

1963 – A snapshot review first published in '50 Years of Cycle Speedway' by The British Cycle Speedway Council in 1996.

1963

Death of Mr Arthur C Palmer

Mr Arthur C Palmer died in January after only a short illness, at the early age of 55. For two years Arthur Palmer had been a pioneer of cycle speedway in Southampton. He was instrumental in building up the "Provincials" club to the standard which resulted in their carrying off the national junior team championship and many other awards.

Mr Palmer was a draughtsman at the Ordnance Survey Office in Southampton.

Lions Roar to Shock Gold Cup Win

Hellingly Lions pulled off the shock win of the year by defeating South London Rangers, 57 points to 50, in the final of the BCSF Gold Cup at Bournemouth. For the first time, the final was held outside London and guests of honour were the Mayor and Mayoress of Bournemouth (Alderman and Mrs H P Mears).

The final opened quietly and when South London took a second heat lead, it was no more than expected of the British League champions. However the match suddenly sprang to life as Lions' pairing of John Myles and George Hollebon roared to a maximum points win in the third heat. The next seven races, all closely fought, saw Hellingly clinging to their narrow advantage. In heat 11, Dave Ellis and Ray Foy scored a 4-2 to cut the Rangers' deficit to one point.

South London went ahead when British champion Ray Chivers raced into an unbeatable lead. A flash of vintage form saw the great Roy Baker sweep round the outside to join Chivers and put Rangers in front by 37-34. Hellingly snatched back the lead in the next heat, with skipper Tom Killick and Mick Green riding to a tremendous 5-1 over Ted Cracknell. Two races later, Green again with Roy Hazelden added a 4-2 but still only three points separated the scores. Tension mounted as heat 16 was shared, but Myles and Killick sprinted to a 5-1 in the penultimate heat to assure Hellingly of victory.

SCORE-BOARD

HELLINGLY 57

Tom Killick 12, John Myles 11, Mick Green 9, George Hollebon 9, Roy Hazelden 8, Ron Smith 5, Pete Smith 2, Mick Martin 1

SOUTH LONDON RANGERS 50

Roy Chivers 12, Ted Cracknell 8, Roy Baker 7, Ray Foy 7, Ron Webb 5, Dave Ellis 4, Pete Oliver 4

British Title Win for Ray Chivers

No one in the 2,000 crowd at Garratt Park was the least bit surprised when Ray Chivers from South London Rangers topped the scores in the 1963 British Riders' Championship final, to win the handsome 'Senior Service' Trophy.

Previously fourth in 1960, third in 1961 and second in 1962, the fans were convinced that it was Ray's turn to win. And as the tapes flashed up in the first heat, it was Chivers who led from the gate, a winner all the way.

Two points ahead of his nearest rival, Chivers looked as if he was going to settle for second place when he made a desperate bid for the lead and almost saw the title slip from his grasp. Mike Pretty challenged and the two riders tied for second place on the line.

Norwich League 1963

	M	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
Galley Pirates	18	15	0	3	1023	690	30
Norwich Stars	18	12	1	5	901	827	25
Hellesdon Lions	18	11	1	6	953	763	23
Trowse Tornados	18	10	2	6	903	821	22
Thorpe Saints	18	11	0	7	880	840	22
Thorpe Tigers	18	8	1	9	875	849	17
Tuckswold Stars	18	7	0	11	837	883	14
Earlham Panthers	18	6	1	11	821	898	13
Earlham Arrows	18	5	0	13	783	939	10

1963

Seven Teams in Middlesex League

Seven teams contested the Middlesex League in 1963- Stonebridge Vikings, Greenford Aces, Stonebridge Eagles, Latimer Lions, Kingsbury Bees, Bushey Kangaroos and Crane Phantoms. A similar number of clubs took part in the Southern League. They were Southampton Vikings, Swindon Eagles, Poole Tigers, Shirley Bombers, Littlemore Falcons, Bristol Lions and Bucklebury Robins.

Best Ever Season for Manchester

The 1963 season went down in the records as being Manchester's best ever. At the national finals, Manchester riders and teams monopolised the championships. Individually Derek Garnett (Offerton) and John Watling (Gorton) finished first and second in the individual and Pete Bury (Gorton) was crowned junior champion as Manchester youngsters filled the top four places. Gorton took over from Offerton as the top team and rounded off their many local successes by beating Uxbridge by 50 points to 45 at Leicester to become national team champions. Gorton completed a clean sweep by winning the corresponding junior championship beating Southampton Provincials 42-36 again at Leicester.

HOME COUNTIES INAUGURAL AGM

The first annual general meeting of the Home Counties League was held at Chiswick on 1 December. Over 50 people were in attendance. In his report, the chairman, Maurice Maitland, stated that the league had run smoothly and thanked the clubs for their support. Four new teams were represented and it looks as if the league will go from strength to strength in 1964 with two divisions. The league executive committee was returned unopposed. They were chairman Maurice Maitland, secretary Geoff Pearce, treasurer Bill Punter, fixtures secretary Bob Saunders, press and recorder Roger Seymour.