



A publication of the

newsletter for further details.

**SECRETARY:-
Vic White**

Save trees.

**Publishing Editor
Alan Catley**

Eric.

Harry Millsom

It was with the deepest sorrow that we received news of the death of Harry from his son, Gary on 16th. March this year. Harry was a very popular and enthusiastic member of our organisation. He attended most of our functions regularly, always meeting his pals with a warm and friendly greeting. From the late 1940's Harry had been associated with the Stratford Hammers C.S.C. and would no doubt have been looking forward to that club's recent re-union. Our condolences go out to Harry's family and friends. He was our friend too and will be sorely missed.

Members Directory

New Members:

Terry COELL 39, Canveys Road, Dagenham, Essex. RM10 8YA.

Change of Address:

John SAVILL 63, Clementine Avenue, Seaford, East Sussex. BN25. 2UU.
Roy MILANO C/ Alberca 5 BIS. Urb. Palmeria, Orba, Alicante 03791. Spain.

Golf at Rickmansworth

The regular Spring golf day was held this year on Thursday, 9th. May for the first time at Rickmansworth Golf Club in Hertfordshire. It was well attended with most of our golfers present. An attractive course in an attractive location, it was however on the hilly side and proved tiring for some. This problem would be solved if more buggies were available which I believe is under consideration for the future.

Once again, this informal competition, which consisted of the ladies joining the gentlemen in teams, proved popular with the team of **Roy Garnham, Jimmy Heard, Ken Baxter and Denny Daniel** being successful. More of our members joined the golfers in the evening for a meal at the club in a convivial atmosphere where the food and service were excellent.

A notable absentee was our secretary Vic, confined to his home with back pains, but determined to make the next arranged golf day in the Autumn.

ANNUAL DINNER & DANCE. SATURDAY NOVEMBER 16TH 2002

In order to maximise time left after our meal for dancing and socialising, this year we will sit down to eat at 6.30.p.m. promptly. We have also been advised by the Hotel management that we must finish at 12.00. Midnight due to their licensing regulations, which is another reason for the earlier start. So please help us to make the most of our evening and ensure that we can commence our meal at 6.30.p.m. Thank you.

A reminder to members who are staying overnight that this year the cost of a room will NOT include breakfast the next morning. After some complaints last year we arranged with the Hotel that the price for a room would be reduced by £5.00 to £45.00 and breakfast would be an optional extra.

As Vic is planning to be out of the country for 4 weeks, later in the year, we would be very grateful if members could ensure that they have paid for the Dinner in full by the end of September so that Vic can finalise arrangements for the Dinner and accommodation before he goes away. Any late changes will be dealt with by Johnny Brown in Vic's absence.

NORTH WEST "BOOZE AND CHAT" EVENING

Ex President BRIAN MOSTON recently arranged another of his social evenings when most of the night is spent in re-living old races and supping ale. Memories of the races tend to stray from the actual happenings and get worse as the evening lengthens, with the saying "The older I get, the better I used to be" taking over. Still it is just a nice social gathering. With no harm done. Brian is hoping to arrange another one for the Autumn and if we get a date from him at the right time we will try to include details in an issue of The Track record.

One of Brian's buddies, JOHN BARTHOLOMEW, recently undertook a charity cycle ride across the Pennines for The British Heart Foundation, a very worthy cause. The VC&RA made a donation on behalf of John to the charity for his efforts which certainly deserve a round of applause. Well done John.

Below is a thank you letter received from John:-

Dear Brian & Vic,

Thanks very much for the kind donation to the British Heart Foundation as part of the sponsorship for the Over the Edge bike ride. The ride itself was quite tough, 40 miles of steep climbs but with some high speed descents. It took me a shade under 4 hours and with an average speed of about 10 mph you can see it was a bit of a grind, however, my on-board computer shows a maximum speed of 42.1 mph this at least shows my appetite for speed is still present even if I do need the assistance of gravity these days. On a financial note my sponsorship is currently just over £160 so again a big thank you to the VC&RA.

Best wishes to everyone,

John Bartholomew.

Poole Cycle Speedway Club

Pete Barnes, Club secretary writes:-

"The Poole Cycle Speedway Club will be staging a weekend of International racing On Saturday 27th. July and Sunday 28th. July 2002. On Saturday afternoon events will include a European Club Pairs Championship in addition to a European Youth Individual. On Sunday afternoon, the major event will be an England select team versus a Polish select team at senior level. The club is situated at Baiter Park in Poole. Further information can be obtained from **Pete Barnes on 01202-245087**". It sounds well worth a visit if you are in the area.

Teams from the 50's.

Were the Catterick Lions the only Army CSC team?

Most of our members will have served in the armed forces at some time and I thought that the following article by **Bob Garland** stationed at Catterick Army camp in Yorkshire, reprinted from the "Amateur Cycle Speedway" dated Sept—Oct 1950 might be of some interest.

"Sergeant yells "Up the Lions!"

"It all began one bright April day when in the daily orders of the 1st Training regiment, Royal Signals, appeared a notice asking for ex-riders and ex-officials to come forward to help start a unit Cycle speedway club. This appeal resulted in our terrible twins, **Ron & Pete Tarrant** of Warwick Lions, **Eric Ashley** of Norwich, **Bob Devine** of Glasgow and team manager to be **Duncan Carson** Getting their heads together. Things started moving and a week saw the outline of the track with the aid of the Royal Engineers & their mechanical roller! Cinders were found & a tarmac starting area was laid. The workshops produced an electrically operated starting gate and all was ready for the first meeting on 1st July 1950.

The first opponents were the New Brough Park Eagles of Newcastle and by this time the ranks had been considerably swollen with the addition of **Doug Wotton** of Bristol Whitby Lions, **Ron Snelling** of Beckton Aces and **Ray Pollard** of Ruskin Flyers. The great day arrived. The track was duly opened by the C.O. and the tapes flew up on the first official Army Cycle Speedway meeting! The result was a win for the Army team by 56 points to 40. Doug Wotton scored a maximum of 15 points, Ron Tarrant 13, Pete Tarrant & Ray Pollard 10, Ron Snelling 8 & Bob Devine 5. For the Eagles, their captain, **Ernie Hodgson** scored 11 points & **Arch Cooper** 8.

Plans for the future? Firstly to promote an inter unit league in Catterick, Secondly to have many more matches with civilian teams and thirdly, to have cycle speedway recognised by the Army Sports Authorities as a sport in its own right. Finally, there is an open invitation to any team to come to our 76 yard red cinder cycle speedway. We promise you good racing, a good time and, at the same time allow you riders who have yet to be called up to have an insight into this Army life, *which you may be dreading!!*. Details from our secretary, **Sigmn. R.G.Devine."**

Editor's note: Surely there must have been other Armed Forces teams? We would like to hear from our members who know of any tracks that existed here or abroad on Army or RAF camps.

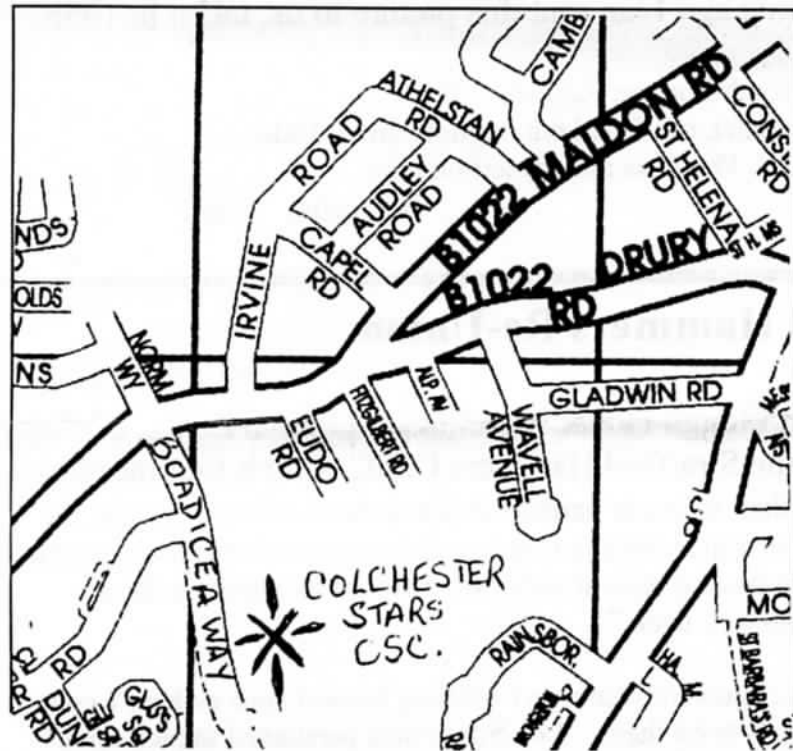
New Track for Colchester Stars.

On Easter Monday, 1st April 2002 at Shrub End Sports Ground, Boadicea Way, Colchester, a passionate ambition was realised by VCSRA member **Vic Duffy** by the opening of a new track for the local team, the stars, of which Vic was the founder in 1997. In bright weather, a good crowd enjoyed the occasion and the close racing which followed.

Vic writes: "An estimated crowd of nearly five hundred turned up for the opening of the "Colchester Stars" new £19,000 shale track, among which **Stan Stevens** had brought along some twenty veterans. The Stars president, Bob Russell MP and Colchester Mayor and Mayoress, Mike Hogg and Helen Chuah opened the proceedings. After a surprising lap or two by the Mayor and Bob Russell, the main event of the afternoon was a seniors' championship which was won by **Dennis Hubble** (Southampton) with **S. Beesley** (Oxford) second and **Dave Palfreyman** third. The racing was thrilling and competitive and the club made a profit of £260.

I originally sent off for a grant from the Foundation for sport and the Arts some six years ago. We were on a waiting list and we had constant checks to ensure we were not "nine day wonders." Credit must go indirectly for "**Sprockett**" **Doggett** who first told me about this organisation. I hope to arrange something for the veterans in 2003."

Shrub End Sports Ground, Colchester.



As one of the "vets" who made the trip to Colchester, I found the unusually banked shale track was situated in a pleasant park location in Boadicea Road with plenty of local support. Racing was close and exciting and provided first class entertainment for spectators. Facilities are available, car parking is adequate and the track is surrounded by a large grass area ideal for picnicking etc. This would make an ideal meeting place for our members and deserves our support. The map alongside may assist anyone thinking of visiting the track and for details of meetings, Vic can be contacted on 01206-793530.

Alan Catley.

Subscriptions. A final appeal to those members who have yet to renew their subscriptions for this year which were due on 1st April, please send a cheque for £6.00 made out to the VCSRA to our secretary, Vic White, at address on front page. Alternatively, please contact any committee member to let us know your intentions.

Ivan Mauger, six times World Speedway Champion rode Cycle speedway too.



It is a poor reproduction of the original photograph but has been included because of its special interest. Some time ago Ivan sent this picture to us, taken in 1958.

He writes:- South London Rangers 1958.

Not sure what order as print on back has faded but in photo are **J. Dale**,
J. Fitzwalter, **G. Gilbert**, **J. Watkins** and myself on bike.

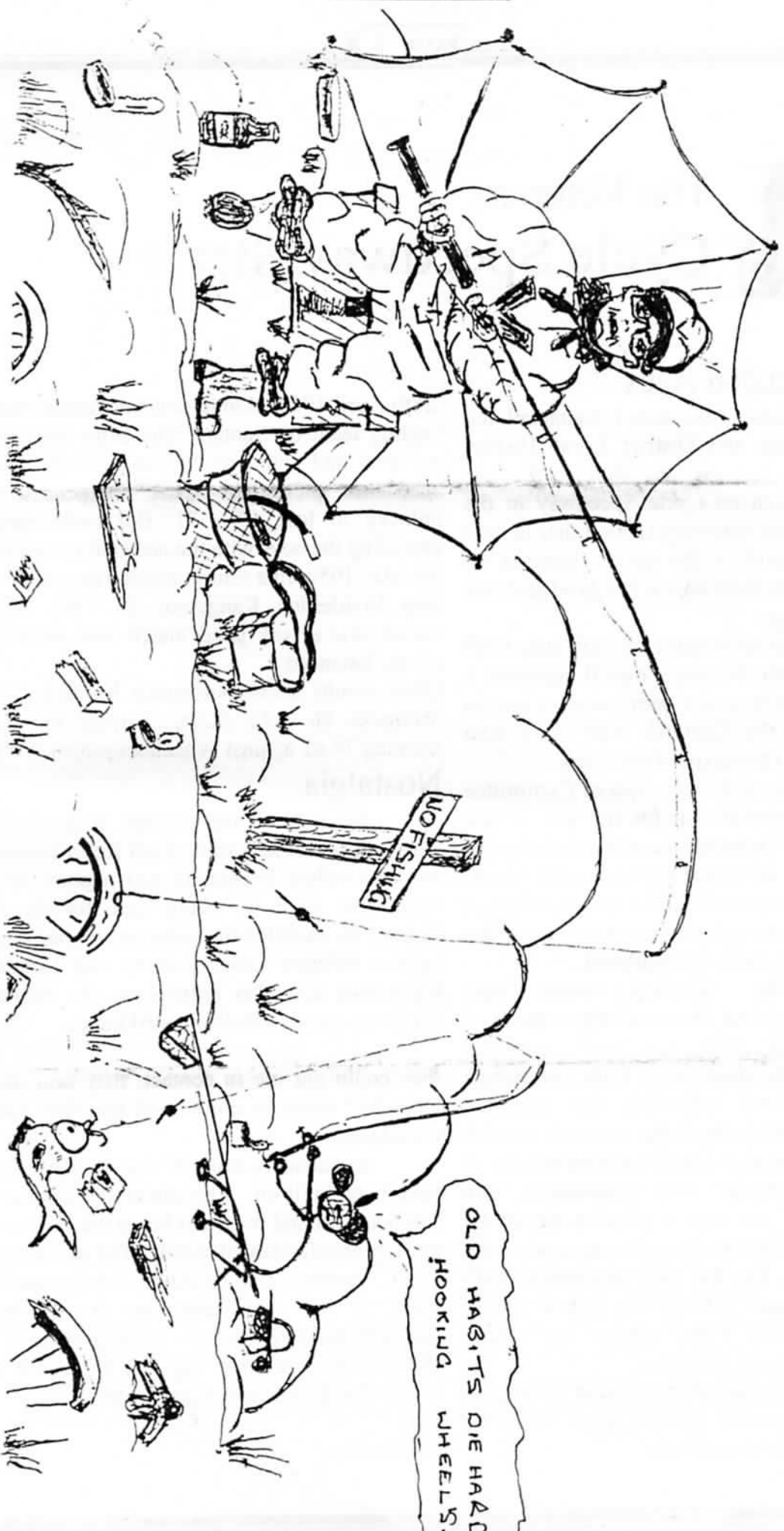
Regards, Ivan.

The Stratford Hammers Re-Union.

On Sunday 5th. May 2002 at Ye old Plough House Motel at Bulphan in Essex, a lunch was held to celebrate a re-union of the Stratford Hammers C.S.C. which first raced as a club in 1946. Over forty ex-riders and their wives or partners enjoyed the excellent meal and the good company. **Stan Brown** writes "It was nice to have time to talk to one another. It was great to see Terry Greenaway and Ken Baxter after having several setbacks. I would like to thank **Don Wagstaff** for his pictures and cuttings from way back."

Ken Baxter agreed that it was a great occasion and that many of those present such as **Ken Lewis** and **Dennis Day** had travelled long distances to be there. **Len Silver** was persuaded to pick up his ukulele to give a flawless rendition of "Grandad's flannelette night-shirt" reminiscent of his late 40's coach-trip performances. **Sid Fage** who was taken ill after arrival and went to hospital, later made a complete recovery. **Roy Garnham** paid tribute in a short speech to old friends no longer with us. Altogether it seems to have been a very successful get-together for one of London's foremost clubs which could well merit repetition.

VETERAN RIDERS



GONE FISHING!

BERT HUDSON



The Veterans Cycle Speedway Star

Harpenden Aces

Some time ago I contacted the Harpenden and District Local History Society to see if they had any information on Cycle Speedway in the area. Their secretary replied that he had never heard of the sport. However an appeal in their newsletter produced the following:-

At its meeting on 11th July 1949 the Urban District Council received a letter applying for permission to use an area of the Common near Ayr's End Lane as a cycle speedway track.

The Parks and Open Spaces Committee granted permission for the use of this area for a nominal fee of 10 shillings per year on condition that an adult would accept responsibility for the organisation and that no nuisance or annoyance being caused to the neighbourhood.

The meetings were very successful and attracted large crowds of spectators, with the result that the council received letters from two owners of property adjoining the common complaining about the nuisance caused. When the decision to suspend the use of the common was announced, the Council was sent a petition signed by 581 local residents protesting against the decision. On the 18th November 1949 the Council offered the club a site in Rothamsted Park, subject to similar conditions to last time.

The article then went on to give several match reports, taken from the Harpenden Free Press.

28th April 1950. Hoddesdon Kangaroos were the visiting team on Sunday. The Boys were evenly matched and some really good riding gave the spectators plenty of sport. Harpenden were unlucky to lose 67 - 71. But each match is providing the boys with the necessary experience. 5th May 1950 In a return match, Harpenden Aces beat Hoddesdon Kangaroos 75 - 66. A large crowd saw a very good match with both teams evenly balanced.

Other results show Harpenden losing to Hilltop Vampires 66 - 72, E.A.C. Hawks 56 -81 and winning 74-62 against Wheathampstead Wolves.

Nostalgia

My letter to this column in the St.Albans Observer received a reply from Keith Hammond, son of Gwilym Hammond and nephew of John Hammond, both of whom rode for St. Alban Cobras. He said that his father remembered racing against Whipps Cross Comets and Hoddesdon Kangaroos and also remembers the Harpenden team that raced in Rothampsted Park.

When I contacted the Newspaper to see if they could put me in contact, they said that the letter had come by e-mail and that they had lost the address.

Incidentally none of the St Albans tracks have been built on. The site of the Cobras track has been grassed over and has some mature trees on it, probably planted shortly after racing ceased, E.A.C. is now a trading estate, but the site of the track is still free and the Aces track in Rothampsted Park is now a compost heap. Only the Hilltop Vampires track at Redbourn has disappeared under a housing estate.

BillGadsby