

THE TRACK RECORD

**A publication of the
VETERAN CYCLE
SPEEDWAY RIDERS
ASSOCIATION**

**Volume 17
Issue 1
Mar. 2013**

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Keith Bristow (outside) & Alan Cowland (inside) heading for a 5-1 for Wembley All Stars.
(Note the fourth rider falling)

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PITS PORTRAIT

RON HOLVEY - TOOTING TIGERS

The History of Ron is like the history of Cycle Speedway. He started riding in 1946 before any League was formed in his area. Riding for Wimbledon Wolves, he became their captain, led them to be League Champions in the original Surrey League, was his club's Individual Champ. and also the League Individual Champion.

Towards the latter end of 1949, Ron joined the Tigers who had now joined the S.E. London League. A surprising loss of form nearly caused him to retire, but the following year, however, Ron came back to form in a rush, and honours came his way. He was S.E. London Individual Champ. 1951, Best Pairs Champion with J. Cooper, led the South London area team to victory in the ill-fated Empress Hall Matches, and was Captain of the London V Birmingham Television Match at the Empress Hall.

Ron has represented S.E. London, London, and led the Southern Premier League in matches against N.W. Middlesex last year. He was second in the S.E. Individual in 1953, Winner in 1954, and had fifth place last year. Ron has been his club Individual Champ. for the past five years. After winning the "Larue Shield" four times in succession, he made it his own property. Last year he won the new Individual Trophy, the W.J. Cearn's Memorial Trophy.

Ron has been a member of the "Tigers" in all their successes, and he is without a doubt the most popular rider in the Southern Premier League, and it is considered an achievement to beat him. He is on the administrative side of the "Tigers", and in all his career, he has never been disqualified for unfair riding.

With D. Cattle, Ron now shares the club Captaincy, and has been co-opted on to the Board of Control for the selection of riders in future Representative Matches.

THE FACTS FOR THE ABOVE PORTRAIT WERE SUPPLIED BY
MR. W. J. CATTLE.

Directory Amendments

Clive Hitch (New Address/Tel)

Arthur Caunt (New Email Address)

Fred Pallett (New Email Address)

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16th VCSRA President, Ray Gingell Installed Wednesday 9th February 2013 at Wetherspoons - Wibass Down Inn Wimbeldon Broadway

After a couple of delays our 16th President was finally presented with his chain of office by the 2011 President, Pete Leckie at the South London Groups bi-monthly gathering organised by Ron Johnson. About 13 members including Pete Saunders, Danny Daniels, Len Adams representing South, North and West London gathered to wish Ray well on what looks like being, for the Association a very testing year.



Above. Ray together with regalia being congratulated by President No.14, Pete Leckie.

Right. The main VCSRA table headed on the left by Martin Willgress and on the right by Danny Daniel. In the far left corner can be seen Jackie Adams who was relegated to a separate table with Eve Willgress.

Pictures by Len Adams



VCSRA Notices

Subscriptions

Members are reminded that their subscriptions at the new rate of £10 PA (See May 2012 issue of the TR for the 2012 AGM Report) for the year 2013/14 are, if they have not already renewed due on the 1st April. See the Renewal slip which is enclosed with this issue of the TR which should be sent together with your cheque to Malcolm Belchambers.

2013 AGM—Sunday May 26th.

The format for the 2013 AGM will be the same as last year and will follow a Carvery and Buffet lunch to be held at the Roydon Mill Complex, see enclosed payment slip for details.

It is hoped that the meeting will be able to identify and install some new committee members that will be able to see the Association through to 2016 and our 20th Anniversary.

Information Required, Where Are They Now?

Colin Mellors family has a picture of a Cycle Speedway Team, 'The Sunbury Sabres' from the 50's. Do you remember them, Colin would welcome any Info. Colin can be contacted via email, at :-

colmellors@AOL.com

CHAMPIONSHIP FIGHT IN FULL SWING

SOUTH LONDON RANGERS
NOW LEADING TABLE.

The fight to become 1958 Southern Premier League Champions is really becoming interesting now, because last Sunday Raynos Park Tigers, last seasons champions, met their Waterloo at the hands of South London Rangers by 49-47. This win now puts Rangers back on top of the table with 18pts from 11 matches. However Tigers are still well in the hunt having 16pts from 9 matches, an advantage of two matches in hand. Outsiders at the moment are Bockonham Monarchs who are lying third with 12pts from 9 matches, just waiting for either of the top two teams to slip.

In the match between South London Rangers and Raynos Park Tigers, Rangers held the advantage throughout and it was not until the 15th heat that Tigers managed to draw level, but in an exciting nominated race, Roy Baker (Rangers) pipped Tigers Dave Chivers for first place and with Pete Milton holding Geoff Pennifot at bay, Rangers were assured of their two point lead.

In form for Rangers were Roy Baker 15 and Ivan Mougier 12, while Tigers best were Dave Chivers 9 and Charlie Vaughan and Tod Crocknoll with 8pts each.

At Ditton the Devils pulled off a surprise 49-46 victory over a Tooting Tigers team minus Brian Greatloy. Ditton gained the lead in the second heat and never looked like losing it only a 5-1 win in the nominated race keeping the scores at a respectable distance. In excellent form for the Devils were Mike Smith 10 and Phil Binos and Jim Doherty with 8pts each, while scoring more than half Tooting Tigers between them were Derek Cattle with a 15pt. max and Ken Archer with 13. This now leaves Ditton in fourth place in the table and Tooting fifth.

Teams selected for the return Test match with North London at Edmonton on Aug 23rd are as follows: "A" Team R. Baker (S. London) T. Spaulding (Bockonham) D. Cattle (Tooting) D. Chivers (Raynos Park) T. Crocknoll (Raynos Park) P. Jarman (Bockonham) capt. I. Mougier (S. London) M. Smith (Ditton). "B" Team: F. Bodford (Raynos Park), P. Milton (S. London) D. Daniel (Bockonham) K. Archer (Tooting) capt. B. Cattle (Tooting) B. Greatloy (Tooting) G. Butler (Thornton Heath).

TONY JONES.

FIRST BIG B.C.S.F. EVENT

THE BRITANNIA SHIELD

The Britannia Shield event will take place at Garrett Park Wandsworth on Sunday Sept 14th at 3pm. This trophy has been sponsored by Mr. N.L. Roden of Alfred Roden & Sons Ltd. Mr. Roden is being invited to present the trophy and is being offered a position of Vice President in appreciation of his great interest in the Federation.

We are also very pleased to announce that Mr. P. Taylor of North London Independent League who stewarded the World Championships in Holland has accepted an invitation to steward the Britannia Shield event.

J. RICHARDSON, Secretary,
British Cycle Speedway Federation.

EDITORS NOTES.

Email from Paul Thorne.

Scrumpy & Western.

Re-reading last Novembers edition I was intrigued to see a Picture of Nailsea CSC 1949/50 which included the legendary "Worzal" & Zyder drinker Adge Cutler.

He was brought up and schooled in Nailsea, where a plaque stands in his honour in Grove Park Sports Centre.

Before starting his national service, he worked in his fathers motorcycle shop in Nailsea and seeing his brother machine in the lower picture, you wonder if they made their own? I also had a phone call from Malcolm Belchambers saying much the same thing.



Was very interested to read the article about the Cycle Speedway National Archives moving to Warwick, I am not sure how long it will take for any of the items to be available to the public.

I looked on their website the other day, and the only mention of cycle speedway was "The Spokesman"

Mention of the Spokesmen, (www.spokesman-online.co.uk) there is always something of interest in their "Retro & Vets" section. In the last issue, I mentioned LAPSE4, a site that had pictures of defunct tracks. (See page 11.)

Now it gives a site (fourlapfever) that has " a wonderful array of vintage cycle speedway photographs." There are 190 photos in all, but they seem to be the same photos that are on the VCSRA photo album 1. that Colin Booth produced.

RECALLING WHIPPS CROSS.

This picture was posted on the site, asking if anyone could give information about it.

This resulted in this reply from Steve Woodroof. The pub was called the White Hart in Temple Mills Lane. It was demolished in the 1990s. The Track was used by the Whipps Cross Comets in 1950. The club disbanded in 1971. Then New Ham Hammers took the track over. It is now part of the Olympic Site. We sometimes rode there in the late 70's when it was a derelict site explained the E. London rider.



A special cycle speedway match will take place on March 13th, between the Birmingham and Dudley Speedway teams. The event will help raise vital cash for Sandwell Cycle Speedway Club, which suffered a vandalism attack recently. Birmingham boss Graham Dury insists that it will be a competitive match and the likes of Ben Barker and Danny King have already been out on their pushbikes practising.

Wednesfield Aces Cycle Speedway Club. who suffered an arson attack on their club house last year have also offered their support.

Bill Gadsby

Two pictures from ROY DELANEY



Roy Delaney, nineteen year old Captain of the "Edmonton Saints" leads in a race on their cycle speedway track. He won a best pairs trophy in April 1949 and an individual championship trophy in February 1950. Works as a postman at Tottenham

This photo appeared in a copy
of Tit-Bits with report.



Montagu Road 1950

L-R ? Charlie Scales. Bernard Hart. Tommy Kilbey.

From PETER LIPSCOMB.

On receiving my "Track Record" on turning to page three, it was a great shock to hear of the death of Derek Cattle. Derek did so much for our association in the early years, plus his great help on the committee as Chairman and President. I remember going to his place in London many times, with Pete Saunders and Pete Leckie, we were always treated with great hospitality at the club that he ran for so many years with Vicki. It is a sad day. Derek will be missed by all his Cycle Speedway friends all over the country.



On my visit to England last June, my two great mates, Pete Saunders and Pete Leckie took me and DA to the Cycle Speedway Lunch at Wimbledon. It was great to meet up with so many old faces, as I have missed the annual dinner for many years now since moving to Thailand.



Lakeside Restaurant Pantong 12 November 2012 DA, Janet, Barry & Me

In November, I had a phone call from my old friend Barry Briggs, to say that he and his partner Janet were in Thailand for 5 days, so we met up, and while Jackie laid on the beach. Barry and I talked about the good times of Speedway
We also all had a great night out at the Lakeside Restaurant in Pantong..

From Les Gustafson.

There were several Middlesbrough teams listed in the Club Directory section of the 1965 Cycle Speedway Annual one of which was Holmwood Hawks, whose Secretary was noted as (14-year old) Frank Auffret. Their track was on the Holmwood estate - a grassy space between two trees, from which they were frequently chased by men from the town's Parks and Gardens Dept.

Although there had been an Individual Championship in 1965, and a visit by Middlesbrough teenagers to race at Kingstanding (as reported in July 1965 in the Cycle Speedway Record), activity on Teesside had slackened by 1966 (Frank had missed out on that trip to Birmingham, but was in the Trow Lea team which raced there in 1967 - see below). With more opportunities for racing with Tyneside teams, Frank joined up with Trow Lea Mariners at the beginning of 1967 - although his first programmed match saw the relationship off to an inauspicious start.

A joint visit with Newcastle Vikings to Halifax was organised, with Frank waiting at a pre-arranged spot on the A1 south from South Shields. Unfortunately, when the coach came to South Shields from Newcastle, the driver refused to continue on down the A19 via Stockton and insisted on returning to the A1 route - so Frank sat by the side of the A19 road, waiting for a coach which never came, and we sailed on down the A1, short of a heat-lead (no mobile phones in those days!).

The second outing a few weeks later was more successful - the 1967 Halifax Charity Fours (as reported in the last issue of Track Record). The photograph shows Frank on the inside at the track of Woodside Diamonds, with his partner Mike Dobson on the outside, heading for the 5-1 which saw them through to the Quarter-Final of the meeting.

Another memorable trip involving Frank was Trow Lea's visit to Kingstanding at the end of the 1967 season. Tamworth was the overnight stopping-point, with a practice on John Heaton's Tamworth Stars track on Sunday morning - until the vicar came over and asked if we'd mind packing up, as morning service was about to start (Midlands readers may remember that the track was next to the church). When we met John Heaton later in the day at Kingstanding (he was taking part in the Midlands Riders Championship there), he didn't seem to mind too much about our unauthorised use of his track.

In our match against Kingstanding which followed, Frank led Roger Ellis for all of a lap in one of the heats (Harold Smith put out a strong team, which included Roger, Ivor Walsh, Dave Parry and Mick Aris), so we felt that we hadn't disgraced ourselves). On the way back, the mini-bus broke down near Doncaster, so we had to offload bikes and leave them in a local garage, and then catch the overnight coach back to Tyneside (Frank then had to make his way back to Middlesbrough from there). The bikes turned up about two weeks later - just in time for a visit to Edinburgh's Bridgend track, and a match riddled with bike failures.

Frank hadn't given up on resuscitating a Middlesbrough side, however, and in 1968 he persuaded the town's Beechwood Youth Club to let him lay out a track in their grounds, and named his team Saltersgill Saints, taking them into the Northern League Division Two in 1969. At the same time, however, he was starting to have second-half outings at Middlesbrough Speedway, and soon moved into the team proper, bringing down the curtain on his Cycle Speedway activities. Apparently, he considered Speedway very similar to the pedal-sport variety, just a bit faster.

These days, Frank is very much involved in the North Yorkshire Folk Music scene (he used to blow a mean harmonica to entertain us on our away trips in the Sixties!).

Pedals to Power Frank Auffret



1. Frank in Saltersgill Saints race jacket.
2. The Temple Park Track L. to R. Ray Turner, Frank Auffret, Barry Smith, & Mick Nouch
3. Micky Dobson and Frank Auffret on the way to a 5-1 (see opposite page.)

Frank Auffret rode Cycle Speedway in 1967/8 for Trow Lea Mariners of South Shields, but he had started his Cycle Speedway career a couple of years earlier in his native Middlesbrough and it was always his desire to revive the sport there, which he achieved when he managed to persuade the town's Beechwood Youth Club to let him set out a track in their grounds. He named his team the Saltersgill Saints and they entered the Northern League Division 2 in 1969.

Frank then progressed from second-half rides at Middlesbrough Speedway into the team proper, and his duels with Sunderland's "Crazy" Jack Millen are still talked about. He moved up into the higher Division with Hull and there rode alongside Ivan Mauger, the boyhood hero of the North East's Cycle Speedway fraternity. He also spent three seasons with Leicester before signing for Hull, and when Hull closed down in 1981 he briefly returned to the Middlesbrough club before retiring from the sport.



Young England v Scotland at Berwick 1972 Scotland won the series 3-0

Young England L. to R. Pete Reading, Frank Affret, Bruce Forrester, Mitch Graham, Graham Jones, Geoff Davies, & Dave Gatenby

Young Scotland L. to R. Doug Templeton, Wattie Robinson, John Wilson, Andy Meldrum,

NATIONAL ARCHIVE MOVES TO WARWICK

Cycle speedway's national archive has a new home, the national cycling archive and heritage centre at Warwick University.

Ten crates crammed with thousands of cycle speedway magazines, programmes, handbooks, annuals, reports, development plans, sponsorship prospectus, fixture lists, posters, press cuttings and photographs were transported from the sport's

former Central Office in Norwich to the purpose-built centre in Warwick.



Among the "priceless" items now housed in the specially controlled environment at the Modern Records Centre are programmes dating back to the early Fifties including the first ever national team and individual championship programmes as well as programmes from the first England v Scotland test matches and the first

World championships held in Holland in 1958.



A complete set of Spokesman magazines, dating back to issue no one, published in September 1977, through to issue 104 Autumn 2006, is also housed at the cycling heritage centre. A hardback "collector" copy of "50 years of Cycle Speedway, one of only six ever printed, is also part of the collection.

County archivist Helen Ford was delighted with the new acquisitions.

"This is an amazing collection" she told Spokesman-Online. "Until now we've had very little cycle speedway material in the centre. Now we have some unbelievable items, many of which go back to the birth of the sport in the mid Forties. Given their age, the documents are in amazingly good condition.

We plan to catalogue every item, a job that will take several months, before making the entire collection available to the public. Some of the more valuable items like the early programmes, posters and press cuttings, we hope to digitise and make available electronically".

From Spokesman-Online (June 2012) submitted by Robin Martakies.



Hayes Broadsiders Track 2003.

Roy Fraser under starters orders.



From LAPSE4

Hayes 2012



Tolworth 2012

Very sorry to say that Tony Emmott, was involved in a car accident, which tragically resulted in the death of his wife, Jackie. Tony was a cycle speedway rider with Elmfield Eagles, Bradford Moor Vulcans and Shipley Tudors. He is a regular contributor to the Track Record.

Jackie was a cycle speedway supporter and will be remembered by many former riders from the Bradford area.

I understand that a two minute silence held for Jackie at the riders reunion (see opposite Page)

20th September 2012

A counsellor who helped traumatised police officers in the wake of the Hillsborough football disaster has died after a two-car collision on a moorland road.

Jackie Emmott, 67, died at Bradford Royal Infirmary following the collision on Hangingstone Road, near Ilkley, on Sunday.

Mrs Emmott, of Ilkley, was injured when a Mercedes C240 and an Opel Kadett collided on the stretch of road between Ilkley's Cow and Calf Rocks beauty spot and Burley Woodhead at 5.10pm. Her husband, retired solicitor and former Bradford councillor Tony Emmott, 70, was also injured, but has since been discharged from hospital.



Jackie Emmott

4th October 2012.

Hundreds of people - including senior figures from Bradford Council and West Yorkshire Police - gathered at Ilkley's Church of the Sacred Heart on Friday to pay tribute to much-loved resident Jackie Emmott.

Keighley and Ilkley MP, Kris Hopkins, Deputy Lord Mayor of Bradford, Councillor Mike Gibbons, and Assistant Chief Constable of West Yorkshire Police, Mark Milsom, were among those who attended the funeral, which celebrated the life of Mrs Emmott.

The service was led by parish priest, Monsignor Keiran Heskin.

A former West Yorkshire Police welfare officer and Bradford University counsellor, Mrs Emmott, 67, died after a two-car crash on Hangingstone Road on September 16.

She leaves her husband, former Bradford councillor Tony Emmott, two children and four grandchildren.



Horton Pirates v Elmfield Eagles 1961. Tony Emmott Leading

Telegraph & Argus September 22nd 2012

RIDERS SET FOR REUNION

**Sally Clifford on
speedway's glory
days and former
team get-together**

Cycle speedway enthusiasts will have the chance to turn back the clocks and reminisce at a reunion. Former rider Mick Fielding has organised the get-together, at Wibsey Liberal Club, for former Bradford and Halifax league cycle speedway riders of the 1960s and 70s.

The event coincides with the anniversary of Mick's team, Bierley Vikings' 1968 KO Cup victory over the Halifax side West Vale Wolves.

"It's a few years since we had a reunion and it would be great to see all the lads again for a chin-wag," says Mick, who got in touch after reading this week's Remember When? feature on the History of Bradford Speedway exhibition at the Industrial Museum in Eccleshill.

Mick rode as a professional representing Bradford, Crewe and Wembley Lions (Johannesburg) in



Our story on the Industrial Museum's speedway exhibition, prompted Mick Fielding to get in touch regarding a speedway riders reunion



the early Seventies.

"I got involved with some mates at Bierley in 1967. We were the only Bradford club in the Halifax league after the old Bradford League had folded circa 1965. Our track was on Knowles Lane, Holme Wood. Many of the Bradford lads joined new teams in the Halifax area," says Mick.

Mick says the leagues comprised teams Woodside Diamonds, West Vale Wolves, Greetland Aces and Druids, Copley Crusaders, Horley Green Aces, Luddenfoot Panthers,

Mixenden Rangers, Dodgeholme Devils and Boothtown Rapiers. Heckmondwike joined later, along with a team from Sheffield, Stradbroke Arrows.

"It was well organised and great fun, but, apart from Heckmondwike, the sport seems to have died off. It's a shame because it produced some great characters as well as several Bradford lads who were Yorkshire champions, including Jim Meadowcroft, David Burnett and Maurice Tillotson and a few lads who had a go at real speedway,

including Dave Baugh and Mick Fairbairn (pictured above) who rode with me at Odsal," says Mick.

"It is hoped that riders and officials from many of the old Bradford and Halifax clubs will attend the reunion, all are welcome."

Mick is keen for anyone who may have a DVD of any races from that era to be shown on the evening.

● The reunion will take place at Wibsey Liberal Club on Wednesday October 17, at 8pm. For more information, e-mail Mick at fielding851@btinternet.com.

Telegraph & Argus October 20th

STAR RIDERS REUNITED

**Sally Clifford on speedway
cyclists' memories catch-up**

Cycle speedway riders from the Sixties and Seventies were reunited in Bradford.

Former rider Mick Fielding organised the reunion of the former Bradford and Halifax League speedway riders at Wibsey Liberal Club to coincide with the anniversary of his team Bierley Vikings' 1968 KO Cup victory over the Halifax side West Vale Wolves.

Scrapbooks, photographs and match reports evoked many memories for the 20

former riders who attended. For many it was the first time they'd seen each other in a decade.

Among the riders who attended were 1980 British champion Pip Serbert (Woodside Diamonds) from Halifax, former Yorkshire champions David Burnett (Horton Rangers), Jim Meadowcroft (Elmfield Eagles), Robin Wells (Horton Rangers) and Mick Fairbairn (Bierley Vikings).

Another reunion is planned for spring.



The racing cyclists meet up again (above and far left), and in their heyday (left and right)



From Ton Emmott.

HENK DE BRUIN – THE DUTCH FLYER

This legendary cycle speedway rider achieved national prominence in the UK in 1950, when he was a member of the Holland team that rode against England in a test match staged indoors at the Empress Hall, Earls Court in London. Going into the last heat, the Dutch lads led the match by two points. England's Ken Cooper shot into the lead so Henk dropped back to ensure, by virtue of his brilliant tactics, that the other England rider, Derek Clemmit, was kept in fourth place. As Henk and his team mate Theo Dusbaba finished third and second respectively, the 3-3 race result gave Holland overall match victory by 49 points to 47. Henk finished the match as second highest scorer for Holland with 11 points out of 15. VCSRA member Fred Pallett, a former Welling Wings rider in the Kent League, has never forgotten Henk and knowing that he was living in Devon, decided to contact him to discover more about his distinguished cycle speedway career.

Henk de Bruin was born in Amsterdam in 1933. Although he was only six years of age when World War 2 broke out, he was still old enough to realise what was happening. He and his parents were destined to endure the long and difficult Nazi regime's occupation of their Country and, in 1940, the family moved first to the outskirts of Amsterdam and then to Hilversum. Towards the end of the war, Henk missed the last year of his education because the Germans had taken over his school as part of a last ditch stand against the advance of the Allied armies in the months following D-Day. It was about this time that his father died, leaving the family on hard times. Henk left school at the age of 14 and began a panel-beating apprenticeship with a local coach-building company.

His introduction to cycle speedway took place in 1947, when he and his friends began racing round an oval track consisting of two long straights and two sharp bends. The track was, in fact, the tarmac roadways between two apartment blocks and there were lawns and flower beds in the middle. Like many of us, Henk built his own track bike, designing it as far as possible to resemble a motorcycle speedway machine. It wasn't long before Henk and his friends formed a team and this attracted the interest of a neighbour, Hartog de Ronde, who became the team's manager (over time, Hartog was so widely involved as an administrator in the sport that he became known in Holland as "Mr Cycle Speedway").

Henk, as captain of the Hollandse Welpen team of Hilversum, took part in two so-called "ghost" cycle speedway matches against English opposition. The two opposing teams raced simultaneously on their own tracks and the times for each race, run at five-minute intervals, were recorded and conveyed by short wave radio transmission to their opponents. In the first match in 1949, Hollandse Welpen beat the Wembley Lions. This novel experiment was repeated in 1950, when the Dutch lads lost to the Cray Tigers.

In April 1950, Holland received its first visit by an English team – the formidable Cray Tigers who were based at St Mary Cray, Kent; being an area that is now part of the London Borough of Bromley. The visit was hosted by Henk's Hollandse Welpen team, whose track was marked out with white concrete edging, surfaced with red shale and surrounded by a safety fence. The Tigers won the match comfortably by 41-31, with only Henk and his team-mate Walter Dorland being able to offer much resistance. The Tigers went on to ride five more matches during their tour and won them all. It was notable that Dutch tracks usually comprised long straights and narrow radius "suicide" bends, but the Tigers adapted to them well.

The Cray Tigers' tour was a wake-up call for Dutch cycle speedway and Hartog de Ronde decide organise a visit the UK to familiarise himself with the British scene. His visiting party included Henk de Bruin and his track bike. By this time, Henk had won the Dutch Individual Championship three times. The Kent Individual Championship was taking place at the Kent League's ROF Vampires' track at the Woolwich Arsenal in South East London and Henk was invited to participate, so that he could gain experience of an English circuit. Jim

Henderson of Cray Tigers won with Geoff Stark of Welling Wings second. Henk finished third after having won three of his races, although there was some controversy about the reason for his exclusion from his other race. It was immediately following this competition that Fred Pallett competed against Henk and two Cray Tigers' riders in a scratch race, in which Henk gated extremely fast and beat Fred by half a lap.

So impressive had been Henk's riding that Hartog de Ronde was invited to bring to the UK a representative Dutch team to ride against England later that year (this is the match described in the first paragraph). The Dutch lads would be invited to stay in Slough and make a short tour of Berkshire and Buckinghamshire, with matches against some local teams. After the test match against England, the Dutch team, captained by Henk, made their way to Slough, where they stayed in the homes of local riders. First, the Dutch team beat Slough Flyers and then won their next two matches, before losing against a representative two-county side. They then drew the next match and won another. The last encounter was preceded by a challenge match between Henk and Maidenhead Lions' Bernard Spink, which Henk won by two heats to one.

In 1951, in Hilversum, Henk won the Dutch Individual Championship for the fourth time (he was later to win it twice more). It wasn't long before Henk was summoned for his two years' National Service in the Dutch Army and he was trained to drive various military vehicles, including half-tracks. Later during his service, he applied successfully for a driving instructor vacancy.

During the Dutch team's stay in Slough in 1950, Henk had met a local girl Rita, with whom he later kept in touch until marrying her in 1956. By 1953, Henk had taken up grass track racing and motorcycle speedway. Regrettably, these activities were short-lived, as he was very mindful of his responsibility to his future young wife and a dangerous sport like speedway was incompatible with this.

At the time of the couple's marriage, Rita had intended to move to Hilversum to set up home there with Henk. However, because of a prevailing housing shortage, Henk decided to move to England, where he and his wife lived first in a caravan at Winkfield before buying a house in Cippenham; Henk managed to obtain employment with a coach-building company in Slough. It was during this period that Henk turned out occasionally for Edmonton Monarchs, then managed by Vic Cowell, in North London. For these engagements, Henk and his wife were collected from home and returned after the match by motorcycle.

It was whilst living in Berkshire that Henk took up clay pigeon shooting. He became an expert shot and, among other things, represented Berkshire 11 times in competitions. During his last full shooting season, he won the Supreme Berkshire Veterans competition. In later years, his active participation in the sport became limited, although he continued to be listed as a coach, referee and life member of the Clay Pigeon Shooting Association.

Henk retired from work in 1999 and he and his wife moved to Devon in 2001. In retirement, he has put his excellent panel-beating skills to good use by fabricating detailed, small-scale, replica suits of armour and he has also produced figures in relief from sheets of copper.

Some photographs from Henk's cycle speedway and motorcycle speedway career are reproduced on the next page.

From FRED PALLETT

(Note: Fred wishes to acknowledge that some of the information contained in the above article was gleaned from an unpublished biographical document on Henk de Bruin titled "The Flying Dutchman", written and compiled by Arthur Bird in 2007)



Henk de Bruin leads Derek Clement of Slough Flyers



Henk de Bruin as Captain of the Hollandse Welpen team



Henkde Bruin (left) and Martin van den Brakel.



Henk de Bruin tries Speedway in Holland