's Tommy Price's turn. Buster's watched him score his sixteenth successive win.



The Backroom Boys

The mechanics don't get the cheers, but they do a lot of work. When you tune up your machine daily you're grateful for tips.

to show his friend this speedway racing which was causing such a furore on the other side of the fence. They tossed up, and David won. They went to the speedway races: and, spiritually speaking at least, Buster has never since left the home he found there.

He began to make himself worthy of his new love by throwing himself body and soul (chiefly body) into that junior imitation of the real thing, Cycle Speedway. At fifteen he formed his own club, first with a nucleus of three, then with a full-scale team of eight. His boys saw to it that the inhabitants of Perivale enjoyed the privilege of living dangerously. The team, frequently to be seen broadsiding *en bloc* round the corner of Empire Road, was less than popular with the traffic authorities. When Buster went into hospital with hernia—an occupational disease of cycle speedway—there was a breathing space which many welcomed. By the time he was well again, his team had disintegrated. A less staunch character would have given up, and sur-



The First Corn

The most important moment of the four-lap race. If you win a prize. Buster heads the field with his brilliant



Here are the Idols—

Split Waterman (Christian name Squire) is Buster's hero and pal. Learned to ride with the Army in Italy on a track made of cinders from Vesuvius. Became a speedway ace in record time.

rendered to the cinema on his next afternoon off. Not so Buster. The day his convalescence ended, he joined the Wembley Panthers as reserve rider. Within a fortnight he was captaining the team.

Cycle Speedway is perhaps the most highly-organised sport for boys in which the lads themselves cope with the staffwork. On bomb-sites and building spaces the dirt tracks are set down, the teams recruited, the League programmes arranged. On a small scale it is a replica of the greatest drawing-card in big-time sport. In the Wembley and District Cycle Speedway League, crowds of 500 spend their Saturday afternoons watching the boldest boys on the fastest boneshakers. Buster zoomed to the top. He was highest scorer in the preliminary rounds, on the way to the final of the British Riders' Championship. In the final he was a disappointment. This failure at the critical hour has happened to him before, and since: the result, probably, of too intense a concentration which prevented him doing



in the First Race

lead here, you've every chance of collecting points—and team-mate Den Cosby hot on his heels, at 45 m.p.h.

himself natural justice. Time and increased experience are probable cures for this failing.

But though there were set-backs, it was generally recognised in Cycle Speedway that Buster was the boy with the future. He captained the national team against Holland. And then he graduated, as many do, into having a cockshy at the real thing on the dirt-track itself. Now, everyone who can ride a motor-cycle at speed (especially every demobilised despatch rider) believes he has a future in speedway. Experience has proved that nine hundred and ninety-nine out of a thousand have no gift for the game—once issued with light-framed, gearless machines which are so different from anything they have known before.

Buster was the thousandth. At Dickie Case's Hoddesden school for speedway riders he paid his £2 to do 32 laps under intensive constructive criticism; indeed, he paid two weeks running. Wembley's speedway manager and major talent scout, Alec

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Buster Comes Clean

In spite of the handkerchief knotted round your face when in action, you finish looking like a coalheaver. First job in the minutes to spare between races is to freshen up.



—And There are the Worshippers

They scream above the roar of the machines, whirl rattles and spend the winter knitting pullovers demonstrating their loyalty to the club. Many read twelve speedway magazines a week.



*The Girl Friend Gets What the Fans Would Swoon For—
A special smile for Helen Jones. She never misses a meeting. Generally she goes with Buster's mother, who couldn't bear to watch when her son first took up dirt-track riding.*

Jackson, liked what he saw of his form, and on the following Thursday he was given a trial for Wembley. It was a horrible day, and the track was in grim condition. Buster fell off five times—but his form in the intervals had been sufficiently good to get him an engagement.

He started on the Wembley payroll on Christmas Eve, and made his first public appearance on Good Friday against West Ham. It turned out to be a flying start. He scored five points out of a possible six, and had the beating of Wally Green, an ex-Third Division Match Race champion. Since then progress has been maintained. Buster has had the advantage of the help and encouragement of Split Waterman, who has provided him with bike leathers and the old engine that once won the London Riders Championship. Buster repays him from his earnings on the race track, which average some £28 a week. Nice money for a boy in his teens.

So far his best performance has been a maximum achieved at Wimbledon on Whit Monday—despite a heavy attack of hay fever. That is a feat which gives colour to the theory that this boy has the steadiness of temperament, the nerve and the skill that mark him out as one of the most promising juniors in the game, and about the likeliest to succeed to the lineage of Kitchen, Price and Waterman.

Not only is he serving a distinguished apprenticeship in the Junior League, but—due to injuries among the seniors—he has frequently been pressed into service in the National League itself. Here his form has retained its bright glint of promise. He hasn't allowed himself to be overawed by quick promotion. His zeal for battle remains his most remarkable and valuable quality. For Buster Brown the green light is shining brightly.

DENZIL BATCHELOR



—And the Fans Get as Much as is Good For Them

He used to write his name a hundred times on Thursday nights—now he's learned a trick or two. He generally keeps away from the wire fence separating the pit from the fans. After the meeting, hundreds attend a Supporters Club dance in the hope of saying 'Hullo' to the rider they'll dream about tonight.