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Journal of British Motor Cycle Racing Club
PO Box 75 Kingston upon Thames Surrey

FOR WANT OF A NAIL

The moral of the tale of the lost kingdom if well known. It very nearly happened to the club last month: practice time came but not the doctor!

It probably arose because the postal strike made written contact with the hospital at Norwich impossible. It may have been confusion that two motor cycle race meetings occurred at Snetterton on the same weekend, or it may have been a simple case of memory. Whatever it was a thousand competitors, mechanics, entrants, officials and marshals very nearly went home without ever starting the meeting.

It underlines a factor too often discounted that we all have our achilles heel. Every race meeting has to have a qualified doctor in attendance throughout practice and racing. There are far too few doctors, and one day! Thanks to Doc. Hamilton, who lives locally, we were able to start proceedings two hours late, and the hospital staff kindly arranged a substitute at the last moment: to both substitute doctors our sincere thanks are extended.

It happened once before about 10 years ago. Then the United States Air Force stepped in. There is now a doctor somewhere in the States with a Chief Medical Officer armband of BMCRC adorning his surgery.

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

NOTICE is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of British Motor Cycle Racing Club Limited will take place on Friday, 23rd April, 1971, at 7.30 p.m. at the White Lion Public House, 16 Northington Street, London, W.C.1.

Meanwhile make a note of this important date. The White Lion is close to Grays Inn Road with ease of access and plenty of parking space.

CRYSTAL PALACE DECISION.

After literally wrangling over the matter for months we have at last achieved our objective of obtaining a permit for the annual race meeting at Crystal Palace.

Originally scheduled for the Bank Holiday Monday in August it was changed to allow the athletic people to run an international on the day. By then the calendar was full and alternative dates either clashed with other events or with our own club arrangements. Finally the GLC allotted 4th September, only to have the application rejected by the ACU because of a clash with the National meeting at Castle Coomb - too near by 3 miles to avoid the 100 mile distance limit.

Now all is resolved and we shall be staging a closed to club affair for the GLC on Saturday 4th September. The programme looks like being as interesting as 1970 with the usual solo and sidecar races, plus the final round of the club team match race for members of the Sponsors Association.

This means, of course, that the Club Championships will be over 12 meetings instead of the 11 of 1970, as will the Shell Production Machine Championship.

The Sporting Scene

By the turn of the year Denis 'Jenks' Jenkinson had decided that another member might like to inherit his racing clothing, and so Mutual Aid offered a 'set of leathers, tatty but not torn, fit a rider about 5ft 3in if any rider is that small.' But Jenks never gave up riding even though he since earned fame (and still does) as a sporting motoring journalist. He once turned up at Long Marston sprint on a big Vinny, passengered Eric Oliver again in an historic turn out by the pair at Ramsgate's famous quarter mile sprint in the sixties, did the same at Silverstone in 1965 and was last seen (!) taking the long jump at the Press Trial at Brands in November 1970. This was the time of 'Doppelweltmeister' Geoff Duke whose long reign at the top was still in its Norton heyday; when the Editor of 'Bemsee' described John Surtees (Junior) as an up and coming youngster and star of the future - a most prophetic observation, for little did he realise the truth of the statement! John was still then the ballast of J. Surtees Senior's Vincent outfit, and dad true to form was in the scrum lambasting all and sundry. Wrote Jack to the club on the subject of an 'invitation race' arguing that as they appeared in the regulations for the Hutchinson 100 meeting, he considered that a driver should not be called upon to pay a fee to enter a race after he had been invited to ride. The Club agreed, but only to modify the wording, not to waive the fee.

About TT time the defunct Swiss Grand Prix saw a lone Englishman riding in the 250 class with fingers metaphorically crossed in the hope that a patched fuel tank would hold. It did and got Cecil Sandford fifth berth in foul weather against a horde of Moto Guzzi's. Sandford turned out

again in the 350 race which included Duke on the works 'Featherbed' Norton, which I believe had a 16 inch rear tyre that year. Les Graham (there being no 350 MV) had a private Bracebridge Street model. Les, always canny in the wet, kept ahead for four laps, was overhauled by Duke on drying roads, but got to the front again when the factory Norton called it a day. He had a clean run home to his second successive victory in Switzerland. No easy task either. The course included tramlines and racing down one side of the road, round a hairpin and back down the other. Professional road racer, journalist and golfer of no mean repute, Fergus Anderson took the Moto Guzzi to a convincing win the the 500 race next day, blowing off Duke (Norton) Graham (MV) and Guzzi team-mate Lorenzetti. Eric Oliver looked set for a chair victory until the outfit shed a chain very inconvenient!

Team match racing at Crystal Palace in 1970 was not entirely new (it's just the way you do it, Ed.) for in early summer Brands and Cadwell held a challenge match between teams from each circuit. The contest took place at Brands who won by 49 points to 19. Star of the meeting was Harry Pearce who rode AJS and was well known on the early G45 Matchless twins. He championed Cadwell on that day scoring 12 of the points total. Surtees took part finishing well up.

April saw Boreham Wood as the scene for racing. Roland Pike, the arch advocate of the Rudge, won the 250 race easily at 74.5 mph, then took his 350 7R - we called it the Boy Racer - and recorded his second win of the day at 81.3 mph in the first of the 350 heats. But Robin Sherry ultimately put up the fastest lap in the class at 85.5 mph. The race including Pike, Max Klein and Les Dear. The Surtees father and son team got second berth in the chair race which Cyril Smith

(CONTINUED AFTER ACCOUNTS.)

won on the Norton outfit. What fun the handicap race must have been. They usually took place in three sections. Section 1 before the race with all and sundry arguing the toss over the timekeepers handicapping; Section 2, the race, which saw Bill Boddice blast off the Smith pair; Section 3 being the 'I told you so' comments made, if possible to the timekeeper, the clerk of the course, the starter and anybody else who could be got at. Great fun!!! For the record Sid Barnett saw off George Brown (yes he used to race as well as sprint) and Phil Heath in that order. George got revenge by making fastest lap and winning the 1000cc event on, naturally, a big twin Vincent.

Long races by today's standards marked the Continental meeting at Floreffe. It took Cecil Sandford 1 hour 2 min 29.2 sec. to convince Les Graham that he, not Les, was destined for the chequered flag. Les, that year, was Velocette mounted in the 350 class which included Bill Doran (AJS) and Bill Lomas. Les took the lap record at 85.03 mph. Oliver thrilled the crowd when the outfit failed to fire at the start but in typical Oliver fashion he was ninth on lap 1, third by lap 2, got the lead and won the 8 lapper in 56 minutes. Irishman Reg Armstrong (Norton) collected 500 honours with Bill Doran (AJS Porcupine) second.

Goodwood: the one and only motor cycle meeting took place there on Saturday 14th April in fine weather. Curiously enough the magazine had been filled with information and comment about this great day for many months beforehand. After it was all over reams of stuff appeared in the form of comment, mostly about organisation. Precious little information on the actual racing was printed but this much was obvious, Norton still remained in ascendancy over AJS. Although Bill Doran got in front of Duke, it was the latter

who triumphed winning the fastest race at 87.08 mph. Slowest race was the vintage affair won by over half a minute by Mike Tomkinson (Velocette) at 66.61 mph. Tuner Ray Petty came fourth in the 250 in a period when most 250 races were won by Maurice Cann and the fabulous 250 Moto Guzzi. Bill Boddice collared the sidecar race. Published results showed that a special Vintage award went to 'Either A. McKay or J.D. McKay'. We wonder if the result was ever declared.

Finally to an event once high in the annual calendar - the hill climb at Shelsley Walsh in Worcestershire. This narrow, steep track with a vicious Ess bend part way up is undoubtedly the classis course. For two years George Brown (Vincent) had held the honour of ftd, the ultimate accolade in hill climbing, at 37.13 sec. The reckoning was that the car's improvement and a reduction in power in the Vincent could turn the tables. BMCRC's team was George, Bill Ryan (500 WR Special) and Les Graham (350 Velocette). For Midland Automobile Club the team was Dennis Poore, Ken Wharton and Sidney Allard. Wharton already held the car record only 0.13 sec. behind George at 37.27 sec. Bill Ryan's entrant was Derry Preston Cobb of Greeves fame. With the Vincent below par George made only 38.15 sec. on his first climb and the second was in the 'fifties'. The course is never more than about 10 feet wide and blind for most of the way, with a nasty manhole cover at the exit to the Esses which is just on the correct line, but a devil if you go over it. At the hill top there is about 60 yards of tarmac to stop from over 100 mph before following the cart track over the brow of the hill and down the other side with a hedge looming up you know what I mean! So in talking about slowness its hardly the correct word. But as nearly always happened nothing on two wheels could touch George. Les Graham's Velo clocked in at 42.07 and Bill Ryan 39.50s. Pip Harris (596 Norton sc) did 42.65 and Bill Boddice came second - great Shelsley supporters these two - with Cyril Smith half a second

slower in third berth. Dennis Poore, now of course Pa Norton of the seventies, got the blown 4 litre Alfa up in 37.55s and Ken Wharton got the only under 37 time of the day at 36.62 to re-claim the record for the car brigade. George would have to wait 11 years before he broke his bike record, but break it he did, but that is another tale.

Dennis Bates

---oOo---

ODD JOTTINGS

Public Relations man Allan Robinson lost no time in getting himself organised once the postal strike began. Always motor cycle minded Allan founded and operated one of the licenced delivery services - motor cycle powered, of course - with marked financial success.

Bert Cope, scrutineer, has had pleurisy but hopes to be fit again shortly.

Bill Rose organising his flight to the Isle of Man for the TT on 11th June has a sixty seat Argonaut arranged. You'll find Bill at Rosedene Cottage, Woldingham, Surrey. But hurry.

Roy Pike one of our senior marshals, and Margaret catch our sole lady lap scorer, have announced their engagement. Which reminds us that Julie Williams who helped Margaret last season has transferred to race control telephones so Margaret is looking for a companion in the timekeeping box. Congenial work in the dry. Applications to the Clerk of the Course next race day.

9 Prestwood Close,
Benfleet,
Essex.

13th January 1971.

Dear Sir,

Congratulations to Bemsee for having sorted out it's finances, and about 25 cheers for Shell and the club for the new production formula. This is great news and a real incentive for the smaller classes.

The small bikes may lack the immediate commercial attraction of their bigger brethren, but it's good to see that it's been recognised that this isn't necessarily what club racing is about.

One thought: the Crystal Palace meeting must cater for 250's, not being restricted to over 250's as before, otherwise the intended fairness is lost.

Long live the class war!

(Sgd) JIM EVANS.

After this Issue, no more Magazines or Regulations will be sent until you have paid your 1971 Subscriptions

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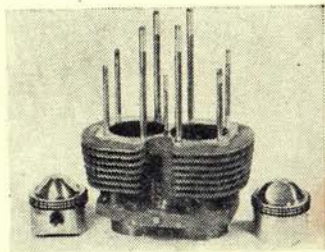
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