

1957 – A snapshot review first published in '50 Years of Cycle Speedway' by The British Cycle Speedway Council in 1996.

1957

Film Star Opens New Track

On 27 April 1957, television and film star Miss Shirley Eaton officially opened Ruislip Aces new track. A large crowd, in the region of 2,000, was present. Miss Eaton was kept very busy signing autographs, and the start of the meeting was delayed a little. Miss Eaton pulled the gates to start the first race.

The home side were entertaining Hillingdon Stars in a league match. The Aces started with a 5-1, and were leading by 10 points at the interval. There was a break during the

CALL TO SCRAP NATIONAL TEAM CHAMPIONSHIP

An interesting article appeared in the October issue of Cycle Speedway Gazette. Reader Chris Lymn called for the national team championship to be scrapped, to be replaced by a County championship. Lymn argued that travelling would be easier if more clubs were involved; many teams had little chance of progressing past the early rounds but had one or two riders who were good enough to represent their county; clubs were encouraged to keep riding strengths on an equal par and county matches were popular. Finally it would stop clubs strengthening their teams (often at the expense of smaller clubs) just to compete in the national team championship.

Editor's note - 40 years later, in 1996, a Counties League was introduced but the national team championship remained.

Toffs Tops in Glasgow

Undoubtedly team of the year as far as Glasgow racing is concerned were the Knightwood Toffs. Formed shortly before the start of the 1957 season, the Toffs were unbeaten all season. The nearest they came to a defeat was a seven point win over the Craighton Eagles on the big Rouken Glen circuit.

The team's most outstanding rider was captain Doug Maxwell who in 14 matches scored a remarkable 238 points. He was capped for Scotland and also won the match race championship.

Handsworth Reunion

Many friendships have been made in cycle speedway, and it's good to know that they sometimes endure even when riders retire or a club disbands. Take, for example, Handsworth Hammers, one of Birmingham's leading outfits in the Forties. The club broke up in 1950 but when Pete Fryer married, all the original members were present, including such past aces as Roy Turnham, Alan Pridoy, Wally Harbon and Tony Smart. What a wonderful reunion it must have been! Wonder what they talked about?

Manchester, Stockport and District League

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
Belle Vue Cobras	12	10	0	2	687	462	20
Carrs Wood Hunters	12	10	0	2	662.5	487.5	20
Openshaw Monarchs	12	8	1	3	611.5	536.5	17
Blackley Flyers	12	5	0	7	462.5	584.5	10
Wimslow Hammers	12	4	0	8	509.5	636.5	8
Longsight Pegasus	12	2	1	9	540.5	608.5	5
Ladybam Kingpins	12	2	0	10	447.5	605.5	4

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Sussex Revival

After two years in the doldrums, cycle speedway in Sussex has been given a boost with the announcement that Brian Makepeace has formed a new club at Brighton. Nicknamed the Scorchers, the new team will feature a number of ex Fishersgate Flyers as well as many new riders.

SHORTS

In 1957 the Daily Express started to carry cycle speedway results in their Monday sports columns.

Cycle speedway was well served by regional magazines in 1957. In addition to the national magazine, the Cycle Speedway Gazette which was published weekly by John Leith, there were at least four monthly magazines including Cycle Speedway Argus (editors Dave Stevens and Ted Sear), Track News (also John Leith), Cycle Speedway Bulletin (covering Lancashire and Cheshire and edited by Fred Ashtonhurst and Brian Moston) and Cycle Speedway Star (a London magazine published by Bill Gadsby). They were all priced at six old pence (two and a half pence at today's rate).