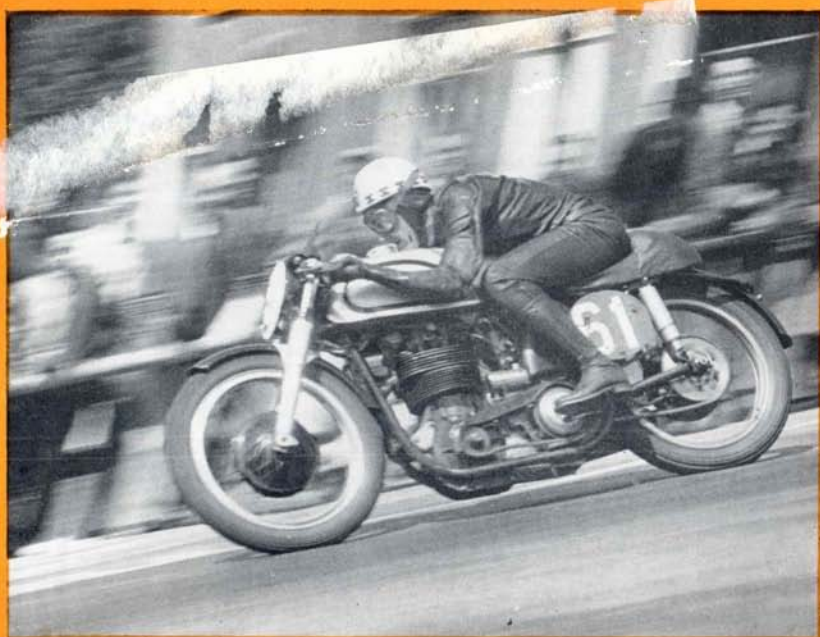




Bemsee

THE JOURNAL OF THE
BRITISH MOTOR CYCLE RACING CLUB

Vol. 6. No. 7. JULY, 1953 ONE SHILLING



DOUBLE WINNER RAY AMM rushing down Bray on his Senior Norton.

(Photo: Salmond)

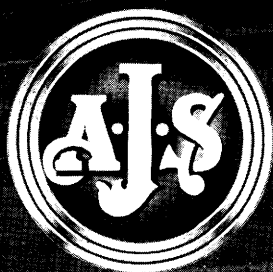
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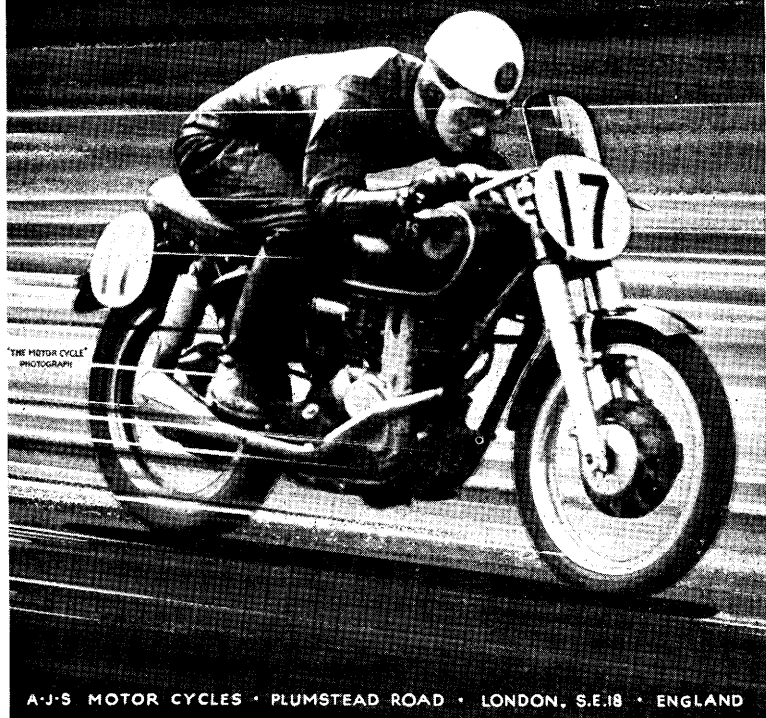
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Bemsee

Vol. 6. No. 7. JULY, 1953

EDITOR:

L. R. HIGGINS

THE BRITISH MOTOR CYCLE RACING CLUB

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VICE-CHAIRMAN: A. H. Taylor

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

EDITORIAL

THE SUCCESS of this year's T.T. races was marred by four fatal accidents. Three of the victims were members of "Bemsee," two of them were well known to us as private owners, the third was internationally famous. Les Graham will be mourned by motorcyclists all over the world. While we were still congratulating him on his first T.T. success, for which he had striven so long, came the sad news of his death. His name will be perpetuated in "Bemsee" by the Trophy which he recently presented to the Club.

To members who gained success in one or more of the races we offer our congratulations, and to those who are recovering from injuries we wish a speedy return to full health.

Future Events.

The Crystal Palace meeting will be over before this issue of *Bemsee* appears. Our next important meeting is Trophy Day at Silverstone. This will be followed by an invitation to that famous Worcestershire hill, Shelsley Walsh, and to Brighton for that well-known annual event, the Brighton Speed Trials. Sprint enthusiasts should send their names to the Secretary at Wilton Mews if they wish to compete. Finally, comes our big end-of-the-season meeting, The Hutchinson Hundred, and competition for the Club's oldest trophy, The Mellano. To offset the criticisms of past years the Committee have a different scheme under consideration for this year's meeting. The success of the meeting depends, as usual, on the great army of helpers; your offers of help are, therefore, solicited.

OBITUARY

IT is with great regret that we record the deaths of three of our members. H. L. Stephen and T. W. Swarbrick, who were killed during the Junior T.T. on June 8th; and R. L. Graham, who was killed during the Senior T.T.

To their wives and families we offer our deepest sympathy in their sad loss.

We also offer our sympathy to the family of a visiting New Zealand rider, G. J. Walker, who was killed at Kerroo Moor during the Senior T.T.

★ ★ ★

Death of C. A. Stevens

As we go to press we have received the sad news of the death of "Pud" Stevens. He died a few days ago in hospital, from cancer. His funeral took place on Monday, June 22nd.

It was only in last month's *Bemsee* that "Rev Counter" mentioned that "Pud" was in hospital, and was making some recovery, after an obscure trouble that started about twelve months ago.

"Pud" was a regular competitor at racing events and had competed in the Clubman's and International Tourist Trophy races. His best T.T. performance was in the 1949 Senior T.T., when he finished sixth on a Triumph. He will be sadly missed by his many friends. To his family and business associates we offer our deepest sympathy.

★ ★ ★

LESLIE GRAHAM

Last Tributes.

THE death of Leslie Graham was a terrific shock to all who knew him. In many years of racing few men have gained the popularity that he did amongst his fellow competitors and everyone who goes with motor racing. His great courage and optimism in misfortune placed him amongst the immortals. His great-

ness lay not only in his uncanny skill and fearless driving, but in his gentlemanly bearing and charitable outlook at all times, which, I am sure, was never easy, especially when things go wrong. That great big smile endeared him to everyone. He said to me years ago after losing a race: "So long as I can maintain my family to a right and proper standard of living, I shall be happy." No one ever worked harder for that end. No one, I am sure, will ever replace him, but by his example and courage we shall all be better men for knowing him.

JACK NORRIS.

★ ★ ★

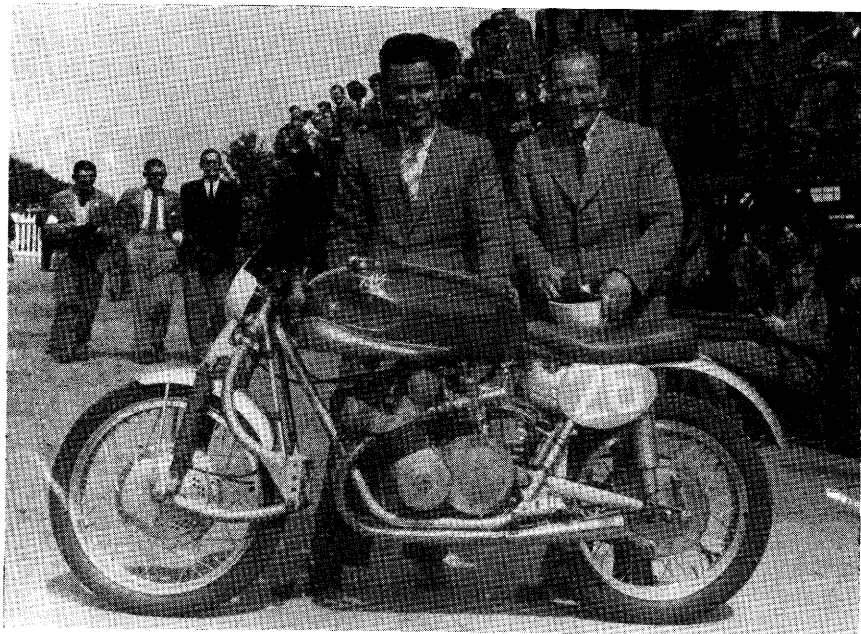
THE news of the death of Les Graham came to me over the B.B.C. after the broadcast of the Senior T.T. Whilst I was impatiently waiting for the B.B.C. to return listeners from Nottingham to Douglas for the finish of the Senior race, I idly wondered what had happened to Les and his M.V. In the broadcasts I had heard, there was no mention of him. The first lap leaders were not given and no reasons given for his non-appearance amongst the leaders on lap two. Had the unexpected happened and Les met with a serious accident?

Philip Robinson's quiet announcement at the close of the broadcast came as a great shock. That Les Graham could be killed in a racing accident was incredible, for he was not a man who took wild risks.

I first met Les Graham in the I.O.M. in 1938, when he was practising on a Lightweight O.K.-Supreme early in the morning and working on the three works entries during the day, and sometimes in the night. It was after the war, when he came to live in Chislehurst that I got to know him better. He was a most likeable man, ever willing to help and advise, and took his disappointments with a smile. His death is the biggest loss to the racing world since Jimmy Guthrie was killed in 1937.

To his wife, Edna, and his two small sons, we offer our deepest sympathy.

L.R.H.



A rider who will never be forgotten, Les Graham, wearing his usual happy smile at the Junior weighing-in. With him is Arturo Magini, M.V.S. chief mechanic.

(Photo: Salmond)

The funeral of Robert Leslie Graham took place at Birkenhead, Cheshire, on Thursday afternoon, June 18th. A large crowd, many of whom could not gain admittance to the Church, attended. "Bemsee" was represented by our Chairman, Noel Pope. Amongst the many wreaths was one from "Bemsee" and one from Sir Algernon and Lady Guinness.

MARSHAL'S MUSINGS

W. G. BILL JARMAN

THESE NOTES are of necessity penned before the T.T. and our meeting at the Crystal Palace on the 27th June, which looks like developing into a real motor-cycling course. I cannot visualize the present circuit as a suitable venue for G.P. cars but as things are at the time of writing, there is every prospect of the solo bikes being faster than the four wheelers. The "barrow-boys" will also be in their element and have a fine chance to prove to the spectators that sidecar racing is as good as *any kind of speed event*.

The number of marshals required at the Crystal Palace is considerably less than Silverstone, but if you are free to do a job of work for the club on the 25th July, drop me a note *immediately*. You know the address, 153 Reigate Avenue, Sutton, Surrey. Don't leave it — *do it now!*

Our July fixture is a very matey occasion and if last year is anything to go by it should be a very happy meeting. Then we have the Hill Climb on the 29th August, the Speed Trials on the 5th September, with the famous "Hutchinson Hundred" on the 25/26th September. Your Committee men have gone to a lot of trouble to make the "Hutch" of 1953 a meeting whereby as many racing members as possible can be included in the classic event. A separate article is being written on this subject by Noel Pope.

Although somewhat late, may we say "Thank you, Denis Parkinson and the Howstrake Hotel" for the Film Show and Bemsee Party on the Saturday before the T.T. of 1953. Let us also thank the ladies who took the hub-caps round for the Benevolent Fund. *Let's hope you never need it.*

Rarely do I get a miserable letter, but I must record the fact that a pessimistic character has written ticking me off for not *automatically* giving him a job at Silverstone last April. His entry was much too late and he thought the Secretary should have told me about it. Really, and does this individual think he is the only man who was too late? Does he, or anyone else for that matter, ever stop to think what is involved in the secretarial

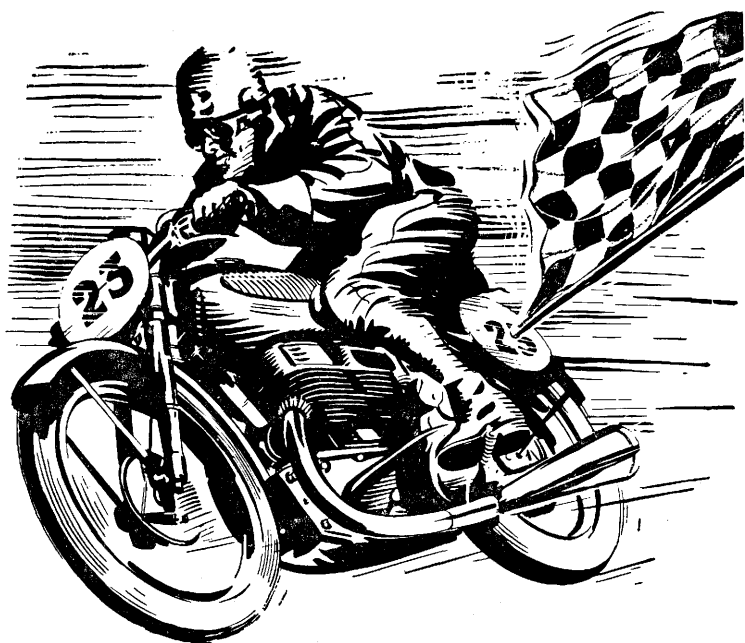
side of a race meeting? We cannot assume anything in the racing game whether it concerns competitors, officials or spectators, so if you have something important, make it the subject of a *letter or post-card* please.

The summer is now upon us. Maybe we shall get a heat wave such as Jupiter sends us about every ten years or so. Maybe the rest of our meetings will be blessed with sunshine so that the Club can finish the season with "lots of lolly" in the bank. Come what may, in this Coronation Year we will continue in a spirit of optimistic endeavour. Let us resolve also to welcome our visitors and meet their motorcycling needs as only we know how. Racing or touring, it's the people that make the place, so any member of the B.M.C.R.C. can always spread a spot of goodwill and make these guests feel at ease. In other words, let them return home thinking that the lads who wear our badges are a team of fine fellows. Wear your "Crossed Jacks" at all times and use this appropriate emblem as a *means of introduction*.

The Secretary has asked for these notes to be sent in early. Maybe he is thinking that once I get to Manxland there will not be much writing done (except figures taken from stop watches). How right he is. At the time of writing, Bob Walker is swamped with Crystal Palace, Silverstone, Shelsley and Brighton. His trip to the Island was truly a "flying visit" which may surprise some members who do not know what goes on in the way of work and worry behind the scenes. Salaam — don't slam — the Secretary.

The battle of the singles, twins and fours is in full swing and the dice are loaded in favour of four pots in the half litre class at all events. As you know, I have advocated the 125 basic baby for many years and things are shaping that way. Even "Ixion" with his 50 odd years of experience, agrees with the sequence, but does not hazard a guess at the layout. I, for one, regret the dropping of the V-four but hear that the Germans are taking it up where we left off. Surely it

(continued on page 7)



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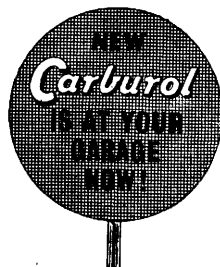
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COMMITTEE NEWS

Meeting held on 11th May, 1953.

Present: N. B. Pope (Chairman), G. C. Cobbold, H. L. Daniell, D. J. H. Glover, W. W. Hunt, W. G. Jarman, and A. H. Taylor.

Ex-officio member: E. C. E. Baragwanath.

In attendance: The Secretary.

Overdue Subscriptions. The Secretary reported that a number of members had not yet paid their subscriptions for the current year. It was, therefore, resolved that any member who had not paid, or submitted his reason for being unable to do so, by the 16th May, should have his name deleted from the Register.

Admission of Members to Paddock. The findings of the Race Committee on the subject of allowing spectating members in the Paddock Area at B.M.C.R.C. race meetings were considered. It was resolved that members should be allowed in the Paddock during the "Hutchinson 100" meeting in September as an experiment provided the made application to the Secretary, at least two weeks before the date of the meeting requesting a Paddock Transfer Pass.

Silverstone Saturday—The Report of the Clerk of the Course on the April Silverstone Meeting was heard, and a recommendation that scrutineering and practice should be accommodated in capacity classes was noted.

Appreciation. The Secretary was instructed to convey to Mr. Adlington the appreciation of the Committee for the assistance rendered by the Proprietors of *Motor Cycling* over the April "Silverstone Saturday" Meeting.

The Monthly Account was presented and approved.

Crystal Palace and Trophy Day. The Secretary gave a progress report on each of these events. Preliminary arrangements were considered satisfactory, notwithstanding certain difficulties that had been experienced with regard to the Coronation Meeting to be held on the Crystal Palace circuit.

Oulton Park. The Secretary reported on information received in connection with the Cheshire racing circuit. It was resolved that the possibilities of organising a motor cycle race meeting there should be investigated.

Minnie Grenfell Memorial Trophy. It was agreed that marks awarded to members participating in races in the I.O.M. shall be as follows: Clubman's T.T. and the M.G.P., then the marks gained in the former event only would count.

Admission Control and Programme Sales Sub-Committee. Mr. Hunt gave a verbal provisional report on behalf of the above Sub-Committee, from which it was understood that the control arrangements had worked satisfactorily, in consequence of which there was a considerable reduction in the number of persons gaining admission without payment. An offer by Mr. Hunt to submit a plan for improved control at future Silverstone meetings was accepted.

Honorary Members. In recognition of his unflinching services as Chief Medical Officer at all the Club's Silverstone meetings, it was resolved to confer this honour on D. F. E. Gowland Hopkins.

New Members were elected.

Marshal's Musings (continued)

isn't going to be another A.B.C. to B.M.W. over again? Strange, is it not? The peculiar thing about it all is the poppet valve. How long will it last? Carburation is already being revolutionized or should I say evolutionized?

What has all this got to do with Marshal's Musings? Quite a lot, my friends, because you are the bloques who have to look after the men who will be riding these multi-cylinder, radial valve, jet injector jobs in the near future. Impossible, you say? *Just wait and see.*

See you at Silverstone on the 25th July.

ON THE INSIDE OF DAYTONA

by an American

MOST of you will have seen the Daytona results, but having witnessed it maybe a little on the spot scoop would make things a bit clearer. Nicholson; he rode fine in the "50," the B.S.A. was a veritable bomb, in the "200," however, it seemed as though there was nothing left, I'm assuming that they changed engines for the race, the 200 that is, and if so, they would have done better to leave the 50-mile mill in the frame, as Nick just couldn't get going Sunday. The winning average he ran in the "50" of 93 something was very close to the 95 Goldsmith put up, but in any event, the Beesa didn't go, in fact, outside of Thiessen's job, none of them went fast Sunday, though nothing could touch them in either of Saturday's races. The most potent job of any was one of a trio of Norton 88 Twins, with what appeared to be racing kits, that is, examination of the jobs from the outside had the look of factory made stuff in regards the dual carb setup (2 Amal 10 RN 1" bore), and the pipes and racing seat. Of the three, only one went good which was Lassiter's job which finished third Sunday. To give you a rough idea, in the early laps he *lost a lap* for a plug change, still finished third, passing Goldsmith in the process, and Goldsmith was unable to draft the Norton on the *beach* even, after he'd been passed. Except for the lost lap I believe that Lassiter would absolutely have blown everyone off the win. Klamfoth was out of the running irregardless of his spill. He was losing from 3 to 6 seconds a lap and hadn't even begun to improve his times up to the collision. It would have been nearly impossible for him to have overcome the handicap he'd already run up had he missed the fall and began to run faster. *Motorcyclist* magazine states that Hicks (Triumph) led the first 9 but I think they were in error there. Kretz was the one according to my eyes, and also according to the newspaper re-run after the race. It's possible I'm wrong, but as the lead was during the early part of the race, don't see how I could have been. He was in front, period. The Triumph moved much faster than

anything else, with the possible exclusion of Lassiter, who at that time was way back and no-one paid much attention to his times. One of Kretz pit men told me that the clutch was burnt up — asked him if they used cork or Ferodo inserts, he said Ferodo. Hawley's job swallowed a valve according to a pit man, but they had it running on 2 about 20 mins. later, and don't see how they could have changed a valve in that short time, even excluding the fact that swallowed valves usually cause further damage. Goldsmith's K was the only K that seemed to be able to get out of its own way. The A. J. Lewis's Triumphs ridden by Hawley and Hicks and possibly one other, were Speed Twin from the cases to the iron cylinders and heads of all things. There were also G.P. Triumphs, but they didn't go very fast. Talked to the B.M.W. crew from N. Jersey, who had all the B.M.Ws. that were entered, they said they had one of the 3 going very good, in practice 127 on the road straight, but that the more they "turned" the sicker it got, and they didn't entertain many hopes before the race began. The N.S.U. singles sounded good, were about as good as a Gold Star Single, but didn't last long. The Guzzi ran one fast lap with the leader and stayed right with them then I didn't see any more of it. Regardless of what *Motorcyclist* mag says, Goldsmith did *not* tune the K he rode, I know Paul and I know he's never tuned his jobs in the past (Jack Knapp of Detroit and more recently Wilmont Douglas of Detroit has done the tuning) and the fact that the H.D. factory was there *en-masse* is reason enough to believe that it was a factory job and nothing else. As a matter of fact, conversation the previous night with several friends from Detroit led me think that Paul didn't have a chance, as in the past the factory hasn't been able to get the Ks or even the WR's to go as good as either Douglas or Knapp, and when we heard that the factory had put forth his K for the race it was a sort of guess that he wouldn't do too hot in view of past factory performance.

THE TOURIST TROPHY RACES 1953

BILL SALMOND

THAT the evergrowing eager anticipation which precedes each T.T. meeting was fully justified this year goes without saying and everyone that I met agreed on this point. The racing itself was simply superb and the standard of riding of the Clubmen in the Junior and Senior races was a great deal higher than I have ever seen it before. The Vincent boys in the main had not had as much relative experience as the others and the lower standard can be fairly attributed to the few chances given the 1000 c.c. class by the majority of organisers and the probability that these big machines are not perhaps as flexible or as readily mastered. Anyway our thanks to the enthusiasm of the Vincent Owners Club without whose support there would not have been enough entries to qualify the event being held.

There is no need for me to say much about the tragedy of the loss of the four gallant riders we shall see no more; we of this club feel the loss more deeply than the general public, for we have watched and followed them more closely and in part perhaps shared their triumphs and misfortunes — let us just say we miss you, we salute you.

That there were journalists and editors who turned tragedy into a nauseous form of near hysteria and sensationalism only emphasises the fact that neither their own ability as reporters nor the dependability of their several newspapers can be relied upon to give adequate or well balanced reports on the news in its true perspective.

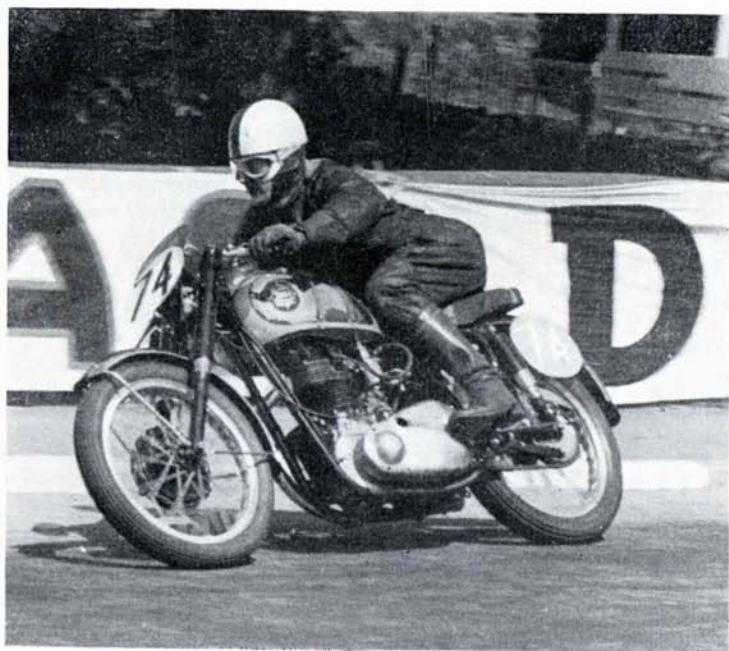
I would say in reply to certain allegations I read in one such paper, accusing the Islanders of all sorts of heartlessness, that one notable Manxman, Wilf Harding, spends a considerable amount of time and money each T.T. and Manx G.P., despite the handicap of the loss of an arm, in driving newcomers round the course and giving them priceless advice on line, speeds, gears, etc., all with a view to rider safety. Most of you know the additional list of 'locals' who do the same thing, quite apart from the voluntary

Marshals, Specials, Medicos, etc. Not being a Manxman myself, I can vouch positively for the enormous trouble the Islanders go to to ensure as wide a safety margin as possible for all who race here, and the results of the wholehearted co-operation of the Manx Government and the Auto Cycle Union is so widely known amongst participants and followers of the sport that nothing more need be said.

The Practices.

Probably one of the most fascinating aspects of the practice periods is watching the steady and quite noticeable improvement, not only in the general field, for even the acknowledged masters lose their keenest edge during the winter, but more obviously amongst the first-timers. The outstanding example to my mind this year was America's Nick Nicholson, and the new boys from Australia and New Zealand, a really cheering situation as we would like to see more Americans in European road racing on the one hand and it is good to know that the quality of Dominion riders is as fine as ever. In the 'works' teams category there is Germany's youthful Werner Haas, who was truly remarkable to finish so well on his first visit to the Island, where it is generally agreed that a knowledge of the course plays such a major part towards success. The weather generally during practising was not very kind, especially for the Clubmen and the keen and regular turn out and number of laps covered was a real tribute to the sport by the men concerned. There must be something more than just personal experience and success involved when many dozens of otherwise perfectly normal, fit, intelligent adult citizens get up before dawn regularly for a fortnight and motor smartly along the road, often in a gentle downpour, with the firm intention of, having got back to where they started from, doing it all over again to see if they can not only do it better than last time, but quicker as well! This surely must be one of the outstanding proofs that motor cycle road racing is the finest sport on earth.

Bemsee's Senior
Clubman entry,
L. C. King (Norton),
at the
Quarter Bridge.
(Photo : Salmond



S. T. Seston (B.S.A.),
safely crosses the
Quarter Bridge,
the most crashed-at
spot on the T.T. course.
(Photo : Salmond



Les Graham accelerating out of Governor's Bridge dip on his 125 c.c. M.V. Note how the cowling blends with the rider's body. (Photo: Salmond)

The Clubman's Races.

Junior Clubman's

Whilst my right eye was extremely busy earning its keep by controlling the direction in which my camera was pointing, my left eye was having a whale of a time just watching racing—quite seriously, this is no fairy tale, neither am I cross-eyed—and on the Monday afternoon 'neath a smiling sun the progress of the Inters, Gold Stars, etc., was as good a session of 350 c.c. racing as anyone could wish to see. I must confess that I was most agreeably surprised at the number of characters who marched down Bray as quickly as full noise would allow and in this noteworthy Coronation Year the maximum downhill march produced by current catalogue 350s is quite a great deal smarter than somewhat. I would go so far as to say that in a year or three time when 1953 Junior Clubmen have matured into the International class, the quality and quantity of British dicers will be truly something to try and beat.

I am not going to attempt to report on the races as such, for, not only has it already been done by the best in the business, but roaming the pavements with a camera and concentrating on the record-

ing of the passing scene more often than not takes you out of range of loud-speakers and other means of knowing the full picture of the race. Rather do I give you here the impressions I had at the particular spot I was at coupled with the undoubted facts shown on some of the photographs I took at the time.

Senior Clubman's.

A good proportion of the entry were in the Junior race so naturally much of the unusually high standard noted on the Monday afternoon was even higher on the Thursday, when a further four laps experience was logged to the credit of many. Although it must have been very inconvenient to quite a number of the riders entered to have had their scheduled Wednesday gallop postponed for a day, there is no doubt that the Stewards were entirely right in refusing to allow herds of eager characters to do battle in Snafell's mists which stretched, I believe, from somewhere near the Goose-neck to the vicinity of Creg-ny-Baa—together too much of a hazard of navigation even at touring speeds with the varied degrees of knowledge of the course and sundry antics likely to be come upon all of a sudden.

125 c.c. Lightweight.

Much the same applies to the postponement of the mighty 'tiddlers' race although in many ways it might be said that Les Graham would have found the conditions an advantage. As it is, however, I am glad that his spectacular and long striven for T.T. win should have been earned in such perfect conditions where it cannot ever be even privately thought that he had an unfair advantage in his fabulous and legendary mastery in bad weather racing. The thing I shall always remember about this particular race is how Les, who was one of the first to start his engine and get into the saddle, instead of streaking away into the lead as he undoubtedly could have done, hung back in his position on the extreme right of the front rank of the massed start and watched for his team-mates, Cecil Sandford and Italian Carlo Ubbiali, to get going, whereupon he swung in beside them and the trio set off in neat formation after lone wolf Werner Haas on his N.S.U. A quite patent display of his putting his factory and team-mates before his own personal ambitions. The fact that after he was quite satisfied with the others welfare, he then got stuck into going as hard as he could and made all previous records look second-hand both for the lap and race only enhanced the greatness of this first 500 c.c. Solo Class World Champion. Personally, I can never thank Destiny enough for seeing that smiling, friendly Les Graham finally savoured the sweetness of winning an Isle of Man International Tourist Trophy, especially on a make of machine whose manufacturers must owe so much to his skill and patient undauntedness in the unusually troublesome development of their machines, all classes of which must surely now be amongst the most formidable contenders for their capacity classes in the world.

When rueful Joe Ehrlich told me that his barometric tests and subsequent selection of jet sizes for the 'Pooks' were sadly let down by an hour later change of pressure of 'Point Six' it is realised that more than usually fine judgment and rapid reaction was shown by Frank Burman, D. E. Bell and John French in whipping the clutch out at the 'moment critique.' I am not sure whether Doctor Ehrlich was actually concerned with John French's single cylinder Sulby-E.M.C. in point of fact, probably not, but a melting



Bob Geeson (Lightweight R.E.G.) peers over the rim of Bray Hill. (Photo: Salmond)

piston was no less his fate than the 'works' E.M.C.-Puch seizures or other internal mayhem that put them out of action in the first lap. A great pity, for Burman had given Bill Webster's First-in-the-Country private owner 125 M.V. a good chase on his noisy little twin at Silverstone in April and the impression then was that the twin 38 x 55 was quite a bit quicker this year and should have broken its 65 m.p.h. T.T. lap record. It is a pity that the Sun, D.M.W., Dot, Anelay, etc. *marques*, which put up a brave if pitiful British effort last year have been so completely chased away by foreign supremacy — it really behoves our manufacturers to give a great deal more attention to the smaller capacity classes both in racing and standard machinery, both of which have so completely become the property of foreign manufacturers. The time is rapidly approaching when racing motor cycle capacities are going to be revised down just as racing cars have been and I would hazard a guess that it will not be all that long before the Lightweight, Junior and Senior classes will be limited to 100, 200 and 300 c.c.'s. or thereabouts. When you consider that the 125 M.V. returned a faster race speed than the 1930 Senior T.T. race speed, the 250 race speed of 84.73 compared with Artie Bell's 1948 Senior win at 84.909 and Ray Amm's Junior win at 90.52 with Harold Daniell's 1949 Senior at 86.93 you will

see what I mean. The most important aspect of it all, of course, is human limitation; considering that on a last year's machine Geoff Duke lapped at over 96 m.p.h. from a cool engine (No. 67) standing start *and* being flagged down at Cregny-Baa (where Keith Bryen had just fallen off) — nip ahead a moment and consider the possibilities *next* year on a 1954 model with a light last lap load of fuel on a flying start!!! All things being equal, with normal rate of progress and all that sort of thing, the situation is rapidly getting a bit fraught. How many bloques are there knocking about who can honestly be considered to have a reasonable safety margin when they are being dragged along public type roads at around 150 and more m.p.h.? Much as I thrill to each 'Senior' as a private bod, each year now brings an ever-growing sense that the ice is getting thinner and thinner!

Although I must doubtless seem to have drifted far from the 125 T.T., it is in this, the smallest capacity class that current lap speeds of today's 'works' machines point the moral. Personally, I think that whereas it was the speed of the M.V. that helped to bring Les his richly deserved win on the 125 model, it is more than likely that after what I would guess to be his likely pit signal in the Senior that it was the speed of the 500 that was responsible for his death.

250 c.c. Lightweight.

The outstanding thing in this race to me was the wide variety of ages both of riders and machines which, when combined as they were, made for plenty of interest not found in any of the other classes; also worthy of especial note was the fact that 50 per cent. of the first 16 finishers were members of B.M.C.R.C. Headed by that very competent character Arthur Wheeler, who rode his home tuned Guzzie into 4th berth at over 80 m.p.h., Arnold Jones on the (Reg) Marsh and (Frank) Fry Ex-Chelsea nipped round at a sprightly 72½, no small fact when one saw the amount of drape he had to adopt, sometimes Arnold appeared to have a half-Nelson on the model! Bill Webster brought his Velo in next 9th place a handful of seconds ahead of Bob Geeson, who almost literally carved his model out of the solid — wonderful show altogether, Bob! Two places later came Ernie Barrett on his Phoenix (the bird

you will recall that was born in a flame) probably so named not so much after the welding torch as much as Ernie's inflammatory remarks during the birth of the beastie! Young Frank Cope rolled up in 13th place at a highly creditable 70½ pace, only just out of luck for a replica. (Have to blame young Fergus there, Frank!) Next in, Eric Hardy on a 1929 Rudge at 69½ was another remarkably skilful spot of nursing and judging by the way Eric gradually straightened himself out when he climbed off the heavily panting model, his discomfort was far from confined to being literally 'clocked' in the face between Kates and Cregny-Baa by a departing rev. counter, followed on the next lap in the same place by identical treatment from the flippin' bracket thereof! Finally, in 16th place was now retired Sven Sorenson, a merry member of *Bemsee*, whose impish face and frolics we shall miss.

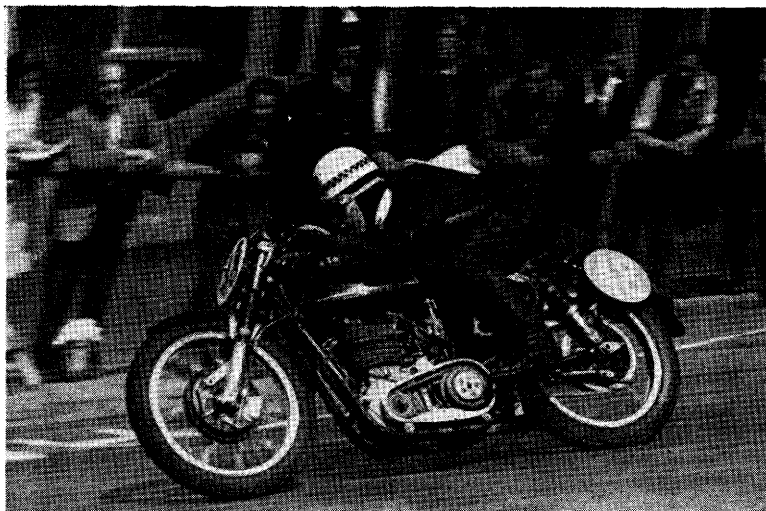
Junior T.T.

The list of starters in the Junior looked almost like the nominal roll of racing members of B.M.C.R.C., and we can be truly proud of them for bringing home not only the Trophy, with race and lap records, but 13 Silver and 7 Bronze replicas as well!! Give yourselves a pat on the back boys — a really fine effort!

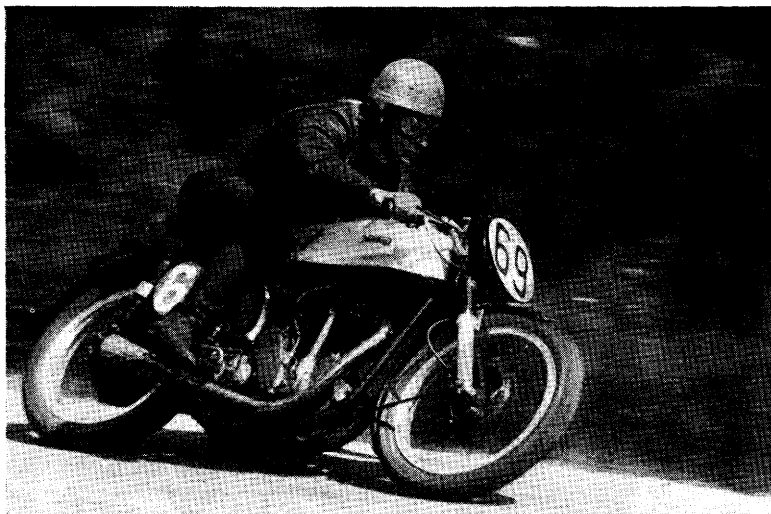
To our remarkable Ray Amm we surely all add our congratulations, with great satisfaction in noting that withal the vastness of your speeds, Ray, you seemed to look a good deal steadier than last year and you earned the approval of many in saving the Streamliner for the less tortuous circuits on the Continent where you can sort out its habits in greater comfort. In any case, its possibilities can be kept in reserve for next year as you did not need its advantages anyway. On the debit side was the fatal accidents of Harry Stephen and Tom Swarbrick, both who had ridden with great courage and verve — a double tragedy felt throughout the club.

Senior T.T.

I really do believe that whatever happens in future 'Seniors,' the 1953 race will never be forgotten by any of us who witnessed and felt the impact of the day when after the seething anticipation that incredible Classic was finally over. The mixed feelings of the joys and admiration on one hand and the heart-stopping horror of dire calamity on the other, left



A man enjoying himself at serious business.
Michael O'Rourke (Junior A.J.S.) down Bray
Hill.
(Photo: Salmond)



Syd Barnett (Senior Norton) at Kate's Cottage.
(Photo: Salmond)

both riders and spectators with a bewildered feeling of complete turmoil when that titanic struggle was over.

After that first stupendous lap when the race was obviously going to be, for those of us watching on the mountain, the like of which we had never seen before, the concentration of spectators who, somehow sensing as early as that that mighty events were making racing history, was something that I, for one, had never quite seen before. At this point I pause to realise that the further tragedies of the day made such an impression on everyone that to bring them into further prominence when these words, whilst written not so long after the day, will be read when time will in part have lessened the blow, will serve no purpose and as I have previously made mention of the facts I will leave it here by simply stating that as a Club, we lost one of our members of whom we were most proud.

As to the race itself, the detailed reports have been read, marked, learned, etc., and duly considered with the most profound feelings of wonder and awe. To average over 97 m.p.h., including climbing some thousand and more feet with two hairpin bends and many hundreds of gear changes as only one of seven similar laps is enough to make the mind boggle! And what a thrill it was to realise that along with the conquest of Everest — a British effort almost unbe-

lievable in success, we too who love our own sport could take pride in the thought that in this wondrous Coronation T.T. a British Empire rider and machine had won out against the most formidable foreign challenge. one could imagine—the more pleasurable in view of the fact that H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh was graciously pleased to become our Patron last year. It is also good to think that in any case the serious foreign challenges were still ridden by British riders!

Apology.

Truly a momentous week and far beyond my amateur's pen to justify in words. Indeed, the Editorial request to expand to three thousand words has taken me well into daylight and if I have left out much of importance and overstressed lesser points I would gently say, "You want to try it yourself, sometime." I am, in fact, hoping that friend Bill Jarman will tell you of the enjoyable evening of June 6th, when B.M.C.R.C. members quaffed a crafty one and were vastly entertained by Denis Parkinson's films and commentary.

In conclusion, I would enjoy reading my copy of *Bemsee* each month much more if some of you characters would take up some of the space and leave me lots less. Apart from the absorbingly interesting subject matter, bloques like you have at first hand, it would leave me more time to sleep. 'Night.

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CONTINENTAL RACING MOTORCYCLES

ERWIN TRAGATSCHE

No. 3. WALTER.

IN A LITTLE PLACE called Vepřku near Kralupy in Czechoslovakia, there was born, in 1873, Josef Walter.

Josef Walter was a poor boy. He lost his father when he was only 14 and went soon afterwards to Prague to become an apprentice in a machine shop.

At the age of 24, he opened his own workshops in which he produced and repaired bicycles, and in 1901 he produced his first single cylinder motorcycle. He was one of the pioneers and his machines gained many successes in races. For their time, his machines have been of very advanced design and very reliable. In 1905, Josef Walter had to move to bigger workshops, which have been at Prague-Smíchov. Here he produced his first V-twins and sidecars and in the following years, before the first World war, the famous Walter-Three Wheeler.

In 1911, his firm moved to even bigger premises at Prague-Jinonice, where in the same year his first cars were produced. Later they took over the production of aero engines, of which the big 24-cylinder "Sagitta" became world famous. With the production of cars and these engines the production of motorcycles had to be neglected, but Josef Walter never lost his great interest for them. In 1922 he left the firm at Jinonice and founded a new factory at Prague-Kosire, where he produced gear wheels, sprockets and later engine parts and complete industrial engines.

At Jinonice they produced in the 'twenties a 750 c.c. and a 1000 c.c. o.h.v. V-twin bearing the name "Walter" which was successful in many races, ridden by famous riders.

Josef Walter started at his Kosire works to produce a new original Walter machine . . . but seldom he came over the proto-types because he was too much occupied with his other products and could not spare enough time to develop in the real Walter fashion a new motorcycle.

The situation changed in 1938. His youngest son, Jaroslav, produced a 250 c.c. push-rod racing engine, designed by himself and built by his own hands.

It had 63 mm. bore and 80 mm. stroke and was delivering at 6800 r.p.m. 21.5 H.P. on alcohol fuel with a compression ratio of 1:12.5. It was a simple and

clever design. Two well-known Czech racing men, Jan Lucak and the late Josef Lukes, reached a top speed of 142 km. over the flying km. Unfortunately the second world war made the use of this engine at that time in races impossible.

September 1945! 120,000 spectators were crowding the big stadium at Prague-Strahov when the first post war motorcycle race in Czechoslovakia was started. The Jawa works had no fewer than 9 entries in three classes, 250 c.c., 350 c.c. and 500 c.c. The rest were a lot of very fast J.A.P. engined machines and some fast Douglasses. In the 250 c.c. class a solitary "Walter" machine against the Jawa's, Terrots, J.A.P. engined Specials, D.K.W.s and others.

Vaclav Hovorka rode the "Walter." In four heats Hovorka was second behind the little Stanislav, who won also all heats in the 500 c.c. class on the big Jawa. And in the final, Hovorka was again second!

This success gave Walter the background for further work. The second push rod engine was built in 1946, not much different, but a little better than the engine number one, and in the same year Jaroslav Walter surprised with a brand new design, a very simple, but very efficient o.h.c. racing engine of the same capacity. The stroke, against the o.h.v. model, was reduced to 78 mm. while the bore was now 64 mm. This engine was running up to 7,000 r.p.m. and was delivering on Methyl with a compression ratio of 12.6 about 22.5 h.p.

This engine was a real masterpiece. Jaroslav Walter was designing it, building it and never changing it from the proto-type form. One and the same engine was used one week in a road frame in a race over 200 miles and the following week on alcohol in a track frame, without any harm, without difficulties or troubles, with 100 per cent. success. The only weak point have been the valve springs because for shortage of them in Czechoslovakia. They could not be often exchanged and sometimes the riders had to start with very tired springs. But the engine was otherwise dead reliable.

Jaroslav Walter produced in the following years about 20 of them, all single handed with the only assistance of his old mechanic, Dobias. His main work on

them he was doing in the evening and on Sundays, because after 1945 he had no more a free hand in the business which his father founded. Old man Josef Walter retired in that year when the factory became nationalized and Jaroslav, with his older brother Ing. Jan Walter, became employees of the firm. Jaroslav had since that time to pay for every part or job done in the factory like any other customer. The producing of the racing engines was a 100 per cent. private enterprise by this famous designer and great sportsman. He got no assistance from the new rulers of the firm and only thanks to his unequalled ambition and love he was able to work further. No praise for his work during these years is high enough.

He was often spending his last money to produce another engine and was never able to produce a series of them although hundreds of riders have been prepared to give him every sum in advance for an engine. But he never was interested much in the financial side; in the first years he was very careful in selecting the customers; only the best riders got a "Walter" engine for a sum which was really very low.

I remember, when, in 1947, "Walter" machines won a race in Switzerland, a Swiss firm was offering him a first class job as designer with all manufacturing facilities, he refused because he liked to be independent and to be in his beloved country. Often I visited him in the evenings. He was always working alone or with old Dobias. For him, every piece of steel or alloy is a whole story, it is not just a piece. He knows everything about them, father Josef, the schools, practice in other firms and his own experience gave him a full knowledge of the material and his greatest strength is the nearly unequalled safety of the success when designing and building.

Jaroslav Walter is a very simple man of 40 now. He does not like to talk much, he likes to work. His products are so simple as he is himself. I never needed more than 5 minutes for a demontage of the cylinder head and the barrel, on the o.h.c. models! Funny is also the true story about the interchangeability of the cylinder heads. When, in later years, he produced also a 350 c.c. model and was in need for a cylinder head, he took an old head from a 250 c.c. model, enlarged the valve seats and turned the combus-

tion chamber out, and had a head for the bigger model.

Before the war — in 1936, 1937, and 1938 — he was himself competing in races on Indian machines with sidecar. In fact, his machines had only Indian frames. On these machines he tried some of his own engine developments. The first machine was a 1000 c.c. model Chief with a side-valve engine. I suppose it became in Jaroslav Walter's hands the fastest machine of this type ever run. Later he bought a 1927 produced 750 c.c. Indian "Daytona," which was a factory racing model with a o.h.v. engine. After rebuilding by Walter it had a capacity of over 900 c.c. and was the *enfant terrible* in many races. Often I was wondering how Jaroslav could hold this in races, but he was always not only a very good designer but also a very fine rider.

The 1946 and 1947 models had cylinder heads from cast iron. Not because Walter liked them, but only because he couldn't get light alloy cylinder heads without material faults. Later he tried heads from brass and finally found the right firm which supplied him with first class light alloy castings. The valves in these heads have been insert at an angle of 70 degrees. The exhaust valve had a diameter of 36 mm. and the inlet valve of 38 mm. Some engines had inlet valves of 40 mm., exhaust valves of 35 mm. and showed an increase of acceleration. The whole valve gear was enclosed with one cover which had the size of the whole top of the cylinder head. I found this arrangement very suitable for shorter races, but when I decided in 1948 to enter a machine for the T.T., I asked Walter to design a new covering of the valve gear which would give more cooling space. The models produced since 1948 (about 30 including 350 c.c.), had not only the redesigned cover with cooling flanges, but also a bigger and square cylinder head which was connected by 5 studs through the barrel with the crankcase. The use of 5 studs was the result of some bad experiences with a British o.h.c. racing engine which had only 4 studs and which was inclined to deform the cylinder head.

The most Walter engines have been equipped with Amal R.N. carburettors but 1948 some got Czech made Jikov racing carburettors, which proved very suitable and good. They have been inclined at 15.

The single camshaft on all Walter engines is driven by a bevel gear which has on the bottom a ratio of 1:1.15 and on top of 1:2. The piston has two rings, the gudgeon pin a diameter of 18 mm. A B.T.H. magneto supplies the engine with sparks for the 14 mm. plugs which are on the left side of the head.

The weight of these engines was 32 kg. Later, when they got electron crankcases and dural cylinder heads, the weight was reduced to only 26 kg.

As I told before, in 1948 I had entered a 250 c.c. Walter machine for the Lightweight T.T. at the Isle of Man with Vaclav Stanislav as rider. Unsporting politicians prevented in the last minute the start of this machine, which was a further development of the described engine. It had a bore of 63 mm. and a stroke of 80 mm. like the early push rod Walter engines. All Walter engines since 1948 had these dimensions.

The compression ratio was 1:8.5 for the 73 octane fuel and at 7,500 r.p.m. this engine was delivering first 20.4 and later nearly 22 h.p. These 7,500 r.p.m. have been "too safe", the most riders never feared to go to the 8,000 mark. Once we put a detuned racing engine into an Ariel Red Hunter frame for a very difficult 2,000 km. trial, and the Walter arrived at the finish without lost marks. The following week the same engine, running on alcohol, won a speedway race!

These engines had cast-iron cylinders with ribs from light alloy, and pistons, whose weight including gudgeon pin, was only one ounce. The crankcase was of electron. On their left side have been two ball bearings and on the driving side, two roller bearings. The con rod had a two-row roller bearing with 5 mm. x 8 mm. diameter rollers. The magneto was driven by the mainshaft through wheels. A gear type oil pump was in the crankcase. Walter engines have been outwardly always very clean and had no outward oil pipes. The rockers have been from Poldi TEM Chromnickel steel and their running ends have been without difficulties changeable. Little, thin steel plates put on the valve stems enabled the regulation of the valve play in the shortest time. The hairpin valve springs on these engines had a pressure of 80 kg., the valves have been produced from Poldi AKR steel and never gave any troubles. The weight of this engine was 25 kg.

During 1947 the 350 c.c. Walter O.H.C. racing engine has been developed. Outwardly it was not much different from the smaller brother. It had a bore of 72 mm. and a stroke of 86 mm. and delivered on 73 octane petrol with a compression ratio of 1:8:2, 26.8 H.P. at 7,800 r.p.m. Later engines reached 28 H.P. on the brake. Many parts of this engine have been interchangeable with the smaller model.

(To be continued)

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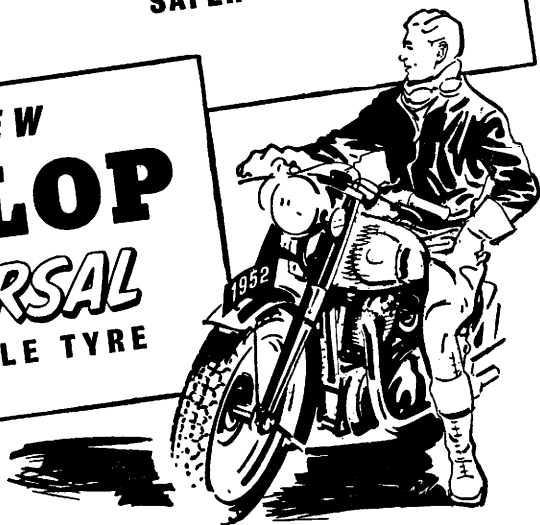
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ANNOUNCEMENTS

SHELSLEY WALSH - - 29th August

BRIGHTON SPEED TRIALS - 5th Sept.

Entries for both the above B.M.C.R.C. events, which are run in conjunction with the Midland Automobile Club and Brighton and Hove M.C. respectively, are strictly limited and by selection only.

The Supplementary Regulations will shortly be available and interested members should make application to the Secretary for copies without delay. It would considerably assist the selection committee if members gave a brief resumé of their past hill climb or speed trial experience when sending in their entries.

Entry fees for Shelsley Walsh have now been reduced to £1-1-0d. Brighton is free but an insurance premium is payable.

NEW MEMBERS

The following new members have been elected:

R. E. Arnold, N. W. G. Axten, K. M. Bryen, M. W. C. Collins, H. Dugdale, P. M. Doncaster, T. P. Gordon, R. Harris, E. Lambert, J. T. Griffiths, B. Mack, N. M. Milligan, J. H. S. Robinson, B. K. Robson, L. A. Sherman, H. C. Speller, J. A. Viccars, J. L. Wallis, A. E. Willerton.

Dr. F. E. Gowland Hopkins has been made an Honorary member of the Club

in appreciation of his services as Chief Medical Officer at the Club's Silverstone meetings.

SPEED TRIALS

The N.E. London M.C.C. are holding Speed Trials at Stapleford Tawney Airfield, Abridge, Essex, on Saturday, Aug. 1st. The course is $\frac{1}{4}$ mile in length, and there will be standing starts. The event is being held under a restricted permit. "Bemsee" is invited. Members who would like to compete must apply for regulations to the organisers *not* to B.M.C.R.C. Write to: **A. C. Wooland, 42 Rous Road, Buckhurst Hill, Essex.**

PARIS-MONACO TRIAL

The Union Sportive d'Ivry is organising on the 1st and 2nd August a second Paris-Monaco Trial and a copy of the Regulations and Entry Form may be obtained by any interested driver on request to the A.C.U. offices, 83, Pall Mall, London, S.W.1.

BENEVOLENT FUND

Donations have been received from the following members: G. E. Griffin, R. J. Penney, D. Whiting, V. T. Williams, T. W. Bounds.

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