

# Bemsee

THE JOURNAL OF THE  
BRITISH MOTOR CYCLE RACING CLUB



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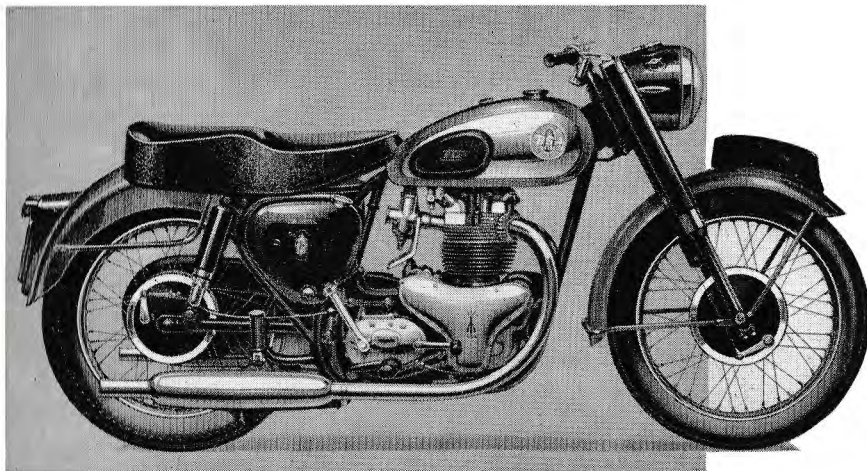
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THE JOURNAL OF THE BRITISH MOTOR CYCLE RACING CLUB

Vol. 12. No. 3. MARCH, 1959

# Bemsee

EDITOR:  
P. F. WRIGHT

BRITISH MOTOR CYCLE RACING CLUB

PRESIDENT: The Marquis Camden, J.P.

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CHAIRMAN: H. L. Daniell VICE-CHAIRMAN: A. Squillario

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

## FIFTY YEARS OF RACING 1909 - 1959

THIS season brings the fiftieth year of racing that has been organised by our Club. Many interesting details of the Club's early days, will be found within these pages and a pictorial record of some famous Club personalities over these years, appears as our centre-spread.

We have had messages of greeting and congratulation and we are most happy to know that the Club is held in as high regard as it is. We thank all our many friends for their kind words and trust that this special issue of our Magazine, will serve as a permanent reminder in the years to come, of this half-century celebration of speed on two and three wheels.

Now the riders of 1959 are assembling on the grid and the roads are clear. Soon, our Jubilee flag will be down and another great racing year will be open. May it be a good year for you all!

TURN TO THE INSIDE BACK COVER IF YOU ARE  
INTERESTED IN THE PRE-SEASON PRACTICE!

Closing date for contributions — 14th of each month



## FIFTY YEARS OF ENTERPRISE

By L. R. HIGGINS

ON a fine March day, fifty years ago—it must have been fine, for great adventures never start on a dull note—eight far-seeing men laid the foundations for what was to become the most famous motor cycle club in the world, the British Motor Cycle Racing Club, the initial letters of which were subsequently contracted into "Bemsee." The founders were Major F. Lindsay Lloyd, R. O. Clark, W. H. Wells, A. V. Ebbelwhite, A. G. Reynolds, F. Straight, O. L. Summers and E. C. W. Fitzherbert, and the formation of the Club took place in the headquarters of the British Automobile Racing Club, Carlton House, Regent Street, London.

The B.A.R.C. operated the Brooklands track, which had been opened two years earlier, and for the next thirty years shared this world-famous Mecca of speed with the British Motor Cycle Racing Club. It is a sad thought that for the past twelve years the Club has been homeless, and that today there is no place in England where a motor cycle can be driven at full throttle for hours on end, or until something breaks! But neither circumstance has proved to be so calamitous as to bring about our demise. The Club has indeed grown enormously; it has been great enough to meet the changed conditions, and, thanks to the efforts of our post-war committees and secretaries, gone from strength to strength. Our racing organisation is accepted as a standard. We have been widely copied. We have won open admiration and aroused jealousy. But one thing remains unchanged. Today, as in 1909, our object is to further the prestige of British riders and British motor cycles.

There are at least four men living who were associated with Bemsee in its year of initiation, Major Tom Loughborough, Bert Colver, Harry Martin and M. Geiger. Major Loughborough was our first secretary, and is probably the greatest organising

genius the racing world has had. Bert Colver is still actively engaged with motor cycles. By day he works at Associated Motor Cycles factory in Woolwich, and at night tunes the machines his son rides so successfully on South-Eastern grass tracks. Bert Colver was a close friend of the Collier family, founders of A.M.C. and Matchless motor cycles, raced with the late Harry and Charlie Collier at Brooklands in pre-1914 days and is one of the few remaining links with those two great motor cyclists of Edwardian days. Harry Martin continues his association with the Excelsior concern. In the early days of Bemsee he rode a J.A.P.-engined A.S.L. with considerable success.

M. Geiger has the distinction of being the first man to win a motor cycle race at Brooklands. This was before Bemsee's time, and was a straight-a-way run over a mile, in 1907, and contested by two riders. Geiger's machine was a German NSU. Doubtless there are other pioneers who are still living. Men like Harold Karlake and that evergreen journalist, "Ixion" of *The Motor Cycle*.

Bemsee's first meeting was held on a Thursday, April 18th, watched by a "crowd" of seventy; and—grumblers please note this!—prize money to the winner of the main race amounted to £1. It is fitting that our first meeting in this Jubilee year will take place almost exactly fifty years after that historic 1909 meeting.

In those pioneering days races were mostly over short distances. In the 'twenties the programmes consisted largely of short-distance races, three, five and ten laps, run as handicaps, but several meetings were organised on a mixed basis. That is, the main event was a long-distance race, and was preceded by short handicaps. The principal long-distance events were the 200-mile sidecar and solo races, and, from 1925, the "Hutchin-

## FIFTY YEARS OF ENTERPRISE (continued)

son 100." The 200-mile races were displaced after 1930, but the "Hutchinson 100" survived and is now one of our few remaining links with the past.

The first thirty years of Bemsee's existence is inextricably woven with the history of Brooklands, for although members raced elsewhere, indeed wherever there was motor cycle racing, Brooklands was the Club's home and the one place at which it organised its race meetings. Even in those now-distant days we were versatile and able to meet the changed conditions that characterised racing in the nineteen-thirties. The decade from 1920-30 was notable for the achievements of the great tuners of the day. The names of Bert le Vack, Claude Temple, Tony Worters, Freddie Dixon, Bill Lacey, Victor Horsman, Dougal Marchant, to mention only a few, will always be associated with the track and what has been described as the "Golden Age of Motor Cycle Racing."

In the next decade the "Mountain" circuit was devised, by erecting artificial barriers and using the steep slope of the banking. On here, sheer maximum speed was not all-important, and the road-racing type motor cycle with its characteristic of rapid acceleration could surpass the track machines which were so outstandingly successful on the outer circuit.

After war years of 1939-45, motor cycle racing was not revived on a full-scale basis until 1947. Pre-war enthusiasm had not faded, and there was overwhelming support when Bemsee was reformed in 1947. The fact that the Club was homeless did not dull optimism, and a tremendous effort was made to organise the first post-war meeting. It was a huge success and provided a stepping-stone for the enormous activities that Bemsee was to engage upon in the next twelve years. The "Hutchinson 100" was revived in 1947, not in its original form, unfortunately that was not pos-

sible, but by bold experiments, new regulations have been evolved to govern the allocation of the award of the Mellano Trophy, our oldest cup.

Today we organise races in several parts of the country, not only short- and long-distance road events, but sprints and hill climbs. We have standing invitations to take part in certain closed events organised by other clubs, and can offer the racing man a full season's sport.

Throughout the years nearly every racing motor cyclist of the day has been a member of Bemsee, and at some time or other every important road race in the world has been won by one of our members. Moreover, those most coveted awards, the I.O.M. T.T. Club Team Prizes have been won by Bemsee on numerous occasions. The first as long ago as 1926.

Amongst our present membership are many who long ago gave up active racing. Their enthusiasm is unquenched and today the Club has the benefit of their wisdom and experience, for it is they who work unceasingly behind the scenes and make possible the organisation of a very full programme. This year, our jubilee, will be a year to remember in our history. The success of our jubilee racing programme will be largely due to their efforts. They deserve full support from every one of us. It is their willingness to undertake many irksome tasks that has perfected our organisation, and made Bemsee events second-to-none. This year they deserve even greater support than hitherto, to make our Jubilee a year to be remembered, and one, perhaps, that will only be surpassed by our diamond jubilee and our centenary. By the time the latter celebration comes round we ought to have a home of our own. And by then we shall all be old men and not able to appreciate it. Let's work hard now and achieve it while we have the chance to enjoy it.



## COMMITTEE NEWS

Report of Meeting of the General Committee held on January 26th, 1959.

**Present:** H. L. Daniell (Chairman), E. C. E. Baragwanath, D. Bates, L. S. Cheeseright, G. C. Cobbold, E. Cooper, D. J. H. Glover, A. L. Huxley, N. B. Pope, I. F. Telfer, the Secretary and, by invitation, L. J. Archer.

**Apologies** for absence were received from Messrs. A. Squillario, G. E. Tolley and R. C. Walker.

The Minutes of the previous Meeting were agreed and signed.

The Secretary reported the acceptance of the B.M.C.R.C. Trophy by the F.I.M. Rally organisers.

Mr. Archer, at the Chairman's request, gave his views on the A.-C.U.'s proposed changes in road-race control. He explained the proposals at length. These were discussed in great detail and, while the proposals for track licences, agreements with track owners and permit-granting were supported, those for restricting the activities of International licence holders, when there was an International meeting on the same day as a national or lesser meeting, were condemned.

The draw for the three Club entries in Event One at "Silverstone Saturday" was made by Mr. Baragwanath; the three successful members being Messrs. P. J. Hardcastle, W. D. Reid and A. Virco. The chief officials for the 1959 meetings were agreed. Detail arrangements for "Silverstone Saturday" were made.

The date of the 1959 Annual Dinner/Dance was agreed, following a report from the Dinner Sub-Committee, as Thursday, November 19th.

Resignations were accepted and new members elected.

Following a recommendation by the Secretary, it was agreed to hold a pre-season practice session at Silverstone on Wednesday, March 18th.

The date of the next Meeting was fixed for March 9th.

## NEW MEMBERS

We are pleased to welcome the following new members to the Club. May we wish them a long and happy stay:—

J. Ainsworth, D. R. Ajax, P. Arnott, A. Atherton, A. E. Baxter, D. J. Bennett, C. W. Brewer, E. Bunker, J. V. J. Cannons, B. B. Carr, P. C. Catchpole, B. V. Chapman, M. Cook, F. Cox, W. H. E. Eardley, C. R. Edwards, A. K. Gardner, R. W. F. Gates, E. Gill, R. J. Goddard, P. G. Hall, E. Hardcastle, H. G. Hays (U.S.A.), K. G. Hearn, M. H. Hewlett, L. W. D. Holland, R. G. Jackson, R. J. Lawrence, A. J. Lloyd, T. R. Mains, T. P. Mayne, J. H. Organ, P. Overall, J. B. Parslow, R. W. O. Pierce, J. H. Platt, K. B. Powell, P. M. R. Pratt, H. J. Preece, E. R. Pressland, A. G. Pruden, D. L. Read, W. D. Roche, M. J. Rowell, D. R. Shepherd, P. N. Sheppard, C. Spence, G. Spence, A. H. Straker, P. M. Sumner, D. N. Symons, B. W. G. Tallett, R. E. Underwood, D. P. Warren, P. G. Watson, J. Wood, I. Wootton.

## BENEVOLENT FUND

The Trustees of the Fund wish to record their grateful thanks to the following for contributions, received since the last issue:—

P. C. Evans, C. F. Brown.

## UNPAID SUBSCRIPTIONS

**I am instructed by the Board of Directors and Committee of the Club to give due notice that members who have not paid their subscriptions on or before March 31st, 1959, will be removed from the Register of Members. All those members who have not yet paid are asked to do so without delay, as this will be the last copy of the magazine and regulations they will receive.**

The Secretary.

## RESIGNATIONS

We regret to record the resignations of the following members:—

K. J. Ellis, M. King, P. Lambert, J. W. Lemm, J. Pritchard, N. Lay, G. P. Stopford, H. Dawes, J. A. Coulson, K. Collier, A. Marr.

ALAN SHEPHERD-348c.c. MODEL 7R A.J.S.

THE MOTOR CYCLE PHOTOGRAPH

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## DOUBLE KNOCKER'S BRIEFS

THIS is a new feature designed to bring you the latest news of members, what they are doing and what they are riding. It will largely replace "Double Knocker's" former contribution to these pages.

As a first brevity may I wish you all the best of fortune this season with good racing and successful rides. Let's hope King Sol shines forth on all meetings and in particular the Bemsee ones.

According to my information the actual day on which, fifty years ago, the Club was founded, is in the first ten days of this month. So we have reached the ripe age of fifty.

I hear that only twenty-four 7R Ajays and 30 G50 Matchlesses are to be made. So some people will be unlucky.

There may be at least one American rider in the T.T. this year. Member **Ed la Belle** is hoping to come over with a 7R and a "Rennsport" B.M.W. He had two wins on the latter in Canada last year.

Talking of Munich twins, it seems we shall see three of these in action over here in 1959. **Pip Harris** will presumably have his going really well. **Bill Beevers** has one, and now **Alan Young** has, too. Thus does the h.o. twin menace spread to our shores!

**Bill Boddice** is one who will be sticking to a Norton and no doubt he will be about the place pretty consistently. A Norton is favoured this year by **Terry Folwell** and **Peter Knocker**. They have sold their Matchless outfit.

I hear of several machine changes in the solo classes for 1959. Already the early entries for "Silverstone Saturday" show some appreciable differences from what we saw last season.

Among the 125 "boys" to change is **John Dovaston** who now has a Mondial. Ducatis are now favoured by **Arthur Wheeler** and **Arthur West**. The former sold his Mondial to the "Ecurie Sportive" and I noticed the other day that this machine was again for sale.

N.S.U.s are becoming very popular in the 250 class, though not all of them are the pukka "Sportmax" models. No less than eleven appear so far in the entry list for this race on April 18th. A really formidable N.S.U. man will be **Jack Murgatroyd** who has replaced his very quick 250 Velo. with a Neckarsulm "bomb."

**Norman Price** from Aylesbury has at last got rid of his faithful KTT Velo., latterly in a "featherbed" frame, and will be seen this year on Nortons. Similarly, **Vernon Cottle** now has a brace of Bracebridge Street "bangers."

Entered by **Geoff Monty** is **Tony Godfrey** on two Nortons, while **Geoff** will be having a "go" himself on the 250 G.M.S. and a 350 Manx. I do hear, too, that he will be putting in Irishman **Tommy Robb** on light-weight machines. That could be interesting.

Vintage enthusiast **Jeff Clew** of Crawley, who had a very nice 1930 Velocette till a year or so ago, now has a 250 Rudge Special well on the way to completion. He tells me that he is nearly through with the job and is beginning to become an almost permanent fixture at **Godfrey's spares' counter!** He plans an article sometime soon on his experiences rebuilding this machine, which ought to be very interesting.

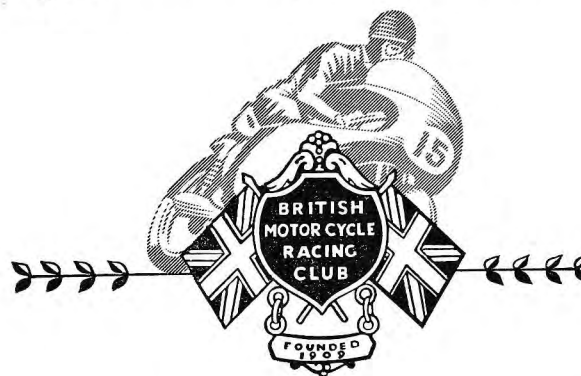
Recently out of hospital is **Ron Mawby** of Camberley who is now looking forward to the season. I think he will continue to ride his 500 Gold Star.

B.S.A. Bantam enthusiast **Ray Hunter** of Knottingley, also has a Tiger 110 Triumph on the boil, especially for Clubman-type events. The Bantam he has rebuilt with a new motor.

**Frank Burgess**, whom we used to see pretty regularly on the short circuits with a 350 Norton, hopes to be back in the fray this year after an enforced absence. He is now with Lucas, working on the design of racing mags. Sounds like a very absorbing job.

(Continued on page 41)

## 50 years of Achievement



On this, their Golden Jubilee, we congratulate the British Motor Cycle Racing Club, and pay tribute to their continuous and sterling contribution to motor cycle racing during the past 50 years

The jubilee of Bemsee is also the third anniversary of the most brilliant of Esso's new petrols—Golden Esso Extra—a petrol which continues to prove itself fully equal to the exacting demands of the highest efficiency engines.

# GOLDEN

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# THAT BROOKLANDS LAP RECORD

By NOEL POPE

(This extract is from "Full Chat", by Mr. Pope, published by Motor Racing Publications Ltd., London, and reproduced here with his permission)

Few people can know how sensation varies at different speeds. After two or three years on the tracks, lapping at 80 m.p.h. becomes boring; at 100 m.p.h. things are just interesting and call for some concentration; at 110 m.p.h. the run becomes hard work and exciting; but at 120, it really is hard labour with unrelenting concentration exacted all the way, giving you no time even to realise whether you are excited or just scared stiff.

You can remember it afterwards! Every thought and impression of that first record-breaking effort remains in my memory even now. I can still take you with me, as it were, and re-ride it in imagination.

At the end of the rolling lap, you open up and the acceleration startles you as the Brough leaps suddenly from 90 to 120 and you find it doing its level best to leave you behind. But you hang on grimly and use all your weight to bend it round the Fork.

On to the Members' Banking you roar and now the momentum seeks to swing you upwards, and up again . . . over the top. That makes you shift your weight urgently to the other side to keep down. Again and again the footrests scrape—and all the time the back wheel is prodging out.

Then on you go again, along the banking to the Members' Bridge, and under it. Here the wind comes up from the Finishing Straight with terrific force, as it often does even on ordinary days. It brings again that threat of forced flight over the top and you fight the wind to win your way down a foot or two.

Next the famous bump looms up, growing swiftly; and as you hurtle towards it, you pull the machine straight. It must face head-on dead in line for the Railway Straight or you will land the wrong way round after the leap. So you poise yourself on the footrests and make quite sure you have an even pull on each handlebar. The machine is still heeled over and you have a tendency to continue lugging harder on one side. But you must have that straight wheel for landing.

The greater your speed, the higher the

bump seems to stand up before you, and the swifter it grows. You take the leap. You live through a breathless split-second in mid-air, wondering if you will land square; then thrill with relief and delight as you feel the wheels touch and take ground faultlessly. That's over, at least!

But now you press on again for the Railway Straight, which, for real exhilaration, is to my mind the high spot of the dice. Here, with the "plot"—otherwise the machine—running somewhere up towards 160 miles per hour at the end, the scenery seems to leap at you. It no longer waits passively while you approach it.

As the plot is in a straight line, and no wresting match is demanded from you, this part can be really enjoyed, but all too soon it is over and another struggle begins. On the Byfleet Banking, speed has to be briskly reduced, for the "plot" again wants to disappear over the top. All the way round it is hard work holding it down. If you relax for a split-second the machine sweeps dangerously near the edge.

The time you will lose over the Fork and that lost on the Members' Banking has been made up in the dash down the Railway Straight, and now a speed of well over 120 must be maintained round the Byfleet to keep up the average.

Even at this speed, and although concentrating to keep on the track, the brain still takes in an amazing amount of detail. White faces peering over the fence by the aerodrome, people standing on the Byfleet Bridge—which always makes you duck your head—an aeroplane just landing, a photographer stationed on the top of the track, and, all the time, like a wall of death, the track unwinding before you.

Diving off the banking, then straightening up for the Fork, steering hard over to get round what now appears an acute right-hand bend, trying to take the chosen path that misses all the pot-holes at the Fork, going over to the inside of the track, and shutting off at the same time—this patch really is all-in wrestling, and it is with a breath of relief that one feels the plot slow up on the hill. You relax

## THAT BROOKLANDS LAP RECORD (continued)

now. You run into the paddock. Stiffly, you dismount.

You have only done three miles, but you are quite out of breath, and as hot as the back tyre—which is too hot to touch! The Brough, smelling and making noises like a fried fish shop, retires behind a haze of smoke.

I made two attempts on the record in the rain on race days and had to pack at lap speeds of over 115 when there was no rear tyre adhesion at all. It was also so cold on one occasion that the induction pipe to the rear pot froze up, resulting in the piston picking up on the cylinder.

Finally, I had George Reynolds down on the first reasonable day to time my

effort officially. It was a day far from perfect, with high gusty wind and wet patches all over the track. On the first attempt the revs. suddenly went sky high as I was going over the fork, so I came in. Nothing could be found wrong and the only explanation we could think of was that the rear tyre had suddenly lost adhesion in a wet patch when the machine was well laid over. By now I was becoming extremely annoyed and throwing caution to the winds, completed a record lap at 124.51 which I am certain could have been much higher in ideal conditions. But I little knew as I contemplated what my maximum lap could be—that in fact this was my final effort and never was I to make another attempt on the Brooklands record.

## DOUBLE KNOCKER'S BRIEFS (continued)

Just rejoined the Club after a sojourn broad for a couple of years is **M. Henderson**. He will be remembered as the builder of the Norvel, which he sold to **Dan Shorey** who has subsequently done very well with it. Just out of the country for a spell is **Harry Worgan**, at present serving with H.M. Forces in Cyprus. Motor cycling, he tells me, is non-existent out there just now, but he contrives to keep up-to-date through the Press.

**Ken Smith** of Derby, whom we saw in the last two years on that in-

triguing 250 Hunter-Velocette, has gone up one class by acquiring a 350 Gold Star.

At the time of writing there are some 154 entries in for Silverstone, comprising fifty-nine in the Club handicap, forty-seven 350s, thirty-four 500s, fifteen 125s, twenty-three 250s and nine sidecars. By the time you read this, of course, those numbers will have increased considerably and I shouldn't be surprised if the first-named event is over-subscribed. If you want to ride, don't delay entering.

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## BILL JARMAN'S COLUMN

**B**AD news travels fast, they say, but it was nice to receive so many inquiries about my recent spell in hospital. I am pleased to report good progress and confirm that football can be a really highly dangerous game. The X-rays and medicos are unanimous on this point, so we might consider giving the football clubs a few of our danger notices, suitably amended of course.

\* \* \*

Did you read the Secretary's article on some of the more costly aspects of big race meetings? If not, I suggest you get out the February issue and really study the money involved. Every word is true and Guy Tremlett went to a lot of trouble to marshal all those facts into a readable contribution. Study our balance sheet at the same time and you will appreciate why we are a Limited Company, as well as a Club.

\* \* \*

Did you notice that Bob Geeson's Mark 1 R.E.G. is still crackling along quite quickly in Australia? It must be the sunshine and good maintenance in that part of the world. Having watched the "Aussies" in the Isle of Man, I know how carefully they prepare their racing ironmongery. The performance of the Walsh Bantams also make one sit up and take heed. Yes, I know about fancy fuels but they still have to possess the ability to use them.

\* \* \*

Whilst on the subject of alcoholic fuels, did you notice our old pal Maurice Brierley had joined in the fray? He made some good points about the dangers of playing with poisonous liquids and I'm glad he did so because there are many chaps who do not know how to handle dangerous things. Any of the old "Brooklands Brigade" will discuss the pros and cons, if you ask them.

\* \* \*

As far as the twin-cylinder half-litre class is concerned, it is almost certain we shall see a few of the Munich products in action this year.

Most of them will have a sidecar attached but there will be one or two solos on the Leader Boards all over Europe.

\* \* \*

At home, we shall see the boys scrapping with "Ajays," Matchlesses and Nortons plus a few specials which are due out on "Silverstone Saturday." One or two of these home-made efforts are very good indeed, but their modest owners don't like to talk about their machinery. Most of them say very simply, "Wait and see!" just like a politician on polling day. One fine day I should like to see a special event laid on for the backroom boys, riding their own productions.

\* \* \*

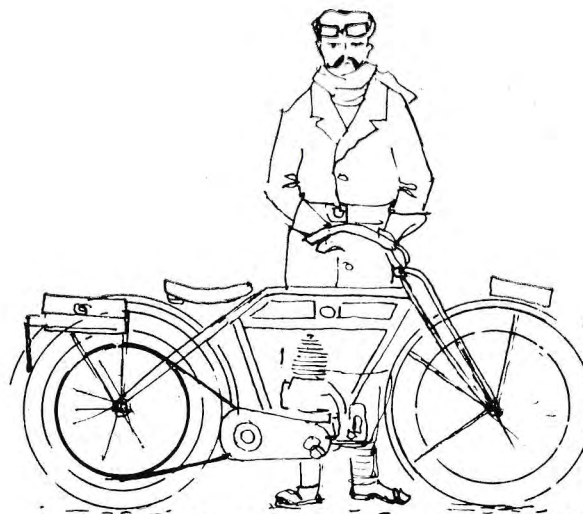
I saw Benny Rood recently. He is as keen as ever and still experimenting with 250's and 350's which will be raced by Messrs. Minihan and Tanner. Benny has a theory that heavy flywheels are not necessary and is prepared to prove it by producing the motor. We shall be watching the Rood engines this year with even greater attention. Remember the 250 Velo? Circa 1951/2!

\* \* \*

The last time I remember a Jap (man not engine) in the T.T. was a chap called Tada in the 1930 Junior. This year we might have two Japs in the Lightweight Race. They will ride Honda machines and as the factory possess its own racing circuit, we can expect a good show from these double-knocker, six-speed jobs, if the riders learn the course properly.

\* \* \*

Now that the season is about to commence, a few words on the subject of regulations will not be out of place. Do you merely read them or study them? Take a tip from an old-timer and quietly sit down, read, mark, learn and remember the important things. You will find that all the regulations sent out by the B.M.C.R.C. are fair and reasonable. They can easily be followed and enforced. You pay your fees, sign your name and enter into a contract. Believe me, it's the best way.



## UNSPRUNG HEROES . . .

Fifty years ago, when the B.M.C.R.C. was formed, motor-cycling was very much a sport for those with strong hearts and muscles to match. Since then of course, Girling dampers have been invented, and while this has not made the game less exciting, it has made it rather more comfortable and safer too.

The constant incentive of men of speed in the motor cycling world, has played a large part in the evolution of Girling dampers, the finest made today.

To all members of Bemsee, past and present, we send our congratulations, and very best wishes for smooth riding.



# GIRLING

## SUSPENSION UNITS

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## MUTUAL AID

**For sale:** 250 c.c. J.A.P. Special; alloy motor with hairpin springs, square head, Alfin barrel; c/r Albion gearbox; teles; swinging arm rear; alloy rims; Feridax seat; new tyres and chains; 95 m.p.h. "naked"; £70 o.n.o. Fibre-glass racing dolphin; £12.—E. Hardcastle, 104 Farmilo Road, Walthamstow, E.17.

**For sale:** much soughtafter and most reliable G45 Matchless, at last for sale.

At the moment, after a winter overhaul (with receipts!) it has 10.5:1 pistons, new valves and springs, new chains and tyres, quite apart from a minute and thorough check of everything including carbs. and mag. The motor is on "green" oil and is a genuine one-push starter. Full history if desired.

Offered in showroom condition, this late, modified 1956 G45 is going at £295; H.P. arranged.—B. R. Cortvriend, The Nook, Minchington, Nr. Blandford, Dorset.

**For sale:** 1956 (Xmas) 500 c.c. Manx Norton with '58 mods; Peel fairing, spare sprockets, etc.; all in first-class condition; or engine/gearbox of above; or Manx frame, forks,

etc., taken in part-exchange for complete bicycle.—Tollit, Red House, Spetchley, Worcs.

**For sale:** two-piece leathers, 38" chest, height 5' 10"—£6-10-0; 20-tooth engine sprocket for late type 7R A.J.S., used once—£2-10-0.—V. L. Green, "Dundrod," 2 Bentleyfield Close, Higher Bebington, Wirral.

**For sale:** Set of close ratio gears for NSU "Max"—£15.—L. A. Janes, 81 Amberley Avenue, Bulkington, Warks.

**For sale:** 1958 (April) B.S.A. Super Rocket; 8,100 miles only; rev. counter; faster than average—ideal for production races or sprints; immaculate condition—£245 (terms arranged if necessary).—Vaughan, 3 Wilverley Crescent, New Malden, Surrey.

**Wanted:** 2 'bike trailer.—J. Bacon, "Bishopgarth," Heathside Road, Woking; or 'phone Farnborough (Hants.) 215.

**Services offered:** member R. Sheldon of 45 Gillett Street, Hessle Road, Hull, is looking for a sidecarist without a passenger, or a solo without a rider. Offers should be made direct, please.

## EVIDENCE IN CAMERA

OUR "staff" photographer Gordon Hicken has done it again! You will all be familiar with Gordon's brilliant racing action studies which frequently appear on the covers of "Bemsee", and during 1957 he won the best action racing shot in the Redditch Motor Cycle and Car Club's annual Amateur Photographic Competition; his prize being a free return cross-Channel air trip with vehicle, from Air Charter Ltd. Making use of this present, he took his A.J.S. across France and Switzerland into Italy during the September of that year and in

the course of the tour, visited the Italian Grand Prix at Monza where he secured some more action shots, albeit only from the public enclosures, as a pass for the track was not forthcoming.

For the 1958 Photographic Competition he has again won a free return cross-Channel air trip, three subscriptions to magazines, and seven cash prizes; having entered twenty-five photographs and won with eleven of them. Gordon is a very keen member of the Club and a great help to the Editor when illustrations are required. Good show, Gordon!

## A LATE GREETING

"I send you all my warm congratulations on attaining your Jubilee. May Bemsee continue to have all prosperity and success."

T. W. LOUGHBOROUGH.

*Whatever model you ride . . .*

**Always ask for**

**AVON**

*Whatever scooter you use . . .*

**Always ask for**

**AVON**

*Whatever outfit you choose . . .*

**Always ask for**

**AVON**

**the tyres that give you**

*higher mileage*  
**and safety**

**Avon congratulate**

**B.M.C.R.C.**

*on achieving its  
Golden Jubilee*



## GREETINGS

MESSAGES of greeting and congratulation have recently been arriving, to acknowledge the Club's Golden Jubilee. We take much pleasure in reproducing these and would thank the senders for their kind words and wishes.

"How the Golden Jubilee's follow one another! Not so very long ago it was that of the Auto-Cycle Union and in 1957 we had the Golden Jubilee T.T. Now in 1959 one of our premier clubs reaches its 50th birthday.

I send my hearty congratulations to 'Bemsee' and I would add very sincere wishes for the future prosperity of your Club. Its record is a proud one and if the up-and-coming younger end show the same enthusiasm for the Club's interests as their predecessors have done, and if they are as unselfish in serving those interests as your creators were, why then you are good for another fifty years—and more!! What your members will be riding in A.D. 2009 I cannot foretell, but that there will be racing (otherwise, as a nation, we shall be finished), and 'Bemsee' will be playing a leading rôle, I am sure."

NORMAN E. DIXON,  
Chairman, Auto-Cycle Union.

★ ★ ★

"I understand that this year is the Golden Jubilee of the British Motor Cycle Racing Club, and I would therefore like to take this opportunity, on behalf of the Federation Internationale Motocycliste, of congratulating your Club on its past achievements and of wishing you the very best of luck for the future.

I think every motor-cyclist knows how much the sport throughout the world owes to British motor-cycling and the part that your Club has played in building up this position is also well known.

This office is moving out of England to Geneva, which will be a more convenient situation for our international work, but this does not mean that our interest in your activities will diminish in any way, and I personally look forward to meeting you and your members on many occasions in the future. With best wishes to you all."

F. D. GOODE,  
Secretary General, F.I.M.

★ ★ ★

"I am very delighted to be given the opportunity to say, congratulations to the oldest and biggest racing club in the world on its first 50 years completed. Keep the crossed flags flying!"

CYRIL QUANTRILL,  
Editor, Motorcycle News.

★ ★ ★

"Congratulations on the Golden Jubilee. 'Bemsee' has done more for motor-cycle racing than any other club in the world, and many racing stars of the last fifty years had their first 'go' in a 'Bemsee' event. Long may our Club continue."

G. S. DAVISON,  
Editor, T.T. Special.

★ ★ ★

"Congratulations to the Club on its Golden Jubilee. I am proud that it has made such great progress and think it is due to the possession of a jolly fine lot of chaps who look after our affairs and the continuance of the spirit of Bemsee."

C. A. LEWIS,  
Vice-President.

★ ★ ★

"Congratulations to the Club on reaching its Jubilee. May it be an even more successful year than the others."

E. C. THOMAS.

★ ★ ★

"As one who, in Bemsee's earlier days, had some small share in its organization, it gives me the greatest pleasure and personal satisfaction to be able to send my congratulations on its achieving its Golden Jubilee.

It has always been in the forefront in promoting efficiently, and in the most sporting manner, one of the greatest and most manly sports in the world. Long may it so continue."

ARNOLD W. PHILLIPS.

★ ★ ★

"On the occasion of the British Motor Cycle Racing Club's Golden Jubilee, please accept my congratulations and best wishes for the future.

May the Club continue to prosper, and carry on the good work of promoting and fostering Racing, and budding 'Racers', for ever!"

GEOFF DUKE.

(Continued on page 51)

## GREETINGS (continued from page 46)

"I must congratulate the Club on reaching its Golden Jubilee and I am sure that this is going to be quite a memorable year."

I. G. DAVIES,  
Publicity Manager,  
Triumph Engineering Co. Ltd.

★ ★ ★

"A birthday—especially a 50th birthday—calls for a horoscope! Soothsayer Holliday, peering into the dark depths of his crystal tankard, sees a highly significant date; it is April 18th. It is the day upon which motorcyclists everywhere come under the spell of the Sign of the Crossed Flags, influenced strongly by the lucky colour of the 'Green 'Un', and their talisman gem is a silver stone. All of which means that the third Saturday in the fourth month of the 50th year—known as 'Silverstone Saturday'—will be indeed a favourable one for travellers, and particularly those who travel fast. The stars will shine all day and, at eventide, many will bask in the Sun Inn, of the 50th Happiness.

May the Club's first meeting in its Golden Year be the harbinger of a second half-century of successful sport. . . . The Oracle has spoken; further readings by appointment."

R. R. HOLLIDAY,  
Editor, "Motor Cycling".

★ ★ ★

"Congratulations to Bemsee on the historic occasion of the Club's Golden Jubilee. There could be no more fitting tribute to the success of the 1909 founders of the B.M.C.R.C. fortunes than the 1959 record membership. Trees may be growing through the banking of our beloved Brooklands and a monument erected beside the Railway Straight in memory of times which can never return, but the spirit of those far-off happy days vapourizes as potently as ever, undiluted by despondency and despair. Indeed, the Club's greatest hour came in 1947 when, with the realization that our fortress had fallen, the rearguard refused to lower the 'Crossed Jacks' and kept them bravely flying in the non-territorial breeze with such magnificent results. Those founder-members who survive may well feel proud of the tradition they established fifty years ago."

GRAHAM WALKER,  
Director, Montagu Motor Museum.

"As I expect others will dwell on the illustrious past of Bemsee, I should like to stress the present. The Club maintains a close fellowship among its members, although its size could readily make it simply an organization. That I regard as one of its outstanding achievements. Another is that the hallmark of a first-class road-race meeting is the stamp of Bemsee organization, and it would not be going too far to say that the hallmark of an enthusiastic racing man is the Bemsee badge. Finally, we all know that without the Club the racing game in Britain would be nothing like so healthy as it is today. We can safely assume that the future is equally bright while the Club continues to hold its remarkable position. Good luck for the next 50 years."

H. W. LOUIS,  
Editor, "The Motor Cycle."

★ ★ ★

"Sincere congratulations on Bemsee's Golden Jubilee! Thank you for many wonderful days of racing, and all good wishes for the future."

PAMELA BAKER,  
Hon. General Secretary,  
West Bromwich M.C. & C.C.

★ ★ ★

"On behalf of our Company, I do ask you to accept our very best congratulations."

J. M. WEST,  
Director, Associated Motor Cycles Ltd.

★ ★ ★

"The mere mention of Bemsee's Jubilee causes thoughts to well up. Of happy days on many circuits and especially, for the more elderly, of happy days on Brooklands Track and days and nights in the tuning sheds—and in the club-room. Nostalgia? Agreed, but there has never been a club the like of Bemsee. And can there be any other that has given so much pleasure or provided so much joyous sport? Thank goodness it survived the war and the loss of its home. Full marks, Bemsee—to those who started the Club, those who have run it, those who tune and those who ride!"

ARTHUR B. BOURNE, C.I.Mech.E.,  
Director, Iliffe & Sons Ltd.  
Editor, "The Motor Cycle" 1928-1951.

★ ★ ★



## COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Brief Biographies of your present Committee



**A. SQUILLARIO**

**I**T is just forty years since "Squirrel" was presented with his first motor cycle—a W.D. Triumph purchased by his father from the firm of Longman Bros. at Acton. It was a foregone conclusion that he should take an interest in competition work, because the late Frank Longman, who taught him to ride, was at the start of his very successful career, and very enthusiastic about the racing game.

After a period at Douglas Motors he joined Frank Longman as salesman, mechanic and sidecar passenger, and rode in speed trials, hill climbs and reliability events in his spare time!

First joined B.M.C.R.C. in 1923, and worked at Brooklands until 1926 when he had a serious accident which curtailed his solo riding. However, he continued in trials with 1,000 c.c. McEvoy-J.A.P. and sidecar until 1931 when he devoted his attention to sports cars and drove with some success in trials and rallies. Only active competitive interest nowadays is an occasional jaunt to Brighton in his

*Continued on page 62*



**I. F. TELFER**

**A**GED 31, Ian Telfer works as an Estimating Draughtsman in the Chief Mechanical Engineer's Department of the British Transport Commission. He has served on the Committee for some years and is one of its youngest members.

I.F.T. 250 "Specials" have been seen at many short-circuit meetings since 1948, when Ian started racing. He has always taken a keen interest in the lightweight class and has modified a handful of Velocette and Norton models.

He started racing by "jumping in at the deep end" when he was entered in the 1948 Clubman's T.T. by the West Middlesex Amateur M.C.C. and rode a 1939 M.O.V. Velocette. Green and inexperienced, he spent two sleepless weeks digging the gremlins out of the machine, only to retire on the second lap. After his somewhat financially-embarrassing introduction to the sport, he decided that his machinery was more suitable for smaller events! He raced his Velocette at most of the short circuits, but had little success, and in 1953 he

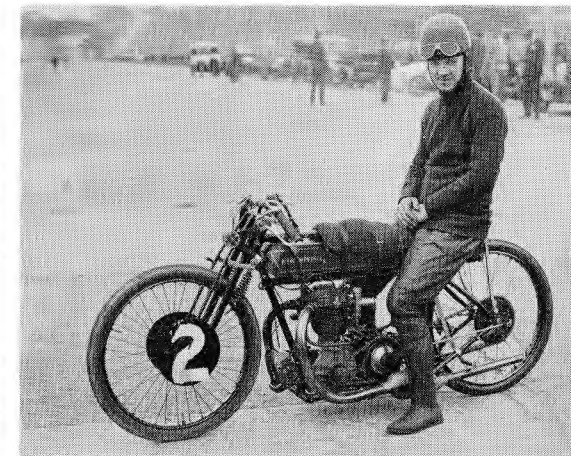
*Continued on page 57*

## A Photo Gallery of Famous Members



Harry Collier is shown here at Brooklands in 1909, with one of his racing Matchless, a 990 c.c. V-twin with rigid forks and coil ignition.

*Photo by Motor Cycle, London*



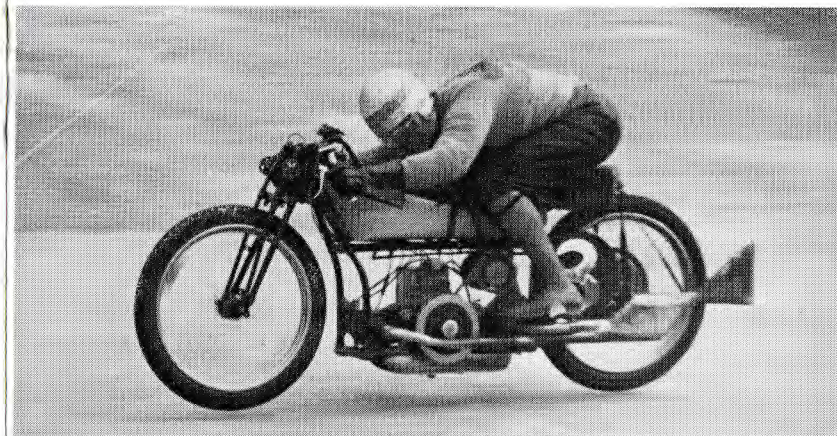
Bert le Vack poses with the 250 c.c. New Imperial. A shot taken in the late twenties at the Track.

*Photo by Motor Cycle, London*

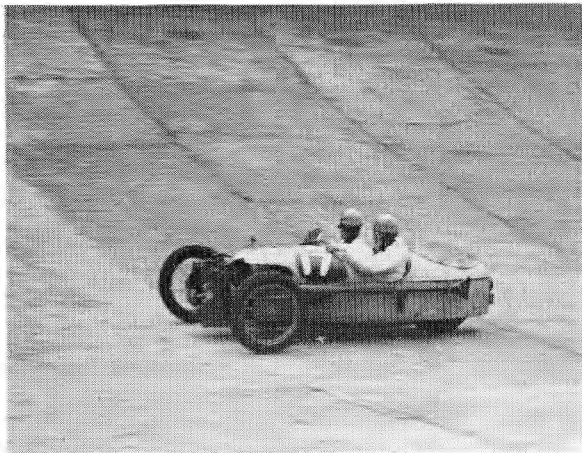
(BELOW)

Still a member though this shot was taken in 1932—C. T. Atkins (Douglas twin), who lapped at over 100 m.p.h. on this machine.

*Photo by Motor Cycle, London*

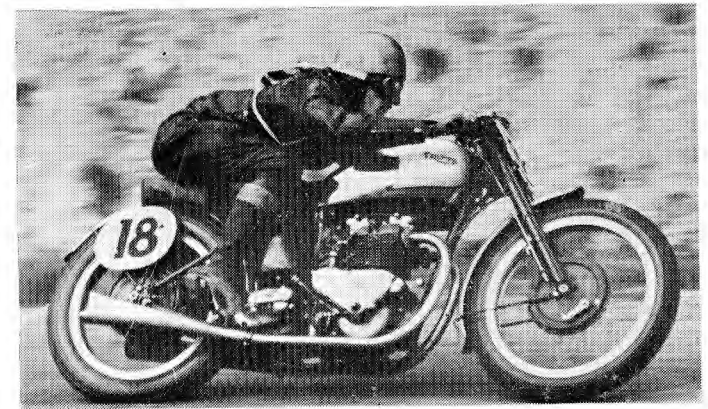






One of the famous three-wheelers—Clive Jones and Morgan at Brooklands. He lapped at over 100 in 1934.

*Photo by Motor Cycle, London*



A pre- and post-war member—the David Whitworth with his Grand Prix Triumph at Spa, 1948 'Belgian'.

*Photo by courtesy of Motor Cycle, London*

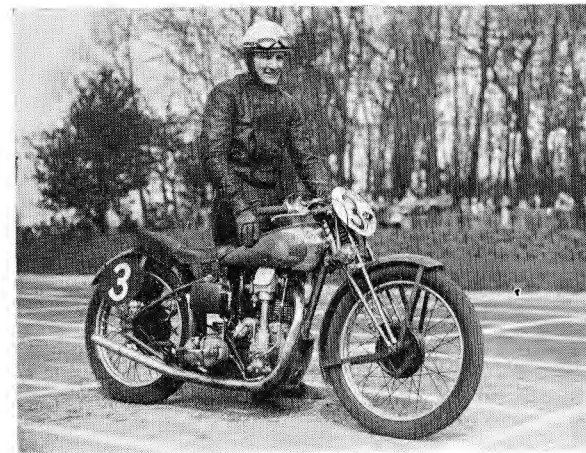
Your Chairman as he was over 25 years ago with "period" Norton. This was taken at a Syston Park meeting 1932.

*Photo by Motor Cycling*



Noel Pope, holder of the Brooklands motorcycle lap record.

*Photo by Motor Cycle, London*



Do you recognise him? Yes, it is Les Graham—a pre-war Donington shot with the work's 250 O.K. Supreme.

*Photo by courtesy of Motor Cycling*



For long connected in one way and another with Bemsee—Roland Pike with one of his astonishing little Ridges.



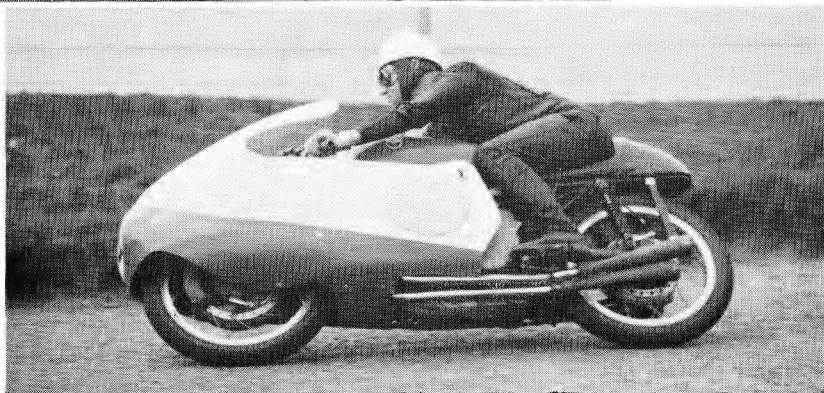




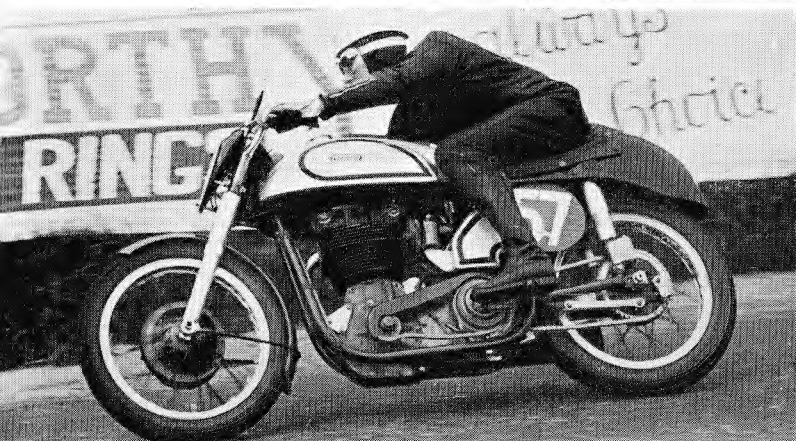
Our current double World Champion John Surtees with 500 M.V. at Silverstone.

*Photo by G. E. Hicken*

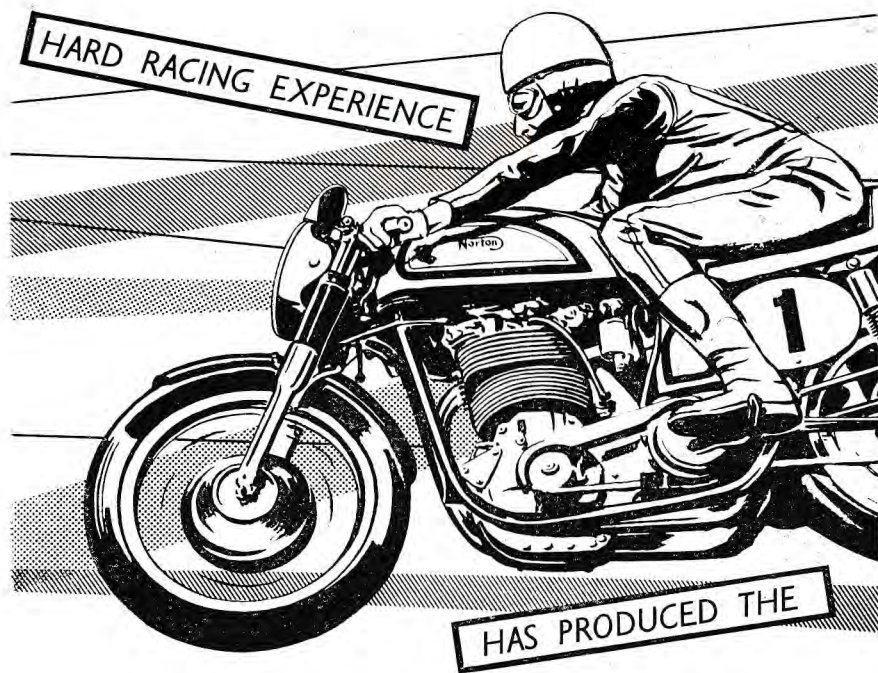
That 101.57 m.p.h. Island lap—Bob McIntyre and Gilera in the process of setting it up.



*Photo by G. E. Hicken*

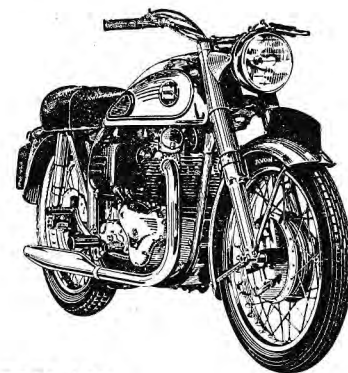


Needs no introduction! Geoff Duke winning his first Senior T.T. aboard a work's Norton. in 1950



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## AREA NEWS

### MIDLANDS

A. Squillario,

Shrewley Fields, Hatton, Nr. Warwick.

THE meeting arranged for 17th February at the 'Boot', Lapworth, was again hit by the elements. Fog descended fairly thickly on the locality and the prevailing epidemic of 'flu took its toll as well, amongst them your Area Organiser, 'Squirrel'. However, 15 members and friends eventually made the rendezvous and a good evening was spent nattering furiously and imbibing the odd drop of heart-warming liquid. Amongst those present on this occasion were Bill Goode, Les James, Peter McKnight and John Tremlett, from the Nuneaton area; Ralph Masson, from Sutton Coldfield; Andy Walczak, from Stratford; and Ken Payne, of a quartet from Birmingham. Secretary Guy Tremlett did make it this time and managed, with the aid of Andy Walczak, to find his way on to the main A34 for his drive back to London. Our last meeting this month will be at the 'Boot' on 10th March, usual time. I hope to see you all there.

### METROPOLITAN

Alan L. Huxley,

"Court End," Courthill Road,  
Chipstead, Surrey.

OUR last film show at the 'Prince of Wales Tavern' on the 17th February was well attended and some two hours of films were shown—the 1952 T.T. and 1954 Cadwell Park meeting with a couple of documentary films about our ocean-going tankers and a most enjoyable film about our native shores; many of us must have recognised some of the small havens in the south-west country. Fog once again turned up to try and dispel our enjoyment, but fortunately it was not as dense as on previous occasion.

Our next and last meeting at the 'Prince of Wales Tavern' for the present winter season will be on the 10th March, when we have our very good friend, Superintendent Ghanes, of the Metropolitan Police Bow District Garage. He will be giving us a talk on his experiences in this year's Monte Carlo Rally—we believe one of our members, "Dinger" Bell, who was one of the crew, will also be at the meeting and giving his views. It is hoped that lantern slides will be shown during the talk and we can look forward to a most enjoyable evening.

Don't forget: Tuesday, MARCH 10th, at 7.30 p.m., 'Prince of Wales Tavern', Drury Lane, London, W.C.

Enclosed with this month's copy of 'Bemsee' for all Metropolitan Area members will be entry forms for the TREASURE HUNT which will take place on the 22nd March. Friends of members are especially welcomed and extra entries may be made on the back of the entry forms. We had 88 members and friends sit down for tea at our last Sunday afternoon-out—let's see if we can make it 100 or more.

The racing season is almost on us and this makes us realise that our winter season has come to a close. We hope we have organised the 'get-togethers' to your satisfaction. We would appreciate a note from you in the coming weeks letting us have your views on what you, as members of the Club in the Metropolitan Area, would like in the form of entertainment at our 'get-togethers' next winter.

Good luck and lots of prize-winning lolly in the coming racing season.

### YORKSHIRE

N. A. Bedford,

1 Lowther Terrace, Swillington Common,  
Leeds.

I WAS bitterly disappointed with the turn-up for the Film Show, and the Noggin and Natter, the grand total of the attendance being *one*, who joined me at the Film Show. Whilst at the *Victoria* I sipped a solitary cider in silence.

On Tuesday, 10th March, our Secretary will be in Leeds and I have arranged a meeting at the 'Victoria' (behind the Town Hall), 7.30 p.m. onwards. All members in the area have been notified and I hope we shall see a better attendance than usual. I have also made arrangements with the Yorkshire Centre of B.A.R.C. for our members to attend the Film Shows at the Liberal Club, Bramley, Leeds 13, on March 12th and 19th.

### PROPOSED NORTHAMPTONSHIRE AREA

A. F. Mills,

Express Dry Cleaning Works,  
St. Crispin's Trading Estate,  
Wellingborough Road, Rushden.

AS a result of talks with the Secretary, I am arranging a social evening for those members who live within a 30  
(Continued on page 56)



**FIRST** for selection—King's have over 5,000 new and slightly used bikes for you to choose from. Every make, every model, lightweights, twins, mopeds, scooters—you can't help finding just the bike you want.

**FIRST** for terms. The minimum deposit and the maximum period of repayment are yours for the asking. No guarantors, no enquiries, no fuss or formality.

• **FIRST** for service. Wherever you go there's a King's branch to provide on-the-spot service. • Full stocks of spares are available and all repairs are carried out by skilled, factory-trained mechanics. •

## 15 NATION-WIDE BRANCHES TO SERVE AND SERVICE YOU . . .

**Oxford** P.O. Box No. 9, New Road  
**Manchester** 770, Chester Road  
**Birmingham** 18/20, Bristol Street  
**Wolverhampton** 1, Birmingham Road  
**Halifax** 25, Horton Street  
**Hastings** Norman Road, St. Leonards  
**Glasgow** 55, Hamilton Road, Tollcross  
**Blackburn** 25, Penny Street

**Leicester** Belgrave Gate  
**Workshop** Carlton Road  
**Plymouth** Wolsley Road, Milehouse  
**Bristol** Stokes Croft  
**Heanor** 34, Market Street  
**Steafoad** 30, Boston Road  
**Luton** Park Street



**AREA NEWS** (continued)

miles radius of Rushden. All these members already know about this and I would like to extend a cordial welcome to all members to come and visit us on this occasion.

The date is Friday March 6th, and the venue the *Queen Victoria Hotel*, Rushden (next door to the railway station on the main A6), at 7.30 p.m. Rushden is within easy reach of Northampton, Wellesborough, Kettering, Peterborough, Bedford and even Luton, Dunstable and Brackley. Refreshments will be laid on, both solid and liquid. Harold Daniell, "Squirrel", Bill Huxley and Guy Tremlett have all promised to be there to meet you and to discuss such matters as you might wish to raise. I do hope to see a really large turn-out of members. Depending upon the success of this meeting I can judge the call for a regular series of such meetings in the 1959/1960 "closed" season.

**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**  
Miss Theresa Wallach,  
2667/9 East 75th Street, Chicago 49,  
Illinois.

NOW that the rush and the scramble of the seasonal festivities has passed, this is the time to send you Greetings and Best Wishes for Bemsee, for the coming season. As usual, I welcome the arrival of the Journal and only wish I could have walked up to your Stand at the Show, or popped in to the dinner.

Things at this end are going along

well. During the summer I am too busy to do the extra things, such as this, namely settling down to write you a news note. During the winter, things are quiet and with the exception of ice racing, there is little to write about, anyway.

During the summer I tried to organise a Grand Prix event in this area. I don't think they are quite ready for that here, yet. No one can do much without material to work with and there just isn't enough motorcycle understanding to get anything done. In California it is different. It is coming. Slowly. The manufacturers are doing a fine job of offering machines to the public, which must surely soon appeal to the layman.

Already there is talk of Daytona and that, as we all know, heralds the opening of the new season. It will be a speed-week. Starting on the Saturday morning of February 28th, there will be two events: A trial in the morning and a gymkhana in the afternoon. Next day: Lightweight road-race. Next day: Beach Sprints (a.m.) and opening of the 'Show' (p.m.) (with apologies to Earls Court). Next day: Beach Sprints (a.m.), Hill-climb (a.m.), Scramble (p.m.) and the Show (every p.m.). Throughout the week there will be an Enduro run, Parade, Barbecue, etc., and finally, the National Amateur 100 miles race on Saturday, March 7th, and the 200 miles Expert race on Sunday, 8th.

With very best wishes and "Hello" to old friends.

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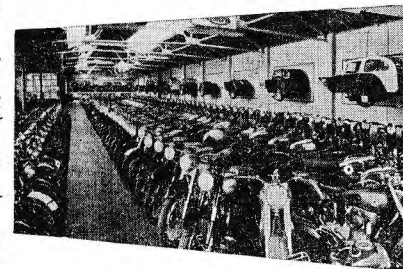
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**SPRINT NEWS**

THE Club has received an invitation from the Vintage M.C.C. to compete in its Witchford Sprint Meeting on Sunday, April 12th. Witchford is 440 yards long with a good surface. It is some two miles south-west of Ely. Regulations and entry forms will be available very shortly from Mr. J. Clarke of 11 Lulworth Court, Curzon Crescent, Willesden, London, N.W.10. Those interested should contact Mr. Clarke and *not* the Office.

Another new sprint to which the Club has also been invited is that organised by the North-East London M.C.C. at Stapleford Tawney aerodrome on Saturday, May 9th. From the preliminary details supplied it seems as if this will be an interesting course of some 1,000 yards, by no means straight and slightly uphill.

Stapleford Tawney is near Abridge in Essex. Further details and regulations when these are available can be obtained from Mr. H. Clenshaw of 51 Graham Road, South Tottenham, N.15.

The next meeting of the National Sprint Association will be held at "The Prince of Wales," Drury Lane, W.C.2, on Thursday, March 19th. The Association has recently been presented with most intriguing awards in the shape of silver stars, which will be presented to those riders who achieve a standing kilo. at Brighton of 100 m.p.h. or more.

Regulations for the first Club sprint at Long Marston will be available, all being well, at the beginning of May. Further details will be published in a future issue.

**I. F. TELFER** (continued)

bought a 1950 350 c.c. Norton which he cut down to 250 c.c. and built into a Featherbed frame.

Ian has had a few modest successes with the Norton: he came in 4th at the July, 1955, meeting at Scarborough and was 2nd to Cecil Sandford at the International meeting the following September. He was first in the 250 race at Thruxton in April,

1956, and came 3rd in the handicap in the "North-West 200" the next year.

He confesses that he is really more interested in the design and construction of machines, and it has given him great pleasure, on different occasions, to lend his bike to some of the well-known riders—Phil Carter, the late John Clark, Cecil Sandford, Terry Shepherd and John Surtees.



## EDITOR'S CORRESPONDENCE

(The opinions expressed in readers' letters are not necessarily endorsed by the Editor or Club.)

(Further letters appear this month about the relative merits of alcohol and petrol fuels. The following paragraph was drawn to our attention by Mr. Baragwanath and is an extract from the "Motor Cycle" of 15th October, 1931.

"Curious to know just what could be done in the way of speed on 50/50 petrol benzole mixture, C. W. G. Lacey recently took out the 490 c.c. Norton, on which he gained the hour record, fitted a lower compression piston, filled up with the mixture and proceeded to lap Montlhery for an hour under official observation, clocking no less than 100.92 m.p.h. He put in one lap at just under 106 m.p.h.

**I** HAVE been following the correspondence about fuels for racing with some interest.

I think it is generally agreed by those that know anything about metallurgy and various fuels, that the best in power and reliability from an "iron" motor is obtained by using alcohol fuels.

The really impoverished rider-owner (and I know what impoverished means) usually has no alternative but to use a pre-war "iron" engine in his machine and is compelled by race regulations to take risks with his engine in order to run it on petrol.

It would appear that International racing has to respond to the dictates of the fuel companies, so that petrol-only regulations are understandable in that field, but I fail to see what grounds the organisers of the smaller meetings have for such dictatorship. Why can't we use whatever fuel we wish; and don't come back with that old talk about expense? If a rider can afford to pay up to £500 for a motor cycle which can be raced on petrol, then he can afford the small extra amount of dope required for the average length race, other than International Grands Prix and long races.

With reference to Mr. P. A. Edwards' remarks on the non-availability of alcohol fuels (February "Bemsee"), how does he explain the almost universal use of alcohol in grass-track racing which takes place in every corner of the British Isles?

I feel that the most refreshing aspect of sprinting is that the builder of the machine is governed by one

The engine (Lacey told me when I met him later) ran perfectly happily, showed no sign of overheating and collected only a very little carbon, which could be wiped off.

There was nothing 'special' about the fuel, which was bought in a Paris garage by the A.C.F. Altogether an interesting demonstration that the difference between 'dope' and ordinary fuel is not nearly as great as many people imagine."

We are indebted to the Editor of the "Motor Cycle" for permission to reprint this paragraph.)

basic regulation: the cubic capacity of the engine. It will probably horrify some of the regulation-minded people that we are allowed to use superchargers in this branch of the sport.

Finally, could somebody tell me what organisers do about the alcohol, benzole, "Flash," "Whiz" or "Zoom" which the fuel companies add, in unknown quantities, to their products obtainable from public pumps?

**Roger Willoughby.**

London, S.E.1.

**W**ITH reference to the letters from Mr. Brierley and Mr. Edwards in the February "Bemsee," the simple truth is that alcohol as a fuel constituent (not necessarily neat!) provides *at the same time* increased power and much cooler running than does petrol *at the same compression ratio*, thus removing the need for sodium-filled valves (currently costing over £20 a pair) and vast masses of heat-dissipating material characteristic of the so-called "standard" racing machines, one example of which at present costs £496-10-1. Alcohol therefore enables the relatively impetuous, but mechanically interested and capable, owner of a basically standard-type machine to obtain satisfactory racing engine performance, without the crippling first and maintenance costs, inseparable from (compulsory) petrol racing.

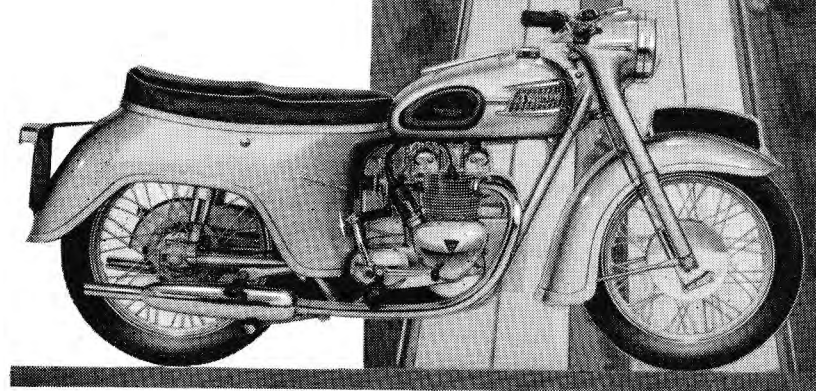
The increased fuel cost (about 2/6d. per gallon if used neat) is surely a matter for the rider/owner to decide for himself, and no business of or-

(Continued on page 60)

*..With a  
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TOMORROW*

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*Twenty one*

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EDITOR'S CORRESPONDENCE (continued)

ganisers or governing bodies. In any case it would obviously take many seasons racing to balance the difference in cost between a basically standard-type machine and the "standard" racer.

Incidentally the air/fuel ratio (by weight) of Methanol is 6.5 and not 4.5, as quoted by Mr. Brierley. Furthermore his red herring of toxicity is pointless, it being no greater hazard than that of Tetra ethyl lead in all petrol, and no sane person washes in, or drinks, fuel.

One would think from all the hulla-baloo that an attempt was being made to make the use of alcohol compulsory—nothing of the sort. My objection is to compulsion of any kind. After all, B.M.C.R.C. is a racing club, and within the limits of engine capacity, should encourage means of increasing performance.

How else can members re-acquire what was common knowledge prior to the war, particularly at Brooklands, but which owing to fuel dictation (compulsory petrol) and the predominance of road-type racing, is now largely lost?

L. W. E. Hartley.

London, S.E.18.

I HAVE followed the Teetotal v. Alcoholics correspondence for some time, with great interest. I am moved to write to you by the latest epistles of those two great prophets of the free fuel formula.

Both Dr. Bayley and Mr. Hartley have consistently pointed out that, say, a longstroke Manx on alcohol can hold a shortstroke on petrol, which is possibly true. Both have gone on from there, to state that alcohol will produce a poor man's paradise, by giving the private owner the chance to compete with the factory. This, however, is fundamentally incorrect, since it is based upon an absurdity.

Let us face it, gentlemen, it is unlikely that the factory and top riders will continue to run on petrol, in order to give the second-rank private owners a chance of beating them. On the contrary, they will make good use of the really extreme fuels, of such a nature that the expense of using them, and the cost of modifying the engine to make the best use of

them, will be infinitely greater than the cost of trying to compete on the level ground of petrol for everyone.

The premise on which Mr. Hartley and Dr. Bayley base their conclusions being basically false, it cannot give rise to reasonable hypothesis. Let me say at once, that I entirely agree with the idea that fuels, supercharging, etc., should be up to the individual, *but* do not let us be confused into thinking that this is either going to make racing cheaper, or give the second rank man a better chance of competing on level terms with the acknowledged expert, for it will not. The very reverse will be the case.

With any free formula, the cost of success must rise, because the number of avenues to be explored increases, and tuning, in any direction, costs money. The proof of the result of free formulae is not far to seek. I don't recall there being a great deal of competition for the German Mercedes and Auto-Unions from 1934 to 1939!

Really the suggestions of these gentlemen boil down to an idea that anybody good should have to give everybody else a start in a race. This of course is good Socialism, but very bad for racing. In any case it would be more effective just to ban Norton, A.J.S., Matchless and B.S.A. racing and sports machines, and to have a touring formula for 250 c.c. o.h.v. and two-stroke, and 500 c.c. s.v.

However, I am afraid the results of almost all formulae which don't ban the good riders finish the same way, with the good blokes in front, the rich chaps next, and the poor riders (like me) still bringing up the rear of the field.

As for mechanical reliability—this can be improved, if you are competing, on free fuel, against the field on petrol. However, if all of you were on free fuel, the engine is more highly tuned, to take advantage of the peculiarities of your mixture, and you cannot expect to have any greater reliability. It may be true that, using alcohol, the valves can be cooled more than they can on petrol, and thus you will not risk dropping them quite so often. To balance this, the compression-ratio will be increased, and the power output will be raised.

*Continued on page 62*

1909-1959

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*Golden Jubilee*



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Thus you are increasing the loads carried by your con-rods, bearings, crank-pin and drive shafts. Generally speaking, of the engines I've seen, it has been cheaper to drop valves than wreck the bottom end. I saw several thoroughly spoilt engines last year, as a result of con-rods getting bored with their rates of pay, or something, and going on strike.

Please, gentlemen, unless you have some magic formula which increases the power, increases the reliability, costs less than petrol, is more economical (in all cases, considering it in competition with itself, not with petrol); could we have some hush on this subject. However, if you have this formula, then for goodness sake let's have it, because I have been praying for it for years.

Just one more thing. Methanol (which is a simple alcohol) costs around 8/6d. per gallon and you get, perhaps, half as many miles per gallon. However, if you only use Methanol, you are a juggins, because you can get much more power by using nitro-methane, nitro-benzine, and a whole lot of other expensive fuels, which are inclined to knock your engine about rather a lot. So if you want your racing subsidised at all, you'll stay on petrol, and get some free, instead of paying for it yourself.

Jon Tollitt.

Spetchley, Worcs.

YES, dear friends, it's good-bye to you all! In a few days I am leaving for the U.S.A. where I will stay in the motor cycle trade and where I will never forget the interests of the British Motor Cyce Industry and also my many friends here in this wonderful and free country, which for a couple of years has been my real

A. SQUILLARIO (continued)

1904 Darracq.

Now lives in the village of Little Shrewley near Warwick and has an engineering works in Coventry amongst other business interests in the North of England. In addition to being a Director of the Company and

home. It's difficult for me to express my feelings because I will miss all the fine sportsmen and technicians who made my stay such a great pleasure, and I will also miss the British countryside, many British customs and all the other wonderful citizens who became my friends.

"Love also your enemies" and that means the two gentlemen—Messrs. Bayley and Hartley, the writers of the two letters which appeared in the Correspondence columns of the January, 1959, issue. Fortunately I don't leave any other "enemies" in England and it is therefore not difficult for me to show my goodwill towards these two men who used some not very nice words towards me. They are so short of suitable technical and practical terms with which to better my opinions about alcohol fuel that they found no other way than to use expressions which prove their lack of practical knowledge of the whole matter.

I always think, however, that England can be very proud to have men who, under all circumstances, are prepared to express openly their different opinions . . . even if these are regarded as jokes or are a proof of a limited knowledge. I personally regard Dr. Bayley as a very experienced man who owned, and still owns, many different machines. When I am reading his "Alcohol" opinions, I think that he enjoys immensely to be different, without really thinking that other experts are taking his views seriously.

I will work for "Bemsee," if circumstances permit, from my new home in the U.S.A., and wish you all a very successful racing season. God bless you all!  
Coventry.

Erwin Tragatsch.

a Committee member he is Vice-Chairman of the Club and the Area Organiser for the Midlands. For several years now he has been a prominent figure at Club race meetings as a Scrutineer and, latterly, as Admission Controller and a Steward.

THE RACING I NEVER FORGET!

By ERWIN TRAGATSCH

IT was my first visit to Brooklands, and in fact it was the first race meeting I ever saw in England. I was then (1926) on a short visit to London and it was a pure coincidence that one of my relatives took me down to Weybridge. Although a very young foreigner, I had known most of England's famous racing men by name and it was a great occasion for me to be able to watch them in action.

Today, after nearly 33 years, I can only say that I would never have missed this meeting, as I saw there many of the great riders of that period—the golden days of Brooklands! At the top of them, Joe S. Wright, who rode on that occasion a Zenith-Jap designed by the late Freddy Barnes. It was on that day Joe put up four new records and reached a speed of 108 m.p.h.—a speed which was equalled by yet another rider on a Zenith, O. M. Baldwin, better known as Capt. Baldwin. Today, Joe Wright, who soon afterwards became the fastest man in the world on two wheels, still rides his big Vincent, while poor O. M. Baldwin (who at that period was also connected with the manufacture of the "Burney" motor-cycles) lost his life during the war, when he was fatally injured in a collision with a horse at Cheltenham. What a tragedy for a man who broke record after record on a motorcycle!

Two other competitors at that memorable race meeting in April, 1926, I saw only a few weeks ago at the T.T. Riders' Luncheon in London. Their names, Vic Horsmann and A. R. ("Curly") Quinn. I mention them together because they have been always together! In those far-off years both worked for Triumphs in Coventry. Horsmann rode them not only in races, but designed and tuned them as well. Quinn was his first assistant, his superb mechanic, and a fine rider as well. Today, who doesn't know the firm of Horsmanns in Liverpool, and if you're asking for the manager of the motorcycle department—it's the always helpful A. R. Quinn! On that April day in 1926 Horsmann won the 500 c.c. Scratch race and Quinn the 350 c.c.—1,000 c.c. Handicap on Horsmann-tuned Triumph "P" models, which appeared in the following year as "Q" models—Q for Quinn!

Another competitor in that event with whom I had quite a lot to do in later years was the one and only George

William Patchett. Brought up in Nottingham with Brough-Superiors, he switched over to the opposition in 1926—McEvoy in Derby. Later, he went to F.N. in Belgium and became famous with the Czech Jawa's. His ambition in 1926 was to beat the Brough-Superiors with the McEvoy's wherever possible. Michael McEvoy, now Colonel Michael McEvoy (retd.), was the 'gaffer' and at Brooklands he rode his own creations as well. They used all kinds of proprietary engines, especially Blackburne, Anzani and Jap. Patchett was at that time one of the first men who fitted a supercharger to a 1,000 c.c. o.h.v. Jap-engined McEvoy. Michael McEvoy rode a 500 c.c. Jap-engined single, and another well-known rider on these machines was Mike Couper, who was not in that race and who today prefers Rolls-Royce and Bentley cars. He rode a 350 c.c. Blackburne-engined model, while another man who was financially and on the commercial and sporting side, connected with McEvoy's was the late C. A. C. Birkin, who lost his life during the 1927 T.T. practice on unclosed roads. He was a brother of the late Sir Henry Birkin, of car racing fame. Another man who had a soft spot for McEvoy's and other, especially Anzani-engined machines, and who rode them around the Isle of Man as well, is still a reader of "Bemsee" and sometimes a writer of letters to the Editor. I will call him "Vulpine", for he is well-known as a supporter of alcoholic fuel for races!

Now back to Brooklands 1926: back to the fantastically fast Blackburne-engined racers. The late, much mourned Wal Handley rode such a 250 c.c. engine in a Rex-Acme frame and nearly, needless to say, won the class as he liked. Behind him, C. W. ("Paddy") Johnston finished second with a similar engine in a Cotton frame and S. M. ("Sam") Greening, on a Zenith-Jap, was third. Poor Wal Handley; he lost his life during the war in an aeroplane accident, while Paddy Johnston is today connected more with four-legged horses than with two-wheeled ones. And Sam Greening? Yes, he is the man who designed and tuned those fast Jap engines for many years and rode them as well. Today, after the fusion of Jap with Villiers, he is still creating new designs at the

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## THE RACING I NEVER FORGET (continued)

Wolverhampton main factory. It is a pity that today we haven't Jap road-racing engines.

The 350 c.c. race was won by W. D. Marchant on a Chater-Lea. The engine was built at Blackburne's, but it wasn't a "real" o.h.v. Blackburne. It was Dougal Marchant's newest creation for Chater-Lea only: the 346 c.c. o.h.c., face cam, single. Woouoooooh!—This thing was fast! I was, and I am still of the opinion that the 350 c.c. o.h.c. Chater-Lea was one of the finest machines ever produced in this country. Even such a fast man as J. S. Worters on a Jap-engined Excelsior couldn't hold the "flying" Marchant; and it is directly paradox when one realises that this genial man who created such fast racing motorcycles is today connected with heavy lorries at the Dennis factory in Guildford. He was fantastic, and proved it again when creating the Motosacoche and F.N. racing machines in later years. Third in this race was a man who was much more accustomed to first places; C. W. G. Lacey! Yes, dear friends, it is the same "Bill" Lacey who today is tuning the successful racing machines for Mike Hailwood; the same man who soon afterwards shattered record after record and who became famous as the most pains-taking tuner in the world, whose machines always looked as if they had just left the factory. In this case his machine was a Coventry-built Grindlay-Peerless with a Jap engine. I am glad to say that the 'gaffer' of this once-famous firm, ex-Alderman A. R. Grindlay, is now 84 years old and lives at Allesley, near Coventry.

I don't think the Sunbeam machine on which P. M. Walters took the lead in the 500 c.c. Scratch race, with the very fast Jap engine it incorporated, was supplied by the factory, because although Marstons used Jap 'powerhouses' for a couple of years before, in 1926 they had definitely very fast engines of their own manufacture. At Brooklands in those years, many riders fitted proprietary units because of bigger bonuses they expected from the trade. A typical case was the machinery used by Claude Temple, whose Hagens-designed 1,000 c.c. o.h.c. V-twin Anzani engine was successively fitted into many different frames, including Montgomery, O.E.C., Temple-Spec., and others.

Walters on the Sunbeam-Jap was leading the 500 c.c. class, but Horsmann on

the Triumph was the eventual winner, with Chris. Staniland, on a Norton, in third position. Chris., later well-known also as a racing driver on Bugatti and Multi-Union cars, lost his life as a pilot. He was chief test-pilot for Faireys when he died during the war. Other competitors? Rex Judd rode a Douglas; today Rex has a big motorcycle business at Edgware Road, and although not riding any more, he is still very keen and enthusiastic. Originally he was a "pupil" of the great D. R. O'Donovan, the "Wizard of Oz", and I think Bert Denly was another one. He rode a Norton at Brooklands, while the late C. T. ("Count") Ashby was a non-starter on the P. & M. Three years afterwards he lost his life in the Isle of Man.

Brough-Superior, Zenith and McEvoy machines headed the 1,000 c.c. class. All three firms used Jap engines and the finishing order was Joe Wright, George Patchett and H. J. Knight—Zenith, McEvoy and another Zenith. Freddy Barnes was really "at home" at Brooklands with his fine frames. A disappointment in this race, for me, was the slow riding of Freddy Dixon, and it was long afterwards that I found out that his machine "used" 500 c.c. of the theoretical 1,000 c.c. available. She went on one cylinder! Poor Freddy, he was such a superb rider and an even better tuner. He was always in a good mood and always prepared to get some fun out of racing as well. Over two years ago he died in his bed, but those who saw him on his fast Indian, Harley-Davidson, Douglas, H. R. D., Brough-Superior and other machines will always remember this fine little man.

Events at Brooklands always included some Handicap races and G. W. Patchett, on the big McEvoy, won one. It was in this race that Freddy Dixon crashed, when a fork spindle broke; today such trouble is nearly unthinkable, but in 1926 one was never sure what would go wrong next. Fortunately, Freddy wasn't hurt much. Another Handicap race was for private owners. Riding a then brand new 350 c.c. o.h.c. Velocette, the fore-runner of the famous KTT's, A. P. Hamilton won it. That was just two months before Alec Bennett won the Junior T.T. on such a model, the first Junior T.T. won with an o.h.c. engine.

M. A. McEvoy, on his 500 c.c. model,

*Continued on page 65*

## THE RACING I NEVER FORGET (continued)

tried hard to take the lead from Quinn's Triumph in the 1,000 c.c. Handicap, but failed. Do you remember that McEvoy was afterwards connected with the Zoller supercharger distributed in the U.K.? During, and soon after, the war he was a big shot in the British Army in Germany, but I think his last connection with racing motorcycles was when Tim Reid rode a McEvoy-Zoller supercharged B.M.W. in the 1939 Senior T.T. At Brooklands in 1926 we also saw another new British motorcycle, the Wallis. G. L. Wallis was not like Granville Bradshaw, Cyril Pullin, Bert Tinkler or Alfred Scott, a man who dreamed of different engines; but of different frames. Fitted with a 350 c.c. Jap racing engine, his "Wallis" was very unorthodox, with a fork and steering layout not unsimilar to the Ner-a-car. At Brooklands this thing proved successful and the designer-rider finished second in the 350 c.c. Experts' Handicap, but when the late Syd Crabtree tried the same machine later, during practice for the T.T. in the Isle of Man, he found it quite difficult to take sharp

corners at high speeds. The next thing we heard from Wallis was when he modified Rudge Speedway frames and created the once-popular Comerford-Wallis dirt-track machines.

Sidecar races at Brooklands (they called them passenger races) were sometimes very exciting, especially as some sidecars looked more like a few welded tubes with a wheel than a real thing with a body. They definitely looked much more primitive than a modern racing sidecar! The race was another handicap, but many famous riders were non-starters. L. Milne, on a 350 c.c. Rex-Acme, won it, followed by two Nortons ridden by J. S. Preston and Chris. Staniland.

Those were the golden days at Brooklands; the days of the designer-tuner-rider. Today, unfortunately, these days are a thing of the past, but it is nice to know that interest in racing is greater than ever before, even without the good old concrete saucer!

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## IT CAN BE DONE!

By W. A. G. MARSH

AT our "Club Day" meeting at the Palace, a well-worn vintage Norton, wearing a modified grass-track tyre on its front wheel, clattered into the paddock, and was deposited in the swamp which was bay 191. Its rider, not a little surprised at having got thus far, and clad in leathers which might have been worn by the machine's first owner, was me.

Of course there was nothing wrong with the leathers, even beneath the patches, the holes were not too large, but if anyone assumed that my arm-chair style of riding was an effort to keep the rain from driving down the back of my neck they were wrong, the breeches were too tight. From the concern shown regarding my front tyre, I rapidly gained the impression that it was not considered the choice of champions. A ribbed cover would of course have been more suitable, but I had numerous reasons for not fitting one, all of them financial.

At the start of the vintage event, onlookers may have wondered why, after coaxing the model into life at the third desperate attempt, I went through the motions of battering the valve-gear to death with the heel of my boot. This was in fact my own particular version of affecting a gear

change, further enchanced by a mal-positioned gear lever. It isn't normally such a difficult task to swap cogs on a machine like mine; if you aren't a born acrobat it's just a question of taking up Yogi seriously, or, you could adjust the lever.

The race itself was, of course, great fun, but I do wish those boots had been waterproof. There was, as you know, some really excellent riding in this event, and you do not need reminding that I was in no way responsible. Modesty compels me to omit an account of my own position, lap by lap. If you don't already know that I was last by a good margin then there's no need for me to dwell on it. Suffice to say that I was not able to do full justice to my ancient banger which, besides transporting me between Kent and Hampshire many times during the past four months, also had to carry me more than a hundred miles to attend the meeting.

And finally, should you be considering the purchase of a vintage machine, remember there are three ways to look at it; from the front; from the back; and from the side. Even then you may have overlooked something—the other side.

## FIRST, SECOND, THIRD

A summary of members' recent successes

OUR members do not seem to have been very active in these last few weeks. At least insofar as number of successes are concerned. Perhaps the majority are too busy getting the model(s) ready for the coming season.

One member who has not been inactive has been **John Hempleman** who certainly has been making the most of the New Zealand summer. On January 10th he scored a 350/500 double at Ardmore, and two weeks later, in a weekend, he had increased this by two more double wins, at Whakatane and Tauranga. From which it would appear that there is quite a bit of racing in that part of the world. The next weekend there was not, evidently, a convenient road race, so he took to the grass with a Velocette and was 3rd in the Te Aroha grass track championship meeting. I expect he will have had a few more wins before he sails for this part of the world at the end of February.

In our icy land, and it has been cold, **Norman Storer** has continued to make his presence felt in various North Midland scrambles, riding the usual Greeves. At Bentley Springs near Wakefield on January 11th he won the 250 race and three weeks later at the Derby Pathfinders' scramble he was 2nd, twice. Riding a Royal Enfield, he tried a trial for a change and secured a first-class award in The Blacknell Bronze Trial. **Bill Slocombe** hasn't let the grass grow under his feet either and he was the best chair in the Bob Kingsley Trial on January 11th and runner-up in this class in the Colmore on February 7th. **John Surtees**, too, figured in the awards list in the Sidcup Sixty Trial winning a "first."

To complete this month's list, we return to road racing and to a warmer clime, South Africa. At Pietermaritzburg on January 18th **Mike Hailwood** scored two seconds in the 250 and 350 races, rather surprisingly being beaten in the former by one of the local chaps, on a Velo.

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(Black and Gold)

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(Dark Green and Club Crest)



## RACING MACHINE INSURANCE

By the Secretary

I AM pleased to be able to give details below of a scheme which, if sufficient interest is shown, could ease the risk of damaging your expensive racing machinery quite considerably. I hope that you will read this paragraph and not just dismiss it as a lot of dull nonsense about insurance. Most people would agree that considerable financial hardship can result if the model is damaged in a spill. By insuring it against accidental damage, this worry can be removed.

The scheme detailed below has been proposed by a member of the Club, M. J. G. Brown. It is to be arranged through a firm of insurance brokers, with Lloyd's.

(a) The policy covers all or any race meetings held under an A.C.U. and S.A.C.U. permit. An extra charge would be made for cover to extend to the Isle of Man and other races outside the British Isles. Official practice is included.

(b) The policy would only be available to fully paid-up members of B.M.C.R.C.

(c) The policy would cover all accidental damage suffered while racing (or practising at official times). It would not cover mechanical derangement, but would cover accidental damage following mechanical derangement (i.e. if the motor seized and you come off and bend the

machine, the damage sustained in the crash would be covered).

(d) All standard machines, British and foreign, would be covered. "Specials" would be subject to special quotation.

(e) The full value of the machine would have to be insured.

(f) The rates are as follows:—10% of the insured value of the machine when excluding the Isle of Man, and 15% of the insured value when including the Isle of Man. All policies would be subject to a £15 excess.

I think that the above is pretty well self-explanatory, but just to help you a little further, I will take a hypothetical case. We have a 1957 B.S.A. Gold Star valued at £250. Under the above scheme it would cost £25 to insure the machine for a full season of British racing, excluding the Island. If, say, twenty meetings are ridden in the cost per meeting works out at 25/-, which is not at all expensive. Assuming you had an accident resulting in £100 worth of damage to the "bike" you would bear the first £15 of this and the insurers would pay the balance.

Well, there it is. It is now entirely up to you. If sufficient response is forthcoming the matter can be progressed, but only if. It would be correct to say that insurance of this kind can never be very cheap. This is much the cheapest rate I have heard of.

## PRE-SEASON PRACTICE SESSION

### SILVERSTONE

ALL DAY — LOW COST — PERSONAL ACCIDENT INSURANCE

I AM pleased to be able to tell you that the Club will be holding a pre-season practice session at Silverstone on Wednesday, March 18th. The 1.64 mile "club" circuit will be used. I would ask you to note the following details:—

(i) Practice will take place from 09.45 a.m. until 12.30 p.m. and 1.30 p.m. until 5.00 p.m.

(ii) There will be as little restriction on practice as is possible, to enable you to make the most of the day. However, small capacity machines, i.e. 50's and 125's, will be allowed to practice with larger machines. In this event the periods will be split into several sessions of equal length. Only forty machines are allowed on the course at any one time.

(iii) A fee of 15/- per rider will be charged. This includes personal accident cover to the A-C.U.'s National scale of £250 death and proportionate benefits.

(iv) On arrival at Silverstone, you are asked to park in an orderly manner in the "inner" paddock, where you park for "Trophy Day", and then report to me to sign-on and pay your fee.

(v) You are asked to obey all flag signals and to take due note of the paddock exit gate marshals.

(vi) Only fully paid-up members of the Club can take part, i.e. those who have paid their 1959 subs.

Some fifty members have already intimated their wish to take part in this session. It would be of great assistance if those who wish to come, but have not yet let me know, would do so as soon as possible. Please note, too, that it will not be possible to arrange refreshments, so you are advised to bring your own "grub". Any queries, etc., to me, please, pronto!

THE SECRETARY.

And don't forget - - - SPRINTS!  
Witchford 12th April    Stapleford 9th May    Ramsgate 10th May

(See page 57)

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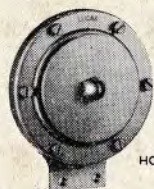
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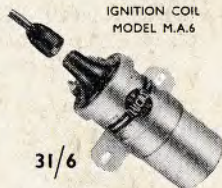
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