

RECORD

Knightswood Toffs at Whipps Cross Comets track July 31st 1958

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Secretaries Notes - October 2007

Another 3 months has past and although things generally are running smoothly some behind the scenes disharmony have left me feeling somewhat unhappy with my lot as secretary. In this issue there is a statement that, hopefully will bring an end to matter. I firmly believe that as an elected committee we should always present a united front to the membership.

Membership. I have to date received 195 renewals, which together with our 11 honorary members means we have a total membership of 206. 14 of last year's membership have failed to renew of whom 2 have stated their intention not to join. For the remaining 12 this quarters issue will be their last 'Track Record'.

Dinner Dance.

Saturday 24th November 2007

As of the 4th October I had issued tickets for 93 members and their guests, well down on last years 127.

Please note that as stated on the ticket request form issued in May I required all requests and payment for tickets by the 21st September 2007. However any late requests will be considered if possible.

And for those of you who may have forgotten, the menu 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, at least 7 days before dinner and also if there is anything on the menu you have a **MAJOR** problem with, you can give me a call.

Directory Amendments

New Members

Alan Ford – 60 Underwood Close, Bramingham Park, Luton, Beds, LU3 3UW. Tel. 01582 585293

Re-joined Members

Pete Thorogood – 85 Roseberry Ave., Benfleet, Essex, SS7 4JF Tel. 01268 753067

Roy Trigg – 14 St. Ives Terrace, Mairangi Bay, Auckland, New Zealand. Tel. 0064 9479 1094

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-December and March with the AGM coming in February/March.

Re. 'Track Record, Vol.11 Issue 2 May 2007 – An Apology

At our committee meeting held on Wednesday 19th September a complaint from Mr. Eric Hemsley was discussed and a resolution was unanimously passed to apologise unreservedly for any inconvenience or embarrassment that may have been caused by the recent article published in the associations' magazine.

THE THOUGHTS OF CHAIRMAN DEREK.

It's that time of year again, when we review the past year. Sadly we have lost many of our friends, rivalry forgotten, only the happiness they brought remains.

What did we organise or at least try to? The day out to Leeds Castle was a reasonable success and thanks to Johnny Brown's work on his computer we obtained a reduced entrance fee. The day out at the Paradise Wild Life Park and Speedway Museum, a great success, again many thanks to J.B. and Tom Kilby for their efforts and negotiations with the management, getting us a reduced entrance fee and a specific meeting place. What can be said about the day out to the Colne Valley Railway? A total disaster, just three people turned up, two from South London and just one from Essex. This was specifically laid on for the Essex and East London contingent. Makes one think.

Len Kitchen's ramble, a great day out, slightly strenuous for some of us. An excellent pub lunch. Len puts so much effort into this day out, maps on how to get there, maps of the route we would be taking and he is a mine of information, answering questions all along the route.

Thanks Len, very much appreciated.

Speaking to Colin Brown the other day, the Dinner/Dance seem to be on a par with last year. Will review in the next issue.

After a great deal of thought I have decided that I will be standing down from the committee at the A.G.M. This is not a decision that I have taken lightly. My health is not quite what it should be and I find the travelling is now very tiring. It has been an honour and a privilege to have been a committee member of this association. I will write more in the next issue. Well I got through this page without upsetting anyone.

DEREK CATTLE



LEN KITCHEN RAMBLE 2007

Back row L to R. Charlie Aldrich, Ray Gingell, Len Kitchen, Wally Dighton & John Burrough.

Front row L to R Derek Cattle, Mick Little, Peter Page & Ron Holvey.

Picture taken by Mrs R. Holvey

Pedals to Power

Potted profiles of those VCSRA members who made the successful transition from Cycle to Motor Speedway

No. 10 Len Silver

VCSRA President 1996/7/8

Our first President, Len Silver, one of Speedway's characters, over 60 years involved in Speedway in one way or another.



Len leads Ossie Austin of Forest Gate Tigers at their track in Forest Gate



1949 Stratford Hammers with the Speedway World Cup. Lt-Rt Mr. T Archie, Jack Wilson, Duncan Menzies, Len Silver, Roy Garnham (Capt.), Dennis 'Twitch' Day, Johnny Livings, Mr Tom Garnham. Front Row. Ray Wilmore, Jimmy Heard, Eddie Parham, Roy Archie.

STRATFORD HAMMERS CYCLE SPEEDWAY CLUB.

Sec-
Mr T. GARNHAM

Track-
JANSON ROAD.

Team Manager-
L. G. SILVER

PRESENT A

"Grand Test Match" EAST LONDON v WEMBLEY

Sunday Sept 18th, 1949. 3.30. p.m.

Betting Strictly Prohibited.

Good Afternoon Hammers! Once again we are giving you all that is best in Cycle Speedway Racing when the East London Test Team oppose our old Rivals from Wembley, Wembley if you remember were the only team to defeat East London last year so our Lads will go all out to day, we are hoping that Her Worship the Mayor of West Ham will honour us with her presence this afternoon, if she does it will be her first view of Cycle Speedway, let us hope she is favourably impressed as we are trying to get the Local Council to allocate some Land to us this has already been done by the L.C.C.

Have you joined the Supporters Club yet? as every regular Spectator at Janson Road should, only 1/- per year, we hold our 1st Supporters Meeting at Maryland Point School Sept. 23rd 1949, at 7-30. p.m.

NOW! on with the show and may the best Team Win.
Len SILVER.

Official Programme.

1946 and 14 year old Len and schoolmate from Stratford Grammar School, Roy Garnham joined other lads from the area to emulate their hero's from the recently reopened West Ham Speedway on a very bumpy bomb site track in the Grove, Stratford, East London.

1947 and the activity moved a huge circuit in Janson Road and Len together with Roy set about establishing and organizing what was to become one of the greatest and most respected of London's Cycle Speedway teams, The Stratford Hammers. Instrumental in the formation of the East London Cycle Speedway League Len then proceeded to visit local businesses to seek sponsorship and trophies; needless to say he was successful procuring The Rivets (Cycle Retailers) Cup, The Stratford Express Cup and The Phillips (Meat Product Factory) Cup for the league. Len approached the organization of cycle speedway in a very professional way for youngster, the Stratford Hammers match program is a good example, it was just the beginning.

c1950 and the Hammers on tour in Yorkshire took part in a match against a Bradford

Team at the Odsal Speedway Stadium and as part of the entertainment the promoter, Johnny Hoskins donated a cup for the winner of a cycle speedway race on the motor speedway circuit. The winner, who else but Len, his first ever win on a Real Speedway Track!

During his cycle speedway days Len 'hedged his bets' by aspiring to a career in show business as a stand-up comic accompanying himself on a banjo or possibly a ukulele (Dave Stevens, Speedway Graphic 1963 says 'Banjo', my golf companion, Roy Garnham says 'Ukulele'). And as with every endeavor of Len's he didn't give up until he achieved success eventually finding himself on the bill of many leading East London variety centers.

1950 and her majesty took a hand in planning Len's future, called-up he became a 'Brylcream Boy', the RAF for our younger readers. In the air force he undertook the duties of motor cycle dispatch rider, his training had begun.

1952, released from the RAF Len began practicing at Rye House. The next year he joined 2nd division Ipswich and for the next 7 years he was in and out of the Ipswich team but finally early in the 1961 season Len joined Exeter and the good times had arrived. As Captain Len lead the Falcons to their KO Cup win against Stoke in 1962. He went on to win the Provincial Riders Championship at Belle Vue the same year. Later he was to record 10 consecutive defenses of the Silver Sash, the Provincial Leagues match race championship. In 1964 after scoring 105 points from 11 matches Len moved on, to take over the Hackney Hawks as Rider/Promoter. A fall early in the season and Len decided to call an end to his riding days and devote his energies to promoting.



Exeter 1962. Lt-Rt Francis Cann, Roy Bowers, Wally Mawdsley, Jack Unstead, Dennis Day, Pete Lansdale, and Eric Howe with Captain Len Silver on the bike.



Rayleigh 1963. Len Silver leads from D Strutt and Alan Cowland with Vic Ridgeon just out of the picture

Over the next 40 years whilst supplementing his income with his well-known car lot in Manor Park Len promoted successfully at Hackney and Rye House. Today he manages the Rye House Speedway set-up during the summer and in the winter takes up residence in the French Alps and runs his highly rated sports holiday company, 'Silver Ski'. Len is known to take a very active part in running his operation in France; we have heard that a New Zealand couple he hired as 'chalet maids' have admired his skiing prowess. What next, only Len can answer that.

VCSRA Golf Society Autumn Golf Day
VCSRA Trophy Competition
 By Colin Booth

A New Name on the Trophy

Thursday 20th September 2007 at Trent Park Golf Course, Southgate, London N14.

Our first society day inside the M25, Trent Park, a rural oasis in the midst of North London suburbia. Once away from the clubhouse, which was on a very busy Bramley Road (A110), we were surrounded by tranquil countryside, a little hilly however with all but one pair opting to hire a buggy.

The first four to tee-off had the benefit of a passenger, Wally Warrington a one-time member at Trent Park to show them the way and offer advice, although the advice apparently did not take into account the fact that Dennis Daniel was not a pro golfer! The weather proved to be mainly dry spoilt only by a heavy rainsquall as we approached the 18th hole and all enjoyed the challenging course.

When we came to tot-up the scores, **our new member Dave Holvey**, son of Ron with a total of 34 points, just piping Stan Brown, also with 34 points by virtue of his 22 points on the back 9 **was the winner of the members VCSRA Trophy**. For the rest Jim Feats, Stan Brown's guest topped the scores with 35 points followed by Brian Robson (G) 33, Dennis England 31, Colin Booth 30, Roy Garnham and Liam Hayes (G) 27, Dennis Daniel and Alan Robson (G) 25 and Dave Burton 21. Roy Fraser who was having trouble with a badly bruised shoulder did not complete the round and Ron Holvey who just had a bad day declined to put in their cards. The prize for the longest drive on the 15th went to Liam Hayes and for nearest the pin on the 11th to Dave Holvey.

Sadly with only Doreen Fraser representing the ladies there was no competition for the ladies Trophy this year. Doreen, as holder will be keeping the Trophy for another year.



Dave Holvey receives the VCSRA Trophy
from President Nobby Dunn

In the evening we were joined once again by our President, Nobby Dunn who presented the prizes with his cousin Celia together with Tom and Shelia Kilbey, John and Shelia Brown, Eileen Clayton and her Partner and of course Wally Warrington. Eileen who lives local to Trent Park was once a regular on our Golf Days but a spell of ill health has stopped her playing, she did however enjoy meeting old friends Roy and Doreen Fraser once again.

The meal although adequate was not exactly spectacular and we will be looking into the restaurant facilities at future venues more closely

We will be holding our **spring golf day on Thursday 22nd or 29th May 2008** on a course south of the river

(Thames that is) and are currently looking at two courses, one of which is a return to Darenth Valley. Let us know if you have any thoughts on the subject.

PETER JARMAN

1935—2007



PETE JARMAN (BECKENHAM) WITH THE BATTLE OF BRITAIN TROPHY

Mr & Mrs Ron Johnson, Mr & Mrs Dennis Daniel, Rat Gingell, Ken Archer & Myself, made the long journey to Poole in Dorset, to say farewell to our old team mate, Peter.

Peter's life in cycle speedway was a chequered career to say the least, a sometime volatile nature may have been the reason that he rode for so many teams. I am so happy that he ended his time in our sport riding for the Tooting Tigers.

Peter won many individual titles in his career, including the Essex Grand Prix, The Battle of Britain Trophy, the Champion of Champions Trophy and the Southern Premier League Individual Championship.

But Peter was not just about winning individual titles, he was one of the great characters of our sport.

A hard man to race against, but never an unfair rider. You knew you had been in a battle when you raced Peter, but always a handshake and a great big smile after. That's how I will remember him.

Sadly the last time that I saw Peter as a young man was at the Gold Cup Final. After giving the steward the "Harvey Smith" sign Peter was suspended from the rest of the meeting and rode off down Montague Street. I did not see Peter until many years later, at Lawrence Spaulding's birthday party. It was so good to see him again after over forty years.

A rival, a team mate and a friend, the memory will live on.

DEREK CATTLE

Editors pages

Continuing on the theme of matches remembered:-

In 1956 Vic Merner withdrew the Wembley All Stars from the N.W. Middlesex League and we spent the season travelling the country having home and away challenge matches. We must have visited some very interesting teams and tracks, but I can remember only one of them! This was away to the Clay Hill Aces and as they had floodlights, it was an evening match, they also had a P.A. system. Unfortunately they only had one record! This was the Ted Heath Orchestra with Lita Rosa singing The Blacksmith Blues, which was played over and over again throughout the whole match!

Of course, 1956 was not a good year to travel the country, as it was the year of "Suez" and petrol rationing. Undeterred Vic applied for and got extra petrol coupons for our travels.

The picture below was given to me by Peter Lipscome. Fifth from the left, is Pat Clarke, who went on to ride speedway for Oxford and West Ham. Peter said that the team was the Black Lion Aces. Does anyone remember the team and can they name the rest of the riders?



On the subject of naming riders, I received the following letter from John Heaton:-

I have received the August 2007 copy of the Track Record and I notice that on page 3 a photo of the England Test Team in Glasgow in 1956. I can identify the rider standing between Clive Hitch and Dave Hemus as Hughie Edwards of Birmingham Lions C.S.C. I believe he scored a maximum in the match in question. He later joined the Birmingham team of Kingstanding Monarchs and was with them when they won the National Team Trophy in the early 1960s, defeating the Weston Stars of London in the final. I rode against Dave Hemus in the Birmingham League, where he was a member of the Sutton Stars team and myself with Aldridge Hammers. I met Dave at the Wolverhampton Speedway some years ago when he was on a visit from his now home town of Cape Town in South Africa where he was manager of a Black & Decker Centre.

Thanks to Roy Delany, for the newspaper cutting that is on the back page. I am not sure which newspaper it is from, but it shows again, that there is still plenty of interest in cycle speedway.

YARDLEY GOBIAN ACES.

I came upon this team's web site by chance. It is very interesting comprising ten pages in all. As well as team and action photos, it gives a brief history of the sport in Northamptonshire. Most of which came from a 2003 booklet called "Milton Stars". It also has a copy of the certificate the team received from the News Chronicle for being county champions in 1952. It also mentions a reunion in 2004. I have included the first page overleaf. If you are interested in reading all ten pages, type "Yardley Gobion Aces" into "Google". Unfortunately, there is no address or contact details on the site.



The photo above was sent in by Maurice Maitland, former Uxbridge Manager.

It is of the official opening of the Uxbridge track in 1952.

Riders from left to right Bill Punter, Bren Harper, Peter Crissell and John King.

As well as Derek Cattle's tribute to Pete Jarman, I have included a "Pit Portrait" from the Cycle Speedway Spotlight. Speedway Star did a nice tribute to Pete, covering his 19 year speedway racing career. He rode for Stoke, Wimbledon, Wolverhampton, Oxford, Cradley Heath and Eastbourne. It also mentioned that he hit the headlines when he broke his ankle — filming an action scene for the ITV Soap Crossroads!

At the recent Southern Riders bi-monthly dinner Len Adams and Bernie Cable, over from Australia, were guests.

Well that's it for another year. Cheers

Bill Gadsby



Yardley Aces - Skid Kids of 1951

Arthur	Dudley	Billy	Alfie	Pat	Geoff	Douglas
Jacquest	Brown	Kightley	Prior	Smith	Warren	Horton

With the kind permission of Alan Digby here are some excerpts taken from his 2003 booklet called Milton Stars, (Alan organised a reunion of members of some of the speedway teams at Milton Malsor on 12th September 2004, there were representatives of seven teams, 29 ex-riders although not exactly ex, as four races took place with as much enthusiasm and competitiveness as in the past. Comment, It's just as much fun at 70 as it was at 17!)

February 1950. The Northamptonshire Cycle Speedway Control Board was formed by Duston Devils, Military Road Pirates and Kingsthorpe Cobras. Only Duston had a track - at Kerfield Estate.

The teams contesting the first League competition were;

Duston Devils.
Heyford Hawks.
Holton Aces.
Military Road Pirates.
Milton Stars.

By 1951 Weedon Whippets and Abbots Way Tigers had joined the league and Heyford Hawks left the league.

RISS AND THE MOTORBIKE SADDLE.

Yardley Gobion in the late summer of 1951 was a hot bed of local pride and Milton Stars; a well-established and emerging team were invited to take part in demonstration races against local lads, who were thinking of starting a team.

The trouble was that these local lads were really quite good and hadn't quite grasped the concept of a friendly meeting.

And so it was that Yardley's star rider performed a series of unpleasant (and illegal) manoeuvres against our "Mr Clean" Captain Duck and actually crossed the line in first place - only to be disqualified.



On September 15th Cycle Speedway Veterans from all over the country came to visit the recently opened Speedway and Cycle Speedway museum at Paradise Park Hoddesdon.

The general opinion was that it was well presented bringing back many memories of yesteryear.

A get-together for tea and chat in the afternoon rounded off a lovely sunny day for our party of about fifty members and family.

John Brown

From Cycle Speedway Spotlight August 1956

Pits Portrait Pete Jarman — Beckenham Pirates

There are some riders who just naturally take chances, and by their rugged efforts reach the top class and very, very often, they lose some of their ruggedness on the way.

Such a person is Pete Jarman, who began racing as early as 1946, at Honor Oak track. He has had experience in many teams since then with increasing success.

Pete was unfortunate to be the victim of a tram accident, when he was trapped beneath one of these masses of iron. However, he made a great effort to come back and gradually began to regain his form. Riding for Blackheath Aces, he became team partner to Terry Eldridge and they developed into a great match winning pair.

Pete has represented S.E. London in Test Matches and has reached the Individual Finals in three areas. Unlike most riders he prefers number 3 or 4 at the starting grid. At the present time, Peter is Beckenham's outstanding rider and is helping to mould the Pirates into a top class outfit.

He is a very popular rider with the supporters at the Church Field Recreation Ground, while his all out style of riding brings him applause at most tracks he visits.

By Ken Cooper with facts supplied by Bill Cattle

Cycle racing packed in the crowds

COLIN Cotton, now a Plympton resident but once a St Jude's boy, recalls: "I started out riding for Plymstock Lions, but they really wanted riders that were all from Plymstock, and I found myself dropping further and further down the order."

"A chap called Mr Davies, I don't know if I ever knew his Christian name, ran Stoke Dragons (he was Welsh and so the team colours were green and white with a red dragon), and I ended up riding for them."

"At first I partnered their captain John Sylvester, but after a while he left and I took over the captaincy. We used to get good crowds at the Blockhouse, about 500 would turn out early evening and we could take as much as £50 – a lot of money back then."

"The bikes were all maintained at Argyle Cycle Store in Stoke Village, and kept in a lock-up to the side of the Blockhouse."

"I rode for two or three years with them and ended up around 1953/54 with Yealinton Badgers. It was very much a boys version of motor speedway and the proper speedway stopped, so did the cycle speedway."

"I used to ride over to Stoke on a motorbike and if we had away fixtures – out in the wilds at Kingsbridge, Modbury or Sparkwell or wherever, we'd load the bikes up onto a lorry and travel on that. Bill Hutchings, who lived next door to me at St Jude's used to ride with me at Stoke."

"I notice they have a picture of a Yealinton Badgers team on the wall of the Rose and Crown out at Yealinton even now."



CLOCKWISE, FROM ABOVE: 1952 Stoke Dragons: from left, Arthur Lavis, Colin Cotton, Brian Charlack, Bill Hutchings, Ray Wood, manager Ginger Hammett, Dave Oats; front, mascot ten-year-old Terry Passmore; 1954: Yealinton Badgers v State Millers; 1952: Stoke Dragons v Plymstock Lions at the Blockhouse – note the large crowd. Colin Cotton left, John Sylvester right (in white caps)

