



Bemsee

THE JOURNAL OF THE
BRITISH MOTOR CYCLE RACING CLUB

Vol. 14. No. 12. DECEMBER 1961



Our President en route to Brighton in Sir Alec Coryton's 1901 De Dion
Bouton motor car.

[photo: Mr. and Mrs. A. W. Carter]

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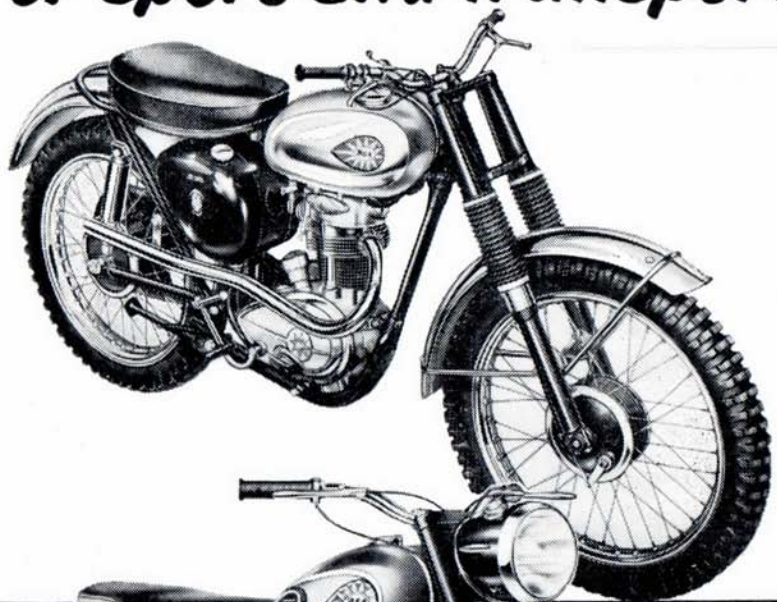
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Bemsee

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EDITORIAL



LET us start off this month by mentioning three of our celebrities; if they will pardon a word now sadly misused by the television people! Any of you who turned out to watch the Veteran Car Run to Brighton last month will have seen our President going splendidly at the wheel of an ancient De Dion. We commemorate that on the front cover this month. We are sure all of you will join us in wishing John Surtees and Pat Burke every felicitation on their engagement. Well done, indeed. We are pleased to hear that Geoff Duke is well on the way to mending after a very nasty accident he had in Sweden in a four wheeled racer.

We are now at the time of year when rumour and counter-rumour run riot throughout the racing world. Already one hears that so-and-so is riding this and someone else that; that A is giving up, but that B has found a new sponsor. So it goes on. Half the stories that one hears are patently quite untrue. Some probably arise through misconception; others are simply . . . well, gossip. One thing, however, may well make a difference in 1962. With but two of the big petrol/oil combines remaining in business, from the point of view of supporting motor cycle sport, there are bound to be one or two people who will have to give up, or at least severely curtail their activities. We were talking the other day with a very good dealer friend of ours who has given his backing to a well known rider for several years now. He mentioned figures which made it obvious that, without help from the oil barons, he would quite obviously have to think seriously about giving it up. Now we know that it all depends on the view that one takes of racing. After all this would not affect more than a third of those who do race. Unfortunately those who are most affected are riders who are leader board men. And so taking the theme one step further, what of the crowd drawing factor of well known names? Truly this business is a vicious circle.

This is the last issue of 1961 and so the Editor would like to send seasonal greetings to all members. Perhaps, too, this is the right place to mention that he has enjoyed editing the magazine in 1961 (though he could do with a few more articles and letters!). One point about which he feels he should apologise is the slightly erratic date of publication. Sometimes this is done on purpose to assist the Office; when there are Regs. coming out with "Bemsee" for example. At others he is afraid it is due to getting proofs off to the printers rather later than intended. Domestic reasons, we believe, this is called!

Finally, and we feel sure that to say this would be the wish of the Committee and Staff, we would like to say a big thank you to all those worthy people who have helped the Club in so many ways during 1961. Without your help we could not have done all we have done. Thank you very much, everyone. Happy Christmas to you all!



One might be excused for wondering what connection there might be betwixt Snetterton, a parish in Norfolk in the boundaries of which lies a disused air-field, and Dunholme, a parish in Lindsay, one of the "parts" of Lincolnshire, with a ditto. Actually there are three! B.M.C.R.C. has organised race meetings at both; each meeting finished the season in which it was held—1947 and 1961; and FOG very nearly wrecked them both. Make no mistake, had it not been for the Secretary's clever idea, 'here might well have been no Guinness-Trophy meeting in 1961. By 11.45 a.m., three and a quarter hours after practice should have started, there was still no sign of the fog lifting and no prospect of racing. Half an hour later things had improved so much that the Stewards and Clerk of the Course, having agreed upon the system for running the meeting, authorised racing to begin at 12.30 p.m. Each race had three laps conducted practice and was run straight off over half the scheduled distance. On that basis the latest possible time for starting, in order to get everyone a ride before darkness, and the fog returned, was 12.43. The 50s got off at 12.40! How fortunate it is, too, that the Club's officials and organisation is elastic enough to take something not far off a catastrophe completely in its stride. For that is what happened. It was really quite impressive.

Event 1—50 c.c.: a new name to the winners of Bemsee 50 c.c. races here—Paul Latham and Itom. He took immediate lead and was never headed, winning at 58.18 m.p.h. Behind him things were nothing like so certain. Ken Johnson from Nottingham, also Itom mounted, broke the lap record at 61.21 m.p.h. to finish third, only just behind Roy Kemp on another Itom. Roy Nicholson was fourth after a poor first half lap. He had a great scrap with G. B. Broder and Dave Simmonds.

Event 2 Race A—350 c.c.: Ray Willatts on his 7R had little difficulty in winning this, the first of three 350 c.c. races. He averaged 78.55 m.p.h. and did a lap at 81.98. Second man was equally secure, after fighting up from a poor start, Tony Flack from South Africa. After those two however there was some great battling. Only a

fifth of a second separated J. Sephton and G. Ansett—4th and 5th. While six seconds only covered 6th to 12th placemen who were headed by G. Hunter (B.S.A.). 7Rs filled ten of the first twelve positions.

Event 3—125 c.c.: only four non-starters here (the reserves all got a ride) and a very comfortable win for Arthur Wheeler and his twin cam G.P. Ducati. Both in the manner of his riding and his machine preparations is Arthur an object lesson in how to go about it. Some of the younger riders could well try and emulate his example. He averaged 75.94 m.p.h. Well behind, but almost 24 seconds ahead of the third man, was Fred Hardy with the Bultaco. Still, even if the first two places were easily attained, Dave Simmonds' third spot was not. Riding one of the Lake brothers' M.V. for the first time, he only just held off Chris Percival (M.V.). George Hughes (Honda) and Jim Baughn (M.V.). One unfortunate had a mild fire on the approach to Riches and several failed to get going on the uphill start. Fred Launchbury with the Todd Bantam was the best British machine.

Event 4 Race A—1,000 c.c.: once more only four non-runners (excellent, this) and an impressive win for Peter Preston on his immaculate Norton Dommy 99. He led from start to finish, did a lap at 84.38 m.p.h. and averaged 81.03. For some reason the announcer referred to the superbly finished machine as a Manx; well . . . ! Laurie Ascott, of bristling moutaschios and quick Manx Norton, stormed through the field to snatch second place from Brian Dennis's B.S.A.—the best finish of the day up to that time. J. R. Peters again rode his nicely turned out Venom very well to take fourth berth, after a good dice with Brian Davis (B.S.A.) and D. H. G. Chester's sparkling 649 c.c. Triumph. There were other good battles throughout the field.

Event 5 Race A—250 c.c.: in spite of the relatively slow speed, the finish here was most exciting. Initially R. MacGregor, who now has the ex-Launchbury Anzani twin, led surprisingly comfortably. But, George Collis, riding Len Harfield's NSU Special, very nearly caught him on the run-in. Collis had lapped quicker than

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GRAND PRIX**

1st
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Sidecar — 1st, 2nd, 3rd
Senior — 2nd
Junior — 2nd

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350 cc — 1st, 3rd
Sidecar — 1st, 2nd

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350 cc — 1st
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anyone else in doing this; MacGregor averaged 72.95 m.p.h. There was very nearly a dead-heat, too, for third place, featuring Vic Poore and Alan Kimber and a third very close finish, for fifth place, this time, involving Clive Hunt and David Baker. Machines here were Velocette, Norton, Triumph and M.V.—good variety.

Event 2 Race B—350 c.c.: this was a perfectly splendid race. Almost at once half a dozen of the boys got really mixed-up (I don't mean in the psychiatric sense either!). They were John Smith, Clive Hunt, Bob Jeremiah (A.J.S.), Ray Millins (Velocette) and John Simpson, John Higgins and Charlie Rowe (Nortons). I suppose each one of them led at one time or other in the course of three laps. Only Jeremiah "dropped it" (at the Hairpin). Eventually, and the Judges were at the ready for a photo-finish on the line, the order was Smith—Higgins—Rowe—Hunt—Simpson—Millins. The speed was 81.64 m.p.h. and it was Smith who did the best lap at 85.43, though they must all have got pretty near it. There was another lesser dice for 7th involving Jim Baughn, John Williams and J. A. Collins, all on Nortons. This was really good racing.

Event 4 Race B—1,000 c.c.: Dave Degens, who, I'm glad to say, seems to have the Army well tied up when it comes to getting leave for racing, cleared off at the start of this one and won by four seconds at 87.64 (with a lap at 89.67—the best of the day). He gets the Hector Dugdale Trophy for that. Second was Robin Dawson, still slightly unfamiliar, to me at least, on a Manx Norton, who held off Ernie Wooder and G.50 Wooder tried hard to catch Dawson, but the latter was alive to what was going on. Brian Denehy was a truly excellent fourth (Snetterton is his "home" circuit, of course). While the excellent John Wilkinson held off Tom Charnley (his beautifully prepared Norton 99 twin going very well now) for fifth spot. Tom seemed to be going with quite a bit of his old fire. John is certainly going places just recently. Initially a considerable scrap developed between Dawson, Wooder, Denehy and two more Nortons ridden by Chris Conn and Tom Phillips. Alas, the latter two tangled at the Hairpin; Conn hurting his elbow nastily.

Event 5 Race B—250 c.c.: Arthur Wheeler had his second win of the day; this time on the lovely Guzzi with five speed box and the lightweight Reynolds

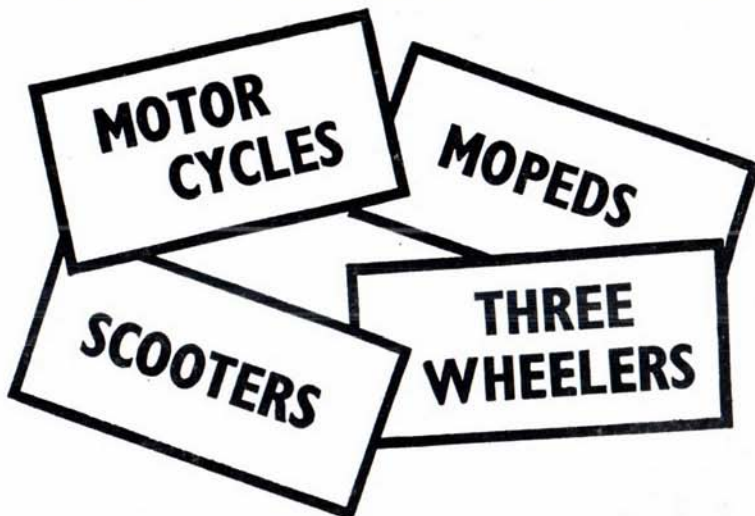
frame. Another demonstration of how to do it! A terrific battle developed between Brian Clark and John Harper, both on twin cam, 175 plus Ducatis (there were three of these machines in the race—Ken James rode the other one belonging to Ivor Watton). For some reason Clark always sat up by the Pits and appeared to be in trouble, but then re-appeared round Coram Curve in front of Harper, who did actually finish 2nd. An equally close scrap took place for 4th place between Dave Warren's NSU Sportmax and Terry Grotefeld's beautiful new Aermacchi racer (he had only bought it three days previously and had done 108 laps at Brands, running it in, the day before). The NSU just won the place. There was practically a triple-heat for 6th place; M. Warne (NSU), Ian Goddard (T.T.S.) and John Kidson (Norguzz). Robin Dawson got Sam Coupland's Arrow home 10th and there were eight different makes of machine in the first twelve.

Event 2 Race C—350 c.c.: like the earlier 350 c.c. event this one, too, was a smasher. Only 6.4 seconds covered the first eight! After a couple of laps Robin Dawson had got the three year old, ex-McIntyre 7R into the lead; though he was hard pressed by Wooder, Degens, Rex Avery (Norton), Selwyn Griffiths (A.J.S.), Pete Darvill (A.J.S.), Brian Setchell (Norton) and Brian Clark (Norton). Darvill had led after one lap—he made a magnificent start. Then Dawson, Degens and Wooder drew away by a few machines lengths from the other. The last lap was most exciting. It was Dawson first round Coram Curve, but the other two were trying to "do" him and again a triple-heat seemed likely. However the Barnet man stayed in front—just. Avery was 4th, but the Timekeepers couldn't separate him from Griffiths. Darvill was 6th. Roy Minto and Keith Crawford, another member from South Africa staged yet another photo-finish—for 9th place—both riding Ajays.

Event 7—three-wheelers: even the "chairs" provided close racing this time. Initially Eric Vincent led, but on lap two Mike Rowell passed him. On lap three Colin Seeley did likewise; not that Eric was far behind in third place. Seeley passed Rowell at the beginning of the last lap, but was re-passed. He then got by for a second time and won by a second. Subsequently there was talk of dangerous riding and a protest was entered. I gather it was disallowed after full consideration by the compet-

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ent authorities. Ben Gross was 4th; we don't see him very often these days. I was pleased to see Pete Hardcastle finish a good 5th (he has had so much trouble with that Norton outfit of his this season). Jennings motored his hairy big Vincent outfit through the field into 6th place. Hodges, with another Stevenage big twin, was 7th, but Dave Wheeler with the ex-Ted Young kneeling device retired. So did Tony Haydon-Baillie, who was very quick for a couple of laps.

Event 6—production solos: by this time the fog was fast re-appearing and it really did begin to look as if headlights would be needed; That was Maggie's idea anyway when she rearranged the programme. It was a pity that Cecil Mill, who has won these races at Silverstone before now, was a non-starter. Still it was a Vinnie leading after one lap; Mick Bennett with his very lovely Shadow and our worthy friend George Breach was 3rd. But a threat to the big twins had already appeared—Brian Setchell with the Dommy 99 SS. He didn't make a good start, but, once going he really did bend that roadster around Snetterton. Lapping at 83.80 m.p.h. he lay second by lap 3 and he swept into the lead before the Esses on the last lap to win at 79.53. Tom Shade rode a very fast Triumph Bonneville into a good third place. Breach was next and two more Bonneville's followed him—J. W. Bowman and John Williams. The first 500 was Cyril Jones with the Triumph Speed Twin who beat Malcolm Brown on Scott's Dominator 88 SS. D. A. W. Bennett's Gold Star won the single cylinder 500 category, but I regret to say I didn't observe who was the best 250. I fancy it must have been Peter

Inchley with George Salt's very speedy Arrow.

The "standard" jobs just finished their dicing in time. Visibility was getting very poor. Everyone seemed to get off in double quick time for once at the last meeting of the season. But with the prospect of a foggy drive back to such places as Leyland, Pontypool, Bristol and Southampton—members came from far and wide to ride as usual—an early as possible start was the answer. I rode up and back on four wheels and with a roof over my head for a change thanks to the kindness of Harold Daniell and I was glad of it. Besides which a drive with H. L. D. is exceedingly entertaining! It was as though the 1961 season just came gently to a stop on a rather desolate and murky Norfolk airfield. Well, that was where I came in. We all have a bit of a breather now; 'til 7th April, 1962 anyhow!

★ JOHN SURTEES

We understand that John Surtees, who, as most of you know, drove for the Yeoman Credit team in Formula One G.P. racing this year in Cooper-Climax cars, has again signed up with this team for 1962. John had quite a good year in the immaculately turned out Coopers raced under the aegis of Reg Parnell, gaining a number of places in the grandes epreuves. For 1962 it is said that Yeoman Credit will be using a new G.P. car at present being developed by the Lola Car Company. No doubt the near genius of Eric Broadley, the Lola designer, the super-expert team management of Parnell and John's tremendous skill at the wheel, will all combine to make a fresh mark in G.P. racing.
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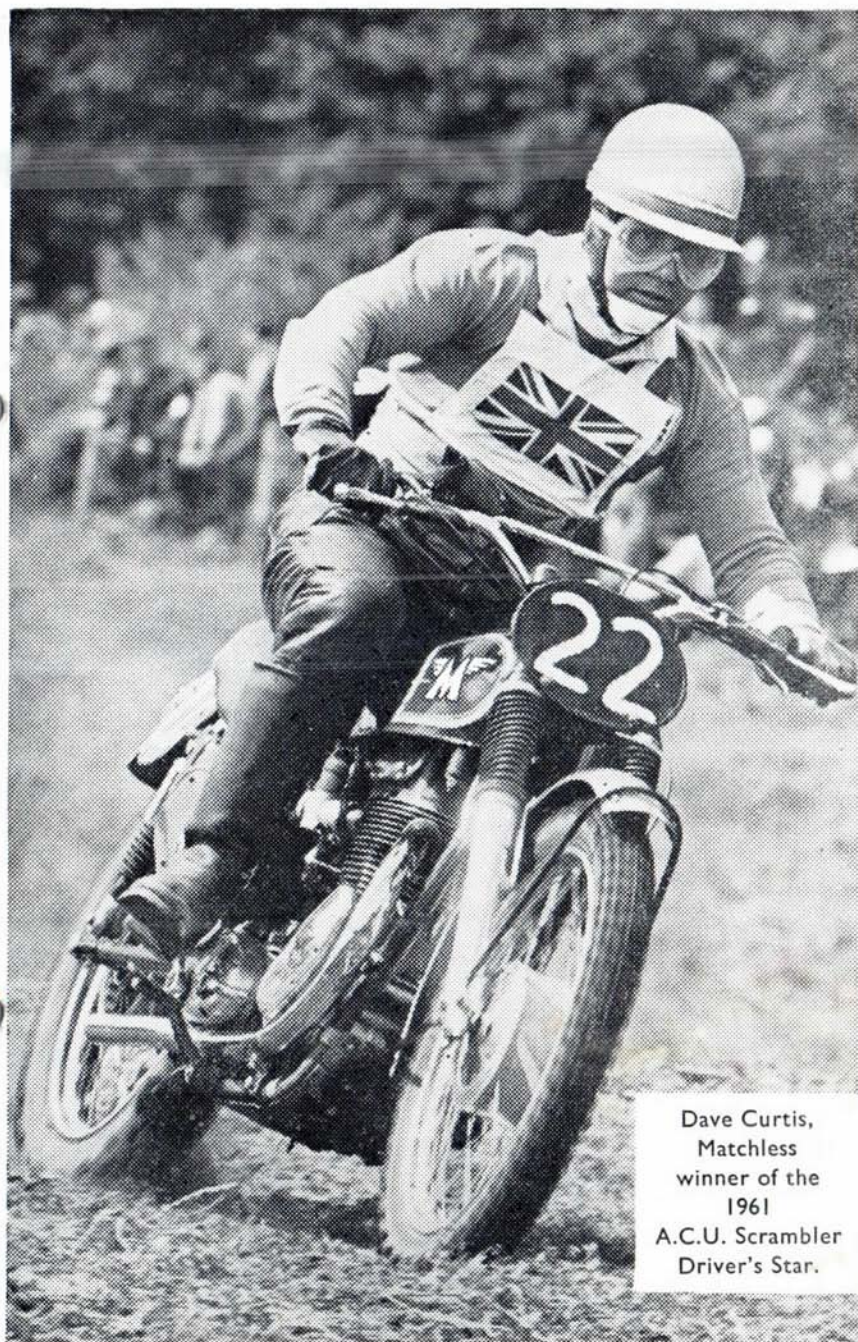
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FIRST, SECOND, THIRD— A Summary of Members' recent successes

And so to the Manx which, despite the poor weather conditions of the Junior and it's tragic results, brought many an up-to-then novice into the limelight. The notable one, as far as the Club was concerned, is TONY NEWSTEAD who finished third in the Junior. Considering the veritably appalling conditions no mean effort in face of the opposition. To all those who finished, a warm congratulation. After that race they need one, especially ROBIN DAWSON who not only finished second in the Junior but also fourth in the Senior. NED MINIHAN won the Senior, after his fifth attempt, with DAVE WILLIAMS from Leighton Buzzard second.

Our congratulations should also go (not out of place here I think) to TIM GIBBS on being selected for the British Trophy Team for the ISDT. I believe I am right in saying that this is the only member to whom this honour has been awarded while he was a member; the only other member being Bob Manns, who hadn't joined at that time.

Yet another member takes to the car world and, like John Surtees, meets with success straight away. Men might say that girls can't drive but PAULINE DALE had just proved them wrong by finishing second in BARC's S.E. section hill climb at her very first attempt. Driving works D.K.W.'s or not the class was 1300 c.c. and the D.K.W. isn't the size of a Vincent!

ALAN DUGDALE, TOM PHILLIPS and JACK BULLOCK made the running at the Wirrall 100's meeting at Wallasley in the solo classes. They all won their respective events. BILL (or is it RICHARD) FRANKS came third in the 250 class behind JOHN HARPER, while LOUIS CARR and ROBIN GOOD were second and third in the 350 class. In the other solo event, the 500 class, CHRIS CONN from the R.A.F. was third. RAYMOND PIKE won the second sidecar race.

REX AVERY had yet another success on the De Havilland EMC at the Cadwell Park International meeting by beating DAN SHOREY (Bultaco) and PERCY TAIT (Ducati). DAN SHOREY also managed to finish second in the 250 class behind the flying Honda four of JIM REDMAN while NORMAN SURTEES was third. Dan also added two more thirds to his bag. JOHN COOPER pulled off a surprise second place in the 350 event by coming home behind John

Hartle. PIP HARRIS was second in the sidecar race, while CHARLIE FREEMAN won the handicap with PAT RUSSELL third.

MIKE HAILWOOD pulled off his first world championship by winning the 250 class of the Swedish Grand Prix at Kristianstad. He also came second in the 500 class. Our German member BERT SCHNEIDER achieved a very creditable fourth place behind FRANK PERRIS.

DEREK MINTER proved that he is undoubtedly still the genius of Brands Hatch by winning both the Junior and Senior races. ROY MAYHEW had two thirds and a second during the meeting. CHARLIE MATEŠ was the winner of the 50 c.c. race with ROY KEMP and MIKE THOMAS second and third. The 125 race was another EMC triumph, REX AVERY never being seriously challenged for the whole of the race. DAN SHOREY on the Bultaco was second and FRED HARDY third, having just managed to beat NORMAN SURTEES. SHOREY again won the 250 class with the up-and-coming BLAKE OSBORNE second and NORMAN SURTEES third. PHIL READ was soundly beaten by MINTER in the first of the 350 races. As usual the non-experts races provided better racing the first of which, the over-250, being no exception. The eventual winner was D. ROBINSON (which one I don't know). JOHN SMITH was second and RAYMOND WALES third. PIP HARRIS came second in the sidecar scratch, followed by FRED HANKS, who was also third in the handicap.

JOHN COOPER won the 350 class at Scarborough. Surely now a force to be reckoned with? Second was PETER MIDDLETON. The other 350 event was won by TONY SUGDEN with CARL WARD second. DAN SHOREY, BRIAN CLARK and HORACE CROWDER filled the first three places of the 250 class, while the 500 race winner was DENNIS PRATT with DAN SHOREY second and PETER MIDDLETON third.

LOUIS CARR and DENIS PRATT stole the limelight at Charterhall for the last meeting there. BRIAN CLARK won the 200 race, ALAN SMITH won the 250 race in which DAVE GALLAGHER was third, LOUIS CARR the first 350, DENNIS PRATT the second. LOUIS CARR was second in the last 350 as well.

The 'Race of the Year' at Mallory Park was, in some respects, a bit of a damp squib. In every race except the

sidecar the conclusion was obvious right from the start. MIKE HAILWOOD rode magnificently to win the 350 event and to finish in gallant style behind the flying M.V. in the 500 race. PERCY TAIT on the Aermacchi rode brilliantly for the whole of the 250 race to finish, unchallenged, third. REX AVERY hadn't the power to catch the twin cylindered Honda of Redman and therefore came home second in front of Arthur Wheeler on his Ducati. In the sidecar race JACKIE BEETON was third.

Again a Wirral 100 meeting at Rhydymwyn provided some excellent racing. IVOR WATTON won the 250 race and ALBERT LOMAS was third. DON WATSON won the 350 event and TOM PHILLIPS the 500. JOHN PETERS was third in the latter event.

MIKE HAILWOOD again came out champion at the Aintree Century meeting by winning four races. In the 125 event DEREK MINTER rode the second of the EMC's and beat REX AVERY. The Bultaco of DAN SHOREY was third. NORMAN SURTEES finished second in the 250's ahead of some stiff opposition. DENNIS PRATT and PHIL READ finished second and third in the 500 race while in the Century race, DENNIS PRATT was third. Second in the sidecar scratch was PIP HARRIS. ERIC VINCENT won the handicap.

At Ramsgate the fastest time of the day went to GEORGE BROW with a time of 11.80 seconds. Second fastest was BASIL KEYS and NEVILLE HIGGINS was third in the 1,000, although not being credited with the third fastest time. GEORGE BROWN also put up a new record in the 250 class on the Ariel, at the same time

winning the class. JACK TERRY was second and DAVE TRINGHAM third. The 350 class went to BASIL KEYS and JOHN PEPPER second with GEORGE THOMPSON third. ALEC BASCOMBE won the 500 class, JACK TERRY was second and ALAN BREESE third. REGGIE GILBERT set up a new course record in the 750 cc. class and was followed home by CHARLIE LUCK and TONY BRYANT. PAT BARRETT, BILL BRAGG and DAVE BRYANT finished first, second and third in the sidecar event.

The 150 c.c. race at Oulton Park on Saturday the 7th October brought the EMC once more into the headlines. DEREK MINTER on board it scored a magnificent win beating DAN SHOREY with the Spanish Bultaco and GARY DICKINSON on the Italian Ducati. MIKE HAILWOOD won both the 250 and 500 races and DENNIS AINSWORTH the Dave Chadwick Trophy. BRIAN CARR and DENNIS GREENFIELD finished 2nd and 3rd respectively in the 350 race, PHIL READ being 2nd in the 500 DAN SHOREY was third in the 250 event, too. PIP HARRIS, FRED HANKS and CHARLIE FREEMAN shared most of the sidecar honours.

Brands Hatch on the following day provided provided much the same excitement in the lightweight class in that DEREK MINTER brought the E.M.C. home into first place, breaking the lap record in the process. Derek also won the 350 and 500 races. PHIL READ was second in both the larger capacity races. MIKE HAILWOOD won the 250 event and was third in the 500. NORMAN SURTEES finished second in the 250

(continued on page 215)

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MEN AND MACHINES—III

[Last year it was intended to publish a series of articles under the above loosely generic title. Something must have happened since the first two appeared—they dealt with "Barry" and production machine racing—but the idea has been revived and we now give the third article. It is hoped to have more of them in future. ED.]

It doesn't need me to tell you that racing today is expensive. How many of you must have realised that while contemplating the result of an expensive noise or a piece of rash cornering. And, of course, if your machine should be a costly racing replica, then the position can be very worrying indeed. Yet today there are an increasing number of people who cannot afford Manx Nortons or 7R Ajays and who want to race. One way of getting over the problem is to "tune" a sports bicycle. There are other ways, of course, but this seems to me one of the best. For one thing you can get a very quick bicycle for a reasonable outlay and, moreover, one that is relatively cheap to run.

At meetings this season I have noticed several such machines; some of them obviously well prepared and quick too. Two such which particularly attracted my attention were a brilliant red Norton 99 and a b.r.g. Triumph Tiger 110. I have recently been talking to the two young owners and constructors of these bicycles. And very impressed I have been by what I have seen and heard. The Dommy is owned by Peter Preston from West Norwood and the Tiger by Dave Chester, who hails from Seven Kings. Peter is 26 and works for Mercedes Benz (G.B.) Ltd. as a tester. Dave is 20 and is employed as an illustrator by the Ford motor empire at Dagenham. Peter, incidentally, is an accomplished player upon the tenor sax and guitar, though I have more than a suspicion that the Dommy now takes up most of his leisure hours these days.

The Norton was bought about fifteen months ago from Pride and Clark for £129, being a perfectly standard '56 model even to the peculiar upswept Norton handlebars and panniers. Peter was well aware of the good points of 99s, as he had had one a year or two previously, and so he set about making a really fast road machine. He stripped the motor down and found that it was quite satisfactory down below. He fitted 9:1 pistons, enlarged the ports slightly and fitted the optional large inlet valves supplied for this model. Clip-ons were fitted, alloy 'guards too, and a trip to Brands Hatch was made. Peter confesses, honest man, that he was hopeless at first with

lap times of around 90 seconds. But he stayed there all day and by the end of it had broken 70 seconds. When one considers the 'bike still had the wide ratio gears this says a lot for his latent skill and the road holding capabilities of the Norton.

This excursion took place in 1960, November time, and it made Peter quite determined to have a 'bash'. So, once again, the motor came down and he set about re-building it very carefully. The flywheels were balanced by Alan Dudley Ward and new big ends and mains fitted. These were standard parts, incidentally. The same compression ratio was used, but the inlet ports were opened up a little further and the whole combustion chamber polished. A TT 9 replaced the Monobloc; this carb. being purchased second-hand and having a bore of approximately 1 3/16ths. on a special manifold. The valve gear was lightened as much as possible, though an attempt to "modify" the camshaft was disastrous. So Peter had to get another one, a standard '55 component. The sum total of this work on the motor was nothing extraordinary; all of it was done by himself, except the flywheel balancing. Any keen and reasonably clued-up private owner could do likewise, of course. A set of Manx close ratio gears went into the gearbox, but the clutch is standard 99. Alloy rims were built into the wheels and racing Avons fitted. All the heavy road equipment was, of course, discarded; and the steel tanks too. A special, centrally mounted, i.e. Manx-wise, oil tank in alloy was made up and a fibre-glass petrol tank sufficed. A Fi-glass seat and rairing are used. Peter found that the handling, excellent on the road, wasn't quite up to racing. Girlings helpfully provided the correct rear damper units and a set of old Manx pattern front fork springs, coupled with R30 oil in the forks, made things decidedly better. Peter has not fitted racing linings either. He found that the brakes were perfectly all right until the July Brands Hatch "do". Then they faded and continued to fade subsequently, despite the fitting of bigger and yet bigger air scoops. In desperation a new set of linings, of the same type, were tried—no more braking

1961 RIDING

Last year you may recall Margaret, Jim and I contributed a few words about the 'bikes we had ridden during the past twelve months. We do so again, though none of us seem to have gravitated far from our own transport this year. Both Margaret and I had interesting rides lined up on racers, but, to date anyway, these have not been possible of realisation. However, perhaps we shall be lucky later; in the meanwhile, what of 1962?

As far as my own transport went I had my 1960 Norton 99 de-luxe (410 ALP) for the first six months and then swapped it for a new 88 Sports Special (539 CXC). The former machine continued to give unflinching reliable service. The roadholding, steering and braking were all admirable and the motor left little to be desired for a fast sports/tourer. Apparently I was fortunate in having a particularly smooth one, too. True there were a couple of "incidents" coupled with this bicycle. Returning late one evening from a Metropolitan Area "do" the gear lever return spring broke and jammed in the second gear selector, leaving us fixed in that cog. And then a few weeks later the centre stand spring broke when we were travelling at about 75 m.p.h. on the Brighton road. The stand trails luckily, so we merely came to a standstill amid a shower of sparks and loud clatterings.

But in July 410 ALP went and 539 CXC replaced it. While it is quite obvious that the performance of this machine is better than the previous one, in spite of it only being 497 cc's, I cannot say, at the moment anyway, that I view with any great feelings of brotherly love. Perhaps I have got a "dud". In spite of what the manufacturers say, bad machines do get made. For some reason it was delivered with several faults and it was not for some time that it was handling as a Norton should. After but 2,000 miles the top half of the motor had to be stripped to remedy an appalling racket therefrom. Inter alia, a broken valve guide, duff valve springs and a bent push rod were found. And I hadn't been over-revving it either! In the end Norton Motors Ltd. took it back and have just returned it to me, having gone through it pretty thoroughly. I must say that, all along Norton's have been more than helpful, as has Harold Daniell who supplied the 'bike. But I get worried when I think of what could happen if this country does join the European

Common Market. Nonetheless the performance of the 88SS is very considerable and, after the afore-mentioned troubles had been put to rights, it steered and stopped magnificently. 9.2:1 pistons are fitted with a "hotter" camshaft and two Monoblocs. I specified a rev. counter and chrome mudguards. The former has been a great blessing, because 539 CXC has an enormous appetite for speedos. So far we have had three and the one just fitted is already "up the creek"! I only hope the next six months of 88SS motoring will be less bothersome.

Other than those two I haven't ridden much. I had an impressive demonstration of what an Ariel Leader can do when ridden by someone who knows what he is about. The performance was highly creditable, the handling excellent and one was well protected from the elements. I imagine the brakes might wilt after a lot of such treatment. Just before I sold my 350 Manx I took it down to Brands Hatch. Once again, slowly as I was going, I was fascinated by the incredibly good handling of the machine and the general ease of riding. I really did bless the roadholding and brakes when some idiot on a Gold Star tried to remove my front wheel at the bottom of Paddock. Though not strictly appropriate to these pages, I may say that I enjoyed a number of runs in a 1959 Jensen 541R G.T. saloon. This was quite a motor car, capable of high speed in an effortless manner in overdrive top gear at a most tolerable petrol consumption and imparting great comfort to those in it, not to mention safety. I was immensely impressed. Now, over to Maggie . . .

My two-wheeled motoring this year has been a little fitful, but nothing if not varied; bikes ridden range from a Trobiker to a 1000 Vincent and from a veteran Rover to the latest model NSU Max. First things first, then . . .

The Rover was a 1914 model which I piloted for Bill Rose in the Pioneer Run. I borrowed the bike for a couple of weeks beforehand to get the hang of the rather unorthodox controls. The journey home was erratic, to say the least. The Rover has no clutch, a Sturmy Archer gearbox, push-bike fashion, in the rear hub, and a damned great rocking pedal with an immensely powerful spring which puts you in motion. The idea is to put the bike on the rear stand, pedal furiously until it fires, get off and

troubles! Another problem was the exhaust system. Eventually standard pipes suitably "picked up", were used with 17/6d meggas, the latter carrying reverse cones. A trial with a professionally designed exhaust system, off another Dommy-racer, didn't come off. Peter's 99 would not go at all with this arrangement in situ.

By Easter all was more or less ready and so an entry was obtained in the Thruxton meeting. Bearing in mind that this was his first meeting, and the 'bike's, the result of 2nd in the heat and 4th in the final was praiseworthy indeed. The 99 went well and its owner was delighted with it! After a 3rd place in the 1,000 c.c. nonexperts' race at Brands on Whit-Monday, troubles befell. A spill in practice for the novice Brands meeting wrote off the exhaust system, but little else, luckily. At the next Brands meeting the brakes failed. Then at the August Thruxton, after being 4th in the heat, Peter was leading the non-experts' final when the brakes went completely and he ran out of road at Windy Corner and, thus, out of the race too. The other two meetings were the last two Bemsee ones and here the Dommy and its rider came into their own. At Club Day he was 3rd in the "middle" 1,000 c.c. event and at

the Guinness Trophy he won the "slow" 1,000 c.c. race. One might add that that was a fitting end to the season.

Dave Chester's Triumph is rather newer than the Norton. He had it, second hand again, in 1958, but it had only done 4,000 miles and was a '58 model anyway. It was perfectly standard and indeed was used for over 10,000 miles on the road before any thought of racing was entertained. But, as so often happens with those who follow racing and go to watch a lot, the bug bit and Dave decided to race the Tiger. He removed all the road equipemnt (the difference which this alone makes must be considerable, though neither owner has actually weighed his mount on a weigh-bridge). At the same time the ports were enlarged a little, the motor stripped and rebuilt with racing valve springs, but no other mods. It is worth commenting that this Triumph motor is almost completely standard. The Monobloc carburettor was replaced by an ordinary Amal instrument of the same bore (about an inch and an eighth). A set of Triumph close ratio gears were fitted and Avon racing tyres graced the wheels, but no alloy rims. More or less everything else is standard. The primary chain case has



Peter Preston at Thruxton in August after the brake fade episode mentioned in the text.



Dave Chester at Brands Hatch on Whit-Monday when engine seizure put a halt to his race.

Photo: Len Thorpe

been retained, so have the petrol and oil tanks, though, as Dave admits, these are some extent of fibre glass construction now. Vibration has caused the odd splits! A Triumph clubman kit is used for footrests, gear pedal and rear brake. Clip-on handlebars are fitted, as is a rev. counter. A little difficulty was experienced with the exhaust system (seems to be a tricky point with vertical twins thus played about with), but the standard pipes shorn of the silencers and with 9 inches of G.T.P. Velo, pipe welded on to the end proved to be the answer.

The Triumph was sufficiently ready to be run a couple of times last year. Dave rode it first at Wellesbourne, at the M.C.C.'s sprint meeting, just to see if it would go. It did—14.5 seconds for the standing 440 yards with a 7.32:1 bottom gear. He also got an entry at Club Day, when, as you may remember, it rained rather a lot. He finished 13th in all the water, having at one time been 6th. However, he had navigation trouble at Woodcote on every lap, taking all manner of weird lines, and so dropped back. This year he has had eight rides. The season started poorly with two retirements; at Thruxton at Easter he rushed into some straw bales with the throttle

stuck wide open (he blames himself for this—he had failed to check the cable) and at Brands on Whit-Monday, when the motor tightened up; almost certainly due to a weak mixture causing piston seizure. A strip-down revealed nothing damaged and, afterwards, the 'bike went better than ever and did not seize anymore. At Castle Coombe in July he finished in the first dozen but did not quite make the final at Thruxton a fortnight later (10th in heat). At the three Bemsee Club meeting things went better, though at the October Brands the carburettor fell off. Trophy Day saw him 7th in the "slow" 1,000 c.c. race, Club Day 8th in the middle event for this capacity machines, and, incidentally, this was his most enjoyable race to date, and at Snetterton he was 7th again in the "slow" big 'uns.

There is one point which I have purposely left until last. The question of performance. For one thing it must now be obvious that both bicycles are pretty fair goers. Neither owner is sure of the true maximum. Each appear to have had some difficulty with rev. counters. Peter, for example, gets readings of 8,000 r.p.m. He got this in top at Snetterton, pulling what was, in effect, Island gearing. Now that comes out at something

like 140 m.p.h. which is no doubt somewhat "fast". Smiths have been consulted about this, but no answer has yet been found. At the same meeting the Triumph was getting 7,500 on the long straight (its normal limit is 6,500). Both machines obviously do well over 120 m.p.h. on optimum gearing and the Norton must approach 130 fairly closely. For what are basically, and in the case of the Triumph very largely, standard bikes the performance is excellent. The other point that can be mentioned collectively is that both bicycles have proved extremely reliable. Neither have broken anything and neither have cost their owners more than a very few pounds in maintenance. Both have given their owners plenty of fun and experience at the beginning of their racing careers.

And what of the future? Well, Peter is keeping his 99. He hopes to get hold of a second-hand 88 motor and do to it what he has done to the bigger one. That way he will be able to get more rides. Both Dave and he both made the point that, if you have a 600/650, you don't get enough meetings. About the only mod he plans to the bicycle itself is the replacement of the Silentbloc bushes in the swinging arm by the Manx bronze type. Dave is selling the Triumph

and is thinking in terms of a Norton framed special. He says that he has never ridden a Norton yet and, while he never had trouble with the Tiger in the handling department, he feels he would like that "featherbed" frame.

Well, there we are. Two young men, very enthusiastic ones too, who have decided to race and gone about it, I think, in a very sensible manner. They have proved that, provided you don't aim for the skies right away, there is a great deal to be gained from preparing and tuning a production sports job. I for one would not be surprised to see a lot more of this type of racing machine about in 1962.



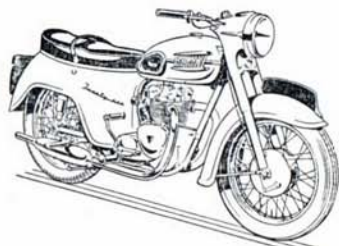
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put the stand up and get back on again (whereupon it usually packs in and you have to start all over again). Once aboard and with the motor banging nicely, you put the bike in first gear—hand change of course—and then *gently* let in the clutch pedal, which is at about the level of the exhaust port on a conventional 'bike. You are then hurtling down the road at a fair rate of knots. Now is the time to change up, which you do by easing off the throttle lever a bit and banging it through the gate into top. This causing a mighty gnashing sound which causes everyone for miles to look at you horror-stricken. After that its all plain sailing except that you have to remember that the brakes aren't up to Manx standards. You have to change down furiously to stop. This is OK providing you have plenty of notice but can cause embarrassment in an emergency. Don't think from the above that the Rover is not an enjoyable bike to ride. Far from it; we plonked to Brighton without missing a beat at a steady 25 m.p.h. (it even has a speedo which registers your speed every five seconds—how about that?) and reached the pylons 7 minutes ahead of schedule. It was surprisingly difficult to lose this time and I finished up grinding along in bottom gear. We crossed the line bang on time with me peering short-sightedly at my stopwatch, to win a first class award.

At one of the road racers' practice sessions, I had a lap or two at the end of the day on Fred Warr's Harley Davidson, the one which subsequently did so well with at the Silverstone 1000. As a dyed-in-the-wool Vincent enthusiast, I must confess I have always heaped scorn and derision on Harleys, but I ate my words most willingly after a short trip on this big twin. It was a shocker to start, I must admit. Unlike the Vincent it has no exhaust valve lifter; so the form is to leap as high as you can and then crash down to the bicycle-pedal-like kickstarter. It it's warm, (this one was, I'm happy to say) the bike will start easily. The only snag is that, unless you are very careful to come down dead vertical, you tend to drop the lot on the floor. Luckily for me Bernard Morle was at hand to prop us up as we teetered perilously. Due to a twist-grip still in the process of modification to fit "Ace" type bars, there was an enormous amount of play on the throttle cable. This, too, was a trifle difficult. When you gingerly opened the throttle, nothing happened until you had got casual about it all. Whereupon it would suddenly come in with a bang and leave

you streaming like a banner in the wind from the handlebars. Despite this hardship, I soon found that the 883 cc motor is very tractable, producing an immense amount of smooth power. The handling was very good and the brakes as efficient as any I've come across.

In the short, dark days of January I acted as a Club Steward for my local club's open to Centre trial. For the purpose of getting myself around the sections, I borrowed a 197 Greeves from Comerfords'. I can honestly say that this is the first trials 'bike I've ridden (with the exception of Phil Read's 250 of the same make) upon which I felt I could really go where I intended to. If I were able to have my ideal steeve, there would most certainly be a Greeves in it for my cross-country motoring.

By the way of an experiment, we tried Trobikes instead of Lambrettas for our official transport at the Hutch. These miniscule 'bikes were great fun to ride. Unfortunately I didn't have a camera to get a record of Rudi Thalhammer and Ladi Richter riding them round in small circles at Cope with broad grins on their faces. Despite their tiny engines, the Trobikes could cruise comfortably at about 20 m.p.h. The main snag, apart from the fact that they were so small that people couldn't see you coming and tended to run you over, was that, being two-strokes, they were a little temperamental about starting and stopping (the chilly April weather). This was a problem as the Trobike has an automatic clutch so that you can't bump-start it. On the occasions when one could do a relatively long trip, they gave no trouble at all in re-starting.

For a short time I have had a touring Excelsior Manxman given me by John Dewhurst. John and his wife had been up to Scotland with the 350 engine installed, the summer before he passed it on to me. It had a 250 engine as well and I found that with either power unit, the Manxman pulled like a train and sounded like a mangle. It handled as though it was on rails, once you had got used to the rigid back and girders in front. The brakes, for a pre-war 'bike, were superb. Indeed they were notably better than many post-war machines I've ridden and could be guaranteed to stop you on the proverbial threepenny bit. I felt sad about having to part with the 'bike, but came to the conclusion that it was being wasted after a summer in which I hardly had time to look at it, let alone work on it. It has gone to a

good home, though, and is still "in the family" as it were, because ex-assistant Secretary Colin Brown has taken it over on the same terms as those on which I got it from John in the first place—"nowt". I still have the model "J" Vincent—for the uninitiated, that is a pre-series "A" J.A.P. engine one—which I hope will shortly be on the road after years in pieces. That will be quite a 'bike, because it has the honour to be powered by the last engine put together by the late and much lamented "Barry" and I wouldn't part with that for all the tea in China.

While the A40 was having its 20,000 service recently, I borrowed another 'bike from Comerfords'. This time it was a 250 NSU Max, with a bare 3,000 on the clock. At the start I felt a bit unhappy on his one as my left leg just isn't cut out for kickstarting. However, once under way the Max was a real goer and handled and braked superbly. Like most German 'bikes, it had the combined ignition/lighting switch which was also the ignition key. What an excellent device this is for foiling the attempts of meddlers to flatten your battery. The Max had such a quiet engine and exhaust note that you could hear other things going on around you, a most pleasant sensation. The engine had a most odd characteristic for a comparatively docile road 'bike. It suffered from chronic megaphonitis and required to be revved considerably in each gear. It struck me that this was an ideal cafe racer's lot, as the 'bike could be given (and indeed even enjoyed) maximum revs in each gear without deafening all the old ladies in sight.

I had Jim's Series "A" Vincent Rapide for the Island in June. This was a really lovely 'bike. It handled and braked considerably better than most post-war

Vincents I've ridden (including my own Rapide) and has had decidedly "hairy" motor. While in the Island, David Womack and I changed 'bikes during a lap of the course. His is an early Venom brought up to spec, and considerably quicker than most current ones. Its rather staid, sit-up-and-beg riding position belies its turn of speed with a maximum well in excess of three figures. I couldn't start it, a failing with me whenever I get astride a Velo. (used to the vast Vincent kickstarter). I was a little comforted by the fact that I had to start the Vincent for David!

Last, but by no means least, another Vincent. This time it was Mick Bennett's Black Shadow, a Series "D" one with little modification on which he won the production machine race at Club Day. A previous owner had cunningly converted it to a lefthand kickstarter, so when Mick offered me a ride on it the day before Club Day, I got him to start the thing. Mick has put the engine together remarkably well for one who does all his tuning in a very small back garden shed. The Shadow had a breathtaking turn of speed and could be ear'oled most successfully. I had occasion to find out how much protection a steering damper knob and rev counter can be on an ustreamlined 'bike. Coming round Becketts, I gave it a bit of stick down the Main Runway, getting well down to it. When I sat up to ease off for Woodcote, I forgot I'd got my mouth open and, as soon as I got my head out into the wind, my cheeks blew out and finished up wrapped around the back of my ears somewhere—most odd.

This isn't really the end of the story, because I've been promised a ride on a 500 Beart Manx in the near future . . . but that'll have to wait until the 1962 instalment.

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IN THE TRADE SINCE 1902

THE VETERAN CAR RUN

I believe this event is of sufficient interest to all of us to merit a passing mention in this, a two wheeled, magazine. Besides, there were three members, to my knowledge, competing; our President, Norman Manby and George Goodall. Though I am no person for living in the past, I am keen on history and the Run is motoring history without a doubt, even if it is motoring history, dolled up somewhat.

I took up station on one of the roundabouts on the Purley Way and spent an interesting hour and a half watching the products of the nascent European, plus a few American, automobile manufacturers pass by. Most were taking it in their stride, but a few were not so happy. One ancient Daimler, for example, made the most awful noises from its gearbox when its conductor essayed a gear change. The very oldest vehicles start first. This time there were seven devices dating from 1896—an Arnold dog cart, a Benz three Leon-Bollée tricycles and the two Lutzmanns. First along Purley Way was the 1898 De Dion Bouton trike of A. Crewe, which was going nicely, and he was followed by R. J. Stephens in his father's 1898 Stephens dog cart. I seem to recall that this vehicle was made in Henley-on-Thames and has remained in same family all its life. After these two the field came through continuously; sometimes one or two vehicles à seul and sometimes a gaggle of five or six.

Most of them were beautifully turned out. Several were exceedingly rare such as the American Haynes-Apperson, which its owner brought specially over from the States, G. R. B. Clarke's 1901 Sunbeam-Mabley, the Shuttleworth Trust's 1903 De Dietrich racer and the Montagu Motor Museum's Brushmobile of 1904 driven by W. Boddy, Editor of "Motor Sport". My own favourite always has been the lovely 1904 Gordon Bennett Mercedes of Jack Sears. This great white car, easily the fastest to take the road to Brighton—it has to be held severely in check most of the time so that it does not run ahead of the time schedule—is a wonderful sight to see. Until the death of its previous owner, C. R. Abbott, it used to ascend the Prescott hill climb at a remarkable pace. Then there is the simply huge Mors of the Pierpoint family, the body of which is termed a "Roi des Belges". I do not know why. And so one could go on. It is all most fascinating. What a pity, it is therefore, that the modern motor-

ist does not show a little more common sense. The general opinion was, I understand, that the traffic was better this time than for quite a while. Nevertheless I saw several quite unnecessary instances of baulking and carving up the veterans. How idiotic and stupid can people get? Great fun all the same! Try it next year.

— 0 — THE 1961 DINNER

Lyons' Coventry Street Corner House was again the scene of the Annual Dinner /Dance. Despite the lack of a Show which is usually considered necessary to ensure a large gathering of Members and their friends and guests, there were as many as there have ever been. Over 450 persons sat down to the excellent meal which, incidentally, made a welcome break with that most wearisome tradition that states that chicken must always be served. Steak was served for the meat course! In the unavoidable absence of the President the Chair was taken by our Chairman, Harold Daniell, and Mrs. Daniell. Harold proposed the Toast of the Club, Harry Shuttleworth that of the Ladies, Guests and Press to which Charlie Rous ("Motorcycle News") replied. Mrs. Daniell presented the Trophies to those winners who were present. Dancing then continued, uninterrupted, to Len Hamshaw and his band until 1.30 a.m. "**Cabby**" **Cooper organised another highly successful raffle which raised £130 and our thanks are due to him for his great efforts in this direction; also to all those kind people who gave gifts, etc.** Margaret had arranged a 1927 Sunbeam (the property of Gordon Cobbold) and the "blown" 492 c.c. B.M.W. which won the 1939 T.T. (this latter by courtesy of M.L.G.) on the band dais.

W.G.T.

— 0 — MARGARET'S MEGAPHONE

Congratulations to two members who have recently become engaged, Vice-President **John Surtees** and **Peter Bettison**. Peter is disposing of his 350 Manx, but isn't retiring completely. He tells me he hopes to be "pottering around on a 250" next year.

I learned from Victor Horsman's private newspaper (circulation 12,000—how's that for publicity?) that his shop has recently moved to new premises. The

(continued on page 219)

SILVERSTONE—SEPT. 30th TOM JOHNSON

[Tom sent us an article about his first race meeting at the "Palace" on August Monday. Before we had time to publish it, this one arrived. Do we take what follows with that pinch of salt? Tom says not; anyway read on—the trials and tribulations of racing. ED.]

I had recently purchased a new 125cc Honda and had only just had time to put a thousand miles on the "clock" before stripping it for Silverstone. After the 'Palace I was going to leave nothing to chance. So I removed and replaced every moving part in my own cock-eyed way; this I fondly call tuning! In fact so much time was spent on the Honda that the poor M.V. was ignored. Indeed, the only thing I did not have time or money for were racing tyres. (Prayers for a lack of rain on the day).

On the Friday beforehand came the first mess-up. The van I had arranged to borrow became unavailable. Panic stations! My sister and her boyfriend, who were to accompany us, had to be plonked on a train with all they could carry and the dirty black 10 cwt loaded with a ton or more of 'bikes, tools, grub, Mech. (a new one—since the 'Palace—also blonde) and self. Notwithstanding a complete absence of recognisable front suspension, very little oil in the crankcase (sump), the back end grounding on every corner, the Mech., plus myself of course, that van performed the not inconsiderable feat of reaching the foot of the M1 within two hours. We stopped at this point to take tea, pour some R into a smoking hole under the bonnet, followed by a drop of paraffin—to keep it cool—and then headed up the Motorway.

Six, nerve shattering hours later we reached Bletchley station. Smiling wanly at the old girl, I patted her bonnet and then ran for the nearest water tap under which to plunge my scalded hand. However, after piling half the occupants of the London train into the van—well, it seemed like that—we set off once more. It took us another two hours to reach Silverstone. A total of ten hours from London to Silverstone must be a record. But then someone remembered that we had no petrol in the 'bikes, so off we went again, tail off van by now dragging in the dust, to locate some. The extra weight of four gallons nearly finished the old girl off completely, because, on arriving back in the Paddock, she let forth an almost human sigh and stopped with a deathly gurgling sound.

Setting up our tent proved to be an operation so complex that, as I do not wish this chronicle to be laughed at, I prefer not to relate it. Anyway what is so terrible about a few broken tent pegs or a few tears in the canvas? A con-

siderable time later supper was announced. Taking into account the fact that the primus stove was no better than a tin with a hole in it, mosquitoes, (or were they onions) and back coffee, explained away by lack of milk (it had been forgotten), the meal was not too bad. Still, as Bill and I didn't wish to be sick in front of the ladies and thus ruin our chances of breakfast, we volunteered to nip into the "village" for some milk. We caught the van unawares. It started and, as the "village" was only a few miles away we got there in three quarters of an hour; in the dark by this time. Requiring cigarettes too we popped into a pub and, as it was crammed to the doors with local milkmaids, we spent the rest of the evening there. When we finally staggered out, it was quite late. It was not until we returned to the Paddock that we discovered we had been to Buckingham! No wonder it had taken such a long time to get there. I don't know whether you have ever tried to find the Paddock at the Club Silverstone in pitch darkness full of beer. After a few lengths of the main runway and a visit to someone's back garden, we made it. More complications arose when we tried to reach our tent. There were dozens of tents, and vans, all over the place. Eventually, however, we were able to switch off the motor and crawl, exhausted, into our quarters; only to be rudely hollered at by the girls simply because we'd forgotten the milk . . . women!

Came the miserable, cold, foggy dawn. I don't imagine there was a man there who felt like going out on to the track at that moment. I didn't, but after breakfast, perhaps . . . Then befell calamity. Someone (identity still in doubt) had left ten bob's worth of sausages and bacon on the kitchen table back home. A plate of eggs and mosquitoes, sorry onions, under my belt made me feel more like the racing game and setting about the scrutineers. Practising with the Honda turned up some good times and I was looking forward to a nice race with it aided by my secret weapon. Training on the M.V. was a different kettle of fish [you should know, dear readers, that Tom had vast difficulties with this bicycle at the 'Palace; it broke just about everything in its motor. ED.]. After losing the rev counter, the use of the front anchor and both number plates, as well as the front end on the long straight, I realised that I was taking

someone else's place on the starting grid and called it a day, signing the non-starters' list for the 250 race—still that 'Palace jinx'!

Then it happened. It rained. Nothing worse could have befallen. I had no racing tyres and I had slid around enough in the dry. We waited in dejected silence and still it rained. While getting dressed I noticed a couple of other 'bikes with road tyres and, anyway, there was my secret weapon. I had a second line grid position and, my secret weapon working a treat, I shot into the lead. A quick glance to the rear showed me to be well out on my own. So, gritting my teeth against the rain and looking as grim as I knew how, I tore into the first right hander, got into the most frightening slide I've ever been in, shut my eyes tight and opened them again to see the tails of many 'bikes. I sorted out the cogs, gave my heart permission to continue beating and set off. I shall never again race a 'bike in the rain without racing tyres. When I finished my misery was added to by discovering that my Mech. hadn't got the usual cup of tea and fag ready. Apparently she had fallen off the pit counter whilst watching me take the lead and hadn't got over it! According to MY timekeepers I had broken the lap record, but only done 4 laps and finished 25th. I ask you! Later I learnt that I had actually finished in 18th place, having done 5 laps and being 10 m.p.h. slower than the winner. When I think of the humility thrust on the poor old van! And THEY even forgot the sausages and the bacon. . . .

After another ten hours, mostly motorway dicing, the old girl wheezed to a halt outside my garage. I had better not go into our half asleep antics on M1 in

case there is a policeman reading this. All I say is that I wouldn't like to be in the Crystal Palace mobs' shoes next year. God help 'em! [not exactly certain why this should be, but think it has something to do with the boys from Balham. ED.]. As an ending let me thank those club members that offered my other Mechs. lifts back to London.

(continued from page 205)

race closely followed by DAN SHOREY. The 50 c.c. race was won by DAVE SIMMONDS on the Itom with PAUL LATHAM second and RON KEMP third. Under the 'Non-Expert' banner JOHN WILKINSON won the 1,000 c.c. race and BLAKE OSBORNE took third place. PHIL READ won the experts' category of this race in which DEREK MINTER had to be content with second place, and ROY MAYHEW third. PETER HARDCASTLE won the sidecar handicap, BILL BODDICE was second and COLIN SEELEY third. FRED HANKS was second in the scratch race and OWEN GREENWOOD third.

The novice meeting at Mallory Park on the same day as the Guinness Trophy Meeting was run in thick weather. FRED CRAMP, in winning the vintage race on his old Velocette came very near to the fastest lap in the 350 racing class. KEN ROBERTS walked away with the 500 event, in which TONY WILLMOTT on the Norton-Triumph was second, RAYMOND PIKE came second in the sidecar event.

At Zaragoza MIKE HAILWOOD had the expected win on the M.V. in the 500 event. DAN SHOREY was third. Norton mounted.

The N.S.A.'s record day at Wellesbourne Mountford saw some rather peculiar records broken. In all nine were

(continued on page 217)

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Editor's Correspondence

[The Editor and Club are not necessarily in agreement with the opinions and arguments of correspondents.]

An open letter to the Trade Barons:
My liege Lords,

During the past 26 week-ends one million or so of your customers have used your products to go and watch the 50-plus road race meetings run in this country: meetings organised by voluntary clubmen, in our fickle weather, at some financial risk.

A mere thousand or so keen, great-hearted riders and a handful of sponsors have provided the entertainment, the machinery, their skill and their skins. **MAINLY AT THEIR OWN EXPENSE.** Those few exceptions are the names which you, my lords, have been pleased to include in your advertisements as '1st, 2nd, or 3rd' at a mere dozen of the main meetings.

What of the rest? You know as well as the riders what a costly game this is. But isn't the cost a far graver factor for the individual than if it is spread through your vast organisations? How can road racing continue without that gallant thousand sportsmen? And if the sport, one of the cleanest in the British calendar, should wither and die, who will have dealt the mortal blow? YOU, my lords?

But we, your customers, are not asking you to spend your shareholders' money in sheer philanthropy. There are dividends in this for you, too. Please ask your directors again to consider these questions:

1. Haven't you gleaned a harvest of valuable information about your products—and the opposition's—from the research data which 'the boys' have given you?
2. Isn't it good public relations to be able, in your regular advertisements, to prove that your products can stand up to stress and strain?
3. Won't you be continuing to buy the same amount of advertising space anyway? The same hoardings, banners, paint on petrol stations? All seen by every one of Britain's mounting millions of motorists?
4. Isn't it better that such a vast publicity expenditure should record something *DONE*, instead of the mere empty clichés used by your less enterprising competitors?

5. Is it really going to affect your combined balance sheet billions to save a few thousands with which you've subsidised 'the boys' in the past?

Granted there are a few ungrateful or greedy lads who have expected too much: who won't do anything to help themselves. But doesn't that tiny minority exist in every walk of life? Why penalise the majority? Why force skilful sponsors like the Geoff Monty/Dudley Ward equipe, with their typical 'S-P-O-R-T' traditions, to withdraw their home-tuned G.M.S. and A.M.C. mounts from sterling riders like Langston and Robb because they can't stand the cos. on their own.

Aren't you ashamed that stalwards like Joe Ehrlich should spend thousands of pounds year after year to challenge the Continental and Asiatic ultra-lightweight monopolies? Why leave it to him to prove at his own expense that 'Britain can make it'?

Is this the time when the Japs and the Soviet bloc are entering the lists, to stab British enterprise and prestige in the back?

So please, my lords, think carefully. And, having thought, speak. Reassure 'the boys' so that they can devote *their* time, skill and money to their winter tuning, knowing that you will continue next year to help to 'spread the load'. For that's all we, your public, ask—and expect—for the sake of our national prestige, as well as for the good of your products.

Finally, my lords, may I appeal to every motorist and motor-cyclist who has borne with me so far, to resolve only to buy and use the brand name which have enough confidence to test and prove their products on British circuits: and whose advertisements also reveal their active partnership with the lads who provide the proof.

Awaiting your answer, I remain,
my lords. One of your lordships' potential customers.
Arnside, E. W. Fitch.
Westmoreland.

Sir,

Picking up the latest "Bemsee" I noted the plea for interesting correspondence from bored people. Well, I'm

far from bored, so here goes.

I was interested to read Dick Wyler's comment in 'Motor-Cycling' not long back, in which he deplored the number of young men, once keen motor-cyclists, who sell their motor-cycles in favour of cars, as soon as they leave their 'teens'. 'As if,' he says, 'they're geeting too old for the game.'

I am a 20-year-old, ardent enthusiast with an ambition to race two wheels somewhere, somewhen. I have recently been upgraded from Technician to Student Apprentice in a firm which manufactures mostly car accessories (with the exception of motor-cycle speedos). Along with this promotion goes a 12 month's course at the company's Residential Training College. There I am the only motor-cyclist among all the motorists. And every week my impression that motor-cycles are thought to be not the thing, is strengthened.

At the moment and in the future, to an increasing degree, my career requires that I arrive at factories, etc., smartly dressed; even in mid-winter. Also, just as important, how is it possible to take an attractively dressed girl to a show, for example, on the back of a motor-cycle? What happens to her expensive hair-do under a crash-hat or in the rain. There was a time when a motor-cycle was a decided asset as far as girls were concerned. However, as girls get older, they are not so keen to get dressed up in full kit. Unfortunately there is too much leg-pulling if one sticks to 15 and year-olds, attractive though they may be! [Well, well—Ed.]

This may not have any bearing on racing, but it does seem topical though! Perhaps I may be lacking in the necessary initiative. But, if someone has found the answer, I would very much like to know what it is. Other than the obvious, but expensive, one of having both car and motor-cycle.

Yours etc.,

Northwood, Middx.

D. E. Rapley.

(continued from page 215)

broken—and so they ought to have been, as it was a very long time since they were last tackled! The fastest time of the day was, naturally, achieved by GEORGE BROWN, although he didn't manage to break his own record—no wonder! ERNIE WOODS in the Norton-JAP was second and NEVILLE HIGGINS third. REGGIE GILBERT, BILL BRAGG and CHARLIE LUCK (still suffering) finished in that order in the 750 class, Gilbert getting the record. ALEC BASCOMBE won the 500 class, taking the record as well, from JACK TERRY and CHARLIE ROUS (mounted on a Norton). The 350 record was taken by BASIL KEYS (AJS) and HAYDN WILLIAMS third. GEORGE BROWN won the 250 class, less streamlining and third gear, while JACK TERRY was second and JOHN KIMBERLEY third. IAN JAMES got the 125 class record. The sidecar winners were: ERNIE WOODS—350; LEN COLLINS—500; REGGIE GILBERT—250, and GEORGE BROWN—1,200.

The Midland Racing Club's first sprint at Fradley (Staffs) proved a reasonable success. GEORGE BROWN winning both 250 and unlimited classes. MARGO PEARSON won the 125 class on her Montesa beating IAN JAMES's B.S.A. PETER INCHLEY, riding George Salt's Ariel Arrow, came second behind Brown in the 250 class. In the 350 class, DENNIS GREENFIELD beat ERNIE WOODS for first place and in the 500 class repeated this success over TONY WILLMOTT. He rounded off the day by finishing second in the unlimited. PAT BARRETT won the sidecar class, ROGER OTTEWELL second.

Congratulations to MIKE HAILWOOD with his first wins in the United States and to BERT SCHNEIDER, our one and only Austrian member, in becoming the Austrian Champion for 1961.

J.H.S.

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A TRIP TO BRIGHTON

by the Secretary

After her visit to Shelsley, Beryl has become a convert to the sprint game, so I wasn't surprised when she insisted on getting up early for the second weekend in succession so that she could come down to Brighton with me. Racing doesn't start until the afternoon for our people, but I always like to be there first thing so that I can wander around the bikes and cars (there's an 8-litre vintage Bentley I covet more than my back teeth) and have a natter.

By a miracle, the weather was just as good as it had been for our hill-climbing weekend. There was practically no wind and the sun shone brilliantly. The more athletic among us went gallivanting off down the beach to do what most other people visit Brighton for—swim, I mean. I didn't because I swim like a brick.

First off after the lunch break were the racing cars. Sidney Allard's spectacular looking dragster was brought to the line last of all, with much pomp and ceremony. It was unfortunate that the monster decided to give a display of temperament and never got going on all its cylinders. I felt very sorry for Sidney Allard because his run had had such a build up that nothing short of a course record-effort would have satisfied the four-wheeled enthusiasts. When our ears had recovered from the shattering blast of the Allard's exhaust (heaven knows how one's eardrums would survive if the Chrysler engine's eight cylinders were all performing!) the 350's moved up to the line.

The curtain raisers were Basil Keys on his standard road racing 7R and Dave Tringham on his quick little Rudge Special which rejoices in the name of Beatnik Fly. George Brown was riding the Ariel Arrow record breaker, but didn't get a good run due to a misfire. Among the 500's was our old friend Dr. Willoughby who had discarded his man, his third wheel and his supercharger. Despite these handicaps he clocked a very fair time.

As always when the "big boys" come to the line, there was a sort of renewal of concentration and a murmur of expectation. Ernie Woods and Frank Williams, lined up side by side on nearly identical Norton-J.A.P.'s from the Williams stable, took off in perfect unison, both front wheels precisely the same distance off the ground. It couldn't have

looked better if they'd rehearsed it. Charlie Luck was out on his bigger banger Norton for the first time in a straight up sprint and gave a good account of himself despite the opposition of being paired off with George Brown and Nero. George's was the best time so far, only .23 below the course record. Like him Basil Keys had a superb start but missed a gear on the Norton-J.A.P.

The sidecar class seemed to be a couple of needle-matches; Len Collins and his well-known 500 Velocette outfit couldn't quite get the edge on Frank Booth with his new Matchless excrambler outfit, while Maurice Brierley and Pat Barrett were battling it out for first place. Maurice had had the bad luck to have engine trouble the day before during a test run. All night work had got it going again and so his run being the first to break the old sidecar record was all the more creditable.

At the request of some of the riders the motor cycles ran singly on the second outing so that the delay and bother of false starts could be avoided. Oddly enough, the second half of the programme was completed in a shorter time than when the riders went off in pairs. Time was getting short, so the thousands went first.

I stood at the finish line this time and Nero's engine sounded beautiful as George bombed across the line. Basil was definitely in trouble and his bike was only on one as it passed—possibly due to that missed gear. I was sure that when Ernie passed me he was going more quickly than I'd seen him go before. When the result came over the P.A., it confirmed my opinion. He had got F.T.D. with a run only .03s. outside the course record.

After that one could be justified in imagining that the rest would be an anticlimax, but the excitement was kept going by Pat Barrett, who pushed up Maurice's newly won sidecar record still further.

Basil Keys, as in his first effort, had a bit of trouble with megaphonitis on the take off, but once the clutch was home and the engine revving well, he got the 7R along at a fair speed to take the honours in the 350 class. The day's proceedings ended with the 500's, in which Arthur Breeze scored a win with Charlie Luck's old 500 Norton with an excellent

At the end of the long walk back to the Paddock, I found Ernie with his always cheerful grin so broad that it nearly reached his ears. For him it was a long-cherished ambition received—to get F.T.D. at Brighton. What made it even better for him and Floss was that it was their 17th wedding anniversary. We celebrated with slices of melon all round. I found another use than wind cheating for Ron May's fairing while hunting for somewhere to dispose of my bit of melon skin. Well, after all, they call 'em dustbins don't they.

Margaret's Megaphone (continued)

Pembroke Place headquarters of this well known member's business in Liverpool is to close after 35 years. The new showrooms are in Renshaw Street and the service depot is now sited at 78 Duke Street.

Sprinter **Reggie Gilbert's** wife has just presented him with a daughter weighing 1lb. 9oz. The proud father sadly admitted that the latest addition to the

family sounded as though she was going to be too heavy to make a good sprinter;

I've heard **Mike Hailwood** called a lot of things in my time, but comparing him to sliced bread is a new departure. Can't help feeling you're going to get your leg pulled about that one when you get home from the States, Mike.

F.T.D. E. A. Woods (Norton-J.A.P.)—21.62s.

Three-wheeler F.T.D. P. J. Barrett (Vincent-H.R.D.)—26.46s.

350 c.c.

1st B. E. Keys (A.J.S.)—27.77s.

2nd G. F. Thomson (Thomson A.J.S.)—30.50s.

500 c.c.

1st A. E. Breese (Norton Special)—26.95s.

2nd J. T. Terry (Cotton-J.A.P.)—27.19s.

1,000 c.c.

1st G. Brown (Vincent Special)—21.82s.

2nd N. Higgins (Vincent Special)—22.94s.

Three-wheelers

1st M. S. L. Brierley (Methamton)—26.53s.

2nd F. Booth (Matchless)—29.20s.

THE 1962 CALENDAR

The Club is pleased to announce that approval has been given by the A.C.U. to its holding the following meetings in 1962.

7 April—Hutchinson 100, Silverstone—International.

19 May—Silverstone 1,000 Kilometres—National.

17 June—Snetterton Club Novice Races—Closed-to-Club.

24 June—Long Marston Sprint—Regional restricted.

6 August—Metropolitan Meeting, Crystal Palace—National

18 August—Trophy Day, Silverstone—Closed-to-Club.

25/26 August—Shelsley Walsh Hill Climb—Regional restricted.

1 September—Brighton Speed Trials—Closed-to-Club.

22 September—Baragwanath Trophy Meeting, Silverstone—Closed-to-Club.

7 October—Guinness Trophy Meeting, Snetterton—Closed-to-Club

There is a faint possibility of a further sprint-type meeting. The Dinner should be held in the 15th November. Fuller details later.

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**Ernie Wooder's 1961 Matchless G50
£425**

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1957 A.J.S. 7R—ready to race

Terms and exchanges arranged

For full details write, phone or call

**Tom Kirby, Roneo Corner, Hornchurch,
Essex**

Phone 48785

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FOR SALE—One-piece leathers. Excellent condition. Slim build, 5ft. 7in. £16. Boots, zip back. 2. Sent C.O.D. E. N. Weekes, 186 Chalvey Grove, Slough, Bucks.

FOR SALE—350 short-stroke Manx; up to 1959 specification. Very reliable and goes well. Reason for sale—retiring. Ideal for G/S owner. Offers around £215 with sprockets, spares and fairings. T. Brown, 53a Park Hall Road, London, S.E.21. GIPsy Hill 4678.

FOR SALE—124 c.c. Rumi engine. New crankshaft, bearings, rods and rings; plus exhaust pipes and expansion boxes. Engine not raced since overhaul. Also duplex frame for above with Earles forks, front and rear damped units and clip-ons. £25 the lot, or v.n.o. Also 1 pair brand new Dell Orto carbs. for the above, available extra. 9 Fir Tree Walk, Enfield, Middx. ENField 2493.

FOR SALE—1951 7R A.J.S. Good condition. £75. K. F. H. Inwood, 72 Molesey Road, Hersham, Surrey.

FOR SALE—Gold Star 190mm front hub and brake, £5 10s. Pair of 1960 front fork legs complete, £5. 1½ Amal 5 GP, £5. Road Rocket rear sprocket, £1. 8,000 rev. counter head and gear box, £5. Burman GB close ratio gearbox. Been used in 250. Good condition, £12 10s. 500 Gold Star barrel, used, £3. All o.n.o. J. R. Blackwell, 22 Park Lane, Coxtie Green, Brentwood, Essex.

FOR SALE—1960 G50 Matchless and 1957 350 Manx Norton; fairings, sprockets for both; also one-piece leathers—5 ft. 8in. and 38in. K. Hearn 9 Eastcheap, Rayleigo, Essex.

FOR SALE—DB34 Gold Star; racing trim fairing, etc.; places at Brands, Palace, Silverston, Castle Coombe; very fast and ready to "go". Ideal for beginner—£140 o.n.o. Also WANTED—1959 (or later) 500 Gold Star engine; must be good and chaep. B. P. Dennis, 108 Priory Crescent, Southend, Essex. Southend 65875.

FOR SALE—Dismantled "Hartley" Ariel 250 c.c. road racer. Frame, wheels, Gold Star forks, Armstrong s/a tanks—£8 10s. Engine (bore and piston scored), polished internals—£7 10s. Gearbox, c.r., and clutch—£6 15s. TT9 carb. with float—£4 10s. B.T.H. mag., KD1—£4 15s. Smith's rev. counter and gearbox—£4 10s. Or the lot, £30. Will deliver locally. J. R. Boggis, 8 Percy Street, Iffley Road, Oxford.

CONTACT WANTED—John Smith wishes to return hand drill borrowed at Club Day. Would the owner please get in touch with him at Taylor Matterson, Ltd., Bedford Hill, Balham, S.W.12.

WANTED—Royal Enfield from 1953 onward. 500 Bullet or 700 Super Meteor. Condition immaterial. Also leathers 6ft. 2in. D. Rapley, Bracken Hill House, The Wood, Northwood, Middlesex.

WANTED—Manx 2 L/S front hub, or complete wheel; or similar 7R/G50 considered—later type of either preferred; details to Standing, 21 St. Dunsan's Hill, Cheam, Surrey.

WANTED—1927-30 A.J.S., Rex Acme, T.T. Sc ott or Sunbeam racer. W. H. Dixon, 14 Abel Street, Burnley, Lancs.

**A short message from Philip Burg,
145a Trammere Road, Earlsfield, S.W.18.**

"I wish to extend a big thank you to all who helped me at the Club Day meeting in 5th place, his riding number being mechanic a new K.L.G. FE 220. Should the owner require his plug back or payment for it, would he please contact me."

AREA NEWS

METROPOLITAN

Bl.I Rose, Rosedene Cottage,

Woldingham, Surrey.

(Phone 2352 night—MUScum 7026 day)

About 60 members and friends came to the Bull and Mouth, Bloomsbury Way, W.C.2., to hear Eric Oliver relate his racing experiences from the early 1930's to the time he retired after the 1960 T.T. Many thanks, Eric.

Films are arranged for December the 7th at the same "pub". By courtesy of Mobil and Smith these should be interesting as they cover Motor Cycle Racing and of course "Bemsee's" own film "Fifty Not Out". As usual good food and drink will be available. Turn up and help to make the evening a success.

Have just heard that Bill Jarman is in Redhill General Hospital with a broken ankle. At North Ward, Redhill, Surrey. Apparently gardening is also dangerous.

Future Dates

January 4th (Not 1st as printed in last month's Bemsee). February 1st and March 1st, on one of these dates, Bob Geeson, I hope, will bring along one of his own engines to strip down to enable all interested to see "how it is made". I hope he will also bring some bits that "did not take the strain"—details next month.

Hasn't anyone ideas for an evening's entertainment, I don't want to push my own favourite subjects all the time.

NOTTS., DERBY and LEICS.

W. B. MARTIN,

"Ivy Cotage", 55 Kneeton Road, East Bridgford, Notts. (Tel. E.B. 349)

My apologies for such a belated opening Meeting! This will be held on Thursday, 7th December, 1961, at our old rendezvous, The Anchor Inn, Kegworth (just off the A6) around eightish. New members are particularly welcomed.

Nothing specific has been organised for this night, in order that it may afford us the opportunity of discussing ideas for future activities. Further to the suggestion re. town groups in conjunction with the area activities, I wonder are there any "takers" in Derby, Leicester or Nottingham? If so, please come along to the meeting or contact me at the above address. See you on the 7th.

GROUP NEWS

As a result of the piece in last month's magazine, several volunteers have come forward to try and start groups in their areas. Their names and addresses are below, for the benefit of any members who want to get in touch with them.

Three definite group nights have been fixed for December as follows:—

Dagenham Group. Friday, December 8th, "Brewery Tap", Barking, D. R. (Johnnie) Walker, 79 Albert Road, Ilford, Essex.

Horley Group. Thursday, December 21st. Red Lion, Turners Hill, Crawley Down. Frank Gillings, 14 Tudor Close, Smallfield, Horley, is the organiser.

Ipswich Group. Thursday, December 14th. 339 Humber Doucy Lane, Ipswich. Charlie Hubbard of the same address is the organiser.

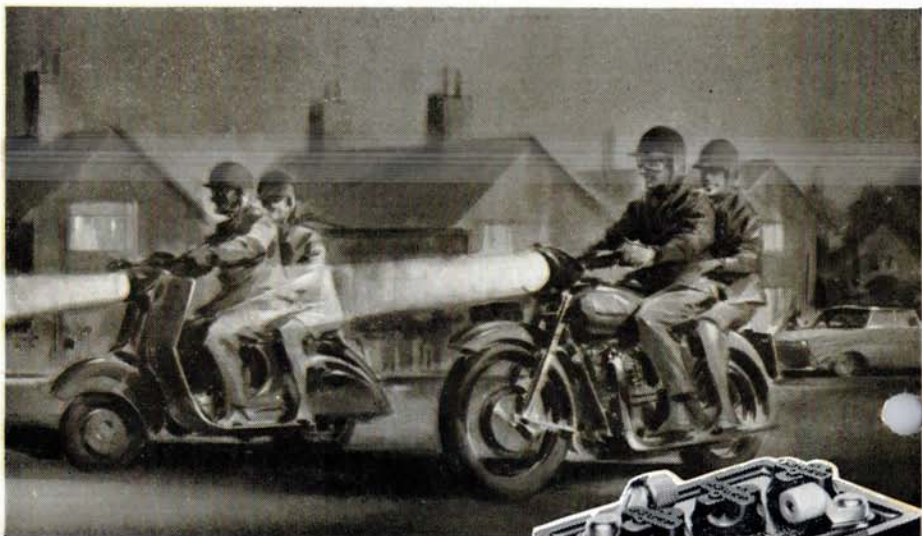
Dunstable. John W. Rhodes, 34 Station Road, Toddington, Dunstable.

Brighton. Mike Cook, 68 Cants Lane, Burgess Hill.

S.W. London. John Wheeler, 211 Burntwood Lane, S.W.11.

Leamington. A. W. G. "Andy" Walczak, 36 Dunblane Drive, New Cubbington, Leamington Spa.

Surbiton. Pete Gain, 101 Grand Avenue, Surbiton.



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