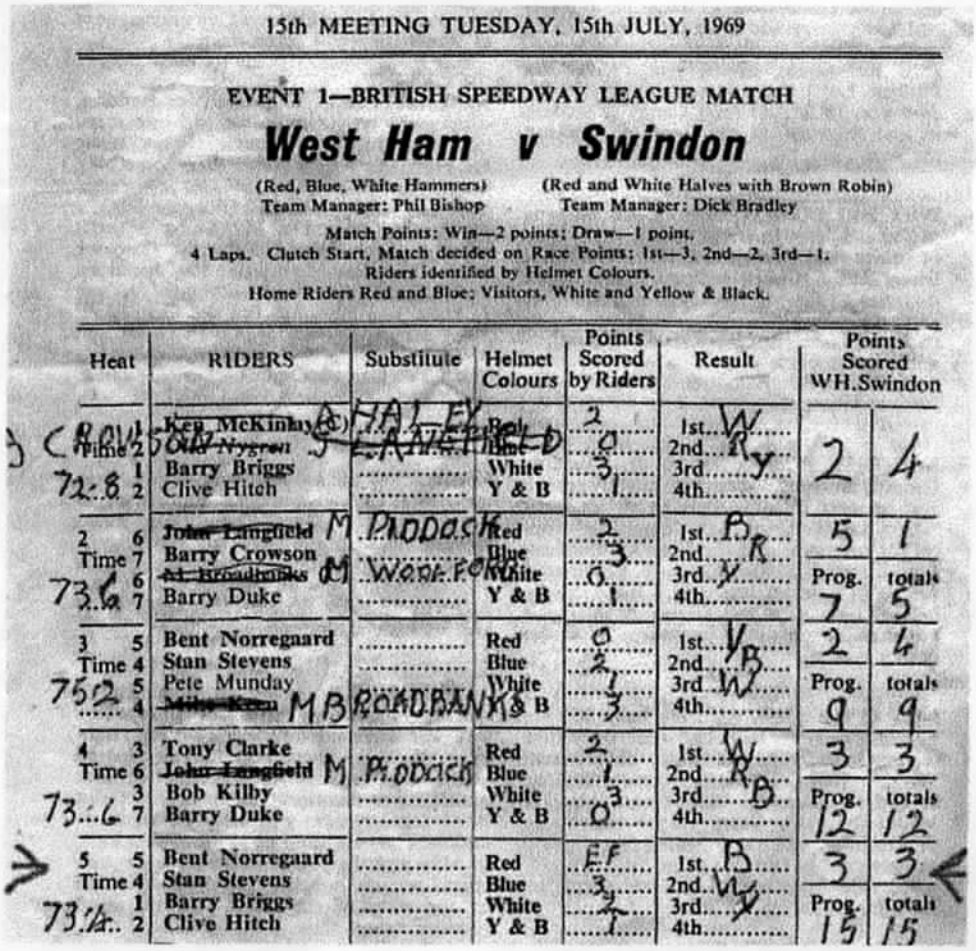
A publication of the

Acting secretary

Publishing Editor

Stan used to watch the Leopards on their track in Barking Park near his house just off the Longbridge Road and eventually in 1950 he got his first chance to ride for the team. He stayed with the Leopards for his entire Cycle Speedway career, except that is for his appearance for the Walthamstow Wolves in their National Trophy winning side at Hungerford in 1958. Another highlight was riding for England against Scotland at Rouken Glen Park, Glasgow in 1956 were he rode alongside his old adversary from the Hoddesdon Kangaroos Clive Hitch.

In 1958 bought himself a JAP and started to practice at Rye House. By the next year, 1959 he was competing for the 'Red Devils'. For the next fifteen years Stan rode for seven different teams. For 1960/61 he was at Rayleigh riding for the 'Rockets', it was here that the ever enthusiastic Stan two of the highlights of his speedway career. In 1960 in a World Championship round at Coventry he competed against for the one and only time, his boyhood hero, the one and only Jack Young. At Easter of the next year, 1961 he won the 'Easter Trophy' being presented with the cup by the well known Essex film actor Victor Madden. He spent 1962 with the Cradley Heath 'Heatherns' and 1963 with the New Cross 'Rangers'. In 1964 he had his first stint at West Ham followed in 1966 with a spell at Kings Lynn with the 'Stars'. 1967 and he was back at West Ham with the 'Hammers' were he spent the next five years. During this time on 15th July 1969 he took part in the most memorable race of his speedway career, around the huge West Ham circuit he beat four times World Champion Barry Briggs, 'Briggo'. This is the event, Stan says that everyone in speedway reminds him of, and quiet right too. In 1971 West Ham closed for redevelopment and Stan joined the 'Bombers'of Romford Essex. Finally in 1975 he joined the Milldenhall Fen Tigers were he finished his riding days in June of 1976.



15th MEETING TUESDAY, 15th JULY, 1969

EVENT 1—BRITISH SPEEDWAY LEAGUE MATCH

West Ham v Swindon

(Red, Blue, White Hammers) Team Manager: Phil Bishop

(Red and White Halves with Brown Robin) Team Manager: Dick Bradley

Match Points: Win—2 points; Draw—1 point.
4 Laps. Clutch Start, Match decided on Race Points: 1st—3, 2nd—2, 3rd—1.
Riders identified by Helmet Colours.
Home Riders Red and Blue; Visitors, White and Yellow & Black.

Heat	RIDERS	Substitute	Helmet Colours	Points Scored by Riders	Result	Points Scored WH.	Swindon
1	~~Ken McKinlay~~ (C)	A HALEY	Red	2	1st W		
Time 2	~~Olle Nygren~~	S LANGFIELD	Blue	0	2nd R	2	4
1	Barry Briggs		White	3	3rd Y		
72.8 2	Clive Hitch		Y & B	1	4th		
2 6	~~John Langfield~~	M PIDDOCK	Red	2	1st B	5	1
Time 7	Barry Crowson		Blue	3	2nd R		
6	~~M. Broadbanks~~	M WOOLFORD	White	0	3rd Y	Prog.	totals
73.6 7	Barry Duke		Y & B	1	4th	7	5
3 5	Bent Norregaard		Red	0	1st Y	2	4
Time 4	Stan Stevens		Blue	2	2nd B		
75.2 5	Pete Munday		White	1	3rd W	Prog.	totals
4	~~Mike Keen~~	M BROADBANKS	Y & B	3	4th	9	9
4 3	Tony Clarke		Red	2	1st W	3	3
Time 6	~~John Langfield~~	M PIDDOCK	Blue	1	2nd R		
3	Bob Kilby		White	3	3rd B	Prog.	totals
73.6 7	Barry Duke		Y & B	0	4th	12	12
5 5	Bent Norregaard		Red	EF	1st B	3	3
Time 4	Stan Stevens		Blue	3	2nd W		
1	Barry Briggs		White	2	3rd Y	Prog.	totals
73.4 2	Clive Hitch		Y & B	1	4th	15	15

1969 In West Ham colours at the huge Custom House track two years before it became a housing estate

1975 Full throttle into the bend at the Fen Tigers track at Milldenhall, Sulfolk

Paradise Park and Speedway Museum Tickets

The committee have arranged with Paradise Park for concession tickets on Saturday September 15th 2007 for a day at the park 9.30 – 6pm and to view the Speedway Museum .
Tickets £7. 50 only available in advance from:- John Brown, 13 Amesbury Drive, Chingford, E4 7PZ (Cheques made payable to **VCSRA)**
An early response is necessary to determine how many tickets we will require.

Members can meet at 3pm. (at a location supplied with the ticket).

Members can also purchase food from a Barbecue and other food outlets. in the park.

There is also Speedway that evening at **Rye House,** which is hosting **The Conference League Championship Final, 7pm start.**

Secretaries Notes - July 2007

Firstly I would like to say hallo to you all, to those I have met, to those who I have only spoken to on the phone and those with whom my only contact is sending them their membership cards.

Assistant Secretary. I am pleased to report that the Association now has an assistant secretary, Malcolm Belchambers who can be contacted on 01268 734896.

Membership. I have to date received 150 renewals that means that currently there are approximately 60 of you that haven't got around to sending in their form & cheque. **Don't put it off until tomorrow do it now.**

Dinner Dance Menu. Your committee and myself have now finalised the menu with The Ploughs' chef, Adrian which will be as follows: -

Fanned Melon with Ginger Syrup

Beef Medallions with Red Wine Jus
Roast Potatoes & Seasonal Vegetables

Pepper Stuffed with Mushroom & Pumpkin Risotto (Vegetarian Option)

Sherry Trifle with Cream

Coffee

Bowl of Fruit on the table throughout the evening

Cheese & Biscuits are available as an alternative to the Desert but you will have pre-order when sending your balance. For those of you who have already paid, give me a ring if you would prefer Cheese & Biscuits.
If there is anything on the menu you have a **MAJOR** problem with, you can also give me a call.

AGM & Dinner Dance. The committee is currently considering a proposal made by myself to hold the 2009 AGM and Dinner on the same day at the same location. This would entail having next AGM in February 2008 as usual followed by another general meeting in the afternoon before the 2008 Dinner Dance. We have consulted with the Plough and they confirmed that there would be no problem setting up chairs, in a theatre style on the dance floor for the AGM at around 3.30pm. We can organise Tea & Cakes and the Bar will be open.

Let us know your thoughts on the idea, by letter, email or phone. If we get no comments we will assume you all think the idea is OK (or do not intend to come to either) and the committee will implement the plan.

Events. As is often pointed out by new members, especially those who live north of Watford that all the events we plan seem to take place in the south eastern corner of England. This is true because all those involved with the running and organisation of the VCSRA live in the southeast. So once again I will plead, if there is anyone out there, not living in the southeast that would like to get involved in organising a get together of some sort and need contact with others with the same idea please give me a call and I will do my best to help.

VCSRA Web Site. My apologies for the lack of new development on the site, which is due to my time being taken up by my duties as secretary. However to be honest I would prefer to be devoting my time to the site but until a budding new secretary appears it looks as if it will have to take second place.

And finally. Please if there are any questions you would like to ask the committee or proposals you would like to make do not hesitate to write and we will attend to them at our next meeting. Future committee meetings will be held in mid-September, December and March with the AGM coming in February.

Museum Corner – 4

By Colin Booth (Sec.)

The Museum is now open and numerous articles announcing its opening have been appearing in the local press of South Essex and Hertfordshire. A copy of the picture published in the Echo (Southend on Sea) on Monday May 8th is below. With the Museum now open and the busy period approaching for the Paradise Park it is maintenance that will be Tom Kilbey's (our man at the Museum) priority and I am sure he could do with some help, so if there are any local members that feel like lending a hand Tom's number is 01279 792362.

At the back from the left Terry Stone(VCSRA), Linda Barclay, Pete Sampson(Owner Paradise Park), Len Silver(Promoter Rye House Speedway & VCSRA), George Barclay(Museum Organiser & VCSRA), Rye House captain Chris Neath and team-mate Luke Bowen, kneeling in front Marc Owen and Rhys Naylor, who are the mascots at Sittingbourne and Lakeside Hammers respectively.

Directory Amendments

Change of Address

Rcn Tiley – 2 The Grove, Hook, Haverfordwest, Pembrokshire, Wales, SA62 4LW

Ron Sutton – 11 Laxfield Road, Sutton, Norfolk, NR12 9QP Tele. 01692 581303

New Members

Dave Holvey – 64 Sycamore Ave, Roffey, Horsham, West Sussex, RH12 4TT. Tele. 01403 255770

Editors Notes

CHANDLER'S FORD "STARS"
Memories of the Cycle Speedway Team 1949-1963
A local History project by John Heward

John has kindly sent me a copy of his excellent publication. It has twenty six pages full of interesting articles, with team and action photos. As well a giving the full history of the "Stars", it explains how Cycle Speedway started. It also gives an "A-Z" of all the riders, and even lists the riders that went on to motor speedway.

John made the decision to write it after a reunion that he organised in February 2006. This was the first official get together since the team disbanded at the end of the 1963 season. He hosted another reunion this year and may make it an annual event. John was persuaded to enter the booklet into the Eastleigh and District's "local history competition" and won first prize. He also sent some cuttings from local newspapers relating to the reunion, plus a report on the competition.

Rock-a-Nore Rockets

Mention of newspaper cuttings, there still seems to be quite a bit of interest in Cycle Speedway in many local papers. A good example of this is the "Days Gone By" feature sent in by John Mann from the Hastings and St. Leonards Observer, which is on page twelve.

It is interesting to see that instead of the traditional rocket, they used a "doodlebug" flying bomb on their colours. Also one of their "second half" races was called the Doodle Bug scratch race. I believe this was because the track was in what was "Doodlebug Alley", the flight path of the missiles as they made their way to London and the Home Counties. Of course the purpose of these was to cause maximum death and destruction, but it is probable that some of them caused the "bomb sites" that later became Cycle Speedway tracks. The article also mentioned that it was in response to pictures of the "Rockets" in the previous weeks newspaper. I looked on the paper's website to see if I could find this but without success. I was thinking of writing to the paper to ask for a copy, when by coincidence, the article arrived by that days post. It was sent to me my Robin Martakies, who had seen it while on holiday in the area.

Does anyone know anything about the Rock-a Nore Cycle Speedway Club?
Bygones is keen to trace the like-lads pictured in the photo, to find out more about their daredevil pursuits. We are particularly interested to hear about the rocket logo on the front of the speedway clubs uniform. Was the team called the Rockets? If you can tell us more about the speedway club, or recognise anyone in the photo, please call the Bygones desk on 01424 856786.

Memories

In a recent "Thoughts of" Derek Cattle contemplated on how many matches that he ridden and recalled a couple of races that he remembered. I have no idea how may races I had ridden, probably not as many as Derek. It is strange how one or two races or matches stay in your memory. I was reminded of one race when talking to Bill Whyte of the South Ruislip Aces recently.

In 1957, the North West Middlesex League decided to change the scoring to four points for first but still two for second and one for third. This was to enable teams like Wembley All Stars and Ruislip Aces, who often had only five or six riders to still win matches even if they only had one rider in some races.

In Bushey's home match against the Aces, I realised that I had somehow won my first four races, and was going into the nominated race with a chance of a maximum. I made a good start from the outside gate, but not good enough to beat Ruislip's Brian Robinson. I chased him down the hill hoping that he would go wide coming out of the bottom bend, but he stuck close to the inside line. Same thing next lap, so I decided the only way was to go round the outside of him, this time he did go wide, right into my path, I hit him knocking him off. I looked at the steward , expecting to be disqualified, but he waved me on to victory. It seemed a hollow win, even more so when Brian came up to me after the race and apologised for me knocking him off! Still the points counted didn't they? Afraid not, the Aces withdrew from the league without completing their fixtures, so all their results were deleted, including my one and only twenty point maximum!

In early 1951, the phone call from Vic Merner was like a "bolt from the blue" as I thought that Cycle Speedway had finished, at least in my area. Vic said that his team, the Roxeth Rockets had lost their track and could they use ours. He also asked if I or any other of our former riders would be interested in riding, I said that I would definitely be interested. So I went to the shed, wiped the cobwebs off my bike and stripped it down and gave it a good going over. I then cycled down to the Kingsbury track to have a few laps round. Knowing (and hating) the track so well I was confident that I would make a good impression in my first match. I was however disappointed as I did not even get a ride, as the Rockets had a full team. Their second match was at one of the Ruislip tracks, so I cycled over on the off chance and got a place in the team at No.8. I came third behind my partner in my first race, almost won my second race, just losing on the last bend of the last lap. My third race I won easily, leading Vic to ask my go go in the nominated race, foolishly I agreed, trailing in last. This led to someone saying in a very loud voice "Fancy putting a reserve in the nominated race" To which Vic answered that I had ridden better than any one else (with six points!!!) The following match I was number one and three weeks later I was voted in as captain when Terry De'barber was called up for his National Service with the R.A.F. I do not remember if we were a successful team, but we were a happy team as I think the slightly different team photo below shows.

Top row left to right:- Bill Gadsby Tom Brown and Jimmy Vincent
Bottom row:- Two regular supporters, Vic Merner (manager) Brian Shuttleworth, Den Kirby, Roy Garland, Roy Twitchen, Alan Gibbons, "Taffy", Keith Bristow giving a "piggyback" to Keith Lawrence and George Cole (ast. Manager)

BILL GADSBY

THE THOUGHTS OF CHAIRMAN DEREK.

Following a heated discussion at our recent committee meeting, it was agreed that The Track Record should not be used to comment on another member. Well that is until the next time

I hope that you all watched our president to be, take on the "Queen of Mean",in the "Weakest Link " those that missed it Vic reached the final. Great demonstration on being a speedway rider "vroom vroom" Well done Vic.

I would like to thank those members who either wrote or phoned me recently, to support me, some even from foreign places.

One especially was Arthur Warren. Perhaps you can help me Arthur. I have a cutting, dated 4th Sept 1949, Dagenham v London and Home Counties. I would like to know which track was used and which teams the Dagenham riders rode for. The riders in question are:-
D.Hubble, T.South, S.Gamage, G.Dower D.Baker, T.Risley, L.Brown and T. Jones.
London and Home Counties won 72-59. Ken Shepherd set a new track record of 33.1 seconds.

Another cutting I have is The Thames Valley League versus The London and Home Counties League, October 2nd 1949. London and Home Counties won 78-51. Young Eric Hockaday (Greenford Aces) scoring eleven points. Strangely all of the London and Home Counties team eventually joined the Tooting Tigers.

About thirteen members turned up for our day out at Leeds Castle, a splendid lunch and a casual tour of the castle followed. As it was not crowded it was a comfortable walk for everybody.

Sunday 15th July, I was a guest at the South East England and Rayleigh veteran speedway rider lunch, a thoroughly enjoyable experience. Among the many former riders present were Bob Andrews and Tom Sweetman, all the way over from New Zealand.

On July 4th Members from South of the river had their bi-monthly lunch at Wimbledon. Good to see Bryan Wood, who brought along many photos and memorabilia for us.

Don't forget Len Kitchens Ramble. Tuesday September 11th at 10.30 sharp. Meeting place Newlands Corner car park, near Guilford. For further information, contact Len, by letter, as he is difficult to contact by phone.
That's it Gentlemen and of course ladies, I hope that I haven't upset any one.

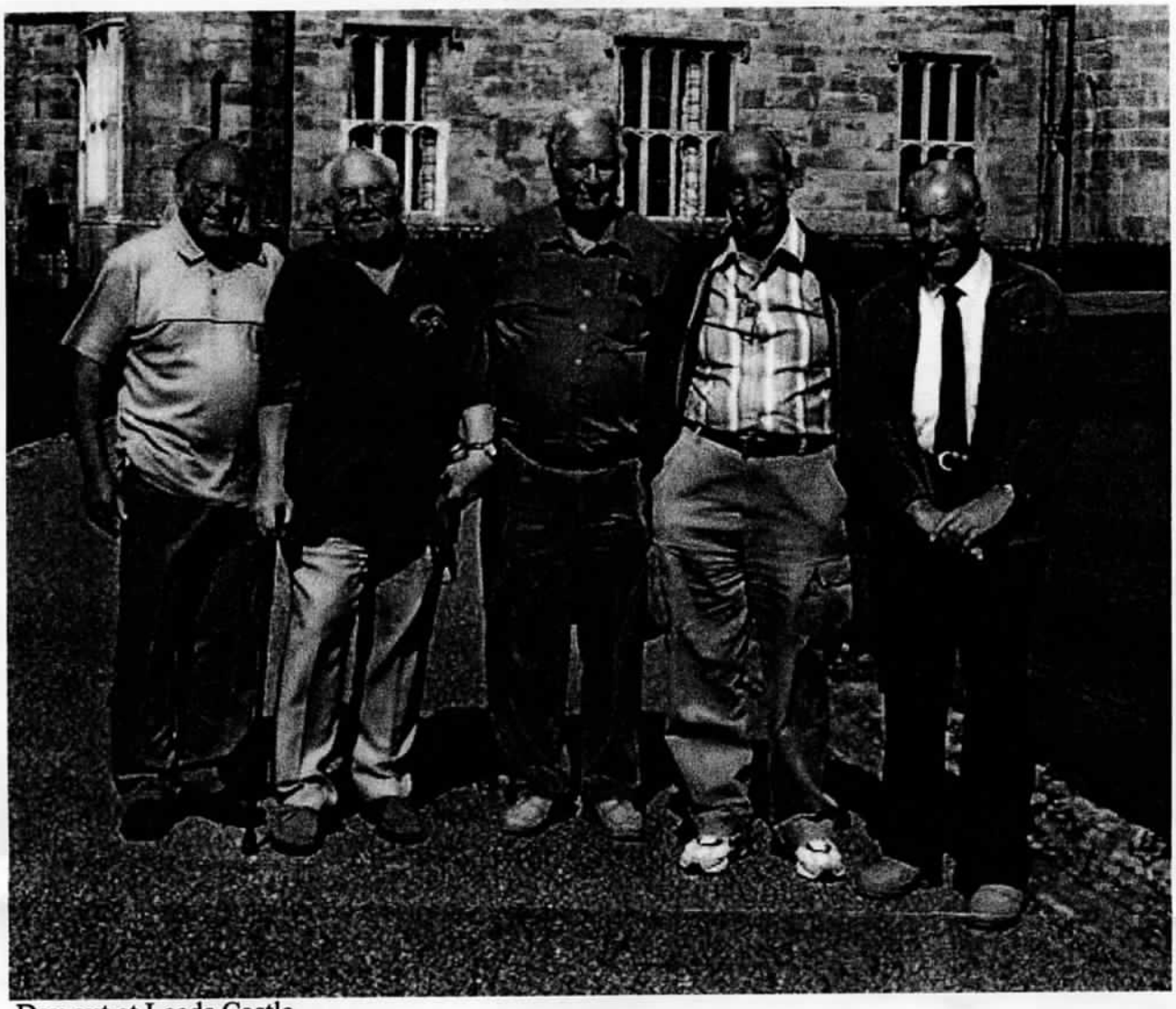
DEREK CATTLE CHAIRMAN V.C.S.R.A.

INTRODUCING RAY GINGELL

Ray started his racing career in 1955, firstly with Raynes Park Stars as a junior and rapidly moved up to a heat leader. In 1959, following the break up of the Stars, he joined, along with his great friend Dennis Hennessey, the Tooting Tigers. Sadly as Ray started to move up the ladder, Tooting were forced to close.

After a brief sojourn with the Southern Nomads, Ray joined the South London organisation. Just one match with the Hunters and he was promoted to the Rangers. Then followed six successful years, before Ray called it a day, winning the British League and the Gold Cup.
Ray brings new ideas and a calm sense of order to our committee.

DEREK CATTLE



Day out at Leeds Castle
L to R:- Tom Kilby, Derek Cattle, Ken Archer, John Brown and Wally Warrington.

Dear Bill

Just a few lines to congratulate you and the committee on the fine work done re the VCSRA. I come back to the UK once a year to visit family and friends and always look forward to catching up on the Cycle Speedway news through the Track Record. The item in the Nov. 2006 issue concerning Les Westwood was particularly interesting as I was one of his opponents in that 1960 World Final. (I might add, when we met, I never saw which way he went) I think at the tender age of 17, I must have been the youngest finalist and being used to the bigger Northern tracks I was totally at sea on the tight Garrett Lane track. I think I finished with four points and three of those were when I was drawn against all three Dutch riders in the same race and just managed to hold on for the win. Despite the match being a personal disaster, it was a day I'll never forget.

These days I still keep in touch with some old mates. A couple of years ago I met up with John Whiting and Fred Rothwell, when they were on their way to Australia and we had an interesting evening in Bangkok. Last January, I also had a night out in Bangkok with John Watling and his wife June.
Also bringing back memories was the reference by Derek Cattle to the National Final when Raynes Park defeated the Lindale Lions at Hungerford. I think it is fair to say that the Wakefield side were definite pre-match favourites, but the fast gating Southerners really showed us how to ride the tight Berkshire circuit and thoroughly deserved their win.

In a couple of weeks I return to my adopted home in Thailand but I often recall the great times I had, both as a rider and as a referee and can honestly say the Cycle Speedway fraternity contains some of the greatest people I've met in my life.

Best Wishes to everyone
MIKE COCKCROFT

email (Editorial) observer@trbeckett.co.uk (Advertising) observer.ads@jpress.co.uk

DAYS GONE BY

Rock-a-Nore Rockets used to pull the crowds

THE pictures of the Rock-a-Nore Rockets featured in last week's Days Gone By elicited such a good response, that we've decided to write more about the Hastings Speedway scene in the late 1940s and 50s, *writes Robert Meek.*

Ken White, captain of the Rock-a-Nore Rockets team in 1949, submitted the pictures featured this week.

He writes: "In 1948 Speedway arrived in Hastings at the Pilot Field and all over the town cycle speedway began to gain a foothold as lads on modified bikes tried to emulate the exploits of their favourite Speedway riders like Ken MIddleton, Wally Green and Buddy Fuller.

"A Hastings cycle speedway league was formed in and the Rockets competed against other teams in Hastings on their track behind the Fishermen's Church.

"The first rocket worn on the riders' vests was a V1 doodlebug in 1948-9. In 1950 it was changed to a V2 rocket.

"The races used to attract quite a crowd as can be seen in one of the photos."

The photos brought back fond memories for Pete Sellens, who rode for the Ridge Eagles.

He named the 'skid kids' in last week's photo as Ronnie Lee,

Dickie (Whipper) Apps, Sassey Benton, Roy Binley, Ron Muggeridge and Frankie (Moonshine) White.

The second photo captures Dave Rick on a bike, with fellow Rockets George Haywood, Roy Bailey and Freddie Smith.

Mr Sellens has vivid memories of racing at the Pilot Field, when he and Ginger Phillips finished unbeaten after four races against the best riders in Sussex.

He said: "They were lovely days, you didn't get all the yobs hanging out on the street corners because we all had things to do."

Mr Sellens remembers broadsiding (falling off) his bike on many an occasion and said that elbowing opponents off their bike was all part of the tactical battle. John Steadman, a Rockets captain and organiser, explained that there was a Hastings league and a Sedlescombe league with about 12 teams in each.

The meetings were weekly and each team had its own track, all of which have disappeared today.

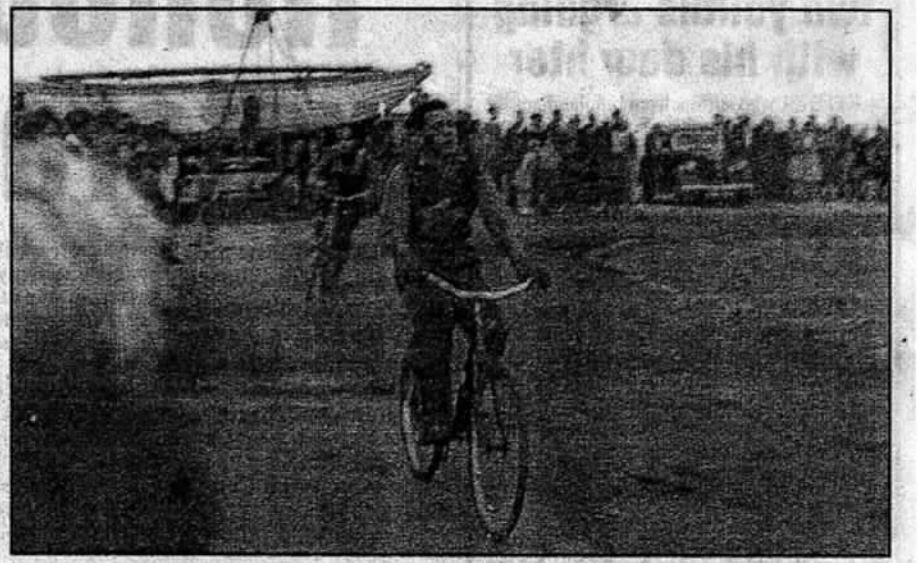
There is still an old track at Hellingly for anyone interested.

Each team was comprised of eight riders, with four bikes riding in a race.

The number one ranked rider would wear a red vest and was expected to win.

Cecil Glazier, who rode for the Eagles said: "It was not uncommon for hundreds of people to turn up."

The speedway scene did not last long as most of the people involved were called up to do national service in the 50s.

Is it time to resurrect this great sport?

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