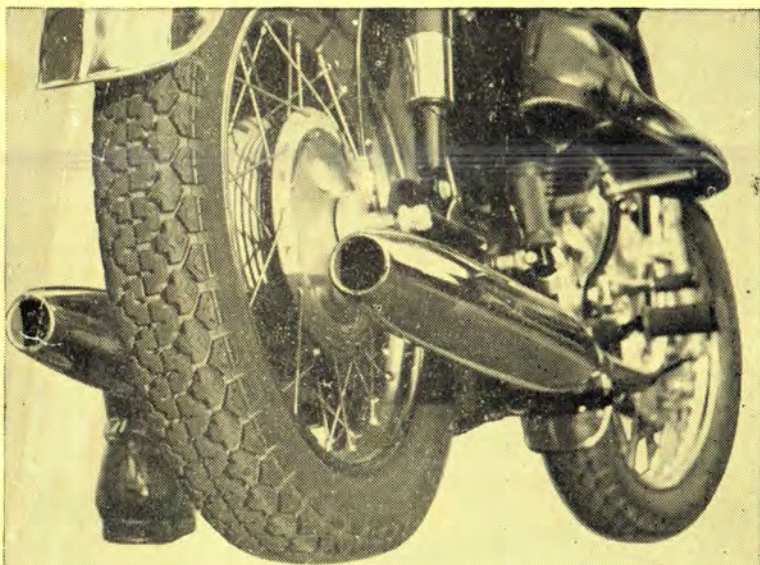


BEMSEE 67

JANUARY





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THE JOURNAL OF THE
BRITISH MOTOR CYCLE RACING CLUB

Bemsee

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Postbag

Members are invited to contribute to these pages by sending in their letters to the Editor by the fifteenth day of the month preceeding the date of issue.

Dear Sir,—As I have read in the monthly magazine, Bemsee will have three Club meetings at Brands Hatch in 1967. I would like to say how much it would be appreciated if all, or just one, race meeting could be run on the full circuit as many riders will go into National events at later dates. Having this knowledge gained from riding in Club meetings, it will save them from being thrown to the wolves and being put off by the very much faster riders. The novice is a constant danger to the top boys; also the experts give many a rider with less experience a terrible fright when he is trying to learn a new circuit and is passed by someone riding at a far greater speed.

In the interest of all I do think that it may help many a novice, and too the organiser for permitting novices to ride with the experts.

Yours etc., SPENCER CRABBE, St. Leonards on Sea.

Ed.: Of course you are quite right, but the biggest problem of all is to find the cash to hire the full circuit. You may recall that the Club did hire the full circuit at Silverstone for members but, as the spectators don't want to watch novices anyway, and even less on a long circuit when they are out of sight for two out of the three minutes, the burden must revert to the rider to provide the necessary finances. This must be in the region of £4 per ride exclusive of insurance for a ten lap race. Too much?

Dear Sir,—If I may be allowed to use the words of Mrs. Dale . . . "I'm terribly worried about Jim lately!" Your November Editorial sounds bleak; lack of officials for race meetings and no magazine support, pointing to members willing to take and not give and who grumble without offering anything constructive. You may well ask what do I do, but having dependants doesn't give one the spare time of single chaps. Something of an excuse if nothing else!

It appears then that the days of BMCRC social wise, along with other similar organisations, is finished. If rider members want their meetings they must be run on a business basis even to the limit of paying for 'quality' marshals etc. to attend—expenses at least.

Should you print this, you are indeed desparate for material, but it may stir a conscience or two.

Yours etc., C. H. HUBBARD, Ipswich, Suffolk.

Dear Sir,—I would like to take this opportunity of thanking you for a very pleasant season's racing with Bemsee, although perhaps not entirely successful!

I look forward to renewing my membership of the Club.

Yours etc., P. JONES, Coventry, Warks.

Dear Sir,—Having read your latest outburst in the magazine about the late arrival of scrutineers at the October 2nd meeting, being one of these I would like to wade into the fray. While we suffer from a lack of officials as we obviously do at the moment, any out-pourings such as these will only aggravate the unhappy situation. Mud-slinging is not the answer, only a move towards the sporting image of the Club will do us any good.

On a different vein, I would like to express my appreciation to Dennis Glover who has organised the scrutineering superbly and been a great help with all the queries that crop up at meetings. Considering the lack of willing helpers, the greatly increased number of machines to examine in less time, Dennis has always helped people to get their ride, provided they adhered to the rules, albeit somewhat bent, and if they didn't endanger other people besides themselves. I am glad to say that I was one of his assistants and wish to his successor, Ernie Woods, the same friendly co-operation.

I will close my screed by hoping that sporting instincts will prevail and that the bleating of the vociferous minority goes unheeded.

Yours etc., P. A. EDWARDS, Chadwell Heath, Essex.

Ed.: I suppose Peter means well but is it not a fact that the average rider knows nothing of what happens on the other side of the fence? Riders, like officials and other members of the Club, deserve an explanation and if the scrutineers are late then what is the harm in telling them so? Officials are all too quick to complain themselves so a little criticism about themselves, if such it can be called, can hardly be called an 'outburst' and 'bleating'. I can only hope that we're not all as lost as Mr. Edwards makes out!

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Dear Sir,—I was very pleased to hear that the Club is to promote meetings at Brands Hatch. However, on reading in the November issue that practice and racing has to be held in the afternoon, I feel that we shall not get full value for our entry fee as we have done in the past. With practice and racing taking place in the afternoon does this mean that we shall be racing in the dark? If so, I feel it would be unwise to race in a direction which is unfamiliar to most riders.

On the question of timekeeping I personally would be prepared to do without it if there was a possibility of extending each race. If time-keeping is reduced or dispensed with, might I suggest that the fees saved could be applied in extending race awards to sixth place.

I should like to offer my sincere thanks to all the Club's officials and marshals who have made racing possible this season.

Yours etc., M. A. LEWIS, Harrow, Middx.

Ed.: The whole point of running the meetings in July/August is to provide for racing until 7.00 p.m. I have already given consideration to the question of anti-clock racing and although the Board haven't discussed the matter as yet, I doubt that the meetings will be run in the reverse direction for the following reasons:—

- 1) Clearways could be a dangerous bend for novices.
- 2) While practice may be short it is a great advantage to use a circuit on which everyone is familiar with the bends.

Dear Sir,—May I make the following comments in answer to your 'Editorial' for November, any or all of which you may print, discard out-of-hand, put down to 'From whence they came' or consign to the laugh and tear up file, as you see fit.

Firstly I was sorry to read your confirmation of the press statement that Silverstone would not be used for motor-cycle racing next year, but pleased to note that this may not be an all-time shut out. As you say with the loss of Aintree and now Goodwood, the BARC must be hard put to find venues at which to hold their meetings, we can only but hope that at some time in the future this circuit will be available to us again.

It may be that not all members of the Club agree with me, but I have always (well nearly always) enjoyed my days out at Silverstone, even when it has rained, and it seems to do that more often than not. I like the wide open spaces which the aerodrome circuits offer, and only wish there were a few more of them where the 'boys' could have a days racing without the risks involved with the use of the tighter and more enclosed tracks.

What a pity that "some riders" get annoyed at delays caused by the non or late arrival of voluntary officials on race days, perhaps the most kind thing that can be said for these riders is that they are keyed-up at the prospect of a days racing, and any delay is an added barb for their nerves. I may have said this all before, I know that I have to some of my friends, but I started my interest in road racing as one of those voluntary officials, and because of this have a very high regard for the work they do, both at, during and after a meeting. If for some reason, any reason, they can't turn up on race day I shall be the last to take them to task, thank you chaps and girls, you do a - - - good job.

Of course, from the top 'Admin' point of view it is a headache, but surely as we are all members of the same Club the very least we can do is try and pull together on these rare occasions—these very rare occasions—instead of making the job even harder by blowing our tops.

Who said that the magazine is now becoming a load of old rubbish? Apart from the man who sits at home and writes the most outrageous attacks on everything. Here I hope that isn't me!!! I don't agree that it is a load of old rubbish, some of it is quite new; and I for one like to see any reports on meetings, with lists of results etc., as I find so little time to read the Motor-cycle Press that I have now stopped taking them altogether, so the magazine is the only contact I have these days. Which leads me to ask if it would be possible during the winter to print a list of road race circuits, with the names and addresses of Secretaries to which applications for entry forms should be made. Also perhaps the type of event/s held on each. Yes I know, more work for the poor office staff, but it was just an idea, and it would fill a couple of pages one month, and be a big help to a few, and maybe a little help to a lot. Could we also have details of any new regulations which may come into force as they become available?

So the old question of sidecars dropping oil has come up again, I thought with the regulations regarding drain plugs, sump studs etc., etc., this might have been a thing of the past, but I was wrong again worse luck. Please can anyone tell me why a sidecar machine should loose more oil than a solo? Anyone may get a split tank, I saw a 7R loose the lot once, in less time than it takes to tell, so that can't be a sidecar only fault. Is it that the sump of the modern outfit is so close to the ground that a bit of grit will take the sump plate off or dig a hole in the crank-case? Or perhaps they are so complex in construction that it is impossible to make good connections for the feed pipes. This could be expensive in motors let alone anything else. Or is it, and this may be nearer the truth, there is so much weight and friction in the oil pump that a lot of drivers have discarded the return side of the pump, and the used oil simply flows out of a little pipe at the back. We must all realise that oil on the course is a much greater hazard to a solo than a threewheeler, but even so the chair driver who lets oil on to the track through negligence is risking his own neck as much as anybody's, and I feel that it is up to all of us to make every attempt to make our machines safe to ride, and leave the circuit safe for the man who will follow us round. 'If in any doubt, wire it on', is my motto. And I find this does not only apply to oil and fuel pipes either.

On the question raised regarding longer or shorter races, from a personal point of view I enjoy the longer event, even if it means only one ride on the day. It gives a chap like me more time on the circuit, whereas if heats are run, with a final later in the day, I have lost interest in the event after three or four laps, and can only stay and watch my quicker friends have a second go later on. And with the longer race there is always the chance that the faster machinery will blow-up and give the lesser lights a chance of picking up a place, with a slow but reliable machine. On the other issue, of timekeepers, I like them. It is interesting over the years to see how one's speed compares from meeting to meeting. I have no pit crew, so no stop-watch, and this leaves me with

only race times by which to judge if the plot is going faster since the last modification, or if as I suspect, a lot slower. And anyway while there are timekeepers I know somebody is watching me.

Here's to next season, I regret that I may not be able to get to Brands Hatch for the Club meeting as I have for the past couple of years to Silverstone, but we shall see. Best wishes to all for Christmas and the New Year.

Yours etc., NESTON H. LEWIS, Bath, Somerset.

CLAIMS TO NATIONAL RECORD

The following Claims to National Record made by Mr. G. Brown at Greenham Common, Nr. Newbury, Berks. on 2nd to 4th November, 1966 will be placed before the Competitions Committee at its meeting on 15th December, 1966 for confirmation.

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1 Mile S.S.	31.436 secs.	114.5148 m.p.h.	184.2990 k.p.h.
Category B — 1,000 c.c. Class			
1 Mile S.S.	30.3465 secs.	119.0869 m.p.h.	191.6521 k.p.h.
1 Kilometre F.S.	14.1175 secs.	158.2384 m.p.h.	254.6605 k.p.h.
Category B — 1,300 c.c. Class			
1 Mile S.S.	31.057 secs.	186.5487 m.p.h.	315.9158 k.p.h.
1 Kilometre F.S.	14.9395 secs.	149.7327 m.p.h.	240.9719 k.p.h.
1 Kilometre S.S.	21.6255 secs.	103.4395 m.p.h.	166.4701 k.p.h.
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A Sketch on Diesel Engines—Part I

JOHN DENNY, *A.I.Mar.E.*

Having spent most of my life at sea it has entered my head on occasions to write about some, not all, of the experiences that have befallen your humble scribe. One of the reasons for not doing so is that I am not a good writer; another is that what interests me does not necessarily interest my fellow members. I therefore make no apology for the lack of literary finesse.

A major criterion of good design may be said thus:—

It has been shown that one of the best methods of obtaining intrinsic reliability in complicated machinery is to proceed by logical evolution from one successful design to another. During this process, the critical parameters proven in the original must be maintained in the new design.

I have found that on many occasions, confusion arises on this subject where a particular construction has taken place and then altered: nobody has thought to add a little helpful advice "because of . . ."

The marine diesel engine is no different from any other diesel engine. Progress is along logical lines to one success or failure to an improvement; from engines turning out 400 b.p.h. from four cylinders of 12" x 10" to twelve cylinders of 950 mm. x 1500 mm. giving 30,000 b.p.h. plus. Probably the first manufacturer of marine diesels was the firm Burmeister and Wain of Copenhagen in 1898 when they signed the licence contract for Dr. Rudolf Diesel's compression ignition engine. Production started in 1904. In order to make the machinery fit for marine use they had to overcome many problems, not the least of which was to run the engine slowly enough (about 120 r.p.m.)—the propeller speed is governed by a natural jaw—and to make it directly reversable enabling it to be coupled to the shaft without easily broken gearboxes. The first great success came when 'Selandia' made a good round trip thus becoming the first motor ship in the world.

As the current concept of ship propulsion is governed by a rotating propeller at approximately 120 r.p.m. (not high speed motor boats) it follows that the reciprocating action of a piston must be converted to suit this principle. It has been found that the easiest way to accomplish this is to connect the piston to a crankshaft.

Crankshaft

In the early 1900's the diesel was only capable of about 400 b.p.h. on a shaft of some 6" diameter. Progress was made from single cylinders where it was comparatively easy to forge a crank to two cylinders which was also within bounds of forging a solid billet of steel. As powers and cylinders got bigger and material improved it became rather more complicated to arrive at a satisfactory answer to forging all those different angles accurately enough. Then somebody wanted even more cylinders and more power—he was greedy, but willing to pay. It then occurred to an engineer that if he just made a lot of identical parts and stuck them together he could have any number of cylinders. So:—Fig.1

What a good idea! But man is prone to disagreement on everything with the result that someone had a better idea. So:—Fig. 2

But, just a minute! The main twisting stresses come on the journals between the cylinders! So, an even better idea:—Fig. 3

But now another engineer thinks that if he has opposing pistons instead of a cylinder and cover he can get more efficiency and power. So, another better idea. Oh dear! Fig. 4

Fortunately, most engine builders have adopted the second type of construction accepting that shrink fits have to be carefully calculated in order to accommodate the twisting stresses set up, but the whole being cheaper. Only Doxford of Sunderland and Harland and Woolf of Belfast are the main users of opposed pistons. To withstand the tremendous forces acting upon it, the grain flow of the material should be preserved as much as possible. At some time everyone has used wood and has made the mistake of not preserving the grain flow. Imagine this with forces multiplied many times and the damage and speed with which it can occur.

N.B. If the edges of the crankpin to the webbs were sharp there would be a great concentration of stress at these points. Also they are recessed into the webbs so as to allow the bearing surface maximum coverage.

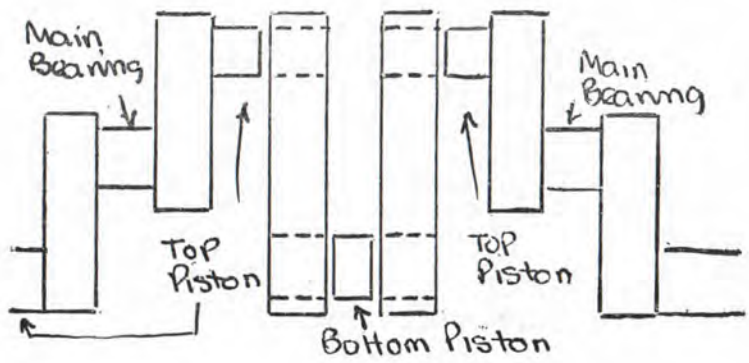
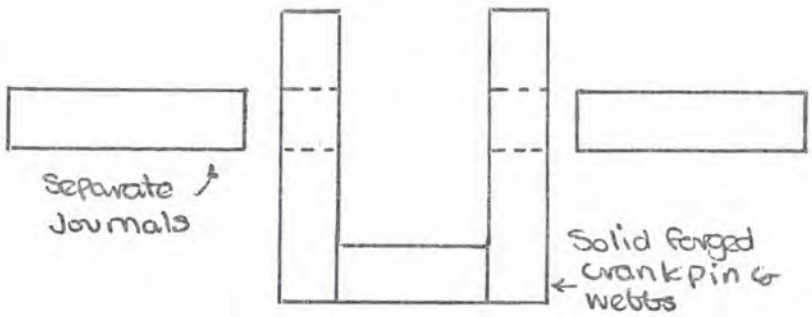
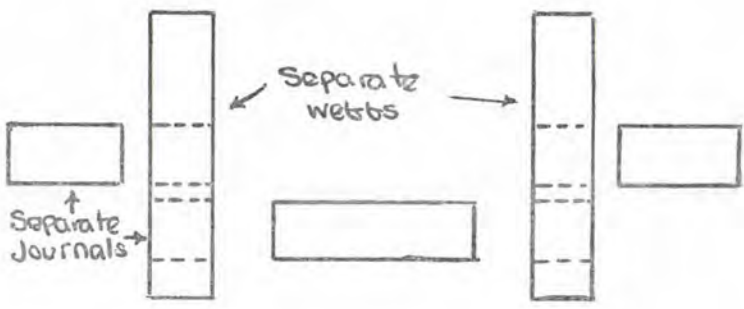
Consideration must be given to the main bearings; the further apart they are the less support they give to their main function. Therefore, anything that can bring them closer is incorporated, i.e. radius of pins and webbs being in the webbs and not on the pins or journals.

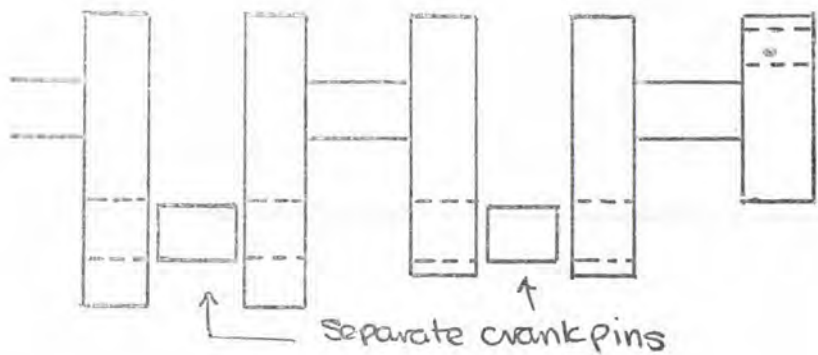
To lubricate our bearings there are at present two methods in common use:—

- 1) To feed oil under pressure to the main bearings and thence by holes drilled in the crankshaft to the large end bearings up the connecting rod to the crosshead bearings.
- 2) By oil under pressure to the main bearings only and by oil to a linkage on the crosshead to those bearings, down by holes to the connecting rod to the largest bearing.
This method eliminates the complexity of drilling holes in the highly stressed crankshaft but adds the linkage required to the crosshead.

Having found out the h.p. required, built a crank to accommodate a number of cylinders and lubricated it, we must now fit it into a bed-plate and main bearings and the problem of torsional vibration needs to be solved.

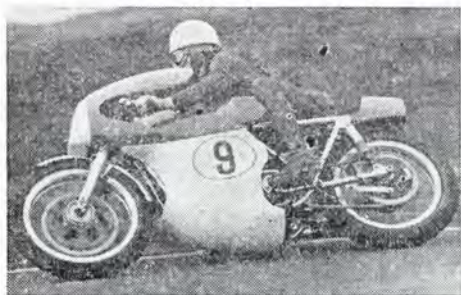
This article and subsequent parts are to be continued in subsequent issues of 'Bemsee'—Ed.





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It's a strange fact that road racers can also use different barrels for different sports. The size is a twelve bore and, of course, the sport is shooting. I took it up myself some two or more years ago simply to provide a respite from the eternal racing roar which daunts my life year in and year out, and soon found that many of my fellow members also had a similar interest. So it was only natural that we should join together in some memorable day's shooting; memorable not only for what we hit, but for what we didn't.

Imagine an August day at a particular venue. There were five of us who, having parked the cars were walking with guns loaded but broken—or on the safety catch with nothing in the breach in the case of the one who used an automatic—and were all crossing a small bridge on to the 'shoot' when a flock of at least a dozen pigeons appeared as if by magic out of the heavens, flying straight towards us. They didn't see us—pigeons have fantastic eyesight and can spot a human at a mile unless he is careful—because we were covered to the most part by the bridge, but panic followed while everyone closed their guns, aimed and fired. I use the word panic; it was much more an amusing frenzy in which we all missed. I suppose at least a dozen rounds were fired in about a second, it certainly sounded as though all hell had been let loose, and Frank's ack-ack gun made it all sound like a war film. Those pigeons must be still going!

Ever tried to catch a fox? They are truly crafty devils and one of the biggest menaces to farmers and breeders that there is. I suppose the worst I have known are wild cats which number high on the list of pests. Again we were out mainly after pigeon and rabbit and I had warned my companion for the day that there were fox around. He was just sighting on an overhead pigeon when he heard a faint rustle beside him and a fox slowly trotted past him at no more than a few feet away. He was so surprised that he didn't think of shooting it or the pigeon! War was declared from thence on. A little later that same day as dusk was beginning to settle in fast we spotted, on the top of a banking which happened to be outlined against the sky, what we thought to be a rabbit walking slowly into some brush. We had had a pretty unsuccessful day, marred by rain too, so we promptly gave chase. The distance was about a quarter of a mile from where we were standing so that we arrived about fifty yards away short of breath. The 'rabbit' turned out to be a wild cat who hadn't lifted its tail until then!

Pheasants keep a diary and know when the first of October comes round! Until that day there are plenty to be seen but suddenly they disappear. They also cover themselves extremely well by running with their heads down through the grass or what-have-you and where you thought they were they aren't. Likewise they refuse to get up on the wing until absolutely necessary and only do so if they can't get out of trouble by using their legs. If you are quick enough and are used to their tactics they are an easy shot—I find them difficult because I seldom get the opportunity to indulge myself—but putting them up needs a

score of beaters. Two of us tried it one Saturday afternoon. We carefully came from two sides on the unsuspecting pheasant hoping that we could put it up within range of the gun and in the opposite direction to either of us. We met in the middle of the field, guns broken, and within handshake distance, decided that it must have spotted us and run off, turned to walk back to edge of the field when suddenly my companion tripped over it and it flew off squarking. There were a few swear words emitted on that occasion but a lesson was learnt.

There are many laughable episodes in the life of the average hunter that makes enjoyable listening over a beer afterwards. It matters not to a rough-shooter if he shoots anything or not but of course it does help his morale a bit if he fills the bag. In this present day and age, opportunities to go shooting are rare and expensive and one of humble means must rely entirely on friends and acquaintances to provide him the room to take it seriously. Like road racing, one careless moment could be lethal to someone else and I am proud to number amongst my shooting friends, road racers, who appreciate more than the average person, the dangers of a misfire. There can be many disappointments on a day's shooting. Often the only 'game' one sees are pigeon flying so high it seems as though they must be wearing oxygen masks. Shoot a couple and they make a nice pie but one has to wait for another day when they come into the range of a gun!

Minimum Age for Riding Motor Cycles

When opening the new RAC/ACU Training Centre for Learner Motor Cyclists at Sittingbourne, Kent, on 23rd October last, Mr. Wilfred Andrews, the Chairman of the RAC, strongly criticised the proposal by the Minister of Transport to raise the minimum age for riding motor cycles from 16 to 17 years. He stressed that expansion of training and education along the lines of the RAC/ACU Training Scheme is the only answer to safeguard the lives of motor cyclists and scooterists. Referring to the statement by the Ministry of Transport that 54 per cent of the total number of motor cycle riders and scooterists killed or seriously injured in 1965 were under 20 years of age, Mr. Andrews said: 'It is a classic example of a statistic being used to suit a particular argument. Of course, a large number of motor cyclists killed were under 20—for the very simple reason that the majority of learner riders are under 20 and that inexperienced riders are the most likely to be involved in accidents'. A detailed memorandum expressing the RAC's objections to the proposal was subsequently submitted to the Minister of Transport by Lord Chesham, the Executive Vice-Chairman of the RAC, who stated in his letter to the Minister that he had been unable to support the recommendation concerning this matter made by the National Road Safety Advisory Council, of which he is a member. Lord Chesham emphasised that inexperience, and not age, is the vital factor in accidents involving young riders and he expressed the hope that the Minister would make an early announcement of plans to facilitate expansion of the RAC/ACU Training Scheme which had been the subject of an investigation by an official Working Party. Similar views have been expressed to the Minister by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents and the British Cycle and Motor Cycle Industries Association.

RAC PUBLISHES

The RAC, which has for many years pressed for a better system of signposting in this country, has today issued an up-to-the-minute booklet entitled "Know Your New British Traffic Signs."

This 12-page booklet gives descriptions and meanings of all the new road signs recommended in the recent Worboys Report and has been prepared with the co-operation of the Ministry of Transport and H.M. Stationery Office.

Produced in an eye-catching style, the booklet gives colour illustrations of 156 road signs and markings under seven separate headings: Regulatory, Warning, Directional, Light Signals, Road Markings, Informatory, and RAC Temporary Signs.

Particularly useful is the section headed Warning Signs—invariably triangle-shaped. These follow the Continental system, and should be readily understood at a brief glance.

All existing "regulatory" signs are scheduled to be changed by the end of 1967, and, within the next few years, most of Britain's 1,600,000 traffic signs will have been replaced by the new designs.

A spokesman for the RAC said to-day: "This booklet—the most up-to-date on the market to-day—is a boon to motorists who want to know about the new traffic signs."

"Know Your New British Traffic Signs" is free to all RAC members from any RAC Office.

The seasons over, there's bills unpaid,
I'm sorry to join the financial raid,
But in order to know where and when to go,
The marshalls are helped by the G.P.O.
Unfortunately they are paid for their job,
The amount not large is just a few bob,
The notices sent was eighty one,
At fourpence each you will not be done,
Amounts I think to twenty seven,
Bobs not pounds, don't send it to Devon,
My address is shown right at the top,
Remember I was once a Cop,
So I won't twist, but should you find,
A detailed account is on your mind,
I will send it immediately and without fail,
Almost by return of the mail.
I must thank you for the jolly time,
I've had this season wet or fine,
I know your work is very hard,
And hope our efforts met the card,
Come next year we'll be back again,
I only hope we'll see less rain,
So finally to end this silly ditty,
I hope you'll find my method witty,
A nicer way of getting a bill,
Instead of starting 'unless, I will'.

Bert Beavis.

Typical of Many

HARRY DARBY

David Darby is 20 in January and is at present studying to become a member of the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors. His only hobby is motor cycle racing and his ambition, after watching this year's M.G.P. (1966) is to start and finish in a subsequent Manx.

Along with Stanley Woods, Jimmy Simpson and Charlie Dodson, one of the other famous riders I watched on the Isle of Man during my early days of spectating was Jimmy Guthrie. Now, of course, there is a Jimmy Guthrie jr., having ridden brilliantly on the same island this year, and along with a new generation of competitors is my son.

My own ambition to ride a racing machine in competition has never been realised, and probably never will—unless I have a couple of bob's worth with Charles Mortimer. Before the war I was unable to afford to race and after it, my first vehicle had four wheels and you pushed it, very carefully, or the contents would cry loud and long. But more recently the contents of that pram has shown an interest in motor cycling and in 1964 he was 17 and old enough for a 50/- Royal Enfield which was ridden in a local field.

The Enfield was replaced by a 197 James, a 125 Bantam and, finally, a 175 Gilera; by then the "bug" which bit me in the 30's had caught my son. He suggested selling the Gilera, scratching together some cash to buy a racing machine, join Bemsee and have a season's racing the following year. It was agreed, though naturally his mother was definitely not "with us."

We lost money on selling the Gilera to start with. Leathers were bought on the "drip feed" payments system and Father Christmas became a useful benefactor of other gear. In October, 1964 Ken Griffiths, of Cardiff, advertised his 125 c.c. F III Ducati. I went to see the machine and it really was "immaculate" and a very good buy. It arrived at home, but we had nowhere to ride it until a friend offered us the use of an old air-strip on his land. It was about 300 yards long and plenty wide enough for practice.

We pushed the Ducati two miles each way four or five times for practice before the Bemsee practice day came round in March. It was our first appearance at a proper circuit. Transport was provided by a fellow Bemsee member, Peter Morgan, of Cardiff whose mini van was heavily laden with our machine, his Greeves Silverstone, plus fairings and other gear. All went well at the practice and our next visit to Silverstone was in April.

This time "Dad" was rather the more nervous. I gave all kinds of instructions—but I need not have worried. There were 41 riders and David made a good start and just circulated fast for about 14 laps and, partly due to retirements etc., finished about 14th.

Next came the Barry club's Llandow meeting, only a mile or so from home. We had hired the circuit before the meeting and did a lot of practising laps; and very much to my surprise, we finished "in the money"—sixth place for £1. In the eight lap race, Dennis Trollope (Honda) passed us on about the fourth or fifth lap, showing the Ducati very slow by comparison, but it handled well and was utterly reliable. No money had been spent on it—not even for a plug—so far.

Our next meeting was at Little Rissington, a beautiful riders circuit, in two meetings here we learnt more than anywhere else. In seven rides that season, David only really raced once and it was there. On other occasions he just rode fast, as opposed to racing. But at the first Little Rissington meeting he was very much a learner. His heat was the easiest of the three (mostly newcomers) and he finished third with a Bantam breathing down his neck. He was about seventh in the final.

Then on to Silverstone again where another lesson was taken—so silly, but you have to put petrol in the tank to keep going; he ran out on lap four. Of course "Dad" was a "clot" for asking if there was enough petrol in the tank when arriving in the paddock.

We later managed to get an entry for a national meeting at Castle Coombe and so at 3 a.m. one Saturday morning we set off in a Morris 1000 shooting brake and arrived in time for breakfast at the club house. By 9 a.m. we were ready for practice and I very soon found the answer to a problem which had been puzzling me on the last few occasions we had started up the motor. As the throttle was tweaked a puff of blue smoke would come from the crankcase breather pipe. The motor still revved to 10,200, however. But on the first lap of practice, when changing down, the engine locked solid. We discovered that both inlet and exhaust clearances were "cricket pitch length" and there was a hole in the piston.

Our bill ran up to £20, but we were ready for the next meeting at Little Rissington where, in practice, the Ducati suddenly began to issue a smoke screen and the inside of the megaphone became wet with oil. It happened when using maximum revs for the first time up the back straight. We had a look at the new rings and piston, both were OK but wet with oil. So we decided to race on, and, in fact, a ride in the final was missed by just one place. Even signals from me were forgotten in the excitement of chasing a Honda ahead.

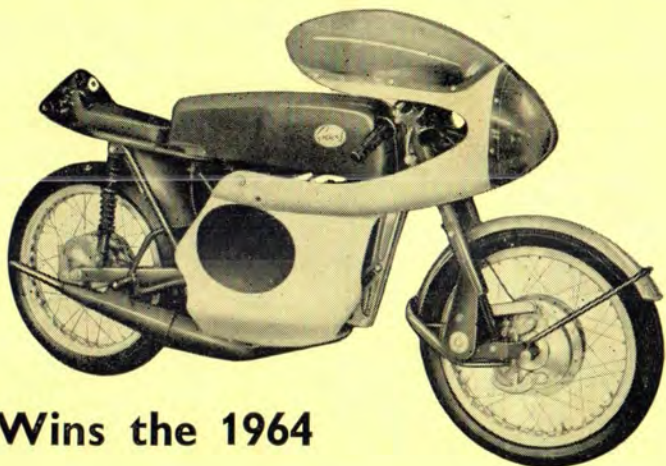
The bike was running well, in spite of the smoke, and at Silverstone the machine's previous owner discovered the fault. A tiny fracture in the bottom of the inlet rocker box caused a bubble of air in the oil. A do-it-yourself fibre-glass kit from John Hartle's spares van did the trick. Rain poured down that day, but we had a dice with another Honda, which we passed but lost out to when the throttle would not open fully on the last couple of laps.

Early in 1966 the Ducati was sold and we had the loan of a 203 c.c. MV for two Llandow meetings, but now that has also been sold and we are just waiting for something to turn up for 1967 in our price range.



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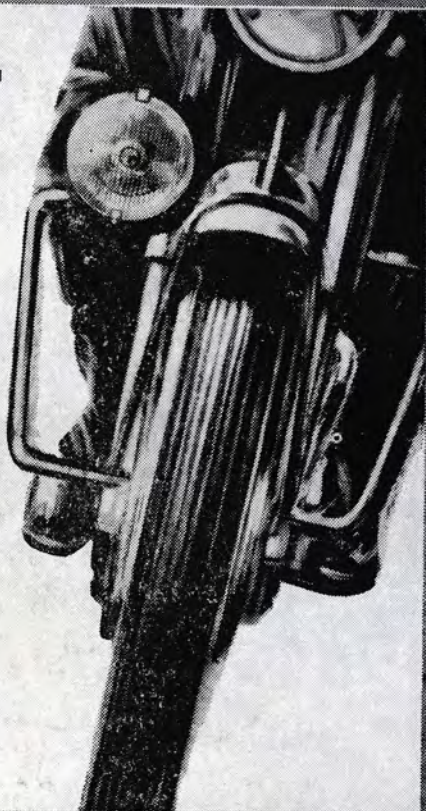
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