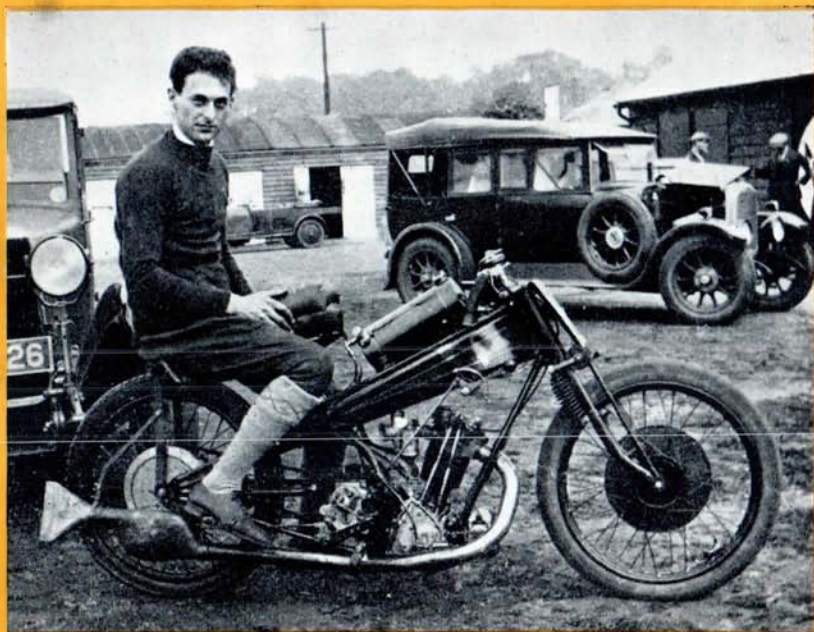




# Bemsee

THE JOURNAL OF THE  
BRITISH MOTOR CYCLE RACING CLUB

Vol. 11. No. 3. MAR., 1958 ONE SHILLING



Eddie Ventura and 248 cc. Cotton Blackburne, pictured in 1927

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## RACING PREVIEW 1958

WITH the coming road-racing season fast approaching, interest begins to centre around the people and machinery that will, we hope, be seen at the various circuits and venues which we all know so well. This time each year, one can read and hear about racing personalities and their proposed plans for the season ahead, both in these islands of ours and over the other side of the "ditch", in the numerous and varied countries that go to make up, what is most generally known as, the Continent.

National and works teams, agent-sponsored riders, works-supported riders, individual entrants and the machinery that they will use, are all subjects that have appeared in the technical Press, in news snippets and items, to whet our appetites, create conjecture, conversation and comment, and to give us in a somewhat general picture, the layout of the road-racing year to which we are all looking forward. With the foregoing remarks in mind, we have gathered together as far as has been possible, all the interesting bits and pieces that have appeared in print up to the present time, and here present them to give some idea of what and whom we shall see.

One should suppose that the big International Grands Prix are the more important of the season's meetings and therefore we will start with these. Up to the time of writing, no official British works' teams have been announced, nor are we likely to hear of any such constituted groups, if the present policy of our manufacturers is carried through the year. Of the Continental manufacturers, the only one who has announced an officially-entered team of riders in the way that we were used to hearing about a year or so back, is the Mecanica Verghera (M.V.) concern, of which its head, Count Domenico Agusta, appears to be a forthright supporter of the sport. With their four-cylinder 500 cc. and 350 cc. mounts, their 250 cc. and 135 cc. lightweights again in the field, we shall most likely see the first outing of their new six-cylinder Senior machine later in the year. They have riders of the highest calibre lined up to represent them: John Surtees, John Hartle, Terry Shepherd, Carlo Ubbiali, Tarquinio Provini, and Carlo Bandirola. The first two mentioned will, of course, be riding their own Nortons when not required by the M.V. people.

The other large-scale manufacturer who has announced a limited racing programme for this season, is the Bayerische Motoren Werke (B.M.W.) of Munich, who are coming back into the sport with their famous horizontally-opposed twin-cylinder bikes in the Senior capacity class. Geoff. Duke is signed up now to ride for the firm in the solo class and we hear of a plan for works' support for three sidecar aces, Walter Schneider, Helmut Fath and Florian Camathias. We may see something of the alleged German "Four", but this engine is so far denied by the works. Famous star-rider Dickie Dale now has the potent ex-Australian 500 cc. "Rennsport" B.M.W., and is promised, we believe, works' support for the season. Duke will also be seen most likely riding his special Norton during the year, as he has frequently been at the Bracebridge Street Works in Brum, concerning this vehicle.

Other manufacturers who have announced a measure of support for road-racing are, Ducati, the Italian builders of fast and reliable lightweights, who are to enter their 125 cc. desmodromic-valve singles, ridden by Italian ace, Romolo Ferri, and we may also see something of their 250 cc. twin racer. Ducati will also be represented by Fron and Brian Purslow, who will have works' support.

Two other lightweight Italian makes may be seen around, Bianchi and Morini, while last year's World Champion 500 cc. class, Libero Liberati, has apparently only his own personally-tuned Gilera "Saturno" single to race, without support from the Arcore factory. Here, in Britain, Norton Motors have announced a programme of service-assistance for riders of "Manx", together with the carrying through of their development plans for this world-famous bike.

The motor-cycle agents still maintain great support for racing, and of these, perhaps the one with the biggest "stake" is Joe Potts of Glasgow, who will enter Bob McIntyre and Alastair King, and the famous 350 cc. ex-A.M.C. "Porcupine", together with their ultra-fast Nortons and a "7R". Bemsee supporter and special-builder, Bob Geeson, will be entering and providing mounts for John Hartle and Derek Minter with the famous "R.E.Gs.". Eric Oliver will be entering "Pip" Harris in the T.T. Sidecar race; Bill Bancroft entering Harry Plews

# *Bemsee*

Vol. 11. No. 3. MAR., 1958

EDITOR:  
P. F. WRIGHT

**BRITISH MOTOR CYCLE RACING CLUB**

PRESIDENT: The Marquis Camden, J.P.

VICE-PRESIDENTS: E. C. E. Baragwanath, H. L. Daniell, C. A. Lewis

CHAIRMAN: N. B. Pope      VICE-CHAIRMAN: A. Squillario

SECRETARY: W. G. Tremlett, 34 Paradise Road, Richmond, Surrey

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## QUICK OFF THE MARK

**T**HE ORGANISATION for our Club's first meeting of the season is now well under way and already we have had many entries for the various events to be staged in April. Now, as you may have gathered, motor-cycle racing is a very popular sport, and it behoves all our members whenever they are thinking of entering for a race meeting, to get their correctly completed entry-forms off quickly, and thus help the Head Office organisation as well as themselves.

After your entry-form has gone in, there remains much work to be done at Headquarters, and so when you are quick-off-the-mark in this respect, it is of immense help to all concerned in getting the pre-race day routine flowing along smoothly.

All our members who bear this point in mind for the rest of this season, and of course, at all times, will be doing a good turn, and after all, it is better for yourselves as well; for you will be far more likely to get your entry accepted.

**Closing-date for contributions — 14th of each month**



and Phillip Palmer, and Allan Shepherd in the Manx G.P.; Jack Bailey entering Peter Middleton on a Norton, and Dennis Parkinson will have Jimmy Buchan riding his Nortons.

Of the interesting machines we shall most likely see during the year, several have been mentioned in the Press, including ex-works Mondials, the Ken Brett 125 cc. "K.C.B.", the Geoff. Monty 350 cc. "G.M.S." Mk. 2, and his "90-bore" Norton, and a very "special" 250 cc. four-cylinder double o.h.c. mount to be ridden by B. P. Setchell.

National teams announced to date include those of stout T.T. supporters, Australia and New Zealand, the former being particularly well represented in numbers. The official Aussie team will be captained by Bob Brown, with Eric Hinton and Jack Ahearn, and these riders will have a veritable galaxy of national colleagues: Harry Hinton, Jr., Derek Hutchings, Tom Phillis, Dick Thompson, Alan Burt, Keith Campbell, and Jack Forrest. The New Zealand team will be Noel McCutcheon, John Anderson and Peter Pawson, with fellow-

countrymen John Hempleman and Frank Higgins along also.

Riders of whom we all know will be back again, although one or two will be missing from the scene this season. Bob Anderson is going abroad, Dick Harding is giving up to concentrate on studies, while, unfortunately, Bernard Codd cannot ride again, on medical advice. We shall see, amongst others however, all being well, Ray Fay, George Catlin (M.V. and Surtees Norton), Peter Davey (B.S.A.'s), Sammy Miller (N.S.U.'s), Ned Minihan, Alan Rutherford (Duke Norton and Velo.), Arthur Willerton (7R.), Jack Brett and Alan Trow (Nortons), Jim Redman from South Africa, John Marcotte from the States, Jackie Beeton, Cyril Smith and Jacques Drion with new Norton outfits, and many others.

We take this opportunity to wish the very best to all these and other riders, whom we hope will have a good year. On our part, we shall look forward to seeing them in action, writing a further page in the history of our sport, one that will be headed "1958".

P.F.W.

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## NEW BOOKS

### ALF FRANCIS—RACING MECHANIC—25s.

By Peter Lewis. Published by G. T. Foulis & Co. Ltd., London.

**R**IGHT from the very first page this is a book of absorbing interest; there is not a dull moment in the whole of its 320 pages. It is a book about motor racing, but from an unusual angle, for it is the story of ten years of postwar racing as seen by a racing mechanic, who works and watches but never enjoys the limelight nor the thrill of participation.

Curiously enough, until he joined the H.W.M. *equipe* in 1948, Alf Francis had no experience of racing. He was a first-class mechanic with a knowledge of foreign languages, but he learnt quickly, and the hard way. In his account of his experience with H.W.M. he reveals some interesting and hitherto unknown facts about this British enterprise which, with inadequate resources, pitted itself against the might of the continental factories, and by dint of many personal sacrifices and whole-hearted enthusiasm, achieved some success.

The book is not wholly concerned with course and track, it contains a good deal of technical chatter, many interest-

ing sidelights on motor racing, and some breath-taking accounts of hair-raising trips across Europe. To drive night and day to reach England from Southern Italy, and follow this up with almost non-stop preparation of the cars was not an unusual experience for Alf Francis. It was while he was with H.W.M. that Francis first met Stirling Moss, and after he had left the H.W.M. *equipe* he subsequently took on the job of preparing and maintaining Moss's privately-owned cars, including the Maserati which Moss drove with such success. This partnership ended sometime later after Moss had joined the Mercedes team.

Subsequently, Francis joined Rob Walker's team and was, and is, responsible for the preparation of the cars owned and raced by this enterprising enthusiast.

A feature of the book is Alf Francis's engaging frankness. He is outspoken and candid but makes it evident that he regards Stirling Moss as Britain's best racing driver.

L.R.H.

to be overtaken was to a greater extent liable for an accident when the overtaking vehicle collided with a pedestrian, than the driver of that vehicle. This ruling emphasises the importance of a driver making certain that it is safe for another vehicle to overtake before signalling that he is ready to be overtaken. Nevertheless, the R.A.C. points out, it does not minimise the necessity on the part of the overtaking driver to ensure that it is safe to overtake another vehicle before doing so.

#### SUCCESS OF TRAINING SCHEME

More than 10,000 learner motor cyclists have successfully completed courses under the R.A.C./A.C.U. Training Scheme since it began in 1947, an average of over 1,000 each year. During 1957 1,402 pupils gained the proficiency certificate despite the difficulties caused by petrol rationing during the early part of the year.

The scheme, devised and operated by the Royal Automobile Club and the Auto-Cycle Union, is run in conjunction with motor cycling clubs in all parts of Britain and enables motor cyclists and scooterists to learn how to ride on private roads without danger to themselves or others, before graduating to busy public thoroughfares.

The course covers twenty-four lessons, both practical and theoretical, spread over a period of from nine to twelve weeks. The maximum cost of the course is only 36 shillings, mainly because the instructors give freely of their time and

some 180 lightweight machines are provided free of charge, largely by manufacturers and dealers. This number has recently been augmented by a gift of four scooters and six mo-peds from one of the leading manufacturers.

The scheme is generally thought to provide a test at least the equivalent of the Ministry of Transport examination and there is keen competition between the sixty Clubs and five centres operating the scheme, to turn out more and better motor cyclists.

The greatest number of successes from a training centre during 1957 was recorded by Crystal Palace where 98 pupils gained the coveted certificate. Harringay with 86 came next.

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#### BENEVOLENT FUND

The following donations have been made to the Benevolent Fund since the last magazine issue. We would like to record our sincere thanks for these:—

F. T. E. Bodman, G. A. Legg, W. G. Bushnell, M. H. Eagle.

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#### PLEASE NOTE

Until further notice, the Editor's address is now:—

**34 ISLAND ROAD  
HANDSWORTH  
BIRMINGHAM, 21.**

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## AREA NEWS

### NOTTS & LEICESTER

W. B. Martin

"Ivy Cottage", Kneeton Road,  
East Bridgford, Notts.

**A**LTHOUGH less than a dozen members attended our February meeting, it was indeed enjoyable, due to the fact that we had the pleasure of the company of Guy Tremlett, who expressed great disappointment at not being able to attend our previous meeting, when he would have had a better opportunity of meeting more of our members. We do appreciate the Sec.'s visit, carried out at what must be a very busy time for Headquarters Staff, and we do look forward to his next visit.

I still await word from anyone interested in attending the Clubhouse at Mallory, one Saturday evening in the near future.

It is interesting to note that the cell is making good progress, as we have recently enrolled about a dozen new local members, but we still have room for more.

Next meeting, March 10th, usual place.

### METROPOLITAN AREA

W. G. Jarman

153, Reigate Avenue,  
Sutton, Surrey.

**O**UR last event of the Winter season is due to take place at the "Prince of Wales Tavern," Drury Lane, W.C., on Tuesday, March 11th, 1958, 7 p.m. for 7.30 p.m. So many of you have asked for another "unparliamentary debate" that it just cannot be refused. Remember the Preservatives, the Stopposition, and the Ad-libs, last year? I can promise you a few more laughs if the witty ones come again. To all those kind souls who have helped with film shows, racing panels, quiz games, technical and practical talks, etc., our sincere thanks are due. Without your efforts these events would have been impossible.

We always work on the principle of one member, one guest. See you on the 11th.

### MUTUAL AID

**For Sale :** Brand new Lucas Magneto, cost £24, will accept £15. **Wanted :** Oil tank and 1½ pint chain-oiler tank for "Gold

Star".—W. Dixon, 14 Abel Street, Burnley. Phone Burnley 2118.

**For Sale :** Racing 250 c.c. Rudge, hairpin valves, swinging arm, alloy rims, racing mag. and carb.; spares include pipe, con-rod, big-end, valve springs, plugs, push rods, sprocket and extractors, barrel, etc., etc. Price £65. 4th Crystal Palace and Brands Hatch.—D. Baker, 136 Blundell Road, Burnt Oak, Edgware, Middlesex.

**For Sale :** 1954 Tiger Cub, which some misguided body has converted into a trials machine. It is now in pieces and requires an expert hand to put it all back together, as well as a few new bits. Cost me £80; going as it is for £35. Anyone interested? If so, drop the Secretary a line at the Office. Thank you!

**Wanted:** Exhaust pipe and Megga for Mk. 8 Velocette, also Blackburne and Chaterlea o.h.c. engine parts.—L. D. Ascott, 62 Wickham Way, Beckenham, Kent. Phone: 4213.

### PETER M. WALSH MEMORIAL TROPHY

**Y**OUR attention is drawn to the rules governing this award. The Trophy has been presented to the Club by the family of the late Peter Walsh, and it was their especial wish that it be won by a rider just starting on his racing career. The Committee gave the matter most careful thought and reached the following decision:—

"Awarded to the B.M.C.R.C. member in his first or second season of racing (any part of a season to count as a whole) and not in receipt of manufacturer, dealer or other trade support, who puts up the best performance over the year in the Club's race meetings. This Trophy will be adjudged on a points basis awarded for each race at each meeting, to finishers, who have signed the Declaration on the entry form, viz., 5 points for the first eligible competitor to finish, 4 for the second, 3 for the third, 2 for the fourth, and 1 for all other finishers.

Only the best performance by an eligible competitor at any one meeting will be taken into consideration."

Secretary.



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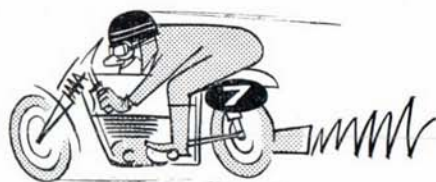
*This electron microscope gets to the heart of things. A specimen of carbon black for instance, can be magnified a hundred thousand times, so that its part in making tyres wear-resisting can be studied more closely.*

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Clubmen, marshals and folk who throng to see,

Record lap men and never in a 'flap' men,

Pit men, Clypse-men, all and one agree —

# "Esso for Extra"



try it and you'll see!

**FINEST PETROL IN THE WORLD!**

# POINTS TO WATCH

By J. H. GLOVER

**W**HEN you bring your machine to be scrutineered, and you are in a hurry because practice-time is imminent, it can be very annoying to be told the bike cannot be passed because of some deficiency in your machine preparation; so to save overheating in the temper department, I recommend the following points for your attention at this time of year, when bicycles are being fettled for the coming season. Under separate headings are the items which experience has shown to be the chief causes of delay.

**Number Plates.** To give the time-keepers a fair chance of seeing them when you are riding into the sun, the paint must be absolutely devoid of shine, and the numbers shaped as per samples in the regulations. The plates themselves must be of correct size and shape, and the side ones must be fitted clear of the rider's legs when in a racing attitude, and attached to the machine by at least three ¼-in. dia. bolts, with sizeable flat washers under the heads.

**Tyres.** Do not expect us to pass a machine with worn tyres, it just is not fair to the others in your race.

**Helmet.** See that it is "A.-C.U. stamped", and make sure it has no soft spots and that the fixing strap and stitching are in good condition; if in any doubt at all, throw it away.

**Brakes.** It is surprising the large number of brake clevis pins which are minus the split pin (usually front wheels). I think it may often be due to hurried fitting of the wheel on arrival at the track, or, after having new covers fitted. Loose brake anchor bolts come into the same category.

Brake levers which pull nearly to the bar when the brakes are cold, can give a nasty moment after a few hotly contested laps.

**Controls.** Levers of the clip-on type are often found to swivel on the handle-bars. This can be caused by contact with

the side of the van on the way to the meeting, or is due to engine vibration. I always found it a good idea to set them in the desired position, and then drill, tap, and screw for about a 2 B.A. A long split-pin through the extreme forward end of the twistgrip is another worthwhile safety factor. Rear brake rods of small diameter, with an "S" offset in them, are not good, on the score of lost motion. (50 c.c.'s and 125's please note.)

**General.** Exhaust systems should be tight. Examine the front engine bolt to pipe-fixings, they are inclined to fracture, especially on some pushrod models. Meggers, alloy mudguards, oil tanks, chain guards and number plates, split. Seat bolts loosen, and can easily be missed when going over the bike with a set of spanners. In regard to the tightening of nuts, apply a steady pressure, and do not jerk the spanner at the end of its travel; this can cause fractures. (Most of you know this, but it may help someone.) Read the regulations, they change sometimes.

Finally, please remember that all your fellow competitors rely on us to see that *your* machine is raceworthy, and our job is not an easy one, with 200 or so machines to check, in a limited time, it is important that you present yourself with machine and riding gear, at the time stated in the regs; in this way you can help us, and in helping us, help yourselves. It will result in much less waiting for all of you.

The B.M.C.R.C. team of scrutineers are all racers or ex-racers themselves and understand your problems only too well. If we can help you we will. We do this job so that we may continue to enjoy the friendships made during our racing years, and make new ones. The smoother the job runs the better we like it.

Good racing this year and fine weather.

## DOUBLE KNOCKER SAYS . . .

**B**EFORE this month is out, racing will have recommenced after its winter recess. At least we organisers of motor cycle meetings have a respite for a few months (whether you riders do is, I know, quite another matter), which is more than the car people do. They even have racing on Boxing Day, while in the Argentine and the Antipodes they have full-scale grands prix in January. I even went to one of the former meetings this last festive season and the first people I met were Bill Martin and his wife. So we promptly began to talk Bemsee and racing two-wheelers. All of which leads me to the point—would a Christmas-tide motor cycle meeting be a worthwhile affair? I'm sure it would be very popular, though it would be somewhat dicey if the weather should turn out seasonable for that time of year. What do you think?

From what I hear there will be quite a few changes of machine as far as some members are concerned this season. One concerns our stalwart friend from Llandudno, "J. Alexander". For many a year we have become used to seeing him riding a 7R A.J.S., but now he has abandoned the Plumstead banner for that of Bracebridge Street, and has a short-stroke Manx. Another very interesting machine, which may be ready in time for "Silverstone Saturday.", is Geoff Monty's latest 350 c.c. G.M.S. It has a very over-square motor and will, I have little doubt, go very quickly indeed. Michael Doncaster, whom we used to see a year or two back on a special 250 B.S.A., now has the ex-Ian Telfer 250 Norton, and a 125 M.V. to supplement it. I gather he is hoping to race them both whenever and wherever possible this season. I shall be seeing too, a couple of 1,000 c.c. Vincents which should get further than these machines have done in the last year or two. One of them, that owned by Peter Darvill, has a Manx Norton frame and cycle parts, while the other is, outwardly at any rate, a stan-

dard Series 'B' Rapide; until you see it going and look a second time. John Macdonald from Coventry is the owner of this beast and has done very well so far on the few occasions he has ridden it.

We must offer our congratulations to two members who are shortly getting married. L. P. Sole and R. M. Ascott. I hear from E. H. C. Baker of Northampton that he will be spending a year in Reykjavik, way up in Iceland. As he said in a letter I had from him recently, "My only contact with the Sport will be second-hand." Nevertheless, Iceland ought to be rather a pleasant place, though motor cycles do not exist in any large numbers. I imagine. He is probably the first Bemsee member to go there, for any length of time anyway. Member Colin Richardson from Halifax is now out of the Army and looking forward, we gather, to some racing.

Most of you will remember the tragic death of Peter Walsh last May. His family gave the Club the magnificent "Peter M. Walsh Memorial Trophy", and his brother, who lives in Tasmania, asked me before he left England, whether I could gather any information, photos, etc., of or about Peter, as he wished to compile a scrapbook of them as a personal family memorial. We have gathered fair amount of information from a variety of sources and I wonder whether any members could help in this matter. If you have any articles which mention Peter or photos of him they would be very welcome. I would, incidentally, like to refer you to the note on this particular Trophy on another page.

In conclusion for this month, may I draw your attention to Chief Scrutineer, Dennis Glover's article on points to watch in machine preparation. If anyone is turned away because they haven't got a ball-ended clutch lever, they really won't have any excuse this time. I hope you have read it.

---

### A.-C.U. NOTES

**T**HE A.-C.U. announce that they will award Road Race "Stars" for the usual classes in 1958. No details are available, but it is supposed that they will follow the pattern of the Trials and

Scrambles "Stars" already in operation, in general outline.

The Club's two delegates on the General Council of the A.-C.U. for 1958, are Messrs. L. J. Archer and H. R. Taylor.





**GIRLING**  
**SUSPENSION**  
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**GIRLING**



## BILL JARMAN'S COLUMN

**P**LEASE write to the office about marshalling duties. If your wife or girl friend cares to help with the programmes, send along her name and address as well. In case you need a reminder, the Secretary operates from 34 Paradise Road, Richmond, Surrey. Don't forget that the April Meeting is a two-days affair, i.e., Friday practice and Saturday racing. If you can help on both days, please let Guy Tremlett know.

\* \* \*

At the time of writing we have no Club commitments during the merry month of May, but the thoughts of every member will be focused on the Isle of Man, because T.T. practice starts at the end of May in readiness for the actual events on the 2nd, 4th and 6th June. As someone on the radio said, "If you haven't been to the T.T., you haven't lived!"

\* \* \*

Did you take any notice of the Editorial appeal in recent issues? Good stories, pictures, articles, etc., are always very welcome, and Peter Wright will be only too pleased to get something of an unusual character so long as motor-cycle racing forms the background. Whilst we are on the subject, has anyone a really good pre-1914 photograph of any of the pioneer racing men of Bemsee at Brooklands or the Isle of Man?

\* \* \*

What have you done about publicity for your club? Did you mail the pre-paid postcard back to the office? Even if you only get one further spectator to come along, you have done a hundred per cent more than the man who did

nothing at all. My pet theory is that the "mobile sticker" in a car window is the best of all, but you may have a better idea. If so, send it along, because we cannot run meetings without spectators. The more the merrier. Keep it in mind!

\* \* \*

I have been asked when I last saw a race from start-to-finish. The answer goes back to pre-war days, as far as I can remember. So, if you see me actually using my binoculars, studying form and working a watch or two, just spare a thought for the men who are surrounded by messages, telephones and other paraphernalia. The men who are executing jobs which demand as much concentration as that required by those actually on the circuit. The back-room boys.

\* \* \*

Members who happen to be in the vicinity of the New Forest should make a point of visiting the Montague Motor Museum, which is in the beautiful district of Beaulieu, near Brockenhurst. All kinds of historical vehicles are on display and enthusiasts can spend a whole day there if they wish. Seeing over the Abbey is also worthwhile, especially if the sun is shining.

\* \* \*

Before concluding, may I suggest you turn to the Area News. It may be possible for you to join in the activities of your nearest cell. At least we all have a common bond, i.e., the racing motor-cycle, so why not make an effort? I know that the social season is nearly over, but at least you can prepare for next October, when these monthly meetings generally resume.

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### NEW MEMBERS

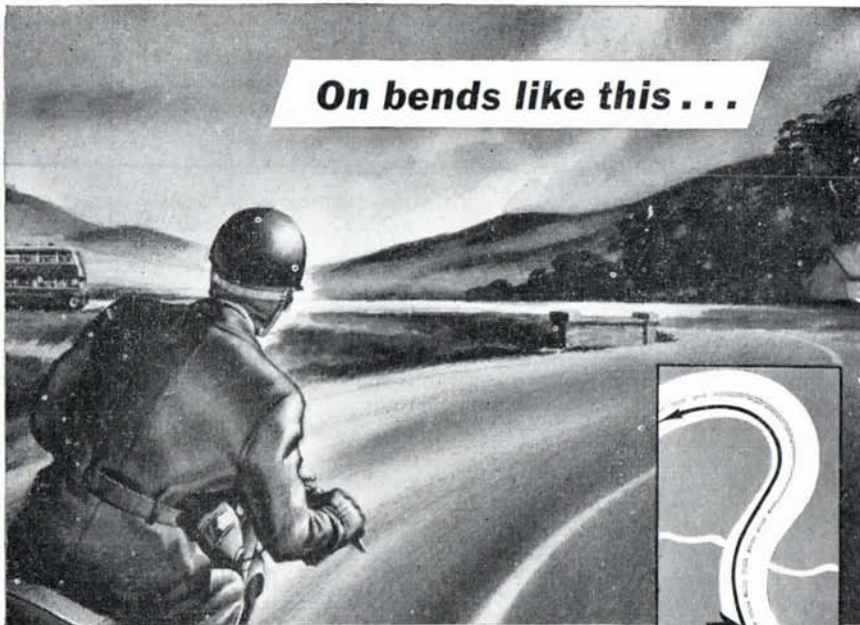
The following new members have been elected:—

D. C. Aleock, W. H. Aldridge, F. Alridge, A. J. Anderson, M. A. Atkin, J. Bacon, M. D. Beames, P. D. Bentley, R. Bisbey, Miss B. M. Bound, R. E. Broom, J. F. Carr, E. S. Carter, G. E. Chapman, P. D. Chatterton, B. Clark, M. F. Copestake, H. Crowder, K. G. Dearman, C. L. Denton, B. G. J. Douglas, E. B. Ellsley, H. J. Fletcher, P. G. Gain, D. C. Gauntlett, C. H. Goody, W. Heslop, J. R. Holder, D. R.

Hutchings, L. J. Iles, J. C. Judge, R. J. Lonsdale, R. E. Marvell, H. McLeod, C. C. McConnell, P. McKnight, D. B. G. Merrick, D. R. Muir, P. Munday, G. B. Powell, A. E. Shaw, P. D. Sherlock, G. A. Shorter, W. Siddles, J. C. Simmonds, G. A. Smith, D. J. Sims, G. G. Sinclair, R. S. Standing, D. S. Vaux, R. J. Wathen, D. E. Watkins, A. D. Wootton, G. R. Butler, E. Anderson, C. J. Huff, J. Murgatroyd, H. O'Neill, L. H. Pennell, G. P. Thompson, H. R. Taylor, C. V. Wallis, D. R. Daykin, K. W. Foden, M. A. Neale, T. J. Dickinson, F. Harrison, R. J. W. C. Dickson, H. Vicaradge, M. D. W. Sandison.



**On bends like this . . .**



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**SPEEDMASTER S.M. Safety Mileage**



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# AVON paired tyres

*The ribbed SPEEDMASTER for your front wheel—everything a front tyre should have for positive braking, perfect steering and lonc, even wear free from 'centre peak'.*

*The studded S.M.—SAFETY MILEAGE on your rear wheel—diagonally grooved for skid resistance and maximum braking, round contoured for full power at any cornering angle.*





## NEWS FROM THE R.A.C.

### NEW SPEED LIMIT

During the first few months of 1958, the Minister of Transport proposes to introduce an experimental 40 m.p.h. differential speed limit on a large number of main roads in the London traffic area. It is already operating on part of the Cromwell Road Extension and on part of Barnet Way. The new limit will be indicated by special signs at the beginning and end of the lengths of road and at intermediate points. The Minister of Transport adopted the plan for differential speed limits following the report of the London and Home Counties Traffic Advisory Committee in 1956. This recommended that these limits should be introduced on the main traffic routes where a 30 m.p.h. limit is unnecessarily restrictive, but the degree of development, the extent of mixed traffic or the number of cyclists and pedestrians make high speed dangerous.

### THE CURTAIN LIFTED

Members wishing to know what motoring conditions in Russia are like will be interested in the first-hand experience of two senior R.A.C. officials who, last July, became the first British motorists to travel from London to Moscow and back by car. These have been vividly related in a booklet entitled *"To Russia and Back"* recently published by the R.A.C. This well-illustrated 20 page account of the 4,316 mile journey is available from all R.A.C. Offices price 1/- (postage 4d.). It provides a clear and factual picture of frontier formalities, conditions of roads en route and in Russia, natural scenery, signposting, standards of hotel, restaurants and cafes, currency regulations and the cost of living, etc. The impressions of Moscow itself and the attitude of the Soviet people towards the motorists from Britain are especially interesting. Packed full of lively information, this booklet is essential for any motorist contemplating a holiday in Russia this year. Even for those who have no intention of venturing behind the Iron Curtain, it provides a colourful description of everyday life in part of the Soviet Union.

### A RECORD YEAR

During 1957 a record number of 150,000 members and their passengers took advantage of the R.A.C.'s nation-

wide 24-hour "Get-you-Home" Scheme, which provides alternative transport free of charge for members unfortunate enough to experience roadside trouble with their cars or motor cycles. The number of cars and private goods vehicles which utilised this 24-hour, seven day a week service was 43,994—some four thousand more than in 1956. Motor cyclists who were helped totalled 10,287, an increase of nearly two thousand over the previous year's figures. In our analysis of breakdowns, covering twenty-five possible causes, by far the greatest number affecting cars was again attributed to electrical faults involving battery, starter, ignition, lighting and plugs. These accounted for 31.36 per cent of all calls made by motorists on the "Get-you-Home" Service. In the R.A.C.'s experience, the majority of such failures can be traced to lack of proper maintenance.

### DIAMOND JUBILEE TROPHY

To mark its Diamond Jubilee, the R.A.C. is to award annually, a special trophy for the year's most outstanding contribution in the whole field of automotive transport. This was announced by Mr. Wilfrid Andrews, Chairman of the R.A.C., at a Diamond Jubilee luncheon last December at which the guest of honour was the Club's President, Admiral of the Fleet, Earl Mountbatten of Burma. It will be awarded to any individual, organisation or corporation of any nationality for a meritorious contribution in the general realm of transport. The trophy represents the three elements of land, sea and air with an engraved crystal globe of the world as its principal design.

### OVERTAKING

The R.A.C. draws the attention of members to the provision in the Highway Code of a hand signal indicating "I am ready to be overtaken" and stating that the driver behind who wants to overtake must make sure it is safe to do so. Until recently, it had been generally accepted that this provision implied that the major burden of responsibility lay with the overtaking motorist. In a recent High Court case, however, it was ruled that despite the provisions of the Highway Code, the driver of a stationary vehicle who signalled that he was ready

## THE EDITOR'S CORRESPONDENCE

**M**AY I be allowed to correct L. W. E. Hartley's remarks in the November issue of *Bemsee*, in which he states that all sprint course records are held by machines with dope-fuelled engines. The 250 cc. class record at Brighton, Ramsgate, Aldershot, etc., are held by my old petrol-engined Ariel.

North Wembley.

**J. T. Terry.**

**M**R. E. L. GRIFFITHS, in his plea for a "125" handicap (February *Bemsee*), sparks off a wider issue. What he really wants, like a lot of us, including myself, is some encouragement for the private owner to continue in the game. Riders and entrants have a go for a number of reasons; some seek fame, some financial gain, some publicity, and some merely the chance to compete in a great sport. Some get the lot, others a satisfying proportion, and most of us, the latter.

Slowly and surely, however, the privilege of competing on reasonably level terms is being withdrawn. Very few riders indeed who are not either identified with the works or trade are appearing in the first dozen, let alone the first three.

It is not my wish to "knock" this source of entry, for we should have a dull time if support was not forthcoming

from this direction, but the situation as it affects the private owner should be examined most carefully.

To maintain a healthy interest, the young rider must be encouraged to enter and his interest maintained by assuring him of a chance to put up a decent display. Cash may come into it but cash is usually necessary in order for a rider or entrant to keep his machine in a competitive state. If near-bankruptcy occurs in an effort to maintain a very expensive machine the person concerned must pull out of the game.

Similarly, people like myself who get their pleasure from persuading a slow machine to go a little less slowly, are apt to get a bit discouraged when the number of "over-the-counter" models gets too high.

It is now becoming almost impossible for even a good rider to get sufficient points for an International licence, and absolutely so, for chaps like myself.

I think it was a retrograde step to make "Silverstone Saturday" an International meeting, but I accept that the Club officially do what they think is best in all the circumstances.

Nevertheless, I do hope that very careful consideration will be given to the position of the private owner.

Ruislip.

**A. E. Rose.**

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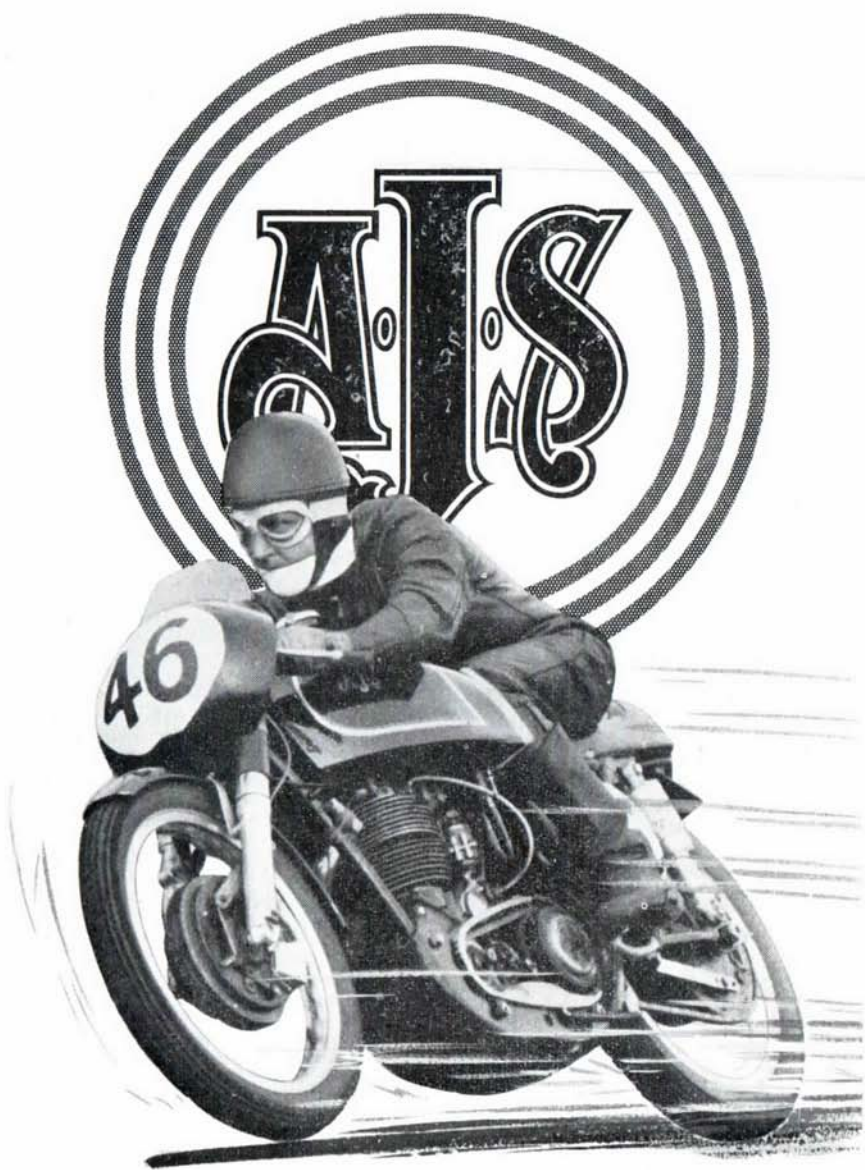
### OUR COVER PICTURE

**L**ONG, long ago! The Editor was just one year old when the picture depicted on this month's cover was taken. The "eternal triangle" is shown here in good measure, that is, the triangular frame construction of this famous Gloucester marque. "Every set of tubes is straight and subjected only to compression or tension" . . . So said its makers, as recorded in Les Higgins' historical book, *Britain's Racing Motor Cycles*.

Cottons first appeared in the T.T. in 1922, three being entered in the Junior Race, one being ridden by a rider making his T.T. debut, Stanley Woods! The following years, Woods won the Junior on this make, fitted with a 348 cc. Blackburne motor, with push-rod operated overhead-valves. In the years

that followed, Cottons became even more successful; 2nd, 3rd and 5th in the Ultra-Lightweight T.T. of 1924; 2nd and 9th in the Lightweight T.T. of that year; 2nd place in both these classes in the 1925 series; then 1926, and a one, two, three victory in the Lightweight. Came 1927, and they had Junior placings of 5th and 12th; but from then on, major successes declined, and eventually to the nineteen-thirties, the racing Cottons were fewer and fewer in number, the last of the make to be seen in a T.T. race was a privately-owned model, in 1938.

The rider shown on the cover is Eddie Ventura, a pre-war member of the Club who has now rejoined us. He rode this machine into second place in the 1927 "Hutch" meeting held at Brooklands, over a distance of thirty-seven laps, 102.37 miles. Welcome back, Eddie!



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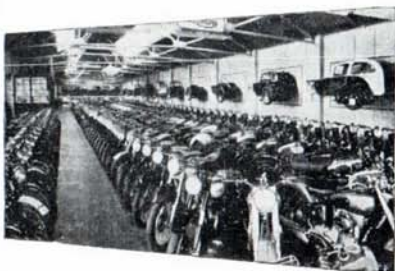
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## **1st NOTICE**

I AM INSTRUCTED BY THE COMMITTEE TO ANNOUNCE THAT ALL MEMBERS WHO FAIL TO PAY THEIR SUBSCRIPTIONS BY MARCH 15th, 1958, ARE LIABLE TO BE STRUCK OFF THE REGISTER OF MEMBERS. YOU ARE REQUESTED TO SEND £2 2s. 0d. TO ME TOGETHER WITH THE BLUE FORM DULY COMPLETED, BEFORE THAT DATE.

W. G. TREMLETT,  
SECRETARY.

## **2nd NOTICE**

THE 1958 CLUBMAN'S TROPHY RACES WILL BE HELD ON WHIT MONDAY AT OULTON PARK. WILL ANY MEMBER WHO WISHES TO BE CONSIDERED FOR ENTRY BY THE CLUB PLEASE WRITE TO ME BEFORE 10th MARCH GIVING FULL DETAILS OF MACHINE TO BE RIDDEN AND PAST EXPERIENCE AND SUCCESSES.

W. G. TREMLETT,  
Secretary.

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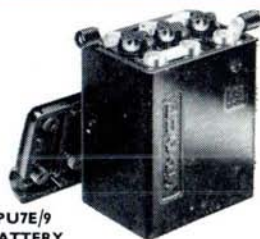
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