



Bemsee

THE JOURNAL OF THE
BRITISH MOTOR CYCLE RACING CLUB

Vol. 15 No. 1. JANUARY 1962



"A typical B.M.C.R.C. club race scene ; in this case Club Day, 1961. R. Masson and J. A. Jacques (Nortons) and J. B. Funnell (B.S.A.) fight it out at Copse Corner, Silverstone."

(Photo : G. E. Hicken)

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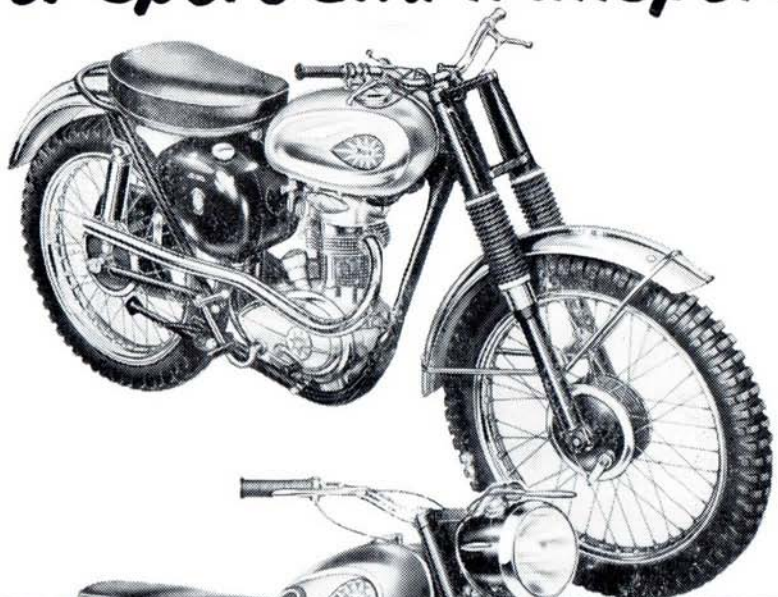
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EDITORIAL

A successful and happy 1962 to you all! It is our sincere hope that the New Year will be your best ever; be you rider, mechanic, official, spectator or even just hanger-on. The Club is busy preparing for you an excellent programme of events which includes no less than seven race meetings and three sprints. It will be our busiest season ever and it will mean a great deal of hard work by quite a few people to see that it is carried off in the usual Bemsee manner. To the circuit owners who have permitted us the use of their circuits, the B.R.D.C. at Silverstone, Oliver Sear at Snetterton and the London County Council at Crystal Palace, we owe a particularly big debt. Without their generosity it is quite true to say that there would be no B.M.C.R.C. today. Racing would then be poorer. We make one general plea to everyone. Please do whatever you have to do to the best of your ability and try to stick to the rules. Yes, we do mean riders as well!

Elsewhere in this issue you will find the customary calendar of racing events. We have tried to ensure that this is as accurate as possible. It is based on the list compiled by the A.C.U. Once again there would seem to be too few purely novice meetings. The Sport has to live, we know, and to live it has to have spectators and the spectators, or most of them, do not seem interested in anyone but the acknowledged stars. The calendar, in this respect, is not very well balanced. Indeed purely from the spectator angle there may well be too many meetings. Nonetheless we feel sure that nearly all of you who are racing Members will be riding whenever you can, wherever you can get an entry and as much as your finances will permit. We would urge you to try and ride on as many of the circuits as you can. There is nothing like different courses to teach you the various aspects of the racing game. We think it folly to concentrate on just one or two courses unless, of course, there are other factors which make this necessary. If there are, we suggest you might try and do something about them! And do not neglect the Northern meetings, you Southerners. A trip to Ouston or Charterhall or Beveridge Park or Thornaby will make a pleasant change. It is a little more than just another meeting too. The very distance makes it a bit more of a break.

In the world of car racing today they have a vintage movement just as we have. Alongside that has risen, fostered by the Vintage S.C.C., the post-Vintage thoroughbred movement. The idea being, of course, that there were some excellent motors made between 1931 and 1940, and especially racing cars. Why not a similar thing for the 'bike world'? One does not have to think very hard to realise that there is, or at least there should be, plenty of material. Of English makes alone we can immediately think of Rudge, Excelsior, Norton, Velocette, H.R.D., A.J.S., Sunbeam, O.K. Supreme and New Imperial. If we go further afield there are B.M.W., NSU and D.K.W. from Germany, Guzzi, Benelli and Bianchi from Italy, F.N. from Belgium, Husqvarna from Sweden and Jawa from Czechoslovakia. We refer, of course, to racing machinery. We do feel that it is time some organiser thought seriously of staging a p.v.t. race for racing motor cycles. Oh, we know there are difficulties; probably more so than with the cars. But we believe they could be overcome. Speaking for ourselves we would be delighted to see the blown Ajay

"four" fighting it out round Silverstone with a 1938 Manx (if it could keep up!), one of the 120° vee twin Guzzis, the M.L.G. supercharged B.M.W. and a 998 c.c. H.R.D. like the one on which "Ginger" Wood lapped Brooklands at 116 m.p.h. We hazard a guess such a sight would interest many and amaze even more. What about it, Madam Secretary? The Club has a reputation for being in the forefront of these things.

All being well the magazine will soon have a new look, insofar as its cover is concerned anyway. We felt it might not be a bad idea if a change was made. Apart from the Golden Jubilee issue in February 1959, the cover has not varied since the magazine was started some eleven or twelve years ago. This is perhaps the place to mention, too, that, with this month's issue, a new printer takes over the production of these pages. F. & J. Press Ltd., of Merstham, Surrey look after this side of things now and the work will be under the personal supervision of one of the principals, Frank Gillings; himself a very keen motor cyclist and member of the Club to boot. Let us hope we have a long and mutually successful liasion.

★ ★ ★ ★

MARGARET'S MEGAPHONE

Someone always misconstrues my most innocent remark and last month's Megaphone was no exception. In case any others got the wrong idea **John Surtees** is not engaged to **Peter Bettison**!

We were sorry that **John** was unable to be present at our Dinner—in my own case doubly so, because in the absence of our President, I was going to rope him in to present the trophies. His fiancée, Miss Burke, had the misfortune to have a recurrence of a back injury received some time ago in a car accident. I can sympathise with her, being in a similar state myself at the moment. We hope she's now fully recovered.

I'm sure that all the members who have had the good fortune to be on the receiving end of the parcels sent out by

(continued on page 17)

MEN and MACHINES—IV

I suppose the usual conception of the racing motor cyclist's first interest in the game is of a lad who first belted about the place on a push 'bike and later, usually before the legal age, commenced riding some old heap round a field; or the local backstreets—depending upon circumstance or place of domicile. I suspect that at least half today's racing men did NOT start that way. Be that as it may, however, Roy Robinson, the fourth subject in my series, certainly did not. Indeed he was attracted to racing fairly late, using the latter adjective relatively. After all they do say that racing a motor cycle is a young man's sport.

Roy is now 29, a stocky fellow, born and bred in London. Indeed the "Smoke" has been his home all his life, except that period during which he had to fulfil the

(continued overleaf)

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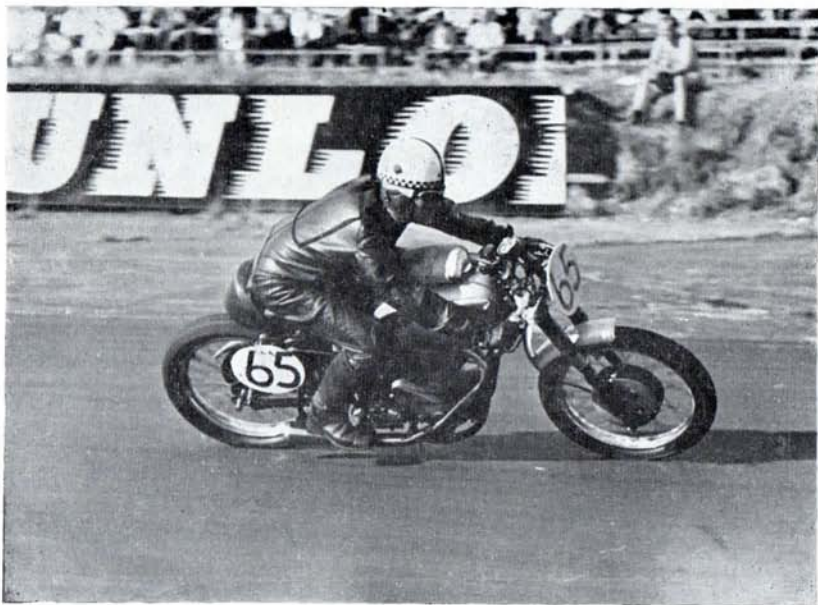
... and for the inexpert too!

dictates of National Service. That particular period of life incidentally, had more excitement than falls to most because he gravitated to Korea when the two halves of that country were tearing each other's throats out. It is perhaps less surprising that he was in the R.A.S.C. looking after motor vehicles. In fact it was not until he had been out of the Army for a few months that he first had the idea of getting a 'bike. He had no thought of racing then, of course; and indeed I don't think he was even interested. Anyway a 1953 (new) Speed Twin became his—from Munday's of Brixton. He very soon became keen on trials and then scrambles; so that, when the Triumph went, an ex-Geoff Ward (very much so, I believe) 350 scrambles Ariel followed it. This delightful contraption had a rigid frame and girders and Roy recalls that it only set him back £10 and he had a flying coat thrown in! He managed to write it off one fine day on one of Brixton's highways, but some insurance company paid up like lambs—a sum more than it was worth.

These two machines really formed Roy's apprenticeship period. At the end of 1954 he had ordered a 500 Gold Star Beesa (from Elite Motors of Tooting) and that device he intended to race if the opportunity came his way. Nonetheless

the Goldie had a good road mileage on the clock before it ever saw Brands Hatch as anything but a spectator's machine. Roy had had the machine 18 months before he raced it and during that time he used to go to a great many race meetings to watch; meetings which included the T.T. And then was born another ambition—to race on the Mountain course. However he had to get started and so he duly entered and was accepted for the last Brands meeting in 1958. He broke no records and set none of the experts by the ears, but at least he finished. However, at a subsequent practice session he managed to loose the lot on Paddock and bend it a great deal. Fortunately he was not much bent and he lost none of his enthusiasm or determination.

The following year, that is to say '59, saw the process of gaining experience continue by leaps and bounds. Roy was up against the trouble a great many novice riders encounter—that of getting entries accepted. As a result he only had about 7/8 rides; at Brands, the 'Palace, Aintree and Aberdare. By the 'Palace result he was quite bucked because he won his first prize money, the fine sum of £1! That was his only financial benefit from the season's racing, but it did not worry him unduly. He



'Early days on the short course at Brands with the Gold Star—quite standard, merely stripped.'

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1st

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1st

THRUXTON 500

1st, 3rd

250 cc W. GERMAN

MOTO CROSS G.P.

1st

EXPERTS GRAND NATIONAL

1st
Senior — 1st
Junior — 1st
Lightweight — 1st

250 cc BRITISH MOTO CROSS G.P.

1st

SHRUBLAND PARK SCRAMBLE

Grand National — 1st
Senior — 1st
Junior — 1st
Lightweight — 1st

DUTCH MOTO CROSS G.P.

1st

ULSTER GRAND PRIX

250 cc — 1st
350 cc — 2nd
500 cc — 3rd

LUXEMBOURG MOTO CROSS G.P.

1st

250 cc SWISS MOTO CROSS G.P.

1st

LEINSTER 200

250 cc — 1st, 2nd, 3rd
350 cc — 1st, 3rd
500 cc — 1st, 3rd

W. GERMAN MOTO CROSS GRAND PRIX

1st

250 cc SWEDISH MOTO CROSS

GRAND PRIX

1st

CADWELL PARK ROAD RACES

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

SCARBOROUGH ROAD RACES

500 cc — 1st
350 cc — 1st, 3rd
Sidecar — 1st, 2nd

IRISH MOTO CROSS GRAND PRIX

500 cc — 1st
350 cc — 1st
250 cc — 1st

WEST OF ENGLAND TRIAL

Solo — 1st
Sidecar — 1st
Manufacturers Team Prize

SCOTT TRIAL

Solo — 1st
Manufacturers Team Prize

BRITISH EXPERTS TRIAL

Solo — 1st
Sidecar — 1st

1961 250cc EUROPEAN MOTO

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'The 1961 M.G.P.—Roy and his latest Norton taking Bedstead in fine fashion.'
(Photo : G. V. Kneale)

thought Aintree (the meeting was the Red Rose one on Whit-Monday) a first class circuit, though it is the only time he has ridden there, while he found Aberdare enjoyable too—wet, rockeries and all. The Goldie went after the season had finished. Roy commented that it cost him practically nothing excepting the usual expendable items and it had never let him down. He had always finished. Here I might digress for a sentence or two to remark that his machine preparation must always have been careful. He is a great believer in keeping his bicycles in good nick. But none of them have ever been "tuned".

For 1960 he had his first Norton; a 350 Manx of 1956 vintage which Bill Baily and he bought from Roy Minto. This machine, an ex-Surtees model, was in excellent condition and Bill and he have raced alternately for the last two seasons. So now you know why Roy doesn't always ride a 350. Once again no bother was had with the Manx, though it had a habit of jumping out of third gear and eventually it blew up in rather an expensive way at the final Brands meeting. Roy's main success was at Silverstone Saturday when he finished 2nd in one of the Club Handicap races. For some reason he has never had any difficulty in getting rides at Mallory Park

—he assured me he has no secret to hide here!—and it was on his way to one of these meetings there that he saw, in the window of Ross Motors of Hinckley, a brand new 500 Manx. He 'phoned Dick Lovatt the next day and bought it. Now this is a bit of coincidence because a day or two beforehand I had chanced to call on Dick and he had mentioned he had the 'bike for sale and did I know anyone interested. At the time I didn't. Roy took it straight to Cadwell, but didn't race it, as it was hopelessly over-g geared; he had no sprockets for it and it was geared for the I.o.M. A trip to Snetterton with it was almost as fruitless because a valve spring broke. Luckily nothing else happened, but it was scarcely a good beginning with a brand new £500 racer; or, come to that, a good advertisement for its makers!

All was now set for the Manx. The plunge had been taken and an entry for the Senior race sent in, and accepted. Roy confesses that he went rather crazy at first. It took him two practice sessions to realise that the I.o.M. wasn't just another short circuit. He describes his first session as hectic; five feet up the outside bank at Brandish on the first lap, but only two on the next. The next time out was a trifle misty on top. "Ginger" Payne went up and he tried to hang on

THE 1962 RACING CALENDAR

As has now become customary we give below a list, compiled from that issued by the Auto Cycle Union, of the racing events which are to be held in the British Isles during 1962. We do not pretend that it is 100% accurate, as it appears to be next to impossible to obtain proper details of some of the Irish and the Scottish speed meetings until the season has practically started. Although some sprint meetings are included in the list below, there are to be others; at least so we understand. Many sprint organisers seem tardy in the extreme in getting their affairs sorted out and permits applied for. We know, of course, that some do have their troubles with local centres. Nonetheless we would have thought the better planned sprint season, which has quite rightly been sought by one or two persons of eminence in that field, would be better begun by plenty of advance notice of events. Be that as it may, there are some sprints mentioned and our straight line members need not worry, so we are assured, that they will have a 'thin' time of it.

Last year we suggested that the way to ensure one's entry had as good a chance as possible of being accepted was as follows. First of all draw up your own calendar and then, preferably, transfer it into a diary. About three months before each meeting write to the address shown for the Regs. Don't forget to enclose a foolscap size stamped and addressed envelope either. As soon as the forms arrive, read the Regs., complete the entry form in full and legibly and post it off with the CORRECT money. We cannot stress the importance of getting your entry back absolutely by return, i.e. by the very next post to the one by which you receive it. This method still remains the best one, though it does not guarantee that your entry will be accepted. Unfortunately there is still far too much divergence of execution on this thorny question. One other thing—we would urge the newcomers not to set their sights too high at the outset. For example, if you are in your first, or possibly even second, season, don't go bald headed for Scarborough. Entries are necessarily limited there and you will not be accepted at first. On the other hand there will be a number of novice meetings—there are not enough even so, but those that there are seem to be these:—Brands Hatch on 1st April, Oulton Park on 11th June (The Clubman's), Snetterton on 17th June, Oulton on 7th July and Silverstone on 22nd September. In addition the Castle Coombe and Thruxton meetings, most of the Brand's events and Oulton Park on 6th October have "non-expert" races in the day's programme. What, though, has happened to the novice Mallory and Cadwell Park affairs? It is indeed to be hoped that these meetings will be added to the calendar.

EDITOR

APRIL

- 1 Mallory Park R.R. N. 1.24m. 250/350/500 solos/s'car.
E. G. Cope, 33 Henhurst Hill, Burton-on-Trent, Staffs.
- 1 Brands Hatch Novice R.R. R. 1.24m. 50/125/250/350/1000 solos/s'car.
A. R. Baukhan, 31, Highbanks Close, Wickham Lane, Welling, Kent.
- 7 Hutchinson 100 R.R. I. 2.92m. 125/250/350/500 solos/500 s'cars.
Miss M. W. Ward, 34 Paradise Road, Richmond, Surrey.
- 20 Brands Hatch R.R. N. 2.6m. 50/125/250/350/500/100 solo/s'cars.
D. Elliott, 50, Brock Road, Northfleet, Kent.
- 20 Prees Heath R.R. C. 1.5m. 125/250/350/500 solos.
- 21 Scarborough R.R. N. 2.4m. 250/350/500 solos.
J. Claxton, The Rowans, 1 Westover Road, Scarborough, E. Yorks.
- 22 Snetterton R.R. N. 2.74m. 125/250/350/500 solos/s'cars.
R. J. Havers, Creg-na-Baa, 21 City View Road, Hellesdon, Norwich.
- 23 Oulton Park R.R. I. 2.7m. 125/250/350/500 solos/500 s'cars.
H. W. Bowman, 63 Claremont Road, Wallasey, Cheshire.
- 23 Cadwell Park R.R. N. 2m. 250/350/500 solos/s'cars.
C. Wilkinson, 140 Eastgate, Louth, Lincs.
- 23 Crystal Palace R.R. N. 1.39m. 200/250/350/500 solos/s'cars.
W. J. Bult, 33 Sayes Court, Addlestone, Surrey.
- 23 Thruxton R.R. N. 2.2m. 125/250/350/500/1000 solos.
N. E. Goss, 60 Bursledon Road, Bitterne, Southampton.
- 23 Thornaby R.R. C.R. 2m. 250/350/500 solos/s'cars.
A. V. Buttress, The Clubhouse, Clarendon Road, Middlesborough.
- 29 Snetterton R.R. C. 2.74m. 50/125/250 solos.
J. Collins, 33 Klea Avenue, London, S.W.4.

MAY

- 5 Castle Coombe R.R. N. 125/250/350/500/1000 solos/s'cars.
V. C. Anstice, Westgate Buildings, Bath, Somerset.
- 5 Rhydymwyn R.R. C.R. 0.7m. 125/200/250/350/500 solos/s'cars.
K. Allbright, 51, Upton Park Drive, Upton, Birkenhead, Cheshire.
- 6 Mallory Park R.R. See 1st April.
- 6 Ramsgate Sprint. R.R. 440 yds. Solos/s'cars.
D. Bates, 55 Chatham Avenue, Hayes, Kent.
- 12 Aberdare Park R.R. N. .7m. 125/250/350/500/1000 solos.
Mrs. M. L. Pryse, Preswylfa, Campbell Terrace, Mountain Ash, Glam.
- 13 Brands Hatch R.R. N. 2.6m. 50/125/250/350/500/1000 solos/s'cars.
R. Thomas, 111, Hollwood Lane, Frindsbury, Rochester, Kent.
- 19 Silverstone 1,000 Kms. N. 2.92m. Production solos.
See 7th April.
- 20 Snetterton R.R. I. 2.74m. 125/250/350/500 solos/500 s'cars.
See 22nd April.
- 20 Prees Heath R.R. See 20th April.

JUNE

- 2 Rhydymwyn R.R. See 5th May.
- 3 Snetterton Sprint. R.R. 440 yds. Solos/s'cars.
Ilford & D.M.C. & L.C.C.
- 4/6/8 Tourist Trophy. I. 37.75m. 125/250/350/500 solos/500 s'cars.
A.C.U., 83 Pall Mall, London, S.W.1.
- 9 Ramsey Sprint. R.R. 440 yds. Solos/s'cars.
- 10 Mallory Park R.R. See 6th May.
- 11 Brands Hatch R.R. I. 2.6m. 125/250/350/500 solos/500 s'cars.
J. Fordham, 966, Rochester Way, Sidcup, Kent.
- 11 Aintree R.R. N. 1.9m. 125/250/350/500 solos/s'cars.
J. R. Greene, Alderley, Brownhill Road, Blackburn, Lancs.
- 11 Cadwell Park R.R. See 23rd April.
- 11 Thruxton R.R. N. 2.2m. 125/250/350/500 solos/s'cars.
F. J. Rendell, 109 Sutton Veny, Warminster, Wilts.
- 11 Clubman's Trophy. R. 2.7m. 350/500 solos.
J. B. Thomas, Welwyn, Moorfields, Willaston, Nantwich, Cheshire.
- 15/16 Cock O'North R.R. See 21st April.



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- 17 Snetterton R.R. **C.** 2.74m. 50/125/250/350/1000/production solos/s'cars.
See 19th May.
- 23 Thrupton 500. **I.** 2.2m .Production solos.
See 23rd April.
- 24 Ouston R.R. **R.R.** 1.9 m. 250/350/1000 solos/s'cars.
Dr. L. Jamieson, 1 Park Villas, Wallsend-on-Tyne, Northumberland.

JULY

- 7 Oulton Park R.R. **C.R.** 1.6m. 125/250/350/50 solos/s'cars.
See 2nd June. J. A. Masters, 22, Norland Square, London, W.11.
- 7 Silverstone High Speed Trials. **R.R.** 1.6m. Production machines.
- 8 Brands Hatch R.R. See 1st April.
- 11/12 Southern 100. **N.** 4.2m. 125/250/350/500 solos.
E. Peers, Lower Foxdale P.O., St. John's, I.o.M.
- 21 Castle Coombe R.R. See 5th May.
- 21 Barbon Hill Climb. **N.** 880 yds. Solos/s'cars.
P. S. Duff, 218 Bureside Road, Kendal, Westmoreland.
- 21 Snetterton R.R. See 29th April.
- 28 Prees Heath R.R. See 20th May.
- 29 Snetterton R.R. See 20th May.

AUGUST

- 6 A.C.U. I.R.R.M. **I.** 2.7m. 125/250/350/500 solos/500 s'cars.
See 11th June.
- 6 Cadwell Park R.R. See 11th June.
- 6 Crystal Palace R.R. **N.** 1.39m. 50/125/250/350/1000 solos/s'car.
See 17th June.
- 6 Thrupton R.R. See 23rd June.
- 18 Trophy Day. **C.** 1.6m. 50/125/250/350/1000/production solos/s'cars.
See 6th August.
- 19 Brands Hatch R.R. See 13th May.
- 19 Thornaby R.R. See 23rd April.
- 25 Aberdare Park R.R. See 12th May.
- 25/26 Shelsley Walsh Hill Climb. **R.R.** 350/500/1000 solos/s'cars.
See 18th August.

SEPTEMBER

- 1 Brighton Speed Trials. **C.** 1 km. 350/500/1000 solos/s'cars.
See 25th/26th August.
- 2 Catterick R.R. **R.R.** 1.4m. 25/350/500/1000 solos/s'cars.
C. Taylor, 14 Lowe Street, Darlington, Co. Durham.
- 4/6 Manx Grand Prix. **N.** 37.75m. 350/500 solos.
C. R. Ducker, 37 Athol Street, Douglas, I.o.M.
- 8 Sprint. **R.** 440 yds. Solos/s'cars.
See 7th July.
- 8 Wallasey Charter R.R. **C.R.** 1m. 125/250/350/500 solos.
See 23rd April (Oulton R.R.).
- 9 Snetterton R.R. See 29th July.
- 16 Cadwell Park R.R. **I.** 2m. 125/250/350/500 solos/500 s'cars.
See 6th August.
- 22 Scarborough I.R.R.M. **I.** 2.4m. 125/250/350/500 solos/500 s'cars.
See 15th/16th June.
- 22 Club Day. See 18th August.
- 22 Rhydymwyn R.R. See 2nd June.
- 23 Brands Hatch R.R. See 20th April.
- 23 Prees Heath R.R. See 28th July.
- 29 Aintree Century R.R. **I.** 3m. 125/250/350/500 solos/500 s'cars.
See 11th June.
- 30 Mallory Park I.R.R.M. **I.** 1.24m. 125/250/350/500 solos/500 s'cars.
See 10th June.
- 30 Ramsgate Sprint. See 6th May.

OCTOBER

- 6 Oulton Park R.R. **N.** 2.7m. 125/250/350/500 solos/s'cars.
J. Smith, 25, Faulkner Street, Hoole, Chester.
- 7 Guinness Trophy. See 17th June.
- 14 Brands Hatch R.R. See 19th August.

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Notes :—the bold letters after the meeting name indicate the status of the meeting, i.e. **I** for **International**, **N** for **National**, **R**. for **Restricted**, **R.R.** for **Regional Restricted**, **C.R.** for **Centre Restricted** and **C.** for **Closed**. Information has yet to reach us about the Irish road races, that is to say the North Armagh 100 (April), North West 200 (May), Cookstown 100 (May), Killinchy 100 (June), Skerries 100 (July), Mid-Antrim 150 (July), Temple 100 (July), Ulster G.P. (August), Leinster 100s (August) and the Carrowdore 100 (September). It can be assumed, we think, that these events will be held as usual, on approximately the same dates as last year. Usually they cater for 250/350/500 solos and all are **National** except the North West and the U.G.P. The latter two have **International** permits and include 125 c.c. races. The latter is a World Championship event. We are similarly lacking information about the Scottish scene. Only two circuits operated last year; Beveridge Park (Kirkcaldy) and Charterhall (six meetings in all). As soon as we have learned anything definite about all these, we shall publish the "gen".



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to him. He managed it until Keppel Gate where he rushed off up the hillside and fell off. Luckily there was little harm done. After that he decided there was more to it, made haste slowly and soon found lap times coming down nicely. He had a most uneventful race which ended in 30th position. But he was quite whacked after it; so much so that he nearly dropped it at Bedstead on the last lap. Now he lays off the beer a bit for a week or two before the M.G.P.!

Last year presented fewer problems insofar as meetings were concerned. By now, of course, he was beginning to be "known" a bit. So he rode the same '60 Manx at most of the Southern short circuits and was well up at many of them. In fact he kicked off the season really well by winning the "less expert" race at Brands and being placed in both 350 and 500 finals at the Monday 'Palace "do", the muddy one. To intrude a slightly personal note here I well remember being at Brands one Saturday afternoon just before the season started when Roy was circulating. He, like the other serious racers there that day, was in some difficulty with the 50s, cafe racers and plain nits circulating and on one occasion he got the Norton broadside on coming down from Druids. I thought he was off, but he held it and continued. When I mentioned the incident, he said he remembered it. Quite apart from being an excellent piece of riding, it was also an impressive demonstration of Norton handling. But to continue . . . Came the Clubman's at Oulton. He was particularly anxious to do well here. The necessary kudos from a success at this meeting would be important. He was entered by the Bermondsey club in the 350 race in which he finished 9th. Bemsee entered him in the 500 event and in this he soon caught up with and enjoyed a good scrap with Rob Jones. They alternated in the lead until Fred Fisher caught them up. Jones then crashed and Fisher made the flag first—just. Roy likes Oulton, but he wasn't happy about overtaking there. Like others of the faster men I have spoken with about this series of races he had some hard things to say about that particular problem. He was up against the same trouble at Castle Coombe the following weekend too.

Once the Manx bug has bitten, of course, there is no stopping the rot; if life or limb or "lolly" remains! For the 1961 event Roy bought a new Norton, the old one being sold. The first outing with the new 'bike was even less auspicious than the previous example, for at the B.M.C.R.C. 'Palace meeting a valve dropped in. So the next succeeding

Brands meeting had to be used as a running in session. Apart from that the bicycle seemed to be okay and, after a little expert tuition, a lap of 91 was recorded. In the race things went not so well. Being unable to get a set of high hysteresis tyres from his usual suppliers he swapped to another make. The fact remains that on fast bends the handling gave some moments of alarm. He got into trouble in a big way once at Sulby Bridge, but managed to extricate himself from the wall safely. He finished 22nd in 2h. 34m. 24.2s. at 87.98 m.p.h. with a best lap in 25m. 17.6s. He concluded the season by finishing 7th in a "fast" 500 race at Brands and 2nd in the "fast" 1,000 c.c. event at our Club Day meeting. At this latter meeting the 350, by now getting a trifle long in the tooth, carried him as far as Cope corner where the motor almost literally fell apart.

And now what of the future? Well, Roy intends to go on. In any case he likes racing and wants, if the finances allow, to do some Continental meetings. If that does not come off, then it'll be the short circuits and the Manx G.P. as the principal event of the year. Incidentally last year's dicing was done with the aid of Esso Golden petrol and Castrol R oil, while the Nortons (and the B.S.A. before) have always been shod with Avon tyres; always? Roy's "home" club is the Bermondsey M.C.C., a club which must number more racing men amidst its membership than most territorial clubs, and he is also a member of the Notting-ham Tornado M.C., as well as Bemsee. He plays football in the winter to keep fit and he also swims and wields a golf club. He likes to natter about 'bikes and racing too, but then don't we all . . . ?

Before we parted I asked Roy four questions; which of the races he has ridden in did he enjoy the most, which circuit did he like the most in this country, what improvements, if any, would he like made to the racing set-up and whether he now rode a 'bike on the public highway? He told me that he had enjoyed Manx practice in 1961 more than anything else. He had felt like going well and everything had gone well. He was all the more disappointed when things didn't turn out so well in the race. He likes Oulton Park and the long Brands course the best of our "home" tracks, though he has enjoyed riding at the others. He feels that the competitor facilities could be improved at most circuits and, like many a rider, says a little more prize money wouldn't come amiss. And to my final question he gave an emphatic 'no'. Far too dangerous, he says!

MAKE DO AND BORROW, OR A TALE OF TWO VELOS'

The cast in order of appearance:—

Martyn

Martyn Howard, the intrepid boot-scraper who aimed the device.

I (and Me)

George Clarke, who owns the 1957 MAC Velo.

Spence Robinson

Owens the crashed Venom, from which was borrowed an engine etc. (and rode Brian Coleshill's Norton into a very meritorious 38th place in the Junior Manx).

Harry Rayner

You don't know who Harry is? Shame!!

Martyn's hairstyle by Pauline

(This story is entirely true, and any resemblance it may have to fiction is purely coincidental.)

Martyn was motoring up the Mountain Mile on his G.50, doing 6,100 r.p.m. in top, when, with a sickening bang, the con rod came sailing through the crankcase, and the engine locked up. This happened on the Thursday afternoon practice for the 1961 Manx Grand Prix. Thus was started a train of events which, although not unique, was certainly interesting, and in many ways surprising.

Back in the garage after tea, we took the engine out. This in itself was a major operation, as the departing 'rod had punched a hole in the crankcase adjacent to the front engine mounting bolt and had distorted the metal to such an extent that the bolt had to be hack-sawed out. Martyn pulled the motor to pieces and took the shattered parts to the folks in the A.M.C. garage. They were most sympathetic and extremely helpful, but the very rock bottom price for repairs was something like £75; quite beyond our "limited" resources. It did look as though we would have to resume the role of interested spectators for the rest of the holiday.

An air of extreme despondency descended on the camp, so we went down to the 'Central' to drown our sorrows. Over a pint of ale we suddenly made a fabulous discovery. I had a perfectly good MAC Velo, 1957 vintage, which had done something like 63,000 miles during its four years of regular road use. It has a Venom type front hub, alloy rims and mudguards, ball ended levers, rearward set footrests, and racing tyres. In our garage lay a crashed Venom,

which had cast off its rider, Spence Robinson, coming out of the 33rd, and then smashed itself against a concrete post (without too much damage to Spence). The next step was obvious. If Spence would let us "borrow" his engine, gearbox and rear wheel, put them in my frame, we could make ourselves a racer again.

The following morning, Friday, Spence said 'yes', so in the twinkling of an eye there were about ten blokes crowded around two Velos', tearing them apart and getting in each others' way, but giving a general impression of extreme industry! The result of the chaos emerged around dinner time, when everybody stood back and there appeared a Venom racer; albeit minus its back wheel, which had been taken to Avon's for a racing tyre to be fitted. The reason for the panic was that Martyn wanted to get in some reasonable laps during that evening's practice, for the chances of doing a good time on Monday morning were remote, to say the least.

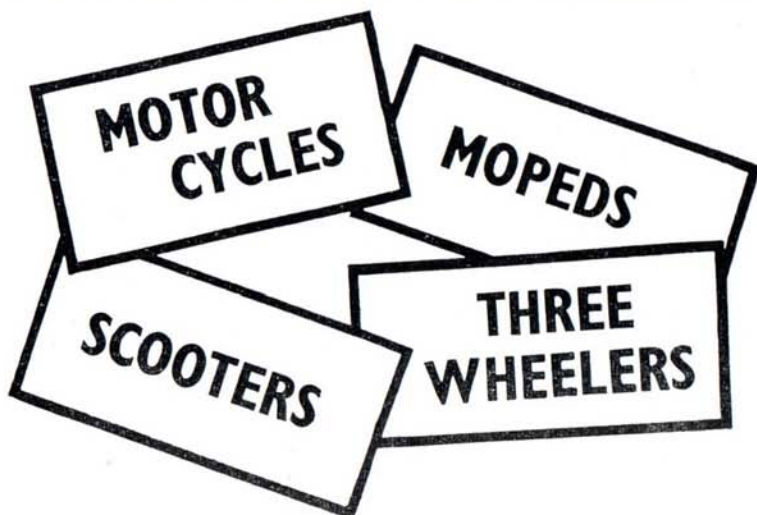
Another snag cropped up with the gearing. With an 18 tooth gearbox sprocket, the Venom was considerably under-gearred and Spence advised us to try and get a 20 tooth, which he reckoned would be just about 'spot-on'. A visit to a fellow Velo. racer saw us better off with a 19 tooth sprocket, but at least we could practice and make sure the thing worked. As we went up to the Start for practice, I think we were all really worried as to whether the bike would be alright. Would it all be treated as an enormous joke? What would Scrutineers say? Would we be kicked out? We'll soon find out! Race control had given Martyn permission to change his machine from Matchless to Velo, provided he did one timed lap on the new 'bike.

The Scrutineers picked us up on only one point. The front brake cable had to be wired into the operating lever. That was soon done. We were in, great!

Eventually it was Martyn's turn to push off and away he went, the Venom, on a straight pipe, sounding like a 'dirt' J.A.P. Fractionally over 30 min. later, he steamed through for the first time. That included the standing start and warming the motor up. 28 min. 23 secs. later he went through for the second time. By the time the practice ended he had done three laps, which, under the circumstances, were definitely quite quick. Big grins all round! The Venom was going like a rocket, though the 19 tooth sprocket was limiting maximum speed to 106 m.p.h. If only we could get a 20

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tooth sprocket. John Freeman, who was staying with us, had some KTT sprockets at home and he sent for them, in the hope that they would arrive in time for the 'weigh-in'. All we did to the Venom before the Monday morning practice was to clean it down and devise a rubber mounting for the oil tank which was beginning to split.

Monday morning practice was completely uneventful. Conditions were not in favour of fast laps, and Martyn only did one lap. Once again we simply washed the Venom down and left it at that.

On Wednesday night we got stuck into the final preparation for the race. We checked valve clearances, points, riveted the primary chain, and lashed lots of felt on the frame around the rear of the primary chain case which, in the Velo tradition, was spewing oil over the rear of the 'bike. At about five o'clock on Wednesday afternoon, John's sprockets arrived, but any hopes we may have had of getting the gearing right, were dashed when we found they were the wrong pitch. Having done everything we could, we set off for Mylchreest's for the 'weigh-in'.

In went the Velo for scrutineering; alas, the first thing the Scrutineer touched moved! The clutch lever was loose. Possibly that gave him a bad impression, because the next thing he took exception to were the handlebars. They were of the "Ace" welded up variety and had been salvaged from Spence's Venom and straightened in a convenient drain. In this operation they had acquired a mysterious kink and it was this masking of the chrome that the Scrutineer would not pass.

After much haggling, we were given about an hour to either strengthen or replace the offending 'bars. We decided straight away that it was a waste of time messing about with the old 'bars, so I left for our garage to pick up my straight ones which, although they'd be uncomfortable to ride with, would at least pass the Scrutineers.

Came on to the scene at this moment of mild panic one, Harry (the) Rayner, a personage of no mean fame. He had the situation under control in the twinkling of an eye. Parked at the kerb outside, and obviously the apple of its owner's eye, was an immaculate Road Rocket, fitted, believe it or not, with "Ace", welded up bars exactly the same as ours, but without the kink and with genuine chrome in situ. The next part of the tale is indeed, sordid and should not be read by anybody of a nervous disposition!

Harry went to work on the unfortunate owner of the Road Rocket, who didn't like the idea one little bit. Harry persevered and talked like a Dutch Uncle. Road Rocket owner began to weaken. Harry turned on the sob stuff. You know—about how a young lad was going to lose his ride in the Manx just because he can't get a pair of 'bars. That just about did it. In came the Road Rocket to have its 'bars ripped off and our tatty old things put on until after the race. Actually the owner turned out to be a Marshal. He certainly saved our bacon and I think we all owe him a vote of thanks. Ta very much, Mate! For the second time we went through the Scrutineers; no trouble at all this time. Everything was ready for the race.

In some ways the race was an anticlimax, as everything went so smoothly. There's not much to say about it really. The Venom went perfectly. Apart from doing its best to go into orbit around Cronk ny Mona it handled quite well. With a consumption of 35-40 m.p.g. Martyn had to stop twice for fuel, as we'd only got a three gallon tank. The brakes stood up to racing speeds remarkably well too. Martyn averaged 80.63 m.p.h. for the six laps, with a fastest lap at 82.6 m.p.h. He finished 51st, ahead of lots of expensive racing machinery. That must prove something. The Venom finished, incidentally, almost as clean as it started and nothing fell off either. This was more than could be said for many of the finishers; several of which had more oil outside than at the end.

The moral of the tale? If you go to the Island, leave your 'bike at home or these race chappies will have it in pieces in five minutes!! By the way, the combined road mileages of the engine and frame before their chance meeting in the Island, totalled up to over 100,000 miles; that's 40,000 for the engine and 60,000 for the frame.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Will all members please note that the Registered Offices of the Club have been moved from 34 Paradise Road, Richmond to:

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Secretary

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WANTED. One-piece leathers. 5' 9" to 5' 10". G. H. Parsons, 3 The Avenue, Bedford.

FOR SALE. T20 SL spares, as new—petrol and oil tanks, chain guard, front and rear mudguards, tool box, dual seat, all lighting equipment. Phone during day B. A. Webb, LADBroke 2444, ext. 106.

FOR SALE. 500 c.c. Gold Star. Alloy tanks, rims, fairing. Spares. Very fast, lightened, many mods. Photos. Also 50 c.c. Comp. Itom. Fast. Offers. F. W. Steele, 10 St. Lawrence Avenue, Warwick.

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(Continued from page 2)

our silversmith, **Mr. Wallace**, will be sorry to hear that he was taken ill just after the Annual Dinner. This accounted for the delay in posting off the trophies to those who couldn't collect them in person. We eventually got them all packed and posted from the office, but you can imagine the confusion which reigned as we were also trying to pack up for our removal! I just mention this in case anyone received a filing cabinet in mistake for a trophy. We all hope that it won't be long before Mr. Wallace is fit again.

Travelling Marshal **Jeff Clew** told me the other day that, putting his leathers away for the winter, he discovered in his pocket a KLG F220 plug which a 125 competitor gave him at the Snetterton meeting after doing a rapid plug change during the conducted tour of the course. If the owner thereof likes to drop a line to Jeff at 23 Oak Way, Northgate, Crawley, Sussex, he'll get his plug back. Jeff Clew, by the way, is the one with the Velocette.

While huddling miserably over the fire at the office reading my mail in a temperature which felt like 30 below (it wasn't really, it's just me that's cold blooded!) I was green with envy at **Dick Wyler** and **Ron Grant**. During their East/West trip across the States, they stopped off on a quiet by-road in Arizona and bombed up

and down on their bikes in a temperature of over 70.

I'm writing this surrounded by the chaos attending two days before zero hour. There is a barricade of loaded tea chests on the landing which makes it look as though we're expecting an invasion. Four legged Fred is on the look out for mice, without success so far. In the middle of it all, our poor unfortunate auditor is working his way patiently through the books ready for the annual audit in a couple of week's time. All being well, by the time you read this we shall be installed in our new offices in Kingston, where visitors are, as always, very welcome to drop in for a natter and, if it's timed carefully, a cuppa. The new office is a bit easier to find than the Richmond one. It is about 100 yards on the London side of C & A's and is over a dry cleaning shop. There's a free car park about another 100 yards further along the road. Remember the address :-

33a London Road, Kingston-on-Thames, Surrey (Telephone : KIN 6886).

I'd like to end up thanking all those who sent me Christmas cards and other seasonal greetings. There were so many that I hope they will forgive me for not acknowledging them individually. Instead I will take this opportunity to wish all of you a Happy New Year, Safe Riding and a Successful 1962 Season.

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GROUP NEWS

Dagenham Group. "Johnnie" Walker, 79 Albert Road, Ilford.

If the enthusiasm displayed at their inaugural meeting is anything to go by, the Dagenham Group is going to be a great success from the word go. Altogether, nearly 30 turned out on a not-very-pleasant wet evening, of whom 20 were members from the actual zone covered on the map by the 5-mile radius circle. This represents a 50% attendance. Several others had tendered their apologies for absence but said they'd be along next time. Among those present were Ernie Wooder, Alan Rutherford, Pat Millard and Tom Kirby. "Outsiders" from the south were Bill Rose and the secretary. Being a thoroughly democratic lot, they had a general discussion upon where and when they wanted to meet. It was agreed that the meeting place should be The Brewery Tap, Barking and that regular nights should be the second and fourth Fridays of every month.

METROPOLITAN

As our next meeting on January 4th follows closely upon the Christmas and New Year's celebrations it would be a good time to get together over a drink at the Bull & Mouth, Bloomsbury Way, W.C.2.

HORLEY GROUP

Meet Red Lion, Turners Hill, 18th January, 1962.

IPSWICH MEETING

Next meeting is on Thursday, January 18th, 1962.

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Our first Meeting of the winter season was somewhat of a flop; partly due to Members not having been advised individually which has been the usual practice and partly due to the magazine arriving somewhat later than usual. Sorry about this, chaps, it could not be helped. The venue, date and details of our next Meeting will be given to members direct due to arrangements having not yet been finalised. I still eagerly await group assistance from keen members in Nottingham, Derby and Leicester, anyone interested please ring me.

NORTHANTS AREA

A. F. MILLS,

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Rushden.

Members from as far afield as Braintree came to the Swan at Goldington on 24th November. The Bedford Eagles entertained us with darts (they won), tombola (we won) and refreshments.

At 7.30 p.m. the "Motorcycle News" Forum will be at the Victoria Hotel, Rushden (it is High Street—the Abroad). The team of experts will include M.C.N's. Editor, Peter Arnold, Charlie Rous and Harold Daniell. We require a large audience for this evening which, in any case, will be well worth attending. So please roll up—in your hundreds. Food and drink available. Admission free.

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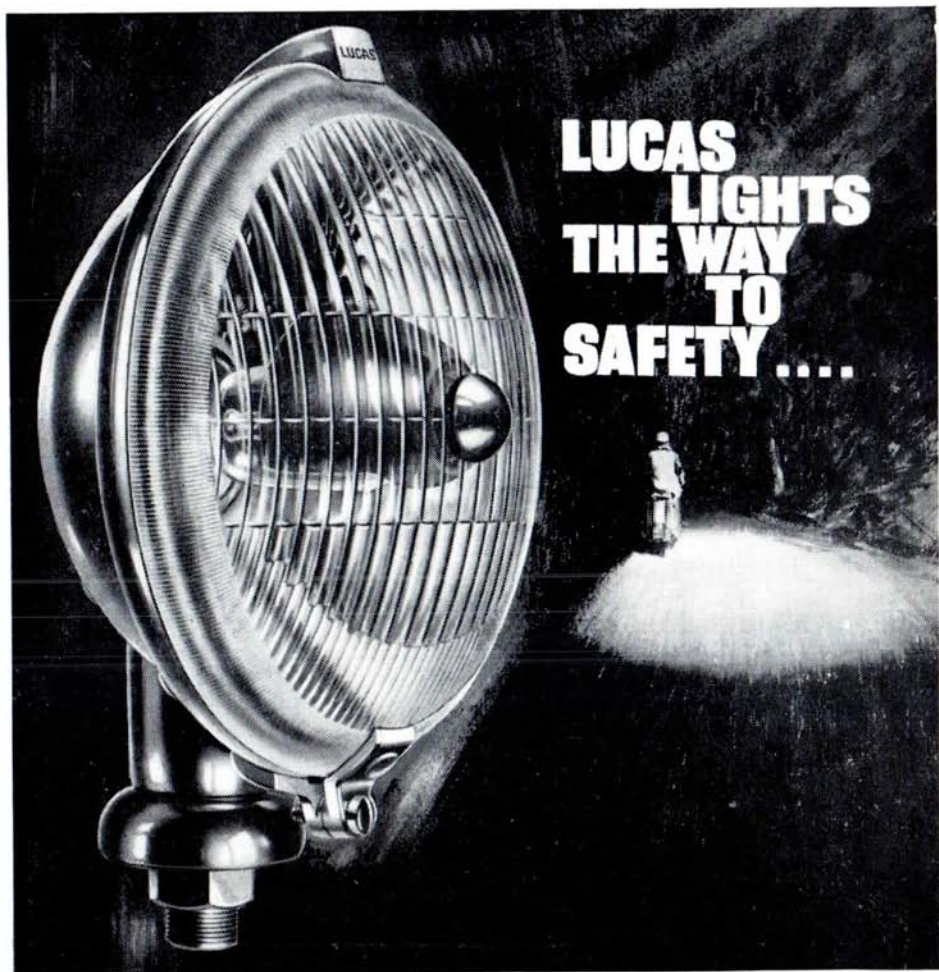
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