

THE TRACK RECORD

A publication of the
**VETERAN CYCLE
SPEEDWAY RIDERS
ASSOCIATION**
Volume 16
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Membership Sec.
Malcolm
Belchambers
16a Ethelred Gdns.
Wickford
Essex
SS11 7EX
Tel:-01268 734896

Publishing Editor
Bill Gadsby
7 Sewell Close
St. Albans
Herts
AL4 0TB
Tel:- 01727-859943

e-mail:- colin.booth@tiscali.co.uk billgadsby@hotmail.com
www.cyclespeedwayvets.org.uk



CYCLE SPEEDWAY IN DEVON

Action on the 1st bend at the Shaldon Kestrels track near Teignmouth in the 50's
From a series of photos from John Burnett

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EDITORS NOTE.

Some people had to pay excess postage on the last issue of the Track Record. This was due to the new printers using much thicker paper. So this issue is reduced to 12 pages, which means that some articles have had to be held over until the next issue.

VETERAN CYCLE SPEEDWAY RIDERS ASSOCIATION

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ACCOUNTS FOR THE PERIOD - 1st April 2011 to 31st March 2012

INCOME		EXPENDITURE	
Membership	1515.00	Stationery & computer supplies	636.81
Donations	70.00	Postage	469.71
		Computer Software	94.37
Bank Interest	.85	Web site registration	99.82
		Presentation	85.50
		Printing Track Record	512.50
		Photo album / Frames	5.00
		Donation	50.00
		Flowers/Funerals	75.00
	<u>£1585.85</u>		<u>£2028.71</u>

Bank Balances at 31 st March 2011.....	2167.86
Income.....	1585.85
	<u>3753.71</u>
Less Expenditure	2028.71
	<u>1725.00</u>
Total funds at 31 st March 2012	<u>£ 1725.00</u>

Represented by-	Bank Deposit A/C	1321.85
	Bank Current A/C	403.15
		<u>£1725.00</u>

This summary does not include membership fees for 2012/2013

Tom Kilbey - Treasurer



Pictures from Dell Legg of the Southall Hammers, now living in the USA.

On the right

The Ascot Lions/Aces pictured at Southall Middlesex 14th August 1949 by Mr Morton of Hull. Left to Right,

Brian Roberts, Split Simpson, P. Brooks, Eric Jolly (Capt. on bike), Pete Rogers, Frank Parker, P. Newton and Dell Legg with Clayton the Mascot on bike.

Below

Pictured at the Southall Hammers track, Southall Middlesex, September 1951, L-R 'Winkle' Luck, Derek Finch, John Bailley, Dell Legg (Capt.), Brian Roberts (V Capt.), Roy Randal, J.Green, Cliff Richards and the Mascot in the centre.



Directory Amendments

New or Rejoining Members

Pete Rhodes	15 Barnard Road, Ashmore Park, Wednesfield, Wolverhampton, W Midlands, WV11 2JY Tel.01902 865381
Les Hunt	42 Auckland Close, Enfield, London, EN1 4PP Tel. 0208 805 7721
Doug Harris	25 Savay Close, Denham, Uxbridge, Middlesex, UB9 5NQ Tel. 01895 834418
Trevor Martin	29 Duncan Street, Calne, Wiltshire, SN11 9DA Tel. 01249 812941 Email danyoadrian@live.co.uk
Denis Hall	3965 Ohaupo Road, Ohaupo 3881, North Island, New Zealand.
Ray Sealey	54 New Garden Drive, West Drayton, Middlesex, UB7 7JB Tel. 01895 471426

Revised Details

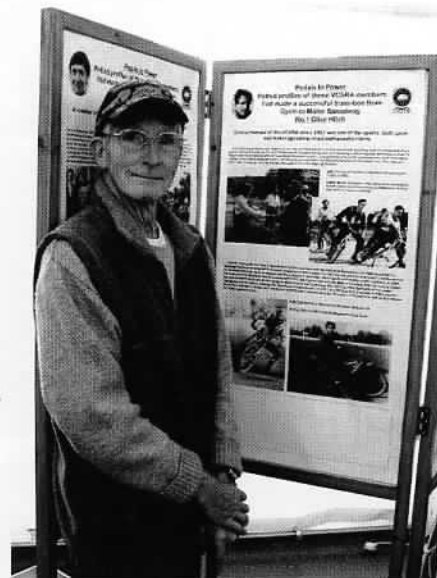
Norman Hunter	New Email normthestorm@live.co.uk
Ted Ede	New Mobile No. 0786 776 1633
Roger Seymour	New Email petancalakeside@gmail.com
Mike Hack	New Mobile No. 0790 541 3396
Dennis Daniel	Revised Email dennis.daniel@btinternet.com
Bryan Geater	New Email bryan.geater@gmail.com
Tom Sweetman	Revised Address 3 Picasso Dirive, West Harbour, Auckland 0618, New Zealand.

NOTES from the COMMITTEEA Celebration of Speedway - Paradise Wildlife Park
Sunday 19th February 2012

A lovely sunny day at Broxbourne where our stand, with its usual display of Cycle Speedway and VCSRA History was well positioned in the marquee. Attracted by the large number of back issues of 'The Track Record' being given away the stand had plenty of visitors including a number of membership enquiries. Also being distributed were copies of the VCSRA reprint of the 1952 Daily Mirror comic strip 'Belinda and the Skid Kids' which didn't receive quite as much interest. Notable amongst the visitors were our very own Clive Hitch (pictured on the right in front of his very own 'Pedals to Power' profile featured on our stand) and Simon Inglis a 'Played in Britain' Series Editor. Launched by English Heritage in 2004 **Played in Britain** is a groundbreaking series on sporting heritage. The latest to be published, in September we are told will feature Cycle Speedway, so lookout for it.

Note

With the retirement for the secretary a new home is required for the Associations display boards - ANY OFFER WELCOME. Please contact Colin Booth

2012 VCSRA AGM and Lunch - Roydon Marina Village, Roydon Essex.Sunday 22nd April 2012

It was another sunny day when 22 members and numerous wives and partners gathered for what proved to be a very enjoyable lunch. The tables cleared and the AGM got underway, a little later than planned at 2.40pm.

Ray Gingell took the chair and with the preliminaries completed Malcolm Belchambers got things underway with his report of the status of the membership which he concluded was satisfactory with a total of 239 members, although, he commented, 48 of those had yet to renew their subscriptions.

Colin (Secretary) followed saying that whilst agreeing with Malcolm that the membership figures were very good he was very unhappy with the number of nomination forms for new committee members returned, only 4 and not 1 for a new committee member. He pointed out that with 3 existing committee members standing down, himself, John Brown, Roy Garnham and one who seemed uncertain, the committee now had only 5 members.

He drew attention to the 'Proposed revision of the Constitution he had circulated and admitted that the change was his idea alone. The changes concern the objectives of the Association which he felt should be dedicated to recording and preserving of the early history of cycle speedway. (*a copy of the proposed amendment is included with this TR*). The implementation of these objectives would undoubtedly require volunteers from throughout the VCSRA.

He noted that it was the opinion of the majority of the committee that in future, with the exception of the AGM and Lunch all social events should be organised by local groups of members on an ad hoc basis. (*similar to the events organised by the South London group*).

He drew attention to the fact that due to increased postal charges soon to be introduced Tom would be proposing an increase in subscriptions.

And finally he confirmed that in 4 weeks he would be giving up the secretaries post, sadly leaving the appointment of his replacement in abeyance. He added that he would whenever possible whilst maintaining the Website give Bill a hand with the Track record.

Next, the Treasurer, Tom Kilbey drew attention the Accounts Summary he had distributed. He highlighted the difference between our income and expenditure for the year which indicated a deficit of approximately £550. Together with the increased postage charges he felt an increase in subscriptions was necessary. **A sum of £10. PA to take effect from 31st March 2013** was proposed by Colin Booth and seconded by Ray Gingell. The proposal was passed unanimously by those present.

The next item on the agenda, the Election of the Committee was raised by Ray who asked that as there had been no nominations for new committee members to replace those who were retiring were there any at the meeting who would like to offer their services. The response was a stony silence. The general consensus of the meeting was that the existing 5 members should be allowed to

AGM Continued

...muddle along, hoping that there would someone they could co-opt onto the committee as and when required. The question of the President for 2013/14 was raised by the chair and 2 candidates were nominated and approved, Ray Gingell and Tom Kilbey. It was agreed that voting forms would be included with this issue of the TR.

The proposed revised Constitution was discussed and with no opinions being offered it was decided that a poll of the membership should be held and arrangements put in hand.

The subject of Dinner/Dances was raised and a proposal made for the reinstatement of the November event at Bulphan was made by Len Adams and seconded by Tom Kilbey. However when meeting was addressed to see if there was anyone prepared to organise the event there was no response. It is assumed that it will be put on hold until a new secretary is appointed.

In conclusion the meeting was asked to approve the appointment of two new honorary members, Dougie Wotton and Derek Cattle which it duly did, unanimously.

The meeting was closed at 3.40pm.

Members Pictures

Via the Postman from Tony Arnold of the Midlands Sutton Stars and via the internet from Dell Legg of the Southall Hammers from Middlesex (see page 3)

On the Right

The 1958 Wolverhampton Midland League Team
Back Row L-R Harry Loasby, Gary Langstone,
Terry Blest, and Peter Pedley.

Front Row L-R John Bradley, Tony Arnold, Jim
Bond, and Peter Blackwell



On the 18th May 1958 they lost 43-53 to Coventry,
On the 6th July 1958 they lost 47-49 to Leicester,
Both matches held at the Inkerman Street Track.



Above

Sutton Stars v Sweden - 13th August 1958
Gate 1 Tony Arnold, Gate 3 Jim Bond.
Can anyone name the Swedish Riders?

On the Right

Birmingham v Wolverhampton - 12th October 1958
On the inside Willie Evans (Birmingham)
On the outside Ewie Edwards (Birmingham)
And at the rear Tony Arnold (Wolverhampton)



FROM MICK JEFFERY

The track record and the VCSRA Web Site

In the last edition of the Track Record, you mentioned that it would be good to have some team profiles, etc., so out came the archives and after about an hour I managed to put together one on the Edmonton Monarchs (1957-1972), which is enclosed. I hope this is OK and, maybe, help to fill up a page or two in the Track Record.

EDMONTON MONARCHS

At the tail end of 1956 following the Suez crisis, petrol became very expensive. Vic Cowell, at Edmonton Saints, started thinking that (a) long distance travelling to matches in the forthcoming 1957 season would be difficult and (b) he would very much like to manage a club of his own and at the same time, try to raise the presentation standard of the sport or, at least, his own team.

So he formed the Edmonton Monarchs and the North London Independent League. The Independent' in the title was important because this league was going to be independent of the governing body NACSA in order to impose their own ideas. Edmonton Saints allowed Vic to take a few riders from that club to form the Monarchs and to share the Montagu Road track. He then talked Mick Jeffery into joining the new team from Hoddesdon Kangaroos - they first met in 1950 at Arsenal Aces.

The clubs forming the North London Independent League in 1957 were Edmonton Saints and Monarchs, Tottenham Kangaroos, Finchley Sabres and Warwick Lions. The Monarch's riders were Vic Cowell, Paul Bowden, Dave Keay, Bob Isaacs, Mick Jeffery and various youngsters. To better appearances the team were decked out in yellow/blue jerseys, no breastplates, blue jeans and yellow/blue socks. A huge change from the norm, at that time. The other league teams also went into uniform dress, referees/stewards and track officials were put into white coats and racing rules were tightened up.

1958 saw the addition of Hellingley Lions into the NLIL following the folding of the Finchley club. Terry Porter joined the team from Finchley and became one of its long time, hard working, members.

In 1958 the British Cycle Speedway Federation was formed with all the NLIL members on board and with Vic Cowell a leading light in the new organisation. Later that year, Mick Jeffery became the first winner of the British Riders Championship after a run-off at Garratt Park with South London's Roy Baker. The BCSF's knock-out tournament, the Gold Cup, held its first final at the Montagu Road track with South London running out winners over Tooting Tigers. This was to be the first of three consecutive finals to be held at Edmonton. The end of the 1958 season saw the demise of the NLIL together with Edmonton Saints and Warwick Lions.

For 1959, Edmonton Monarchs joined the Southern Premier league. Les Westwood and Tony Mobbs from the Saints and Charlie Read, from Warwick, joined the Monarchs. The team finished second to Raynes Park Tigers in the league and managed to win the League's knock-out cup competition.

1960 saw the formation of the British League with Edmonton, South London, Beckenham, Tottenham, Hellingley and Thurrock taking part. The Edmonton team consisted of Vic Cowell, Paul Bowden, Les Westwood, Charlie Read, Mick Jeffery, Terry Porter, Brian Robbins, Micky Hall, Dave Keay, Bob Isaacs and Derek Wills. Derek had transferred from local rivals Tottenham in the close season. The tightening up of standards continued with tracks being required to have continuous safety fences and upright taped starting gates.

This team stayed intact for the next three years and the seasons 1960, 1961 and 1962 became Edmonton's 'glory' years. In this time they were the British League winners and the knock-out Gold Cup winners three years on the trot. Les Westwood won the first World Championship to be held in Britain, on South London's track at Garratt Park and Mick Jeffery regularly captained the British League Test sides in matches against the Rest of England teams.

In 1962, after various trips to Holland, Edmonton's Montagu road track was changed to a tarmac surface and racing took on a completely new aspect - faster, cleaner and with crash helmets! However, not everyone liked the tarmac and in 1963, Edmonton pulled out of league racing and by 1964 almost all racing stopped. Nevertheless, the club held together and by 1967 the team was reformed, still managed by Vic Cowell. By 1969 they had joined the English league with Derek Wills, Brian Robbins, Les Westwood all on board and with Mick Jeffery rejoining after six years retirement. Fred Boutell also came to the club from Middlesex - so the team now had the 1960 World Champion and the 2nd place runner-up in their ranks.

Although Edmonton held their own in the League over the next 3-4 years, they never achieved the dizzy heights of the early '60's and the club run by Vic Cowell finally called it a day in 1972, by which time most of the riders were 'getting on' in years and had other commitments. However, the club members felt satisfied that they, together with like minded friends in the original BCSF, started a movement in cycle speedway that had raised the level of the sport's appearance, presentation and organisation.

As a postscript, I attended the 2011 All England Finals in Norwich last August and was so pleased to find that the standard on all counts had been maintained to this day. So what we had set out to achieve 50 years ago proved to have been worth all the effort and hard work.

EDMONTON MONARCHS



BCSF GOLD CUP FINAL WINNERS 1962 V HORSPATH AT GARRATT PARK SOUTH LONDON.
Back row. Tony Balding (treasurer), Derek Wills, Terry Porter, Paul Bowden, Les Westwood & Mick Boddy.
Front row. Charlie Read, Vic Cowell, Mick Jeffery, & Brian Robbins.

TEN YEARS AGO.

FROM THE TRACK RECORD JUNE 2002

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, **Sigm. 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.

1950—CATTERICK LIONS—1951



Back Row. Duncan Casson (manager) Bob Devine, Kid South, Pete Tarrant, Ron Snelling, Doug Wotton
Front Row. Ron Calendar, Ron Tarrant (Captain on bike) & Doug Bowman.



October 8th 1950. Catterick Lions v Bradford Aces. Ron Tarrant on his Phillips bike, leading brother Peter, waiting to get through on the inside.

Doug Wotton, after he returned from National Service, riding for Bristol Whitby Lions, when he was presented with the trophy for being Somerset Champion.

The article on the opposite page was in the Track Record ten years ago.

By coincidence, Les Gustafson sent in these pictures of the Catterick Cycle Speedway. They are from the Newcastle Cycle Speedway site:- www.newcastlecyclespeedway.co.uk Where there is a section containing many picture and results of the Catterick team.

In answer to the question:- Surely there must have been other armed forces teams? On the next page is an article about Cycle Speedway at an R.A.F. camp in Germany.



In the last issue Les wrote about the Newcastle Cycle Speedway revival. The team had their first matches on April 22 away to Edinburgh Falcons (Veterans). A full report of the match together with many pictures can be found on the Falcons web site www.edinburghfalcons.co.uk Unfortunately there is not room for the report, but the web site is well worth a visit.

Another site well worth a visit is defunctspeedway.co.uk This gives pictures and articles about all the defunct tracks. I was told about this site by Fred Pallett, he has sent all his photos of Wembley speedway for inclusion.

He also sent me some of Buster Brown, suggesting that he should be included in the "Pedals to Power" series.

I will include this in the next issue, but so far I have not managed to find any cycle speedway pictures of Buster.

Last issue, I struggled to find enough to fill 16 pages, this time, I have enough left over to fill half of the next issue! Apologies to those of you who have taken the trouble to submit articles and pictures and find that they have not been included.

Bill Gadsby

R.A.F. BOYS IN GERMANY FORM CAMP TEAMS



IF any of you awaiting your call-up papers for the Royal Air Force, I wouldn't worry so much, there is always the chance of your being posted to Germany, to R.A.F. Camp, Wildenrath.

For this very picturesque station, only eight miles from the Dutch border, are running their own cycle speedway teams—six in all—and have a neat 114 yards sand track near the billets.

The enthusiasm is so great among the airmen, that the possibility of extra teams is enormous, the six already operating are: R.A.F. Regiment (25 Squadron), R.A.F. Regiment (24 Squadron), Catering Section, Technical Section, Fire Section and Signals Section. They are lucky enough to have many old riders stationed there, among them Dixie Dean (ex-South Harrow Greyhounds), Rocky Bell (ex-Cradley Heath Cubs), John Kickham (ex-Rolvenden Blues), Ron Percy (ex-Lewis Rocks), Bill Bruce (ex-Robroyston) and Stan "Tiger" Blackwell (ex-Battersea).

It was really through the efforts of Blackwell that the officers of the Camp allowed the teams and track to be sanctioned. Whilst stationed in England, prior to his posting, Blackwell almost formed an R.A.F. team at R.A.F., Halton.

The Wildenrath circuit was officially opened recently. At the first meeting was a Best Pairs Championship. Present was the Officer Commanding, Group Captain J. E. Johnson, D.S.O., D.F.C., famous ace pilot of the Battle of Britain days. Winners were Stan Blackwell and Ray Hyam (Catering Section) with 24 points, runners-up Rocky Bell and Dixie Dean (R.A.F. Regiment) with 19 points. A Camp Match Champion-



ship was staged next, with Blackwell beating Ferguson in straight runs. Later, Blackwell successfully defended his title against Sgt. Witham.

As well as the six section teams mentioned above, there are two camp representative teams formed, known as the R.A.F. Vampires and R.A.F. Meteors. They soon hope to travel across the border to meet various Dutch teams. Each team has its own rider N.C.O. in Flight—Sgt. Jowett (Vampires) and Sgt. Witham (Meteors).

At the moment, Camp Champion is Corporal Blackwell, but he exclaimed: "That's only because I used to ride back home. Some of the others are new to cycle speedway. They will soon catch up, you'll see!"

From Amateur Cycle Speedway June/July 1952

Photo of Dixie Dean from Cycle Speedway Argus March 1958



A FORGOTTEN HERO

ADRIENNE PORTER nee ELMS

30. 6. 1941 — 11. 2. 2012

Adrienne, wife of Edmonton Monarchs rider Terry Porter, has died. She will be remembered by many riders within the British League between 1958 & 1966 for selling raffle tickets programmes and draw tickets to help raise funds for the club, her dark eyes and smile would not have been missed, as she tried to extract money for the cause. One of the sports "Forgotten Heroes" which helped many clubs to exist. She is sorely missed by her husband and family.

TERRY PORTER



Edmonton v Bournemouth (at Edmonton) 1961.
L to R. Terry Porter, unknown Bournemouth rider and Charlie Read.

CYCLISTS WITH THE NEED FOR SPEED

Jim Greenhalf
on the craze
that hooked
young riders

When Norman Tebbit told the 1981 Conservative Party Conference the story of his father getting on his bike to find work during the Depression in the 1930s, little did he know that some of the party faithful in Bradford had been doing that for a number of years – only for pleasure rather than employment.

Cycle speedway involved young men wearing racing bibs emblazoned with a skull and crossbones, an eagle or the ace of clubs, pedalling customised push-bikes as fast as possible four times round a marked track.

None of them wore helmets or any of the other protective paraphernalia people don these days just to go for a sedate ride round the park.

Former Heaton Conservative councillor **Tony Emmott** used to compete in cycle speedway, which was popular after the war, especially in Bradford during the 1950s and 1960s.

He said: "The Bradford Speedway League lasted for several years but petered out once Odsal closed its doors to motorised speedway. I rode for Elmfield Eagles, Bradford Moor Vulcans and Shipley Tudors.

"At that time I started work on leaving school for the old town clerks' department, where Walter Leatham and Henry Patten worked. Two of us rode cycle speedway. We organised a town hall team to ride against Bowling Aces at the Holme Wood Red



Elmfield Eagles v Horton Pirates, 1961. Tony Emmott is leading with two Pirates in pursuit. Inset, a scorecard from the period

Devil track off Tong Street on February 18, 1962, before the start of the 1962 league season."

The Aces came up trumps by 71 points to 25.

Twelve years before that, in October 1950, Frizinghall Aces – all fresh-faced youngsters with an average age of just 15 – took on the Catterick Lions in a challenge match at Shipley's Green Lane Barracks track. The Lions, all 18 years old and doing National Service, won 52-44.

Eleven years later, on October 30, 1961, the T&A reported that cycle speedway was more popular in Yorkshire than it had been for a decade. The recently-formed Cycle Speedway Association had five teams, each with an authorised racing track.

Winners of the Bradford inter-club championship were Bowling Aces, with Elmfield Eagles sec-

ond. The three other league teams were Horton Pirates, Holmefield Devils and Bradford Moor Vulcans. No mention there of Shipley Tudors.

"They never really got off the ground. We had a track lined up on the canal side at Shipley, but in the autumn of 1962 there was a storm and an old mill building fell on it," Tony said.

Cycle speedway started just after the war in London, with youngsters racing their bikes round bomb sites. Evidently the craze soon came north. Tony thinks motorcycle speedway kick-started interest in it.

"You'd go up to Odsal and see the likes of Arthur Wright and Arthur Forrest hurtling round the track at great speed. Young lads were keen to emulate that. In those days teenagers made their own sports and recreation.

"Cycle speedway was run by teenagers. We used to meet in the Oddfellows Hall on Thornton Road – it's gone now – every Friday night to arrange fixtures. Races were on Sundays. The season ran from April to September.

"The bikes had cowhorn handles, a saddle and frame. There were no brakes. Each team had eight riders. Two from each team competed in each heat. It was four times round the track. There were 16 heats in a league match. Matches went on for about 90 minutes," he said.

Cycle speedway has not joined greyhound racing, wrestling and motorcycle speedway in the dustbin of history.

There are three cycle speedway tracks in Hull, Sheffield and at Firth Park, Heckmondwike. Two races were held in Keighley's Victoria Park earlier this year, with a third planned for March 3.

Share your memories with us by sending your letters and pictures to David Barnett at the Telegraph & Argus, Hall Ings, Bradford, BD1 1JR or e-mail david.barnett@telegraphandargus.co.uk