



Benisee

THE JOURNAL OF THE
BRITISH MOTOR CYCLE RACING CLUB

Vol. 6. No. 4. APRIL, 1953 ONE SHILLING



The late Ambrosini (Benelli) near Hillbery during the 1951 Lightweight T.T.

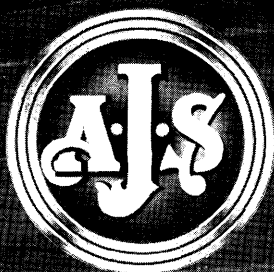
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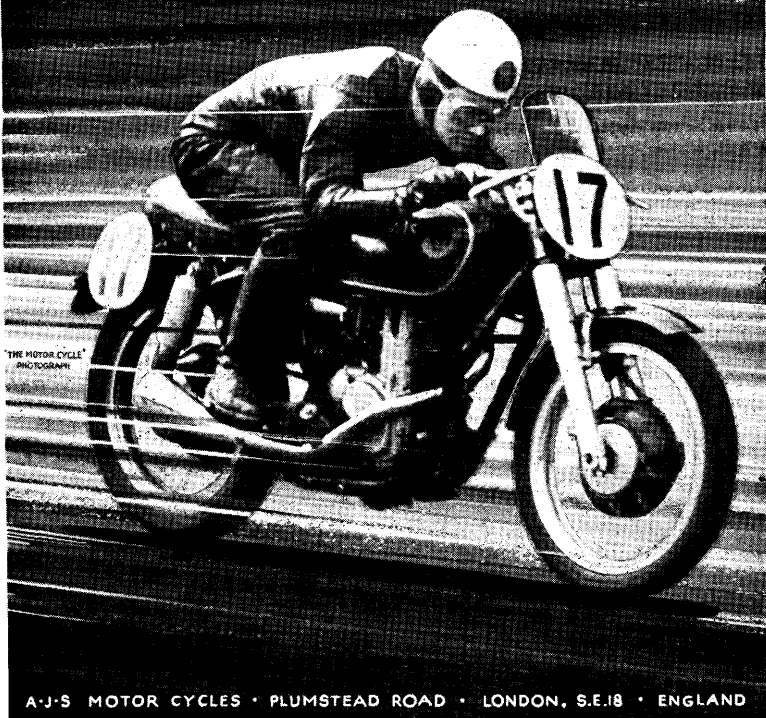
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Bemsee

Vol. 6. No. 4 — April, 1953

EDITOR:

L. R. HIGGINS

THE BRITISH MOTOR CYCLE RACING CLUB

PRESIDENT: Sir Algernon Guinness, Bt.

VICE-PRESIDENTS: Professor A. M. Low, D.Sc., A.C.G.I., E. C. E. Baragwanath,
H. L. Daniell, C. A. Lewis.

CHAIRMAN: N. B. Pope

VICE-CHAIRMAN: A. H. Taylor

SECRETARY: R. C. Walker, 2 Wilton Mews, Wilton Street, London, S.W.1

EDITORIAL

The Annual General Meeting

OUT OF A MEMBERSHIP of more than seven-hundred only forty people attended the Annual General Meeting in February. Admittedly, a great number of members are too far away to be able to attend, and that other reasons prevent various other members, but there must be more than forty within a thirty mile radius of Trafalgar Square who could have attended what is an important function, the occasion on which personal opinion can be voiced and discussed. The attendance of forty is near enough to that of other years. Evidently members are content with the Committee and well satisfied with the Club's affairs. The grumbles heard throughout the year can only be hot air bubbles rising to the surface to burst.

Silverstone

Our first road race meeting of the year takes place on Saturday, April 18. Entries lists are full and, provided the weather is not unkind, a good day's racing is assured.

The Ulster M.C.C. have a very nice maxim, "The competitor is the most important person at the meeting." It would be a pretty compliment to those who work so hard to make a race meeting a success, if Competitors thought of the organisers as "the most important people at the meeting."

Taken by and large race meetings run with extra-ordinary smoothness. Now you Marshals, don't harras the Competitors unduly, he doesn't deliberately work on his machine to delay the start of the race. And Competitors, please don't run over the Marshals, they have to try and keep to a time schedule.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

THE A.G.M. of B.M.C.R.C. Ltd., was held at the R.A.C. on February 27 at 7-30 p.m. It was followed, after a short interval by the A.G.M. of the Club. During the interval a hamper of food from Mrs. Whorwood, now in New Zealand, which arrived too late for the Annual Dinner Raffle, was auctioned. A sum of £6-6-4d. was raised for the Benevolent Fund.

The business of the Company meeting was carried through quickly and in an orderly manner under the Chairmanship of Mr. Noel Pope. With the exception of Mr. E. C. E. Baragwanath the directors were re-elected. Mr. Baragwanath had resigned; his resignation was accepted with regret and a vote of thanks and an appreciation paid to him for his past services.

The A.G.M. of the Club was opened by Mr. Noel Pope, who then made way for Professor Low, under whose chairmanship the meeting continued. A notable absentee was Mr. H. L. Daniell, unavoidably kept away by illness.

Sir Algernon Guinness was unanimously re-elected President of the Club. Vice-Presidents Prof. A. M. Low, E. C. E. Baragwanath, H. L. Daniell and C. A. Lewis were re-elected.

In appreciation of his services to the Club "Barry" was elected a life member.

The meeting was concluded at 9-30 p.m. after some discussion had ranged around the "Hutchinson Hundred," Shelsley Hill Club and Brighton Speed Trials. The question of the 2½% levy raised by the A.C.U. was the subject for discussion in connection with the two latter named events and the matter eventually left to the Committee to handle.

It was pointed out that the Hutchinson Hundred this year would be the Silver Jubilee of that event. The Committee stated that they had in mind a suitable programme. The race for the Mellano Trophy would be on different lines to that of last year.

Mr. Denis Jenkinson wanted the "Hutchinson 100" to be a free-for-all event, with no bans, so that dope-fed engines and superchargers would be permissible. It was pointed out that this meeting has International status and, therefore, run under F.I.M. road racing regulations which ban forced induction and alcohol fuels. International status for the event had been

obtained with difficulty and the Committee did not wish to forego it.

Forty members, including the Committee, attended. The Secretary's report for the year, was adopted.

Secretary's Report.

Before embarking on a review of the Club's activities over the past 12 months, I feel a word should be said about those whom you elected last year to look after the interests of this Club. There is no doubt that each member of the Committee has worked hard in your interests, that some have found it impossible to attend every meeting of the Board and Club owing to illness or business reasons cannot of course be helped. Various plans have been devised to save the Club money in the organisation of our recent Silverstone meetings, and these have met with marked success and have helped to maintain our position as the premier motor-cycle racing club in the country. Individual attendances at Committee Meetings have been as follows:—

N. B. Pope	- 12
E. C. E. Baragwanath	- 12
L. G. Jarman	- 12
A. H. Taylor	- 11
J. O. Roebuck	- 9
L. L. Hunt	- 9
K. Rickard	- 9
H. L. Daniell	- 9
D. J. H. Glover	- 8
E. Cobbold	- 3

Mr. Hunt joined the Board of Directors at the end of February, and Mr. Cobbold was co-opted on to the Committee last November. It should be noted that most of the above named also served on one or more of the numerous Sub-Committees.

During the year under review the Club's activities in the promotion of racing events increased considerably and we saw two additional events organised for the benefit of our members. These were, the revival of a Club Meeting, in the form of "Trophy Day" at Silverstone in June, which was generally acknowledged to have been one of the most enjoyable meetings we have put on since the Brooklands days and therefore did much to improve the Club spirit; and we participated with the Brighton & Hove M.C., after a lapse of a number of years, in the joint running of a motor-cycle class at the International Speed Trials last September. This gave an

opportunity to that comparatively small and specialist band of our members to take part in an interesting but apparently diminishing branch of our sport. Another type of meeting engaging the Club's attention was the Shelsley Walsh hill climb, organised in co-operation with the Midland Automobile Club, and always proves to be one of the most enjoyable events even if support is comparatively small; there is little doubt that the reason for this is the rather high entry fee involved, and your Committee is therefore negotiating with Midland Automobile Club in order that this fee may be in some way reduced. Of our two hardy annuals, "Motor Cycling's Saturday" and the "Hutchinson 100," little need be said other than the former was run off under near perfect conditions, while the "Hutch" was almost completely washed out and, I am sorry to report, with consequent financial loss to the Club. This was the more regrettable in view of the fact that it was the first occasion on which we have ever organised a meeting under International permit, although it may be considered a compliment to our powers of organisation and control that we were permitted to rise to this status.

On the social side there have been two main functions, the Annual Dinner in December and a Film Show during the week of the Motor-Cycle Show. Although the latter was well attended, the Dinner, a social success, was worthy of greater support by our members generally. I must urge every one of you to consider if it is not possible to pledge more support to this main social function of the year.

Perhaps the most progressive step that has been taken outside racing matters, is the appointment of approved Area Representatives which it is felt will do much to assist a large percentage of our members and give them greater interest in Club matters. It is envisaged that the Representatives in charge of these "cells" will call occasional meetings for the purpose of general discussion, or some other form of entertainment. At the same time it may be said that they will work in the capacity of liaison officers and pass on to the Secretary constructive criticisms and suggestions. This should be of particular interest to those of our members who reside outside the Home Counties and particularly in the northern parts of the country. By this co-operation it is considered that the Committee may find ways and means of expanding the Club's present programme of race meetings.

As you will have already seen, costs continue to increase, and under these circumstances you will appreciate it is not possible to make reductions in the annual subscription or by way of entry fees to race meetings, etc. You may, however, rest assured that a sharp eye is being kept on expenditure and we are always seeking ways and means of bringing about further economies without damaging the prestige and well being of the Club in general.

Since the last A.G.M. Mr. L. R. Higgins has taken over the Editorship of the Club's journal *Bemsee* and has been responsible for bringing about a number of improvements which have undoubtedly raised the already high standard of this publication and added many new matters of interest to readers. With this in mind, therefore, it is perhaps unfortunate that there should have been such a sharp rise in production costs, and efforts will be made to try and reduce these so far as possible during the present year. One way in which present production costs might be reduced is by increasing the circulation of our journal outside our own membership. You will have noted that the price of *Bemsee* is marked at one shilling and should it be possible to promote a mailing list of fair proportion at a charge of one shilling per copy plus postage, the present deficit might well be reduced if not entirely avoided in future years.

In conclusion, I wish to place on record our great appreciation and thanks to those little heard of persons who have done so much to help us in the past. In particular, Mr. J. D. Ferguson, our Auditor, on whom many calls have been made; the Chief M.O. of our Silverstone Races, Mr. Gowland Hopkins; member Dr. Gordon Hadfield, without whose invaluable services we should be the poorer, and Mr. J. D. Brown, Track Manager at Silverstone, who must surely be one of the most co-operative of people. In addition let us not forget the R.A.C. who allow us the use of this room, *gratis*, not only for our A.G.M. but also at least 12 times per year for meetings of your Committee. For this service we are duly appreciative and grateful. Lastly, but by no means least, it seems that our old friend Baragwanath has, after many years of faithful service, decided not to stand against for re-election. We have much to be grateful for, not least of which is his constant willingness to assist in any manner in which he could and perhaps at times to the detriment of his health.

MARSHAL'S MUSINGS

W. G. BILL JARMAN

As this issue is due to reach you during the first week in April, may I take this chance to indicate the various "King-pins" who will be on duty of 1953. It should be noted that the names given below are the Senior Marshals. They are assisted by a fine team of men of first class calibre but space does not permit the printing of the whole "Marshal Plan." I have already told you that Allan Taylor has volunteered to help me and between us we hope to satisfy the Competitors, stewards, spectators and the Clerk of the Course, R. C. Bob Walker, who is far more particular than people realize. All the better, it keeps us on our toes and we are never satisfied.

Paddock—Messrs. Huxley, Goodall, Winter and Moore.

Pits—Messrs. Headlam, Herbert and Trevor-Smith.

Course Car—E. Cabby Cooper & Son. Solo T.M.—Don McBain and Ken Rickard.

Towing—Hugh Wildman and Joe Wright.

Corners & Sectors—Bill Mould and Team (8) M.P.

Flags & Phones—L. E. Baker & Co. M.B.M.C.C.

Course—Messrs. Walker and Tisdall.

Laps & Spots—Messrs. Cheesewright and Bates

Gate to Track—Messrs. Hopgood and Co.

Track Crdssing—Messrs. Mills and Amos.

Control Office—Dick Bryant's team.

Bridge—L. A. Monagham & Co.

Apart from the foregoing, don't forget the team of men and women who operate with Messrs. Hunt, Roebuck, Rickard and Cobbold. This bonny band of brigands look after Programmes, Security and Parks, etc. Back room boys who know most of the answers and to whom the B.M.C.R.C. owe a debt of gratitude for their fine job on the outside of the circuit.

To the gentlemen of the Technical Press who know and understand my language, we have a common bond of mutual interest. Even the youngest members realize that any criticism is friendly and constructive, written or said by people who know their subject. I am sorry I cannot include the lay press who are more interested in news and scoops rather than technical information which all true motorcyclists get from their "books." Things

are very different on the Continent where a big motorcycle event becomes front page news backed up by lots of pictures. Curious isn't it?

I have been asked to emphasize to Competitors and Marshals that the return route to the Pits and Paddock is via the runway at Copse Corner, i.e. the first bend *after* the footbridge where we start and finish. The yellow flags will be used as a slow down signal and the reds will be displayed at the point where the runway intersects with the circuit. One other point, that is practising as per Regulation 24. The hours are agreed and fixed by arrangement with all the people concerned and are as follows:—

10 a.m. to 12 noon

2 p.m. to 4 p.m.

plus the approved hard luck cases from 4 p.m. to 4.45 p.m. The "Barrow Boys" and the Championship Classes will have sessions on their own between 2 p.m. and 3 p.m. Every driver has to complete three practice laps and this is recorded (a) in the bus and (b) on his card. The cards are issued by the Scrutineer and serve three useful functions, so do not treat them as mere scraps of paper. If your card is all in order at the conclusion of practice you will get a programme which must not be allowed to fall into unauthorised hands—you know why.

To all of you, a happy couple of days and trouble-free racing with all you wish yourselves. The trophies and prize money are worth about £1,000 spread out as well as the Committee can scheme.

I am happy to report that an increasing number of men are giving up two days to help with the administration of an event which has become a classic. To all these good types, the B.M.C.R.C. say a sincere "thank you" and trust you get much mental satisfaction from doing a good job of work. These big events cannot be run without your help and the racing men are the first to pay tribute to you when they get the chance.

May I conclude by expressing an appreciation on behalf of Mrs. Jarman—known as Linda to most of you—for all the enquiries, letters and flowers, etc. during January and February. She is determined to be fighting fit for the Grid Ballot at Silverstone preceded by a day on the cards during practice.

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GREATER SKID RESISTANCE,
REDUCED WHEEL SPIN
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The upper cylinder cannot be effectively lubricated by ordinary lubrication methods. Carburool in your petrol takes care of this—preventing sticking valves, over-carbonisation and *acid action* in the upper cylinder. Only Carburool guarantees this protection—so be sure you get the genuine article!



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Easily carried in
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of Dextrol super-quality motor, tractor and industrial oils.



MANX MISCELLANY

BILL SALMOND

THANKS to the composer who is taking great care to read my handwriting and set this up with superb accuracy, plus the Editor's confident scrubbing of the usual proof-reading, I am able to sneak this in long after the "approved" deadline and give out on the very welcome visits of the B.M.W., Norton and N.S.U. outfits to the T.T. course recently.

It all started—I might almost say "as usual"—with a phone call from *Motor Cycling's* Bob Holliday who has, I truly believe, a telephoto lens fitted to his middle ear. This warned me of the arrival of Germany's Walter Zeller and a brand new R68 B.M.W. 600 twin. With legendary thoroughness this healthy looking character immediately set out to do six laps per day for three weeks! Noticeable characteristics were a good command of English, a sense of humour and an attendant mechanic who rarely spoke and flitted about so abruptly that as I never did hear his name I personally christened 'Herr Fledermaus' which at least seemed to amuse him.

When Bob Holliday flew over to see what was cooking, the *Castle Mona* Hotel began to take on quite a Race Week atmosphere which did surely gladden the heart. You have probably read all about Bob's findings in *Motor Cycling* and it only remains for me to add that if any of you bump into Zeller in June you will, I think, like his merry and ready laugh and his company.

Within forty eight hours my eyes were popping again at the arrival of Ken Kavanagh, Ray Amm, Artie Bell and Norton's enthusiastic Managing Director, Gilbert Smith plus a couple of bikes. Whoa there! one of them was the "Streamliner." Needless to say I was fairly seething with interest and curiosity when I found myself in local "Castrol"-Rep. Harry Buxton's car with Gilbert Smith and Harry in the front seat and Artie Bell and I in the back. Ye Gods, how much nearer could an enthusiast get to Heaven? Camera nearly hopping on the seat beside me and Rowell's enclosed van following behind with Ken, Ray and the bikes inside with Artie's pet engineer, Oliver Nelson, watching the streamliner like an orchid grower with a new specie.

As we left Union Mills and headed for "The Hawthorn" pub area, I was really delighted to see that Artie Bell has at last regained some slight use of the

lower half of his right arm, so much so in fact that I immediately got his blessing to letting you characters know too. The fact that the top half gives constant pain only emphasises what a wonderful sportsman Artie is. May he be rewarded with a full recovery, and a quick one.

When the *rendezvous* was reached the blow fell for me, for as I was reaching for my camera Gilbert said "Sorry Bill—no photographs." Understandable of course, so I did not beef for more than about a quarter of an hour and was finally consoled with the Great Man assuring me that we could all take as many as we liked when it appears in practising in a few weeks time. Still it is good to know that the experts were sufficiently satisfied to declare that they would be bringing it back, and as far as I was concerned I was very impressed and it is good to know that British firms are always good to have a go for the top honours.

Sorry if I tantalise, but official sanction has not yet been triggered on any more and in any case you would not want *Bemsee* to tip off the "foreign menace" would you?

Talking of the "foreign menace," within a day or two of Norton's departure, down the gang plank came a couple of N.S.U. "Max" 250s, wheeled by Bill Lomas and Werner Haas, with N.S.U. Factory Tester Gerd Reinhardt and Racing Manager Ernst-Gustav Germer. By the way, in case you did not know, the river Neckar in S.W. Germany joins the river Sulm and the town there is called NeckarSulm—get it? That, of course being where the N.S.U. factory lives.

Hotfoot, came Dennis Hardwick from *Motor Cycling's* Birmingham office, so out on the course we all went once more and as by the time you read this Dennis will have told you all about it I will only add that after a run apiece on Bill Lomas' N.S.U. I personally felt that £160 in Germany gets you a better motorcycle in every way than it does in the good old U.K. Fortunes of war and necessary retooling are a large part of the answer of course, but even so, British conservatism is sometimes a bit of a dead loss. Like most sensible people on the T.T. Course who are not racing, we wound up at the excellent Radcliffe's Cafe opposite Ramsey Bus station for tea and a natter at which we

(continued on page 8)

'REV COUNTER' REPORTS

C. TATTERSALL will be riding in a number of events this year, including the Junior and Lightweight T.T., before, as he puts it, "I get too old."

ERIC HARDY is without a machine for the T.T., the first time since the war. If anyone is searching for a lightweight jockey (9½ stone) for the Junior or Lightweight races, Eric will be pleased to hear from them. Correspondence should be directed to 153 Birmingham Road, Water Orton, Nr. Birmingham.

L. S. GEDDER is another member with good experience in the Island and other circuits, rode in last year's Junior and Senior T.T. but was defeated by mechanical trouble. Anyone looking for a rider might like to communicate with him at "Glenoor," Coleridge Road, Romford, Essex.

PETER FERBRACHE will be riding H. J. Alderslade's Norton at Silverstone this month. Drastic modifications have been carried out to the rear end of this machine since last season, which should provide the stability which has been lacking in the past. This mount will also be seen in the Island in June where Peter will be competing, with brother Ronnie, on a 7R.

E. A. BAKER is planning to emigrate to Canada towards the end of this year. Because road racing is almost non-existent in that country, he intends to make the most of his time here throughout the season.

P. BROUGHTON (P.O.) has now returned from Canada, where he successfully passed his Flying Training Course and is at present stationed at an R.A.F. base near Ilminster in Somerset, where he is taking advanced training on Vampires.

BOB FOSTER-PEGG, who will be remembered by many for his interesting

technical articles a year or so back, before he left for Canada, tells me he gets a severe dose of nostalgia with each issue of this magazine, and wishes he could be with us on the 18th at Silverstone.

D. STEVENSON has just departed for the Persian Gulf for a period of two years and will perforce be out of circulation for a while. Nevertheless he looks forward to a spot of racing when he returns on leave.

JOHN BOULTER has now turned to sidecars and will be racing a built-up job with a 490 c.c. engine in a Norton frame, and a much modified chassis. One of his first events will be at Silverstone this month.

K.C. BRETT will be racing his very special home-built "125" at our first meeting, initial trial runs already have been made and, subject to a few successful modifications being made speeds in excess of 80 m.p.h. are expected.

J. L. OLIVER who, although himself not racing this year, has ordered a G45 Matchless and 7R A.J.S., which will be ridden by Michael O'Rourke in the T.T. as well as all the well-known short circuit events this season.

PETER HOGAN has spent much time and gold on designing and building "specials," the latest and most interesting being a 250 c.c. vertical twin two-stroke, basically two Hogan-B.S.A.'s married together. This unit is fitted in Peter's own frame, which employs tele-forks and swinging arm suspension, with Puch units. Together with a 4-speed racing gear box and high voltage coil ignition, and weighing under 200 lbs., this may prove to be a most potent piece of machinery and, incidentally, one that I shall watch with the greatest interest. It is understood that the machine will not appear in public before July ("Trophy Day").

Manx Miscellany (continued)

learned that Dennis is shortly going to have to invest in a little pair of woolly bootees—congratulations Dad.

Bless me if Renold's Chains did not appear next in the form of Racing Controller Mike Porter with a really good fifty

minute colour movie film he took of the 1952 Continental Classics, including the Inter Six Days and some car racing. Local clubmen thus enjoyed a really good film show, as a Shell batch were shown as well recently and all our appetites were well whetted for the forthcoming Season.

MOTOR CYCLE TYPES

Drawn by G. H. Fruin



She



Her



The Speedway Fan

The Female of the Specie

NEW MEMBERS

The following have been elected members:

R. W. Basey, J. D. Brindley, J. R. Cridland, T. F. Davies, T. B. Fell, J. P. Fordham, D. Garner, N. F. George, O. E. Greenwood, M. Gunyon, E. O. Humphrys, W. E. Latchford, R. H. Madsen-Mygdal, A. F. Martin, G. Perkins, B. S. Radford, A. E. Rose, R. A. Russell, G. T. Salt, A. Scholefield, W. R. Smith, T. J. Street, J. Terry, C. A. Thurston, B. L. Turner, A. E. Stuffsins, R. F. Upham, P. B. Walker, R. J. Walters, C. H. Whitby, D. T. McDonald.

BENEVOLENT FUND

Donations have been received from the following members:

A. C. Keeble, W. Evans, R. H. Smith, E. Burridge, R. E. Dicker, R. Foster-Pegg.

HEDEMORALOPPET ROAD RACES

Supplementary Regulations and Entry Forms for the Road Races at Hedemora on Saturday 11th, and Sunday 12th July, have been published and are available upon application to Mr. R. Gullberg, Sveriges Motorfederation, Brahegatan 24, Stockholm, Sweden. This is the biggest road race meeting in the Swedish Calendar and entries from British drivers will be welcomed.

PROTECTIVE CLOTHING

Because of the present high cost of racing leathers the A-C.U. is carrying out some practical tests of a proprietary make of plastic material.

COMMITTEE NEWS

Meeting held on 16th February, 1953.
Present: N. B. Pope (Chairman), E. C. E. Baragwanath, G. Cobbold, H. L. Daniell, D. J. H. Glover, W. W. Hunt, W. G. Jarman, K. Rickard and A. H. Taylor.

In attendance: The Secretary.

An apology was received from Mr. J. O. Roebuck.

SILVERSTONE Officials were elected as follows—

Stewards: E. C. E. Baragwanath and H. L. Daniell. Mr. A. S. Perrey would represent the A-C.U.

Scrutineers: D. J. H. Glover and A. C. Squillario assisted by Messrs. Chipperfield and Yoxen.

Deputy Clerk of the Course: E. A. Atcheler.

It was resolved to set up a Committee to deal with all matters connected with Admissions, Car Parking and Programme Sales. This would be known as the Public Control and Programme Sales Sub-Committee. The following persons were elected to stand on this Committee: Messrs. G. Cobbold, W. W. Hunt, K. Rickard and J. O. Roebuck.

The Minutes of the last meeting of the Race Committee on 19th January were approved and it was decided to announce in the Final Instructions to riders that the first four machines to finish in race 2 and 11 would be required for re-examination by the Scrutineers to ensure that only

standard fitments had been used during the race.

CRYSTAL PALACE. The Secretary reported that the A-C.U. had now confirmed that B.M.C.R.C. would be permitted to organise the first motor-cycle meeting at this circuit on June 27th, 1953, and that he would be attending a further meeting with the A-C.U. and L.C.C. in the near future when, it was hoped, further details of the likely terms would be available. It was agreed that the Finance Committee should consider and approve the final agreement as and when this became available.

NEW MEMBERS were elected.

THE MONTHLY ACCOUNT was approved.

THE CLUBMAN'S T.T. It was resolved that, subject to suitable applications being received from members, the Club would be responsible for one official entry in each of the Clubman's Races. Nominations would be considered at the next meeting.

AREA REPRESENTATIVES. The Chairman signed Certificates for presentation to those members who had already been elected to represent the Club in various parts of the country. It was agreed to provide these members with special stationery and allow them to claim postage expenses incurred in the course of their duties with the Club.

RACING NOTES AND NEWS

T.T. FUEL

The Competitions Committee of the A-C.U. announces that for International Tourist Trophy Races the fuel specified by the F.I.M. will be used. It is either pure petroleum spirit, having an octane rating of between 75 and 80, or a mixture of petroleum spirit and washed benzole giving the same octane rating. The addition of alcohol or any anti-detonant is forbidden.

For the Clubman's Races in the Isle of Man the fuel supplied by the promoters will be *Esso Extra* and *Shell Super*.

CRYSTAL PALACE

The Competitions Committee of the Union has invited the undermentioned promoters to organise meetings on the Crystal Palace Road Circuit.

27th June—British Motor Cycle Racing Club.

22nd August—South Eastern Centre A-C.U.

ENTRY FORMS

Entrants and riders are reminded that promoters cannot accept per pro signatures on entry forms. The actual entrant/or rider must sign the form in each case.

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CONTINENTAL RACING MOTORCYCLES

ERWIN TRAGATSCH

IN 1929 the Jawa arms factory of Ing. F. Janecek at Prague-Nusle II announced the start of motorcycle production. They got the licence from the German works for producing the 500 c.c. O.H.V. unit-design machine with pressed steel frame. A nice and very good machine, but a little too heavy and costly in production.

After a few months the Wanderer works—which produced cars and type-writers too—decided to cancel the motor cycle production and Ing. Janecek bought the complete equipment for the motorcycle production and started to produce these machines on a big scale.

At that date Czechoslovakia overflowed with foreign makes and also the other Czech manufacturers—Aeros, Bekamo, Cechie, B.D., B.A.F., Grizzly, Itar, Orion and especially Premier—gave a strong opposition. Jawa—the machines got the name from the first letters of the Janecek-Wanderer combine—had immediately to prove their worth in events and they supported many trials which have been won. But successes in races have been more important. With the original model it was impossible to compete as this was a heavy and reliable touring machine, but never something to race with.

In 1930 George William Patchett joined the Jawa factory as designer, chief of the racing department and rider. He was before at Derby with Michael McEvoy associated with the production of the McEvoy machines, rode these at Brooklands and the Isle of Man.

In 1929 he was in Belgium with the F.N. factory at Herstal and when he joined the Jawa factory in 1930 he was already well known as a rider and especially designer. His first creation for Jawa was a unit design, a 500 c.c. O.H.C. single in a pressed steel frame, one of the nicest racing machines I have seen. This machine gained its first successes in hill climbs. George himself gained many successes. His teammates were Jaroslav Kaiser, Robert Uvira and, later, the late Franta Brand.

In Czechoslovakia at that date there were few circuit races and it was not until 1932, the Jawa's, for the first time, competed in a big international road race with a complete factory team. The race was the Austrian T.T. In 1931 George

took a machine to Belgium for the Grand Prix for a try out; he led the race for nearly one lap but soon Stanley Woods and Percy Hunt on Nortons overtook him.

The Austrian T.T. 1932 is still in my memory. In my memory because I was wearing a brand new suit and as it rained during the whole race, and I was for four hours in the rain, everyone can imagine how I was feeling. This day destroyed not only my suit but also Jawa's chances. George himself was leading after one lap but retired at the pits. Franta Brand who rode the fourth race in his life was superb. He was leading until the tenth of the 22 laps, made the record lap of the race in his 8th lap and retired with engine trouble in the eleventh lap. Bruno Rzehak—the former Rudge rider—the first time on a Jawa in a race, was feeling not very well on the difficult course with the heavy machine. But he was second until the 15th lap behind the winner Schneeweiss on a Rudge. Later he retired fully exhausted.

The next big road race was the Senior T.T. in the Isle of Man. Uvira rode instead of Rzehak; Patchett and Brand again have been the other riders. In the first lap Uvira retired with gearbox trouble. Patchett's machine had in the fifth lap at Ballaugh enough but Brand rode brilliantly and gained 14th place. Really a good show for a newcomer to the course!

1933 we came again. This time Franta Brand was the only Czech rider on the Jawa. The others have been Tommy Spann, S. "Ginger" Wood and George Patchett again, who was due to ride a brand new racing model in the Junior T.T. In practice his best time on the smaller model was 35.55. Unfortunately on the last practice day a valve got a "different form" and as it was impossible to repair the damage until the weighing out, George had to scratch his entry.

The busiest man was Franta Brand. He worked not only on his Patchett machine during practice but also made the mechanic for Tommy and "Ginger." And he had to ride, himself! His best practice lap was 34.42, Tommy Spann's was 29.58 and "Ginger" Wood 30.20. In the race "Ginger" was 8th and Tommy 12th. Franta Brand had retired in the 4th lap with clutch trouble.

Before this race, George raised the Czechoslovak record over one kilometer with the 500 c.c. model to 179.193 km., and Franta Brand the 175 c.c. Czech record over the same distance to 123 km. His machine had a Villiers engine.

These 175 c.c. Jawa machines have been designed and built in 1932. They had pressed steel frames, first Villiers engines, later these made by Jawa under licence. A 250 c.c. model followed as well as later a 350 c.c. S.V. and O.H.V. machine, designed by George Patchett and fully built in the Jawa works.

For racing 175 c.c., 250 c.c., 350 c.c., 500c.c. and even 600 c.c. O.H.V. models have been developed. Also special Speed way and Grass track machines for the factory riders. Jawa was the only factory which ever competed in Speedway races with factory machines and riders. They gained numerous successes and had the best riders in the country. Also many foreigners rode occasionally these famous Czech racing machines, including Jack Williams of England.

Jack rode for Jawas in the 1935 T.T. races in team with Franta Juhan and Josef Pastika. They used new, lightened 500 c.c. and redesigned 350 c.c. road racing models, but could not gain much successes. That was the last appearance of the Jawas in the English T.T. races.

At home they won nearly everywhere, on dirt, sand, grass and road. And in the most difficult trials, including the "International 6 days" they have been always among the top men at the finish.

George Patchett was for nearly 10 years with Jawa's. With the introduction of the little 175 c.c. and 250 c.c. two-strokes the factory gained immense popularity and the racing successes made the machines well known over all places. The factory was growing and as the place at Prague-Nusle II became too small, they built new big factories—mainly foundries—at Tynec on the Sazava river. Mr. Janacek himself and his son have been strong supporters of racing and I can say only that the Jawa racing department was not only one of the biggest, but also most costly in a motorcycle factory. Among George Patchett's co-workers was also a very clever technician, J. Josif, the present chief designer. Later Dr. Jaroslav Frei joined the factory as secretary to Mr. Janacek Sen. He was before with the A.J.S. general agency at Prague and the aero car factory.

1939, when Hitler invaded Czechoslovakia, George Patchett made a risky and dangerous escape, taking with him some very useful designs of arms. With him left also Ing. Janacek jun. Old man Ing. Jancek died during the war in 1941 at the age of only 64. His successor became Dr. Frei who soon formed in the factory a "secret" design department. The factory had to cease the production of motorcycles. Only arms for the German army have been allowed to produce and also to repair German W.D. motorcycles.

In his secret design department has been during the war years built the prototypes of the present famous 250 c.c. Jawa two-stroke. The factory was already before the war co-operating with the German D.K.W. works—built also D.K.W. cars in Czechoslovakia and used the Scgnuerle two-stroke system on their motorcycle-engines on licence from the Zschopau works. The Germans have been of the opinion that in the secret department are designed arms for them and it was a very dangerous thing to have instead motorcycle parts. To test these, they have been built in to German W.D. frames, painted completely in German army colours with army numbers, and as 1945 the war finished, Jawa was as one of the first factories ready with a brand new and really sensational machine, which in the meantime gained great popularity in all parts of the World.

And in a corner have been also already some parts for new racing machines, supercharged twins, of course. Vincenz Sklenar was the designer of these pieces, which 1946 for the first time appeared completed in a race.

Already in August 1945 the first Speedway race was held after the war in Czechoslovakia, at the Strahov Stadium in Prague in front of 120,000 spectators! Jawa machines, ridden by Stanislav, Juhan, Rosak, Lucak, Bednar and Novotny won all classes with well prepared pre-war single cylinder models.

The supercharged twins of 350 c.c. never proved successful. They have been ridden in some road races, won a few of them, but proved very unreliable, much too heavy and also not enough fast. Also a Speedway machine with a supercharged 500 c.c. vertical twin engine was built. No rider could ever finish a race with this monster. During a race at Prague in 1947 I asked Bill Kitchen to try out this machine. This great rider had after a few laps enough. All these costly machines—about

10 have been built—are now in a corner in the factory, some robbed of parts or already gone into scrap iron. The price of these hand-made prototypes was higher than the worth of some complete motor-cycle factories!

But Jawa's made brilliant business with their post war models and soon Ing. J. Josif and his assistant F. Navratil have been designing new road racing twins of 250 c.c. and 500 c.c. These—unsupercharged—have been much lighter and, especially the 500 c.c. model, proved in the last years very fast, although still not too reliable. The first machines had a single, the latest a double camshaft engine. Ridden by Dusil, Novotny, Rykr and Szalkay of Hungary they gained many successes, although Anton Vitvar with his Francis Beart tuned Nortons is still superior to them.

Vitvar was before the most successful rider on Jawas at road races and rode also the supercharged 500 c.c. models, which he later changed for the pre-war, Patchett designed, lightened single cylinder. Since 1949 he rides Beart Nortons.

The 250 c.c. vertical twin never proved very good and was beaten by the Walter and now C.Z.-Walter machines in many races. The factory concentrated therefore more on developing the standard 250 c.c. single cylinder two-strokes for racing, and some men in the factory are

claiming that they get 17 bhp. from this engine, which is destined for young riders in smaller races.

The greatest handicap at present for the factory is that for political reasons they can't compete in foreign western countries against strong opposition from England, Italy and Germany. I don't think the new 500 c.c. Jawa racing twin could win in international races, but with good riders in the saddle could give strong opposition.

This was proved a short time ago when Fred Bracher of Switzerland in the Pruntrut race on a tuned 500 c.c. Jawa twin, won his class in front of Triumph Grand Prix, tuned Triumph Tigers, Gilera-Saturnos and Norton Featherbed's. These big Jawa twins are the newest design of the Czech factory and are built on the lines of the racing models, but destined mainly for touring and not racing. Bracher's speed was 95.325 km/h over the 109 km long race (30 laps).

Soon after the finish of the second World war, the Jawa factory became nationalised. Ing. Janeczek, Jr., Dr. Frei, George Patchett and many others are in foreign countries. They are the men which made this make so famous in the world and we must only hope that the present leaders, headed by a former draughtsman, J. Pokorny, will maintain and uphold the great reputation of the name Jawa.

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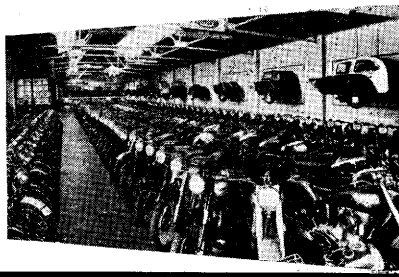
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