

CELEBRATIONS OF SPEEDWAY

The VCSRA will attend the celebrations on Sunday Feb 21st at Paradise Park Broxbourne Herts. With their display stands and it is hoped to see many of their members there. Bill Gill has a collection of Cycle Speedway programmes and publications going back over several decades which will be available for people to take for just a small donation to the association. There will also be a large collection of photographs that members can sort through.

WEBSITES

The VCSRA are currently responsible for two sites, their own and that of the late Dave Hunting. Unfortunately nobody on the committee is fully able to update these sites and it is hoped that one of our younger members may be able to assist or advise so that Colin Booth can bring these two sites up to date with recent acquired data. Please contact Colin on 01268561248

2016 AGM

A DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

The 2016 AGM will be held at Rye House Pub (next to Rye House Stadium and railway station) on THURSDAY JUNE 9th commencing at 12 NOON. Members attending will be able to order pub meals on the day and there are some pleasant walks along the River Lea at the nearby Rye Meads Nature Centre.

Any item for the agenda should be sent to:-

Bill Gill 19, Colchester Road, Holland On Sea CO155DD or e-mail wgill@gmx.co.uk.

PUBLICATIONS.

The Association has acquired a collection of publications including many old programmes from around the tracks, a large collection of spokesman, some old CS Gazettes, vast collection of SUFFOLK SCENE (Suffolk CS magazine) some copies of CS Record and a few copies of Harold Smith's Spokesman. There is also a large collection of CS handbooks. Interested parties please contact Bill Gill.

2016 CELEBRATIONS

This year is 20th anniversary of VCSRA and 70th of birth of Cycle Speedway and ideas for celebrations are being sort. It is certain that many of the active clubs will be holding special events and perhaps members will attend their local tracks. Details will follow when available or keep looking on 33/18 website



From Len Silver.

A call to all my old friends from the world of Cycle Speedway and in particular to my fellow members of the Veterans' Association.

Most of you will have learned that I am no longer the promoter of Rye House Speedway and I took the decision to leave there as I found the new owners difficult, and at my time of life, I can do without hassle.

So I am concentrating every ounce of my energy into making a success of Kent Speedway which operates in Central Park Stadium, Sittingbourne. I built the track there 3 years ago and we operate in the exciting National League on Monday evenings starting at 6.30pm.

I know we have quite a number of members in the Kent and Sussex area and I hope that you will all join me at our opening meeting on Good Friday March 25th at 6.30 when Eastbourne will be our opponents

Then again on Easter Monday at 3pm. You will find our stadium to be one of the finest in the country with comfortable seated viewing and all the catering outlets in luxurious surroundings.

So join me and help us encourage our team, the Kent Kings, to victory.

For further details e-mail me.. Lensilver@silverski.co.uk

Also full details including directions on how to find the track etc. www.kentkings.co

20th Anniversary Celebrations.

Bill Gill asking for ideas (page3) got me looking to see how we celebrated our 10th Anniversary.

Going through the Track Record January 2006, these were some of the events arranged or planned:-

Celebration of Speedway at Kings Oak Public House High Beech, AGM at Sun Public House Waltham Abbey, Golf Tournament at Stevenage or Cheshunt, Fun Race day at Hawbush, Rye House Speedway event, Nostalgia Evening, A Ramble in Surrey including Pub Lunch. Other Trips being considered were Chartwell, Blenheim Palace and Duxford. As well as the Dinner/Dance, the highlight of the year was to be at Paradise Wild Life Park, included in the price (£10) was a buffet in our own private area. This was a great success, I am not sure how many members attended, but there was a page of photos in the August Track Record.

So where to this year? Nostalgia Evening, Hawbush Fun Day and Dinner/Dance are now all distant memories. I remember the evening meals after Len Adams Golf days were well attended. The obvious place would be Paradise Park, but would need at least double the 23 that went to last years event. Rye House would be out now that Len Silver is no longer there.

But read Len's letter above. He makes Sittingbourne Speedway sound very attractive, why not hold the event there? If enough members were interested I'm sure we could negotiate a reasonable combined entry and meal price. If a suitable afternoon meeting was not available, the evening meetings, due to the curfew have to finish by 8.30, so that most members could get home at a reasonable time. And who better to spend our anniversary with than "Our Len".

Bill Gadsby.

MICK LITTLE 1933—2015.

I regret to say that Mick Little passed away in early October, he had been living in a care home in Wallington, Surrey for the last few months. Pete Page and myself went to visit him on Monday, November 9th and were given the sad news. Unfortunately his family did not have anyone to contact in cycle speedway, so nobody from the sport was able to attend his funeral.

Mick had been involved in the sport, virtually from the start, as rider, team manager and referee. Initially he rode for Surrey clubs Hersham Meteors and Manor Saints. In 1953 he got together with other experienced riders, who all lived in the Tolworth area, to form a new club, Tolworth Tudors. They were very successful and Mick was in the Tolworth teams that reached the National Team Finals in 1955, 1956 and 1958. They lost to Carrs Wood Hunters in 1955 and to Walthamstow Wolves in 1958, but won in 1956, beating Kingstanding Monarchs. In the 1958 Final, Mick was Tolworths top scorer with 11 points.

Tolworth won several League Championships and Knock out cups in the nineteen fifties and sixties and Mick was a valued member of these teams.

Later he became Tolworths team manager, but still rode occasionally when needed. As a team manager, Mick was a master tactician. In my opinion he was worth 10 points to Tolworth, in how he deployed his riders. Mick was also a respected referee and carried out his duties as team manager until the demise of Tolworth in 1990.

Micks father was the well known speedway referee Gordon Little, who I understand was the only person to have refereed both speedway and football at Wembley.

LEN KITCHING.

TOLWORTH TUDORS :- NATIONAL TEAM CHAMPIONS 1956.
 L/R. Mick Little, Len Dutton, Hank Giles, Richard Whitcher & Ray Wallis.
 Kneeling:- Derek Baileuy, Paul Murdon & Ken White.



It is with great regret and sorrow that we advise the passing of our former star rider Malcolm (**MAC THE LEG**) Reading. Mac first met up with cycle speedway at the tender age of thirteen years in 1952. A close neighbour in Palmers Green, North London, being Mick Jeffery of Tottenham Kangaroos. Mick signed him up to ride for the Kangaroos junior team. By 1955 he was in the first team and became Tottenham Individual champion in 1961. 1964 saw him again lift the Championship, and in 1966 he jointly won the Trophy again, with his close friend Len Adams.



It was in the fifties that he met up with his wife to be Margaret Webb. The story was that Margaret was a hairdresser and Mac's mum came into the salon. It seems that there were dance tickets available, so arrangements were made for a get-together. Mac & Margaret married on September 1st 1962.

Mac was popular throughout the sport of Cycle Speedway making many friends. Whilst he mainly stayed with the Kangaroos, he rode a season with Edmonton Saints in North London under Saints manager Roy Delaney. It was while there that he met up with former World Speedway Champion Ivan Mauger and persuaded him to turn out for Edmonton against Tottenham using peddle power. Tottenham won the match and when Mac moved his home to Bournemouth he rode for the Premier team Bournemouth in 1968 for a full season.

He raced in Holland for the Kangaroos and the Edmonton Saints.

In 1958 along with his close friend Chubby Denton he took up motorized speedway riding for Chiswick Nomads, where he came across such other peddle power riders as Clive Hitch and Bob Thomas.

Besides Margaret, Mac leaves his son Malcolm, daughter-in-law Debbie and Grandchildren Charlotte & Sam and daughter Lisa with partner Jon.

Mac finally retired from active cycle speedway at the end of the 1971 season.

He and Margaret moved home to live in Spain in 2009.

Nobby Dunn

Malcolm Reading

From: Michael Jeffery

Could you include another tribute to Malcolm in the next edition as I feel that I was there right at the start of his racing career.

Following on from Roy Delaney's tribute in the last Track record, I too was shocked to hear of Malcolm's passing. In 1953/4 he was a small lad helping our milkman on his rounds in Palmers Green, North London and my mother (for whatever reason) suggested to him that he might like to try his hand at cycle speedway. He agreed, so I took him along to my team the Tottenham Kangaroos where he learnt all about our racing. In the mid fifties he moved up the road to Edmonton Saints and then returned to Tottenham in 1958, where he remained until his retirement. All down to 'Mum' who, incidentally, regularly used a local ladies hairdressers where Margaret, Malcolm's future wife, worked. I well remember one hot summer's day in 1954 riding my track bike, with Malcolm and Johnny Pinnock on theirs, about 15 miles along the North Circular Road and Ealing Broadway to the Hayes Broadsiders track for a NACSA Individual Championship round. I was 18 at the time and Malcolm must have been about 15. One notable thing about Malcolm was that at 15 he was quite short but maybe due to all the pedaling on the tracks, he became a very tall young man, with a long leg on the white line which was always difficult to pass!

I was so sorry to hear of his passing and all our sympathy goes to Margaret from all of us connected to the Edmonton and Tottenham clubs.



THE TOTTENHAM TEAM

REMEMBERING BRYAN WOOD — SOUTH LONDON RANGERS



Bryan sadly passed away on Wednesday the 2 September 2015, aged 76years.

Bryan rode for the South London Rangers from 1952. As a youngster he rode a bike too big for him, but his determination soon made him into a Star rider, and a force to be reckoned with!

At the end of his first season he left the Sport to go back into Boxing, where he was a Schoolboy & Youth Champion. He returned to Cycle Speedway in 1954 and after his return he reached, and won, the National Championship in 1956, aged 17years.

He was always immaculately dressed with good equipment. He represented England on several occasions, together with Southern Premier Test Match appearances. His best season with the Rangers was in 1956 when he rode in 31 matches and scored 377points plus 30 bonus points, giving him an average of 13.12!

Unfortunately for Cycle Speedway in 1957, he joined the Met Police, and soon after initial training joined the Mounted Police Division, where he stayed until he retired. He did, however, continue with his Boxing, and went on to become Police European Champion on three occasions, plus other UK Titles.

Bryan will be sadly missed by all of us, who get together at the bi-monthly meetings in Wimbledon, where we meet for lunch and a chat over old times. Several of these friends and wives attended Bryans Funeral in September, when two Mounted Police escorted the Hearse at the Crematorium. There was a very large turn-out of family, friends and Colleagues.

Ron Johnson



Bryan Wood (South London) Danny Daniel (Beckenham) Ron Webb (South London) & Richard Baker (Beckenham)

Top Picture Bryan Wood with the National Championship Trophy.

JOHN JENNINGS 22/8/1944 — 12/10/2015



Sadly after a long illness John passed away on the 12 of October. His funeral at Southampton Crematorium on 23 October was not only attended by his wife Vanessa and the rest of his family, but also by a number ex riders and many friends.

John was a great character, good friend and company. He was very knowledgeable about both motor cycle speedway and cycle speedway. He rode for Chandlers Ford Stars cycle speedway team from 1959 until it ceased operation at the end of the 1963 season.

He became British under-18 champion in 1960, although the 50 Years of Cycle Speedway book incorrectly changed his name to Sydney Jennings! He was a very energetic and competitive rider and was often picked to ride for the Hampshire cycle speedway team inter county meetings. John also won a number of individual competitions during his career.

After the demise of the Chandlers Ford team he bought an old J.A.P speedway bike from Maurice Mattingly a Southampton 'Saints' rider. He visited various tracks in order to get second half rides in the hope of being offered a team place at one of the motor cycle speedway teams operating at the time. It was extremely difficult for would-be riders to break into the sport. Opportunities were very limited and only those with the best equipment and exceptional talent, managed to make the grade.

John put in a lot of effort trying to find a club willing to give him a chance and eventually Weymouth Speedway signed him up. However, he was unable to establish himself as a regular member of the team and only obtained a handful of rides. After a few more unsuccessful attempts to make a break through, John reverted back to cycle speedway. As Chandler's Ford Stars were defunct he joined up with one of their long-term local rivals, Southampton 'Vikings' and carried on riding for a few more years.

Most of John's working life was spent in the busy office of the family business, the Joan Jennings Employment Agency. He managed the agency, which was a well known and respected local establishment with his mother (Joan) and they sponsored a few cycle speedway events. When he retired he set up and worked a successful gardening business until his health deteriorated.

JOHN HEWARD



Chandlers Ford Stars - 1961

L/R:- John Jennings, Pat Cousins, Colin Digweed, Stuart Wallace,
Tony Dacombe, Rob Fagence, Pete Smith & Brian Vine.

The titles at the World Championship events held at Wednesfield in August were shared evenly between the sport's three main nations- Britain's Vicky Brown was the Women's Champion, Shane Weinart took the Men's Junior title, as well as scoring highly for the Australian Touring party, and Poland's Bartosz Grabowski made the step up from Junior to Open World Champion in successive stagings of the competitions.

The schedule of events during the summer also included World Team and Federation Cup matches, a Test Match against Poland and a three-match Senior series against Australia (as well as Women's and Junior Tests). The overall result of the Senior series was in doubt until the last few heats of the final Test, leaving GB victors by 2-1.

The Ashes series began in 1981, when Rod Witham with Graham Sutton and Mick Harley organised a tour to Adelaide by a GB side, which won all seven Tests they raced. It also provided an opportunity to resurrect the World Individual Championship after an interval of twenty years. Ashes Test series have been raced at regular intervals since then.

One of the main differences between the Hemispheres in those early years was the Australian use of BMX-style starting barriers instead of rising tapes).

The Murraylands track in Murray Bridge, about 50 miles from Adelaide, has staged international events, but it has been the Findon, Salisbury and Le Fevre tracks in Adelaide itself which have been the venues for major Ashes meetings over the years, -with the exception of one Test held at the Saddleworth track, where the riders may well have worn old-style face masks, as the track was right next to pig pens, as evidenced by photographs in the possession of VCSRA member Josh Gleave

Les Gustafson



VETS GRAND PRIX SERIES

Apart from the World and British Vets events, there is also a thriving Grand Prix series, organised by Fred Rothwell from the germ of an idea by East London's Kevin Smith. Running now for several years, it has taken its troupe of participants to most of the current tracks, from Hellingly on the South Coast up to Scotland, and also to former circuits like Sandwell.

Although you don't have to be very old to participate in Vets events these days, the Vets Grand Prix series gives opportunities for oldies to race against their 'younger' colleagues, and features Sixties (both in terms of age and decade of introduction to the sport) racers such as Black Country's Bob Prince, Fred Rothwell himself, who turned out in that decade for Halifax's Copley Crusaders, a clutch of Northumbria vets who first took to Tyneside tracks in the mid-to-late 60s, and - until the end of last season - Mick Aris, the doyen of one of the sport's best-known racing families. Mick has reportedly hung up his wheels for good.

(Chick Mackie is in a category all of his own - 'HC' in Tour de France terms - having started almost before records began. Apologies to any other vets from those eras who have not been mentioned above).

2015 ended with a Grand Final at Sheffield, which may now become a regular finale to the season.

Les Gustafson



Josh Gleave at the Saddleworth Track.
Photo opposite 5 in a race at Saddleworth track.
Neil Toye leading Josh Gleave and Lee Beveridge.

Photos and front cover from Josh Greave.

THURROCK REUNION

A reunion of old Thurrock members took place at the Dog and Partridge pub, Orsett in late October 2015. Organised by Ian Gill it was well attended and look as if it will become a regular event.

Ex members going back to the 1950's shared memories and told tales of happy times in Cycle Speedway. Richard Powell came over from Australia and it was the first time in 42 years he met with his old team mates Founder member Bert Waterson's daughter Jean brought along a great collection of her late father's photos and press cuttings going back to the 40's and Larry Marshall (Bert's brother) came along with his family and spent most of his time talking with Bill Gill on old times. From the Tilbury days the two Trangmar brothers, Ray and Mick, Colin Gibbs, Keith Martin, Larry Marshall, Les Busby and Bill Gill had much to talk about. Vic Haines, John Colbert and Pete Hooper attended with their wives. Gary Ricks was a welcome visitor from the 70's and a real surprise was Terry Russell (Speedway Promotor) catching up with some of his old team mates. A lot of talk about Thurrock successes of the 1980's with Les Busby, Ian Gill, Dave Beadle, Alan Busby and Stu McCabe reviving those glory days. Several of the younger members including Neil Lester, Jamie Barton, were there and for a first attempt getting 25 ex members together was great. On a personal note it was for me a wonderful evening meeting so many people who played an important part in my life over several decades and I look forward to the next one.

Bill Gill ex Thurrock member



Thurrock Council Chairman meeting 1969 Thurrock Select Side.
L/R. John Cobbin, Paul Donaghy, Clive Hurrell, Kevin Wilson, Roger Ellis
Arthur Ellis, Dave Collins & Glen Norton.

18/2 Feb

11.10 am

How about an article request from members talking of their greatest moments in the sport / I will start with a short one as a prelude.

I am often asked what are my fondest moments in Cycle Speedway? So many great memories from being a rider, official, proud father and spectator.

As a rider the sheer joy of racing remains with me forever, not that I was very successful but truly enthusiastic but remember our first real league win against Beckenham and we celebrated at the pub afterwards including my pregnant wife. Great days visiting new tracks meeting new riders especially the good riders great times in the Midlands and North. As an official I had great times especially as Chairman of the CSC attending all the top events being introduced to both competitors and officials. As a spectator I was not very interested unless Thurrock lads were involved but I had one memorable day at Bournemouth in 1963 when Hellingly beat the great South London in a thrilling Gold Cup Final, a great day for the underdogs.

My best memories are linked to the 1980's when my son Ian was selected to go to Aussie and despite all the criticism ended up top scorer for the British Lions and then won the British Under 21 Championship in 1982. However the days I remember most are the two occasions Thurrock took the British Team Championship in 85 and 86. This was my dream for several years especially in the early days when Thurrock were the chopping block for the BCSF but it was more enjoyable because both my sons were in the winning team and it was Ian that captained the side. Proud moments as both a club manager and parent- Happy Times. I thought things would never get better but linking up with old friends on the VCSRA has been enjoyable especially in 2015 when I went to the World Finals at Poole and Wednesfield and met so many riders from the 50's and 60's. I didn't recognise most of them at first, for some reason we appear to have aged, but once names were mentioned it all came flooding back. I regret very little of what I did in cycle speedway but am glad I had the opportunity to be part of what was once truly phenomenal and has given me so much joy and made so many friends and hasn't finished yet.

Bill Gill



Tilbury Track. Early 1960s
Bill Gill, Alan Rayner & Colin Gibbs

Payne on a real high after making awards shortlist.

CYCLE speedway star Zac Payne has enjoyed a year of unprecedented success, but is still stunned to find himself among the finalists at this year's Oxfordshire Sports Awards, writes Matthew Bruce.

The 20-year-old, from Chalgrove, became national champion in September and

also represented Great Britain in the World Championships.

But to find himself shortlisted for the Sportsman of the Year award alongside Yorkshire and England Lions cricketer Jack Brooks, as well as MotoGP star Bradley Smith still came as a big surprise.

Payne said: "When my dad

showed me the email I was just in shock - I couldn't believe it.

"I'm a bit nervous to be up against these professional athletes, because what I do is only on an amateur level.

"But I'm really excited."

The financial rewards may not be as great in cycle speedway as in professional cricket and motorsport, but Payne is no less dedicated to his chosen sport.

As well as his regular work in a furniture warehouse, Payne trains three evenings a week with his Horspath Hammers teammates, coaches the club's younger age groups and puts in additional fitness work.

And after storming to the British Riders Championship title in September, Payne feels the benefits of the extra work are evident.

"Last year I wasn't really training as hard as I could have done," he said.

"At the start of this year I really got my head down and that was when I really started to achieve what I think I'd always been capable of."

Payne has already started to turn his attention to retaining the title next year.

And he is also planning ahead further to the 2017 World Championships in Australia.

But if it is his name being called out at the awards presentation at Oxford's Kassam Stadium on November 27, Payne admitted it would be an emotional moment.

He said: "It would mean a lot to me - my dad as well.

"I know how much effort he puts in for me."



Zac Payne, from Chalgrove, displays some of his cycle speedway silverware.

Article from The Herald 18th November 2015

The Result, from the Herald 2 December 2015.

ROLL OF HONOUR SPORTSMAN OF YEAR

Winner: Jack Brooks (cricket). **Runners-up:** Zac Payne (cycle speedway) & Bradley Smith (MotoGP).

Submitted by Pete Saunders.

Just Love Mouldy Old Dough - Roy Delaney

This issues article unveils the tasks of a track announcer who I had the greatest respect for; Ted Sear who in my opinion was simply the best. Ted's introduction to speedway came in 1950 when his father took him along to Walthamstow stadium. From that moment on he became literally hooked on the two-wheeled sport, which in turn led him to get involved four years later with cycle speedway which resulted in him getting a team place in the Whipps Cross Comets fourth team.

During his seven years as a rider he progressed to the first team and reflecting back I feel quite honoured to have ridden against Ted, he was a very clean rider but failed to procure the dizzy heights of stardom. Maybe it was because he was not of an aggressive nature, in fact he was a gentleman both on and off of the track.

He featured in the Comets touring team when they completed a series of matches in Manchester, Wales and Southampton and also rode against a Dutch touring team. In his last recorded match he scored five points when Whipps Cross raced the Weston Stars.

His employment consisted of working in a record shop on The Broadway, Woodford and a position with a finance company.

In January 1963 on a cold night his voice was heard for the first time over the tannoy system at Rye House as he announced the results at a Greyhound meeting, needless to say he felt very nervous but as the meeting progressed he gained confidence. At the end of the meeting he was told 'You'll do' and following this remark he became a member of the speedway staff and also on the books of Hackney's Greyhound staff.

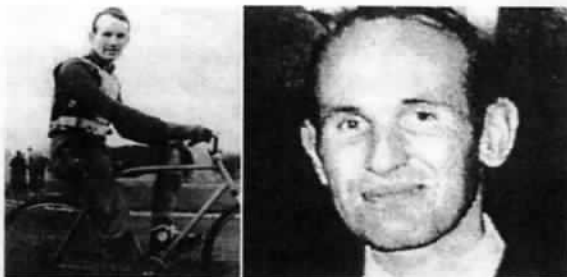
In 1963 speedway returned to Hackney and the new Promoter, Mike Parker held a meeting at the stadium highlighting his plans for the new club and calling for volunteers for various track duties. This was the year when Martin Luther King addressed 200,000 black people at the Lincoln Memorial, Washington DC and quoted 'I have a dream'. Well maybe Ted had a dream at this particular time to fulfil his ambition so he volunteered for the announcer's position which he maintained throughout his speedway career for Hackney. He also announced at West Ham, Romford and at Cycle Speedway meetings.

He was an excellent cheer leader, his voice was a delight to hear in fact he was known as the golden voice of speedway. His big moment came in 1969 when Hackney's original announcer, Peter Arnold was unable to execute the announcer's role at the Wembley World Final. Sadly Peter was tragically killed in a road accident whilst returning home from announcing duties at the final test match between England and Czechoslovakia at Reading. Ted was automatically chosen for this unforeseen vacant position which he fulfilled in his usual professional mode; he retained this spot on a yearly basis.

His interest in cycle speedway never failed to wane and if I had any cycle speedway news Ted would eagerly delineate contents over the mic during the course of the meeting.

I remember at one meeting he played a record *Mouldy Old Dough* by Lieutenant Pigeon three times. When I drew his attention to this at the completion of the meeting he remarked 'Yes I know - I just love that record!'

Announcing can be very strenuous at times as your only contact in the box is by telephone which isn't always reliable. Ted always had a runner at the ready in the pits to dash through the crowd for a last minute change. I would like to take this opportunity to thank former Whipps Cross Comets Captain John Brown for photos and kindly assisting me on my research on Ted Sear who sadly passed away over two decades ago.



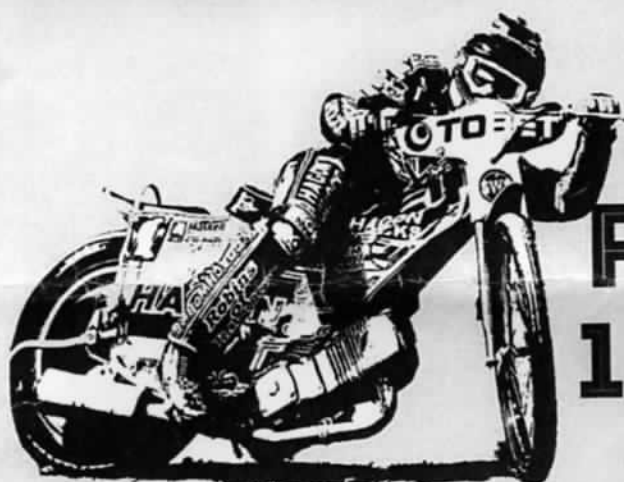
*Above left: Rider Ted Sear and right Announcer
Photos submitted by Roy Delaney*



From the Voice Winter 2014, Thanks to Roy Delaney.

WSRA CELEBRATION OF SPEEDWAY

AT PARADISE WILDLIFE PARK



SUNDAY 21ST
FEB 2016
11AM-4PM

ENTRY IS A MINIMUM DONATION OF £5PP
INCLUDES ENTRY TO PARADISE WILDLIFE PARK

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From Pete Saunders.