



Bemsee

THE JOURNAL OF THE
BRITISH MOTOR CYCLE RACING CLUB

Vol. 6. No. 1 — January, 1953 ONE SHILLING



DENIS GLOVER tries one-wheel locomotion, to the amusement of the onlookers, in the playing fields alongside the Glencrutchery road, I.O.M.

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PHOTOGRAPH

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Bemsee

Vol. 6. No. 1. JAN., 1953

EDITOR:

L. R. HIGGINS

THE BRITISH MOTOR CYCLE RACING CLUB

PRESIDENT: Sir Algernon Guinness, Bt.

VICE-PRESIDENTS: Professor A. M. Low, D.Sc., A.C.G.I., E. C. E. Baragwanath,
H. L. Daniell, C. A. Lewis.

CHAIRMAN: N. B. Pope VICE-CHAIRMAN: A. H. Taylor

SECRETARY: R. C. Walker, 2 Wilton Mews, Wilton Street, London, S.W.1

EDITORIAL

WE offer our sincere congratulations to Geoffrey Duke for the latest honour conferred upon him, his appointment to the Order of the British Empire, in the New Year Honours. Geoffrey has not only earned a most coveted honour for himself but has obtained further recognition for all British racing motorcyclists and the industry. This is the second occasion on which a motor cyclist has been so honoured. Three years ago Freddie Frith was appointed O.B.E. Both are "Bemsee" members. We are very proud of them.

The resolution of the Committee that whenever possible all National and International race meetings organised by "Bemsee" shall be sponsored to avoid a repetition of the financial difficulties brought by the last "Hutchinson Hundred" meeting, reflects the burden borne by the organizers and the disastrous results that can be caused by rain. Running an International race meeting is an expensive business, and one of the major worries of the organizers is how to meet the cost. The cost, if the organizers are not extraordinarily wealthy, must be borne by the paying gate.

Two of the last three "Hutchinson Hundred" meetings have been spoilt by wet weather. The Committee's decision to accept sponsorship is not, therefore unexpected. There is a lot to be said for and against sponsorship, and the most appropriate time to have your say is at the A.G.M. in February.

Our experience of sponsored events have been a happy one. We have been fortunate in having the technical Press as our ally, practical motorcyclists with years of experience of all aspects of motorcycle racing. It is when we consider sponsorship by a daily newspaper that we grow uneasy. The M.C.C. Round Britain Rally (for cars) was sponsored by a daily newspaper, and the event came nigh unto changing its identity. In the mind of the non-motoring public it become not the M.C.C. but the *Daily Express Rally*.

When "Bemsee" organises an event then "Bemsee's" name must not fade into the background. Our prestige has not suffered under the sponsorship of *Motor Cycling*, who understand and respect our name and our traditions. Daily newspapers, on the other hand, are not unlike steam rollers.

Bemsee Dines

SOME two hundred members and guests of "Bemsee" gathered at the Lyons Corner House, Coventry Street, London, W.1. on Friday evening, December 5th for the Club's Annual Dinner, Dance and Presentation of Awards.

The fog which enveloped London for four days was settling down and made travelling difficult; nevertheless, there were very few empty places at the tables. Those who were unable to be present sent messages, and there were two from overseas; Mrs. Whorwood sent good wishes from New Zealand, and Miss Theresa Wallach from the U.S.A.

Many famous racing men of the past and present were to be seen, including H. L. Daniell, G. E. Tottey,—all the way from the Wirral; he hoped to be home by the Wednesday (he said)—D. K. Farrant, Leslie Graham and "Barry." The Technical Press were represented by Graham Walker (*Motor Cycling*) and George Wilson (*The Motor Cycle*).

Service was slick. You should have seen how and with almost military precision the *Nippies* served and cleared the tables.

After the feasting came the talking, with Don McBain as toastmaster introducing the speakers.

Our President, Sir Algernon Guinness Bt., proposed the Royal Toast and The Club. During his speech he paid tribute to the three British World Champions, Geoffrey Duke (350 c.c.) Cecil Sandford (125 c.c.) and Cyril Smith (Sidecar) all "Bemsee" members; made a special mention of the award of the Segrave Trophy to Geoffrey Duke, added a word of praise for Leslie Graham, and reiterated how proud he is to be the President of our Club. Sir Algernon revealed that the B.R.D.C. are taking steps to improve the surface of Silverstone so that the debacle of the "Hutchinson Hundred" meeting will not be repeated. He also revealed that in 1953 "Bemsee" will organise four meetings (rumour suggests that the fourth will be at the Crystal Palace).

John Storr replied and said that he found the ordeal of speaking in public more trying than the interminable wait upon the starting grid.

When Professor Low was introduced to propose the health of the visitors, he was received with applause. The Professor, with his ready wit and seemingly inexhaustible supply of anecdotes and stories,

held his audience's interest from beginning to end; what a pity there are not encores for speeches. This one deserved an encore. In a few fleeting moments of seriousness, Professor Low mentioned that he had recently inspected a proposed racing circuit at Aintree, which closely followed the famous steeplechase course, and advised "Bemsee" to stake an interest.

In introducing Chief Superintendent W. M. Taylor of the Metropolitan Police Driving School, who replied on behalf of the guests, Don McBain said that he did not think the Superintendent would need the "mike." How right he was! The voice of the Police filled the large hall and left no doubt in anyone's mind that he was delighted to be present amongst the members of so unique a club as "Bemsee." He was, he said, in favour of motor cycle clubs and suggested that all motorcyclists should be made to join clubs, the clubs themselves having the power to deal with bad behaviour. Something on these lines was, he continued, necessary to overcome the present accident rate. His speech, like that of Professor Low, was received with loud applause.

Cliff Lewis proposed "The Ladies," and in mentioning the feats performed by many lady motor cyclists of the past, recalled that a lady member of "Bemsee," Miss B. Shilling, won a Gold Star at Brooklands on a 500 c.c. Norton in 1934, and insisted that her husband to be must go and do likewise before their marriage could take place.

Mrs. Ken Rickard made a brief but charming reply. The final toast of the evening was "The Press" offered by Noel Pope. He made his points snappily in three minutes, and left the floor to Graham Walker, who replied.

If ever there was a motorcycle racing meeting at Aintree, said Graham, he was making for Becher's Brook. Commenting on Chief Superintendent W. M. Taylor's proposal of compulsorily Club membership, Graham Walker said that he would prefer persuasion. He added his tribute to Leslie Graham, referring to him as the Pied Piper of Chislehurst, a sly comment upon the drift of British riders to Continental factories because of the lack of British racing motor cycles.

After the speeches the awards were graciously presented by Lady Guinness, who was presented with a bouquet by

LOOKING BACK ON 1952

ERWIN TRAGATSH

SOME leading men of the Mondial factory joined other manufacturers. The result was a desinterestment on races and both the Morini and M.V. Agusta "Tiddlers" become now the leading Italian machines in the 125 c.c. class.

A 250 c.c. Moto-Guzzi with sidecar reached 221,266 k.p.h. The rider of this machine, Gino Cavanna, is by "profession" a monk.

The four cylinder Moto-Guzzi and the new single cylinder Gilera-Saturno racing machines appeared during some practice days in different races. They will probably be ready in 1953 and give the Italians new "horses" for the races.

A good friend told me "secretly" that the M.V. Agusta 500cc. four develops at 10,000 r.p.m. 65 horses, while the Gilera 500 c.c. four at 11,000 r.p.m. between 58 and 62 h.p.

Romolo Ferri was during the whole year in search for reliability and speed of the new 250 c.c. V-twin Lambretta racing machine, but so far—could not find the wanted in sufficient quantity.

Horex became very interested in the racing game. They had already some good older riders as Mansfield, Schoen, Schnell and Gablenz when they started to negotiate with a brilliant new man, Werner Haas. But before they got him to sign the contract, N.S.U. stepped in and secured this rider till the end of 1953. Incidentally, Haas is not so much "new" he rode already 3 years ago on an Ardie in road races as private entrant.

Enrico Lorenzetti was expressing the opinion that probably 1952 was his lazy year of racing. I feel it was not his last word in this connection.

Champion of Germany in the 350 c.c.

class is Roland Schnell, who during the whole season has not won even one race in this class. But he collected points and at the finish he was the most successful man on his Horex, which, incidentally, is his own design.

The Grand Prix of Czechoslovakia on the famous Masaryk Circuit at Brno was won by Anton Vitar of Czechoslovakia on a Jawa. Poor Vitar rode this only race during the whole season as he could not compete with his foreign made Nortons. For this occasion he got from the factory a Jawa machine, which he bent during a practice crash as a result of a broken chain. In the race he started on another Jawa and won, and like Reg. Armstrong in the Senior T.T., the rear chain broke. Fortunately this time without a crash.

The east German produced 125 c.c. two-stroke single cylinder Ifa racing machines are now not only reliable but also very fast. These engines are using a rotating sleeve for the induction system and have 11,000 r.p.m. The weight of these machines is only 53 kg!

The new 125 c.c. Walter designed O.H.C. racing C.Z. machines became high revving "Tiddlers." The newest engines are delivering 11,500 r.p.m. and the latest modified 250 c.c. C.Z. O.H.C. racing machines (also designed by J. Walter) are getting up to 10,000 r.p.m.

Ing. Giannini of Italy produced not only the new 4 cyl. Moto Guzzi racing engine but also the famous 750 c.c. 4 cylinder engine of the Giaur racing cars. One of these little racing cars is driven by the nephew of the late Italian King Vittorio Emanuele III, the Conte Calvi di Bergolo.

Bemsee Dines

Miss Berry, Bob Walker's secretarial assistant. Not all the members who won awards were present. Amongst those that came were John Storr, winner of the Melano Cup; Leslie Graham, winner of the Carburol Cup and The George Reynolds Memorial Trophy; Bill Doran winner of the A.M.C. Trophy; and D. K. Farrant, winner of the Minnie Grenfell Trophy (a new one was obtained).

Dancing followed until 1-00 a.m. A

affle for some excellent prizes, which included bottles of spirits and a magnificent 20 lb. turkey, was organised by Don McBain. Don's band also played throughout the evening. An auctioned book of raffle tickets was knocked down to "Cabby" Cooper for £3-10-0. But, even so, he was unlucky in the draw.

Puzzle of the evening. How does "Cabby" Cooper obtain such a performance from lemonade?

THE SECRETARY'S PAGE

I TAKE this opportunity of thanking all those members and friends who sent me Christmas cards, calendars and goodwishes for 1953. It is very nearly impossible for me to make an individual reply to everyone of my goodwishers, so will they accept this acknowledgement of my thanks. To everyone of you I wish health and prosperity in this new year.

1953 SUBSCRIPTIONS

Will members please note that their annual subscription of £2. 2. 0. (£1. 1. 0. if resident overseas) is now due.

Cheques and postal orders should be made payable to: British Motor Cycle Racing Club Limited, and forwarded to the Secretary at 2, Wilton Mews, Wilton Street, London, S.W.1.

Prompt attention will greatly facilitate clerical work and prove beneficial to the Club.

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following:

L. C. King, D. N. Hagemann, and Donald Chisholm.

BENEVOLENT FUND

Donations have been received from the following members:

W. Fitzakerly, S. F. Lloyd.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY -

| | |
|----------------|------------------------------------|
| 18th April | B.M.C.R.C. Road Races |
| 2nd May | North West 200 |
| 9th May | T.T. Week I.O.M. |
| 8/12th June | Leinster 200 |
| 27th June | B.M.C.R.C. Club Meeting |
| 5th July | Dutch G.P. |
| 19th July | Belgian G.P. |
| 25th July | German G.P. |
| 2nd August | B.M.C.R.C. Club Meeting |
| 3rd August | French G.P. |
| 13/15th August | A.C.U. Race Meeting |
| 22/23rd Aug. | Ulster G.P. |
| 29th August | Swiss G.P. |
| 5th September | B.M.C.R.C. Shelsley Walsh (M.A.C.) |
| 6th September | B.M.C.R.C. Brighton Speed Trials |
| 8/10th Sept. | (B. & H.M.C.) |
| 16/19th Sept. | Italian G.P. |
| 26th Sept. | M.G.P., I.O.M. |
| 4th October | Scarborough Meeting |
| November | B.M.C.R.C. "Hutchinson Hundred" |
| December | Spanish G.P. |
| | Motor Cycle Show |
| | B.M.C.R.C. Annual Dinner |

THE ESSO FILM SHOW

It is with pleasure I am again able to report on a Film preview, to which I was invited during the week of the Motor Cycle Show, by the Esso Petroleum Co. Ltd., who always appear to remember "Bemsee" when organising their various entertainments. This particular show marked the occasion of a presentation to Michael Hawthorn, in recognition of his outstanding achievements in International car racing, by his Grace the Duke of Richmond and Gordon.

A total of six Esso 16mm. films, in sound and colour, comprised this new series and included The Veteran Car Rally, Kitching Trophy Trial, Victory Trial, Red Marley Hill Climb, the B.R.D.C. Daily Express Silverstone Meeting, Senior T.T., the International Six Days Trial. Two of these, the Veteran Rally and the Senior T.T., were shown and while both were of very high quality I think there are few who would dispute that the film of the 1952 T.T. is the best of the many that have been taken in the Island during the past few years. There was a definite new angle of approach to the whole thing and the Esso personnel and cameramen are to be congratulated on the production. A number of "taken-from-the-saddle" shots were also included, and some slow motion shots of Les Graham's M.V. with the Earls' front end were most interesting.

It is understood that the above mentioned films may be obtained free on loan, on application to the Esso Petroleum Co. Ltd., 36, Queen Anne's Gate, London, S.W.1. The best reproduction is obtained by using a projector with a minimum light source of 750 watts, and amplifier output of 8 watts.

OBITUARY

It is with great regret that we record the death of Roger Ajax. He was involved in an accident with a B.R.S. lorry during the foggy conditions that prevailed in nearly December. We believe that he leaves a wife and two children; to them and other relatives we extend our deepest sympathy.

COMMITTEE NEWS

Meeting held on 15th December, 1952.

Present: Messrs. N. B. Pope (Chairman), E. C. E. Baragwanath, C. Cobbold, H. L. Daniell, D. J. H. Glover, W. W. Hunt, W. G. Jarman, J. O. Roebuck and A. H. Taylor.

In attendance: The Secretary.

An Apology for absence was received from Mr. K. Rickard.

Silverstone. The Secretary gave a report on the recent meeting of the B.R.D.C. Silverstone Committee, whereat an assurance was given that the track would be resurfaced where necessary well before the Club's first meeting there in April 1953, and that a number of experiments were taking place to ascertain the most suitable type of surface dressing to use. The following dates have been granted by the R.C.U.: April 18th (National), June 27th and July 25th (Closed) and September 25th (International "Hutchinson 100"). It was doubtful at the moment whether B.R.D.C. could allow two closed meetings next season.

R. L. Graham Trophy. It was stated that Mr. R. L. Graham has made a donation towards a trophy, to be competed for during the 1953 season. It was agreed that the rules governing the award of this trophy should be drafted by the Race Committee in co-operation with Mr. Graham.

Minnie Grenfell Memorial Trophy Competition. It was resolved that the following events should count for this competition during 1953: B.M.C.R.C. 18th April; International T.T. or Clubman's T.T. or Manx Grand Prix; B.M.C.R.C. 27th June and 25th July; B.M.C.R.C. International 26th September.

New Members were elected.

The Monthly Account was presented and approved.

A.G.M. Provisional arrangements were made for the A.G.M. to take place on Friday 27th February, 1953 in the Royal Automobile Club, Pall Mall, commencing at 7-30 p.m.

Area Representatives. The following members were elected to stand as representatives of the Club in the following areas:

T. J. Rowbottom (Derbyshire), A. Shaw (Lancashire), Mrs. M. Pryse, (Glamorgan), J. C. East (Northants) and D. R. Brew (Western Australia).

Annual Dinner. It was thought that the Club's recent Dinner, held at the Coventry Street Corner House, would show a loss financially. In view of the social success of this event however, it was considered that a change of date to coincide with the Motor Cycle Show at Earls Court should be examined by the Social Committee before making definite plans for 1953.

THE EDITOR'S CORRESPONDENCE

125 c.c. RACING

A SECOND reading of Mr. Davison's comments on this subject does confirm that he is not opposed to a race of this class, but believes that (in its present form) it serves no useful purpose. I think this opinion is supported by many; A. R. Taylor makes the most important observation on T.T. racing generally, its commercial and sporting values.

He rightly stresses the possibility of a decline in demand for machines of large capacity on account of high cost. This alone provides the strongest argument in favour of racing and the development of small capacity machines now so popular. Lack of support in this class by British manufacturers has in the past caused the organisers of the T.T. to feel their way in staging the race.

The Island course on account of its distance per lap is not particularly entertaining from spectators' angle with so small

an entry as has so far been the case.

Further, inclusion of this class with the Lightweight event is no solution, rather will each destroy the other if only in the interests of safety.

Full support should be given by the manufacturers of this country who for so long have held supremacy in the 350 c.c. and 500 c.c. classes. They should be most favourably equipped to take up the challenge, it may well prove to constitute the major share of their future products. With this support a seven lap event separately staged would create equal if not greater interest than the 100 m.p.h. lay about which we hear so much.

This might also help to provide the necessary stimulant to retain our ace riders who are regrettably drifting to foreign camps.

Good luck to Dot, E.M.C. etc., in their pioneering. May their efforts reap their deserved reward.

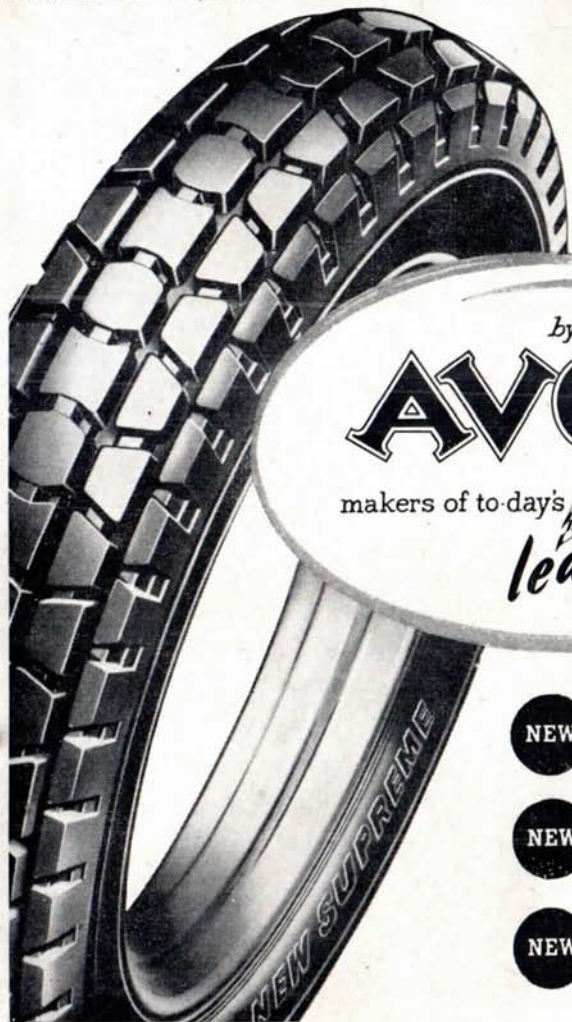
T. L. Rowbottom.

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THE HUTCHINSON HUNDRED

A Retrospect

By L. R. HIGGINS

THE following year's meeting was notable for two very fine achievements: 'The Hutch' was won at 100 m.p.h., and a two-fifty won a Gold Star, the only one to be awarded in that Class. Gold Stars were awarded by "Bemsee" to members who, during a race organised by the Club, lapped the Track at 100 m.p.h. or more.

For some considerable time M. B. Saunders had attempted the 100 m.p.h. lap with a two-fifty, on several occasions approaching within a fraction of a second but never succeeding in topping the 'hundred.' He was using a 246 c.c. Excelsior-J.A.P., fully streamlined but without enclosing the rider. At last, in October 1933, he achieved his ambition and is the all-time holder of the 250 c.c. Brooklands lap record at over 102 m.p.h.

The Track had been lapped at 100 m.p.h. by a two-fifty two years earlier when Les Archer, in a special attempt, succeeded in making the first such lap with a 246 c.c. New Imperial. As this was not a "Bemsee" event he did not qualify for a Gold Star. In the 1933 Hutchinson Hundred he satisfied another personal ambition by winning the race for the first and only time at 100 m.p.h. It was also the first occasion on which a three-fifty covered a hundred miles in the hour on a British track. The machine was a 348 c.c. KTT Velocette, the same one which Archer had ridden in the Ulster Grand Prix a few weeks earlier but modified for the Brooklands race by raising the compression ratio to a figure suitable for alcohol fuel.

For second place there was a duel between Ben Bickell (498 c.c. Bickell-J.A.P.) and D. W. Ronan (499 c.c. Rudge). With one lap to go Bickell was third, a couple of hundred yards behind Ronan; he caught the Rudge almost in the last mile of the race, thundering across the line with a lead of a hundred yards and averaging 101.3 m.p.h.

There were only eighteen starters out of an entry of twenty-six for the 1934 race. The meeting was brought forward to late August, a move that was partially responsible for the reduced field for several

would-be competitors were riding in the Ulster Grand Prix held a week or so earlier, and some were involved in that remarkable multiple crash at the Ballyhill curves near the starting point of the race. No one was seriously hurt but minor injuries and damaged machines led to withdrawals from the Brooklands race, amongst them the 1933 winner of the Mellano Trophy, Les Archer.

Amongst the starters were two very interesting machines; Ben Bickell's supercharged Ariel 'four,' the exhaust note of which was reckoned to be the sweetest music ever heard at the Track; and an O.E.C. This latter machine was fitted with the duplex steering frame and an Austin Seven engine, sleeved down from 742 c.c. to 490 c.c. and supercharged. The blower delivered mixture at a 17 to 20 lb. boost; the engine ran on a compression ratio of 4.5 to 1; and the machine was single geared. Jack Granville Grenfell was the creator and it was ridden by the late F. W. S. (Freddie) Clarke, and completed only five slow laps before retiring. Later on the experiment was abandoned.

The limit man was Eric Fernihough, again riding his 173 c.c. Excelsior-J.A.P. He led from the start to finish, lapping consistently at 85 m.p.h. and averaging the remarkable speed of 82.18 m.p.h. To the fuel tank was attached a conversion table of lap times and speeds, and this, together with pit signals, enabled him to ride a well judged race; he won by a minute. Second was Jock West (498 c.c. Triumph) at 96.9 m.p.h., a position he was to occupy three times more during the next four years.

Eric Fernihough did not defend his title in the next year, 1935, and the race was won by a private owner, the late Noel Christmas, on a KTT Velocette. It was a comfortable victory, for he won by two laps, averaging 97.46 m.p.h. and lapping for most of the race at 99 m.p.h. An equally praiseworthy performance was that of Jock West, who again finished second, his 493 c.c. Triumph averaging 100.1 m.p.h. for the 102 miles.

Amongst the thirty-one starters was road racing star "Ginger" Wood, riding



Competitors lined up for the start of the 1936 race.
(Photo: 'The Motor Cycle')



The first post-war Hutchinson 100 was run at Dunholme in 1947. The winner was Les Archer, junior on a 250 c.c. E.M.C. two stroke.
(Photo: 'The Motor Cycle')

Brooklands at its worst. A scene during the wet race of 1938.
(Photo: 'Motor Cycling')



an experimental and supercharged New Imperial V-twin of 500 c.c. He was on the scratch mark, a position which reflected the sagacity of the handicappers, for "Ginger" immediately began to lap at 114 m.p.h. The steering of the machine did not match its speed, for as it came off the banking and crossed the bumps at The Fork, all the muscular effort that the broad shouldered "Ginger" Wood had at his command was needed to hold the New Imperial on its course. On his third lap "Ginger" broke the 500 c.c. class lap record, raising it to 115.82 m.p.h., but that proved too much for the engine and a few moments later the New Imperial was posted as retired.

An innovation introduced for 1936 was a time allowance for refuelling. All riders who notified the organisers, in advance, of their intention to take on fuel during the race, were given an allowance of one minute on their handicap. Twenty-four of the forty-four entrants took advantage of this concession, while others preferred to fit outsize tanks. Noel Pope fitting a particularly large container to his three-fifty Norton. He finished seventh at 94.59 m.p.h.

There were ten finishers and 67 secs. covered the first three. Ron Harris (490 c.c. Norton) was second and he pulled back all but 59 secs. of the 10 min. 56 secs. he conceded to Syd Goddard (246 c.c. O.K. Supreme-J.A.P.), the winner at 85.87 m.p.h. D. C. Minett (499 c.c. Rudge), off the same handicap mark (2 min. 28 secs.) as Ron Harris, ran him very close for second place, eventually finishing third, a mere 8 secs. behind.

Ron Harris figured in an even more exciting finish in the following year (1937). There were thirty-three starters and only six finishers, many riders being forced to retire because of minor troubles during the closing stages of the race.

At about half distance the race was led by Bob Lunn (348 c.c. Velocette), with a handicap allowance of 10 min. 52 sec. He was followed by H. Rayfield (490 c.c. Norton) and T. L. Beamish (246 c.c. New Imperial). In fifth place was Ron Harris (490 c.c. Norton), and sixth Jock West (346 c.c. A.J.S.). With less than twenty miles to go D. C. Minett pushed his 499 c.c. Rudge ahead of Lunn's Velocette and shortly afterwards Ron Harris passed the Velocette. On the thirty-third lap, with four to go, the order was Minett, Harris, Lunn, and then with the race virtually in his pocket Minett fell a victim to last minute catastrophe, one of his tyres went flat. His retirement left the race a

gift to Harris, who went steadily ahead and was duly flagged in, apparently the winner. Unfortunately the silencer of Harris' Norton had broken, and as that was a breach of the rules there was some doubt of the line of action that would be taken. The stewards conferred and poor Ron Harris was left wondering whether he was the winner or not. Some time later the Stewards announced their decision; Ron Harris was disqualified and the Mellano Trophy awarded to the runner-up, Bob Lunn.

Nobody was aware at the time that the 1938 Hutchinson Hundred was the last of the series that was to be organised at Brooklands and the last that was to be held for nine years. This last track event was held on a dismal day, for torrential rain fell throughout the afternoon, and in places the Track was flooded. Nevertheless, speeds were high for such conditions.

The winner was Maurice Cann, better known as a road racing expert than a track man, and his little Excelsior Manxman averaged 85.36 m.p.h. For the fourth time in five years, Jock West (346 c.c. A.J.S.) was second, his average speed of 92.48 m.p.h. being only $2\frac{1}{2}$ m.p.h. down on his 1937 speed, when the race was run under more ideal conditions. He stopped to refuel and it is possible that this cost him the race, for it was subsequently discovered that this stop was unnecessary.

The rest of the story is soon told. After the war years (1939-45) conditions were greatly changed. "Bemsee" was reformed in 1947, but the Club was homeless. Brooklands was not available, and later on was sold, for two years "Bemsee" joined forces with the Lincoln Club and in 1947 and 1948 the two Clubs organised successful meetings at the Dunholme (Lincolnshire) airfield. The Hutchinson 100 as a race ceased and the Mellano Trophy was awarded to the winner of a sealed handicap, riders taking part in separate races. This was because entires had become unwieldy. At the 1948 meeting the number of entries received for the 100 mile race for 250 c.c., 350 c.c. and 1,000 c.c. classes was almost overwhelming. One hundred three-fifties were entered and they enjoyed a race by themselves. The two-fifties, five-hundreds and thousands were all let loose together. With so many runners it was difficult for the timekeepers and lap scorers to keep track of everybody and as a consequence some men were missed. Eventually all the bothers were overcome, but the organisers realised that a different arrangement would have to be planned for future races.

(To be continued)



1935 Winner; the late Noel Christmas in front of the Vickers sheds with his Mark IV KTT Velocette.
(Photo: 'The Motor Cycle')



Another sidecar victory was registered in 1951. The victor was triple World's Sidecar Champion, Eric Oliver, seen here in action on his Norton-Watsonian outfit at Silverstone. Note the position of his right arm as he bends the Norton round a fast right hander.

(Photo: 'Motor Cycling')



A move was made to Silverstone for the 1949 meeting. The illustration shows Ted Frend cornering on a "Porcupine" A.J.S. during the 500 c.c. race.
(Photo: 'The Motor Cycle')



L. J. Bayliss (248 c.c. Ellbee Special), No. 83, won the Trophy in 1948. The meeting was again held at Dunholme.

(Photo: 'Motor Cycling')

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NEW BOOKS

Britains Racing Motor Cycles — 15s. 0d.

By L. R. HIGGINS (G. T. Foulis & Co. Ltd., London)

A long awaited book that tells the story of famous British motor-cycles that have been raced during the past half-century. It is written by an author who needs no introduction to "Bemsee" members, for he is one of us, and knows his subject from A.B.C. to Zenith.

There are no chapters. The story of each of the different makes selected is told in a separate monograph, so there are 61 stories about the well known makes, the forgotten makes and those that have gone out of business or no longer race. The author set himself a difficult task, that of condensing into 80,000 words the story of the success and failures of Britain's Racing Motor-Cycles in fifty years of racing. The result is a highly interesting story or, in the words of the author, "a potted history of our racing ironmongery"; and in the pot are names that have so long upheld British prestige on the home and the Continental circuits—A.J.S., Norton, Velocette—the past glories of Excelsior, New Imperial, Rudge and Sunbeam, and an introduction to names that, unless you were a motorcyclist during the "Golden Age," you won't recognise.

Although the book deals primarily with machines, there is a great deal of information about the riders and some enlightening and little known details concerning the reasons behind retirements. The race results are not tabulated but very nearly every minor and major success is recorded; not as stodgy statistics but skilfully weaved into the narrative.

Comprehensive technical descriptions tell not only of the machines that were in the public eye, but the lesser known makes, the failures and the experimental models that never made public appearances. Did you know for example, that there was once an o.h.v. 250 c.c. Norton, that J.A.P. made an o.h.c. 4-valve engine more than forty years ago, or that megaphone exhausts were used in 1920? Have you any recol-

lection of that breathtaking T.T. experiment, the four-valve o.h.c. Beardmore Precision built for the 1924 Junior race; or that other expensive failure, the Senior T.T. B.S.A. of 1921?

Besides making extremely interesting reading these technical details enable the reader to trace the development of the motor-cycle from the early days when the engines were slung on the front forks. The introduction and development of multi-gears and gearboxes; aluminium alloys for cylinder heads; the valve-in-the-head engine; cradle and sprung frames; internal expanding brakes; and all chain transmission, are all recorded and pointed to their probable "first time" date.

How many hours of work went into this potted history only the author knows, but some of the difficulties he encountered, and the patience needed to overcome them, are mentioned in the foreword where he mentions the trouble he struck in collecting the photographs for the illustrations. In introducing the book the Publishers claim that alone the illustrations tell the story of the development of the motor-cycle. This is no exaggeration. There are 61 half-tone reproductions of motorcycles ranging from early racers of about 1908 to a modern 7R A.J.S. There are pictures of early T.T. and Brooklands machines, a cavalcade of T.T. winners, examples of "Forgotten Makes," the trend of design, and those who went after "World's Fastest" honours; all attractively presented.

An extremely attractive jacket adds the finishing touch. It incorporates a photograph by our own Bill Salmond, and shows Ken Kavanagh rushing down Bray Hill on his "Featherbed" Norton.

It is a unique book, well worth the price, and a book you need on your bookshelf to settle those arguments that are Armed with it you could answer almost any question on racing motorcycles.

HAVE YOU
paid your subscription
FOR 1953

MARSHAL'S MUSINGS

W. G. BILL JARMAN

ALL you wish yourself dear reader and may 1953 be one of the best years of your life. Maybe you covet a twin or a four when the Bank balance indicates a terrier sleeved down to a whippet! Perhaps you have other ideas which cannot be turned into reality? Never mind, you can still have a grand season with last year's 350 and 500 c.c. singles at least as far as this part of Europe is concerned. Of course, if you're going all continental you will require a vee eight sooner or later. "Lots of pots" to quote Lashmar.

Retired racers who fancy themselves as "King-pin Marshals" are reminded that there is not a lot of time to waste before the big opening meeting in April. We require a few more members who are a 100 per cent keen and reliable to take charge of a corner and act as Senior Marshal for the section near the corner. The Committee rightly insist that these Corner Marshals must be experienced men who will see that the Flags, 'Phones and Course are properly manned during practice and racing. The job is intensely interesting and will give immense satisfaction to those men who like to be in a position of trust. The Corner Marshals will only report direct to Control by telephone. If the 'phone breaks down, there will be radio and travelling marshals to help with messages. Write to me at 153 Reigate Avenue, Sutton, Surrey, as soon as you like, and quote your membership number.

When the date of our Annual General Meeting is announced, make a great effort to attend. If you have any good ideas which you think worthy of a place on the Agenda, send them along to the Secretary. Remember you are all shareholders in the Club and have a vote. In any case it's quite an occasion and we invariably foregather at the *Crimson Beast* after the meeting.

May I suggest a suitable resolution for 1953? Very well, here goes! Every member of "Bemsee" should pay his sub. immediately and introduce at least one new member before the April meeting. The time is not so far distant when it may become quite a ceremony to get into this exclusive organisation. Rest assured, the loyal members will not be overlooked when we get a home of our own. That is our main objective and when that day dawns, the new men will certainly expect

to pay more than those who have been in for years. There are many people who think we should throw in our lot with some powerful organisation with a view to getting the capital quickly. Fine in a way, but if the B.M.C.R.C. gets smothered in the process, where are we? Personally I am in favour of sponsorship but surely that sponsorship should be truly technical? In other words, let us deal with people who speak our language.

Several letters and cards have reached me from far away places. One from Vancouver was a Christmas Card outside and a letter inside. The writer let fly about eccentric springing, which has returned after having been dropped in the early 'twenties. Now we know why chains break. Another correspondent wrote from South Australia humorously suggesting the whole of "Bemsee" should come out and put on one of our special meetings down under. I suggested a Moto-Cross might be more appropriate, but as both types are not very good sailors, this bit of nonsense is only included because it is the right part of the year. Its time one of you bloques wrote a good ghost story anyway. The Editor will be pleased if he gets it in time for next Christmas. I'm sure he would prefer a nice technical contribution right away, so if its cold outside, why not scribble something to make us laugh, argue or weep? A witty article on alcohol for example!

In conclusion, may I ask all the regular Marshals to put the following dates in their 1953 Diaries:—

| | | |
|-----------|-------------------------|----|
| Apr. 18 | B.M.C.R.C. Road Races | ** |
| June 8/12 | T.T. Races—I.O.M. | |
| June 27 | B.M.C.R.C. Club Meeting | * |
| July 25 | B.M.C.R.C. Club Meeting | * |
| Aug. 29 | B.M.C.R.C. Hill Climb | |
| Aug. 5 | B.M.C.R.C. Speed Trials | |
| Sept. 26 | B.M.C.R.C. Road Races | ** |

Items marked ** will involve the full Marshal Plan for two days. Items marked * will be one day affairs. The other events will be under the control of other organisations and any "Bemsee" Marshal who wishes to continue the good work in the I.O.M. or elsewhere can always be sure of a welcome berth provided he applies in good time.

Finally, let me repeat once more that the "Corner Marshals" are the most valuable requirements at the moment. A most important job reserved for the older members who have retired from racing.

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'REV COUNTER' REPORTS

R. D. Keeler will be riding for G. K. Rae in major road racing events during 1953. He expects to be mounted on a "7R" and "Featherbed," with a possible addition of an "Inter" for the Clubmans T.T. George Ewere will be acting as his mechanic.

Peter Romaine reports slow progress but that the recent operations on his leg at the Royal Free Hospital have been fairly successful. He is at present undergoing further treatment to improve knee movement. It may be a few weeks yet before Peter is able to take a job of any description. We all wish him an early and complete recovery. It is nearly two years since he first entered hospital after his serious crash at Blandford.

Les Clifford, that popular P.A. announcer at all our race meetings, departed last month for Wellington in the *Rangitike*. From Wellington he will travel to other parts of New Zealand, following his occupation as a teacher. He expects that his visit will last for fifteen months, so it will be Trophy Day, 1954, before we again hear his now familiar voice at Silverstone,

or elsewhere. Best of luck Les, and a speedy and safe return.

Vic Proctor has made his third attempt this year (1952) on the South African motor-cycle speed record, and has pushed the speed up from 137 to 148.94 m.p.h. The best time recorded on any one run was 156 m.p.h., but unfortunately mechanical failure prevented the return run. Vic, however, expects to make a further attempt early in the New Year and considers a speed of around 160 m.p.h. quite possible. It is interesting to note that the U.K. is not the only place on earth that harbours authorities who are, to say the least, uninterested in motorcycle events that attract national interest. The South African authorities do not appear to be any too co-operative.

Jack Sparrow who, it will be recalled, is the Club's Representative for Shropshire, wishes members to note that he can be reached at Messrs. W. Wilkes, Motor Cycles, Castle Foregate, Shrewsbury, on any weekday from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., and will be only too pleased to do all he can to assist members in his particular area.

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- Members are reminded that their Annual subscriptions fell due on January 1st.
- Prompt payment of £2.2.0 (£1.1.0 if resident overseas) will be appreciated.
- Cheques, postal and money orders to be made payable to the British Motor Cycle Racing Club Ltd.
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