

THE TRACK RECORD

A publication of the
**VETERAN CYCLE
SPEEDWAY RIDERS
ASSOCIATION**
Volume 22
Issue 2
June. 2018

Secretary
Bill Gill
Colchester Road
Holland on Sea
Essex
CO1 5DD
Tel:-01255813476

Publishing Editor
Bill Gadsby
7 Sewell Close
St. Albans
Herts
AL4 0TB
Tel:- 01727-859943

e-mail:- bill.fredrick.gill@gmail.com billgadsby@hotmail.com
www.cyclespeedwayvets.org.uk



ROCK-A-NORE ROCKETS (Hastings) Note the "Doodlebugs"

Your Committee.	2.
Editors notes.	3.
My Crazy Speedway World by Bert Harkins.	4 & 5.
Saint Martins Lions took first honours.	6 & 7.
Cycle Speedway in Halifax Telegraph & Argus.	8,9 & 10.
The Cycle Speed Kings of Tolworth.	11.
Chandlers Ford 2018 Reunion.	12.
Hampshire's Inter County Matches.	13.
"Ghost Match"	14 & 15
Directory Amendments.	16.

MALCOLM BELCHAMBERS (M/ship Sec.) writes -----

A polite reminder to Members who have still to renew their VCSRA M/ship. (M/ship started on April 1st 2018).

A big THANK YOU to Members who enclosed a SAE and Members who enclosed a DONATION with their renewals. With the increasing costs of Printing, Stationary and Postage this gesture really helps the Committee keep the M/ship fees to a reasonable level. Thank you all.

About YOUR Committee ---- We meet about 3 or 4 times a year, usually at the RYE HOUSE PUB near to Rye House Speedway Stadium. We DO NOT CHARGE Travel expenses for these Meetings and we pay for our own Pub Dinners. Thus the VCSRA is saved further expense.

YOUR COMMITTEE and their duties. ----

BILL GILL (General Secretary). Bill uses his vast experience in C/Speedway Management and is in contact with various bodies etc to promote the VCSRA to a wider audience as well as the day to day running of the VCSRA.

TOM KILBY (Treasurer and present President). Tom is responsible for keeping the VCSRA's finances in order.

BILL GADSBY (T/Record Editor). A 'corner stone' of the VCSRA. He is Editor of YOUR MAGAZINE and relies on YOUR ARTICLES and PHOTOS to enable him to produce a very fine T/Record. He needs your input, so keep him busy with articles etc!

COLIN BOOTH (Webmaster). Colin is responsible for the VCSRA Website. He has compiled every T/Record from day one as well as condensing the book '50 Years of Cycle Speedway' these can be obtained from Colin (at £5 per disc). He prints 200 plus address labels per Edition and the M/ship Cards. Thus saving the VCSRA more expense.

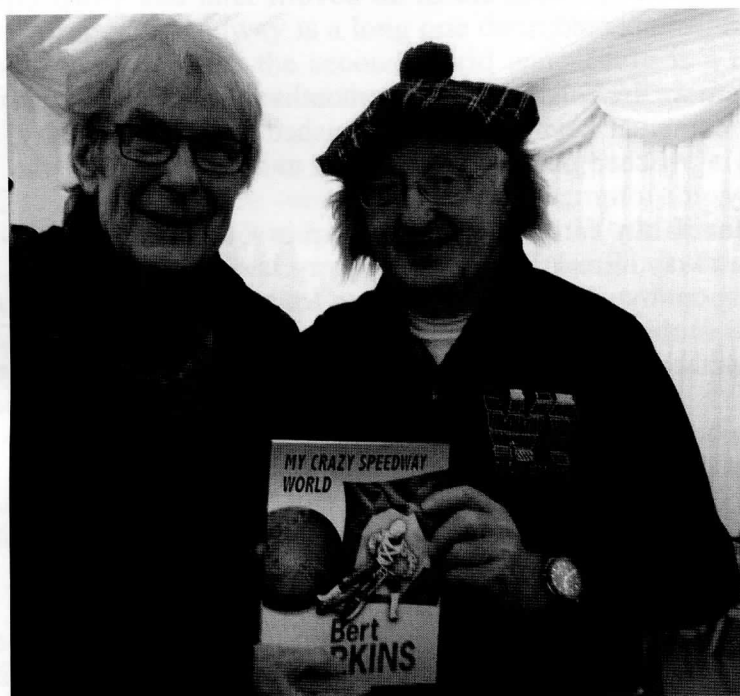
PETE LECKIE (T/Record Distribution). Pete collects the T/Record from the Printers and posts it out to the M/ship.

LEN ADAMS. Len organizes two Golf Days per Year to which ANYONE is invited.

PETE SAUNDERS and BRIAN BARNETT also sit in at these meetings where business permit.

I for myself are responsible for Banking your M/ship Cqs, issuing your M/ship Cards and printing the Renewal Applications and 'Polite Reminders' (to those who forget!). I also compile the Directory Amendments which Bill Gadsby prints in the T/Record. I keep the M/ship Database up to date and deal with the M/ship enquires as they arise.
Thank you for continuing your support of the VCSRA. MALCOLM B.

EDITORS NOTES.



Buying a copy of Bert Harkins book at the 90th Anniversary of Speedway in the U.K. at Paradise Park.
(That's Bert on the right!)

Get the Commercial in first:-
"My Crazy Speedway World" is available from London League Publication Ltd. At £14.50 post free via:- www.llpshop.co.uk

Bert's book covers his Cycle Speedway days, his early attempts to break into the Edinburgh Monarchs Speedway team and details of his exploits in Australia, South Africa and the U.S.A.

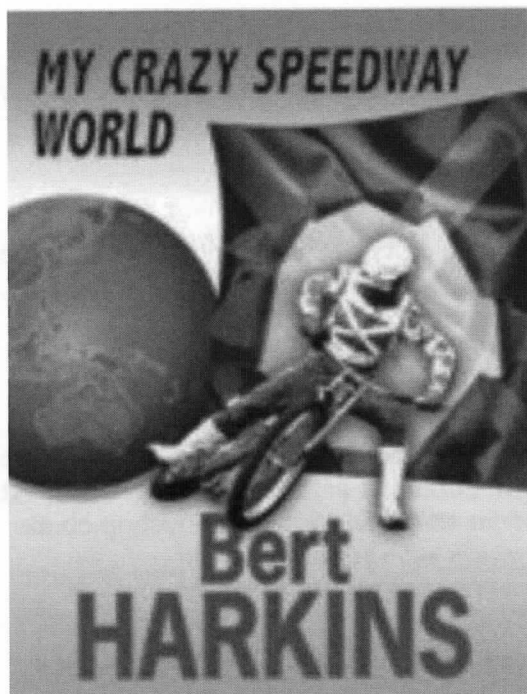
As a long time Wembley Speedway supporter, I was interested in his time as a "Wembley Lion". I was very pleased when speedway returned to Wembley in 1970/71. Although the "Lions" looked very much like the Edinburgh Monarchs, as the book says there was a connection with the previous era, with former riders Trevor Redmond (Co-promoter) Fred Williams (Team Manager) and Bill Kitchen (Machine Examiner). I thought the racing was better (unless you like to see endless 5-1s) and there was a greater variety of visiting teams. Although we were encouraged to use the stand on the "Royal Box" side, you could see several bays on the opposite side with only two people in, a nice touch I thought to allow you to sit anywhere. Crowds were quite good for the Saturday night meetings, although the ever greater demands of football meant that it was sometime necessary to run twice a week in order to fit all the fixtures in the short time allowed.

I was also very interested to read that Wembley sent the Mansewood Lions a complete set of body colours free of charge.

Langley Lions (Stevenage) tried to order a set of Wembley Colours, but the firm would not supply them until they got written permission from Wembley. Unfortunately the Lions folded after only a few matches, so when they advertised them for sale, I decided to buy them. The Wembley Hawks colours were getting the worse for wear, they were actually the Bushey ones with a Hawk painted over the "B". So it seemed too good an opportunity to miss, so the Wembley Hawks became the Wembley Lions.

I did write sometime ago how Bill Kitchen's son rode for the Hawks Junior Team and that his father laid on two cars to take the four riders to an away match! Unfortunately his son, Peter, lost interest after that, so we never saw him or his father again. I sometimes wonder, that if we had been called the Wembley Lions then, maybe we could have had Bill Kitchen as our President.

BILL GADSBY.



Bert Commented:

“Here we are folks, after many months of being stuck over my computer keyboard, I have finished my autobiography, having bashed out every word, dot and comma along the way .

It covers my early days growing up in Glasgow, to Cycle Speedway. Road Racing, Speedway and life after I had hung up my white boots and tartan leathers.

This is the story of a wandering Speedway Scotsman an I hope that you will enjoy it.

The book can be ordered from:
London League Publications Ltd.
For £14.50 post free in the UK.

Website:
<http://www.llpshop.co.uk>

CYCLE SPEEDWAY DAYS.

We found out that there was a Glasgow cycle speedway league and were invited to join. Our original team was called the Eastwood Mercuries, mainly because the National Benzol petrol stations were handing out free stickers with their logo, Mercury, the 'God of Speed'. We collected the decals and stuck them on the front of our home made body colours and called ourselves, the 'Eastwood Mercuries'. Other teams in the Glasgow League included Craigton Eagles, Redhill Rockets, Mansewood Lions, Linthouse Lightnings, Camphill Kiwis, Busby Gulls and Knightswood Toffs, whose riders wore bow ties when they were racing.

One of our gang, Peter Christie, had the bright idea of writing to various speedway teams to ask if we could have their body colours for our cycle speedway team. Some clubs replied to say that either they kept the body colours or the riders kept them as souvenirs, but the one club that did reply with a great offer was the famous Wembley Lions. To our amazement and delight, Wembley sent us a full set of Lions' body colours and suddenly our Mansewood Lions team with the skinny hand painted lion on the front, became the most professionally turned out team in the Glasgow Cycle Speedway League.



Little did I know that, as captain of the Mansewood Lions in the Glasgow Cycle Speedway League, I would one day become captain of the famous Wembley Lions speedway team at the Empire Stadium in London. A long way for a wee laddie from Govan and I guess that is one record no-one can beat.

From its humble beginnings, our track at the Kirkie eventually hosted many top events such as Scotland versus England internationals. Glasgow versus Bradford and Glasgow versus Edinburgh test matches, the prestigious Glasgow Individual Championship-which I won-and the Glasgow Grand Prix-which I also won.

Stan Stevens and Sandy McGillivray both rode for England against Scotland in Cycle Speedway and later moved on to the shale sport. The list of riders who went from pedal pushing to "proper" speedway is a long one dating back to when young kids would carve out a track on an old bombsite after the second world war. There is a board naming the many riders who moved from pedals to engines at the World Speedway Riders Association National Speedway Museum.

In addition to riding in the Glasgow Cycle Speedway League, International and Inter City matches, there were also World Championships to contest. I was Glasgow Champion and Scottish Champion and qualified for two World Finals, one at Garrett Park in Tooting in south London and one at Harrison Park in Edinburgh. In the latter I finished as top Scot in fourth place and beat Manchester's Derek Garnett who was favourite for the title. Derek had won the English Championship that season and was the hot favourite to add the World title to his list of achievements, but I spoiled his chances of glory. The winner and World Champion was Mike Parkins, son of Norwich promoter, Ted Parkins.

Edinburgh's Johnny Murphy, who rode in that World Final, was is riding cycle speedway some 50 years later, just like Glasgow's Chick Mackie. They breed them tough in Scotland and John and Chick are now true cycle speedway legends.

One unusual item from the Edinburgh final was that the trophies that day were presented by Edinburgh Monarchs' promoter, Ian Hoskins. I ended with a unique record which is unlikely to be broken. I rode in the cycle speedway World Final on the Saturday afternoon, and then the novices' race in the second half at Old Meadowbank Speedway on the Saturday evening. From the top of the cycle speedway tree to the bottom rung of the motorcycle speedway ladder. 's work.

This was the second World Cycle Speedway Final I had qualified for, the earlier 1960 World Final at Garrett Park in London had turned out to be a bit of a disaster for my fellow qualifier from Glasgow, Johnnie Speirs and me. We were the only two Scottish riders in the Final, but our journey south turned into a full blown disappointment. Neither John nor I had a car driving license at the time, so I borrowed my friend's old Triumph motorcycle and box sidecar to make the long trip down to London.

Eventually we did reach Tooting and Garrett Park, but to our utter disappointment, the World Championship Final had started and we were not allowed to race. I guess I should have been more assertive, but in those days you just accepted things. Johnny and I turned around and headed back to Hayes for an overnight stop at my cousins house. Then next morning we started the 400 mile trek back to Glasgow. Somehow I can't see this happening these days. We had no comfortable high speed cars or vans to transport our bikes. We covered all that distance on an old Triumph Speed Twin 7 box sidecar and returned home without turning a cycle speedway wheel in anger. A disappointing end to a long journey.



Leading the way for the Mansewood Lions in the Glasgow Cycle Speedway League. Jackie Pinkerton is on the outside.

SAINT MARTIN'S LIONS TOOK FIRST HONOURS.

By Robin Martakies - (Reprinted from South Western Post} April 1964.

CycleSpeedway racing came to Bristol in 1946. The first established team raced on a track situated at the Knowle cricket ground and boasted two of the city's best pre 1950 riders, George Slocombe and Don Edwards. Following the success of the Knowle venture, another track appeared, at Hengrove Lane, an open site just behind the Bristol Bulldog's Speedway Stadium, off the Wells Road.

Several more teams began racing in 1947. Amongst them were Whitchurch Gunners, Teignmouth Bulldogs and Nailsea Hawks. The Hawks had one of the finest tracks in the country and the average age of the team was twenty four (*quite old for those days*). The attractive facilities at Nailsea drew in most of the top Somerset and Bristol teams.

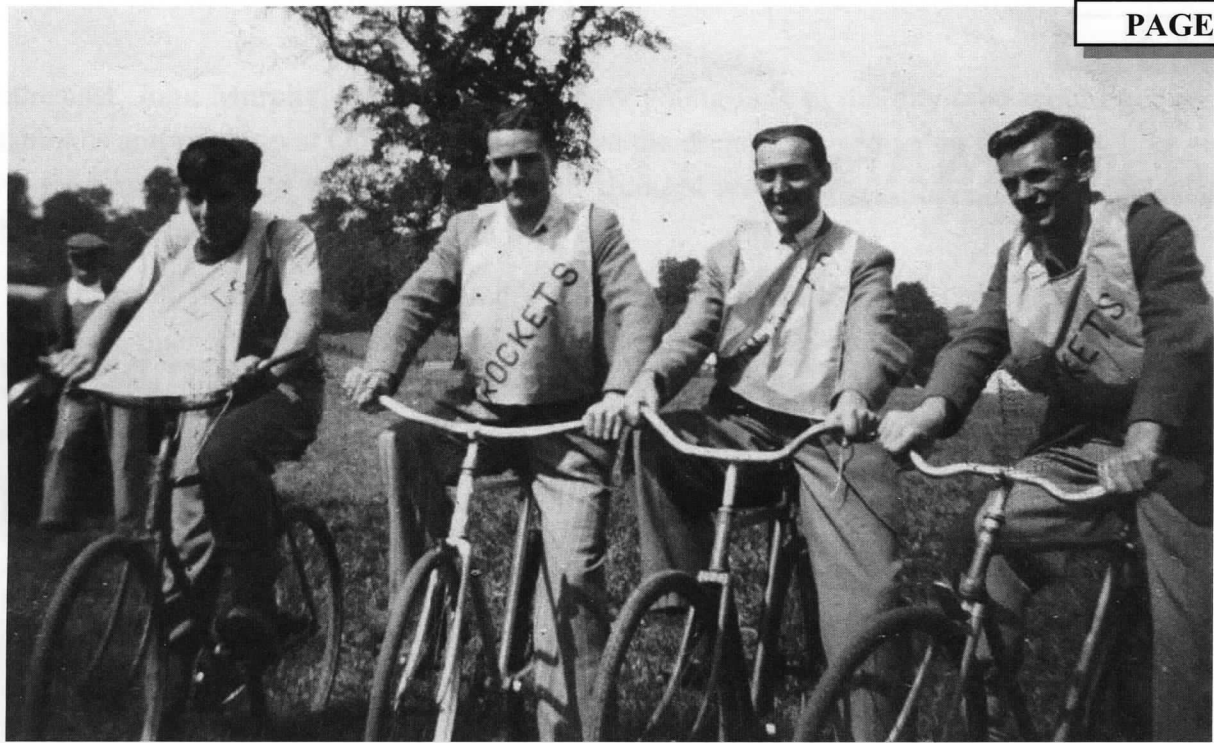
Innovations and facilities included a public address system, track rakers, refreshments and changing rooms. The average home attendance was over 1,000*.

CycleSpeedway racing progressed steadily until the first Bristol League programme began in mid-March 1948. A meeting of the Bristol Cycle Speedway teams was called by the Bristol Speedway Directors, at Knowle Stadium. Nailsea Hawks, Sutton Aces, Filwood Aces, Hengrove Bulldogs, Rushin Kangaroos, St Martin's Lions, Leinster Tigers and Wellsway Hawks attended and agreed to make up the league.

But, even in those days, Cycle Speedway was not the proverbial 'bed of roses'. After only six weeks of racing, Nailsea Hawks withdrew from the league due to travel difficulties and, two weeks later, Leinster Tigers withdrew, owing to lack of riders.



Bristol League Riders 1961-2



Bath Rockets 1961-2

The final League table was as follows:

	P	W	L	D	Pts.
St. Martin's Lions	10	8	2	0	16
Sutton Aces	10	7	3	0	14
Rushin Kangaroos	10	6	4	0	12
Hengrove Bulldogs	10	5	4	1	11
Wellsway Hawks	10	2	7	1	5
Filwood Aces	10	0	10	0	0

The highlight of the 1948 season was the intercity challenge match with Bath. Bristol won by twenty points on the Bath test team's track.

The riders who competed for Bristol were G Gunston, Doug Wotton, Ken Warlock**, T Travers, M Sage, J Willis, M Thatcher and K Flowers.

Two more top Bristol riders, who narrowly failed to qualify for representative honours, were Ron Davis {Hengrove Bulldogs} and John Lovell (St Martin's Lions).

* Stated attendance figures in the early days of Cycle Speedway were often exaggerated and their accuracy cannot be relied upon.

** Ken was still riding at a high level more than 25 years later.

Telegraph & Argus

31st May 2017

On their bikes and ready for action.... remembering Bradford's cycle speedway heyday



AND THEY'OFF Cycle Speedway in Halifax in 1983.

For most people the thrill and excitement of speedway will always bring back fond memories of Bradford.

Some of the sport's legendary riders showed off their skills at **Odsal** and many fans would love to see its return to the city, but for now we can reminisce when Bradford's base for rugby was the focal point for another fast paced, adrenaline filled sport.

Attending the speedway and seeing the riders, among them the late Arthur Forrest, known as the Black Prince for his gleaming black leathers - and Arthur Wright, was an exciting night out for Bradfordians and indeed the many visitors from beyond who flocked to take in the thrilling scene at Odsal Speedway was very much part of the social scene and long after the petrol fumes had evaporated young riders would straddle their cycles to emulate their idols.

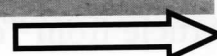
Enthusiast, John Murphy, was one of the many young lads in the city who would get on their pushbikes and pitch up at Odsal Stadium to live the dream. "I used to go up on my bike with a few friends. We used to ride around and thought we were riding speedway," he recalled when I previously interviewed him in the T&A.

An article from our archives dated Wednesday May 2nd 1973 talks of a new cycle speedway track being opened in Bradford. The track was the first in the city up to the standards set by the British Cycle Speedway Federation and was located on recreation ground at the corner of Manchester Road and Mayo Avenue. According to the report, it was owned by Bradford Bees who moved there from a track in Ripleyville. The team's manager, Les Smith, commented in the report: "Our members have been working on the track every night of the week and all day Saturday and Sunday for the last eight weeks."



GET SET, GO
Riders eager for
glory at Halifax in
1983.

FAST TRACK
Cycle Speedway Riders
Pictured in 1984.



Mick Fairbairn rode semi professionally for five years, His farther, Roy Challoner had also ridden speedway. Mick came out of the sport following a serious accident in which he broke both legs, but he still remembers the glory days. "In the 1940s and 1950s the crowds were phenomenal. I grew up reading about that and it spurred me on to ride speedway," he recalls. "We used to ride cycle speedway in a car park on push bikes. That is what everybody did. I used to go to the speedway, we would watch it and we wanted to reproduce it. We'd mark out a track and many lads would turn up," recalled Mick. He talked about cycle speedway giving young lads the chance to try and emulate their idols. "It really started around the war years because we lived in a time then when we all liked to have heroes and the romance of speedway was like the romance of the movies. There were these gladiator speedway riders risking their lives and they could really make their money," recalls Mick. He recalls a time when speedway was phenomenally popular. "I started watching speedway at Halifax then I started riding cycle speedway and it progressed from there. "The great thing about it was anybody could do it. The fact is their specialist equipment was an old bike you made to suit cycle speedway."

Mick recalls creating his own cycle. "You got a standard road bike, took *off* the bits and bobs, you only had one gear and what they used to do is you'd get one with quite a big frame and to make it more user friendly you'd cut them down so you'd get a local welder to cut it, bend it and re-form the frame to make it a bit more like a speedway frame and it was lower in the saddle so you could ride it better."

Mick recalls riding from Low Moor to Brierley, trying to avoid being caught by police, because they did not have brakes on their bikes! "We were looking over our shoulders going there making sure the police didn't catch us because in those days it would have been seen to be serious if you had a bike with no brakes." Mick also recalls those fond memories when pedal power was king. "I remember when I was a kid racing on what is now Richard Dunn's. We were cycling and racing anybody who turned up." They'd spend all day racing around and when it was home time they'd pop over to the stadium where they'd take their seats in the stands and dream.

"Sitting in the stands we'd think wouldn't it be great if speedway came back here and that is all we wanted," adds Mick. The last speedway meeting was held in Bradford in the 1990s, but for many people the aim has always been to one day bring it back to the city.

Of course, Bradford wasn't the only area to boast a cycle speedway track. Others were located in Hull, Sheffield and in Heckmondwike.

Article from Tony Emmott.



UNLESS you live in quiet Elmbridge Avenue, Tolworth, you may never have heard of Tolworth Tudors—or the sport of cycle speedway for that matter.

But that's where this comparatively unknown sport goes on in this area, as our photographer discovered last Saturday evening.

But this is a proper nationally run sport. In fact, the National Amateur Cycle Speedway Association draws up the rules and organises the national team and individual championships for both senior and junior (under 17) riders. This is the N.A.C.S.A.'s 21st year.

It was in the autumn of 1953 that a group of riders, all living in Tolworth, decided to form their own club. The name Tolworth Tudors was chosen and the Tudor Rose emblem adopted.

An earth track was constructed in a field off Davis Road, Chessington, now the site of Gala Cosmetics offices.

There being no local league, the club joined the North West Middlesex League for the 1954 season and became league champions and knock-out cup winners at the first attempt. The original riders were Keith McTear, Len Dutton, Richard Whitcher, Ray Wallis, Paul Murden, Ken White, who still lives in Red Lion Road, Reg Squires and Mick Little, who lives in Sutton.

Travel to away matches was achieved in the back of a lorry or by cycle, but the latter method created problems on the return journey if the cycle was damaged during a match.

In 1955, the club entered the National Team Championships, reaching the final ridden at a track in Fleet, Hants, where they were beaten by Manchester club, Carrs Wood Hunters.

The following season, Tudors went one better, winning the National Team Trophy which they proudly displayed at the Tip-Top cafe near the Ace of Spades, the club's unofficial headquarters of the time. The final took place at Garratt Park, Wandsworth, where King-standing Monarchs from Birmingham were beaten 52-43.

The cycle speed kings of Tolworth

Champion

Tolworth were runners-up in the newly formed London and Home Counties League in 1956 and beat Weston Stars in the knock-out cup final at Chobham. Hank Giles won the league individual championship.

The club almost disbanded in 1957 when several members were called up for National Service.

The London and Home Counties League lasted only one season so Tudors joined the Southern Premier League where they finished runners-up. Present club captain Roger Kirk joined the club in 1957 when his own club, Chobham Rockets, disbanded.

In 1958, four riders, Tony Claydon, Del Pearce, Pete Page and Pete Rides joined from another disbanded club, Cheam Cherokees. Tolworth reached the national final for the third time, being beaten 43-53 by Walthamstow Wolves.

New surface

The sport was reorganised in the London area in 1963 with the formation of the Home Counties League, Tolworth being founder members.

The early months of 1965 were spent building the present track at the end of Elmbridge Avenue. Tudors profited from the disbandment of Chessington Aces.

Pete Rides emigrated to Australia at the end of the 1966 season and Reg Squires and Glynn Brimson left the club in 1967.

Tolworth avoided the wooden spoon by one place in 1968 but were propping the rest of the league up in 1969.

Things began to look up last season with a new shale surface on the track and some new blood in the team. Ab Herbert, of Elm Grove, Sutton, Graham Evans and Roger Ford should have a bright future in the sport.

This season, Tolworth are sitting on top of the league thanks to the return of Glynn Brimson, of 175, St. Dunstan's Hill, Cheam, and the signing of ex-Raynes Park rider Tony Johnson, of Whatley Avenue, Raynes Park, who represented England against Scotland last year and who is probably the sport's most spectacular rider at present.

The greatest rider to appear for Tudors was undoubtedly Paul Murden who rode for England in the late 50's and captained the club until the early 60's.

Both Roger Kirk and Glynn Brimson reached the final of the 1962 World Championship held in Edinburgh.

From "The Surrey Comet" Summer 1971

Len Kitching.

CHANDLERS FORD STARS 2018 REUNION



Standing left to right: Mike Vernam, Mick Denham, John Heward & Andy Day.

Seated left to right: Tommy Webber, Dave Judd & Pat Cousins.

Picture: Barry Judd

The thirteenth annual reunion took place on the 10th March at the home of John Heward in Chandlers Ford. This year's attendance was much lower than usual; sadly due to the recent deaths of two previously staunch stalwarts and also ill health which affected a number of other former team members who had previously been ever present at the function.

Mike Vernam joined us for the first time this year. He rode for Southampton Bombers cycle speedway club in the late 1950s early 1960s and subsequently became a member of the Southampton Saints team when the Bomber's moved from their Shirley Warren track to the Shirley Ponds location. Mike was a local skid kid who went from pedals to power and became a successful speedway rider for Weymouth, Poole, Reading and Romford teams. After retiring from speedway he continued grass track racing for a number of years. Mike brought along a collection of old Southampton and Hampshire area cycle speedway programmes dating back to the days when a number of tracks and teams operated locally. These historic...! Items were eagerly perused by the assembled group. Also during the evening he was persuaded to talk about his time whilst riding at various motorcycle speedway venues and different promoters. This proved to be a very enlightening feature of the evening, enjoyed and appreciated by all.

Although this year's attendance was unfortunately the lowest since reunions started, those present became so engrossed in conversation, searching through memorabilia on display and talking to Mike about his time on the speedway circuits that the event carried on far longer into the evening than usual as time simply flew by.

John Heward



L to R:

Pete Yates (Vikings), Dave Butcher (Shirley Bombers), Colin Wheeler (Vikings), Ritchie Yates (Vikings), Neville Griffiths {Vikings}, Terry Francis {Shirley Bombers}, Ted Mills (County Manager), ? , Dave Tanner (Shirley Bombers).

Hampshire's Inter County Matches

There were a few Inter County matches against local counties Wiltshire and Berkshire (and Oxfordshire at Abingdon?), I am not aware of Dorset ever having a county team.

The matches during the 50's were referred to as 'friendlies', but some I remember were not quite like that at times. Long before the 'new discipline' of the early 60's regarding behaviour and riding styles that were introduced by the new reforming bodies, such as the BCSF.

The attached photo shows the Hampshire team of, I believe, 1957 against Wiltshire at Bucktebury or Swindon.

Leading riders of Wiltshire included the Morse brothers (I can't remember their Christian names) and Steve Richards, who often wore a collar and tie when racing. Great days with the addition of riding at unfamiliar tracks against unfamiliar riders.

DAVE BUTCHER

George Delderfield's
Cycle speedway
gossip page

Article below from Speedway World
Jan 19th 1949.

Opposite page Feb 16th 1949

Article on the right from 50 Years of
Cycle Speedway

Picture from Sunday Pictorial

UNUSUAL INTERNATIONAL MATCH

On Saturday, January 22, at 3 p.m., at the now-famous Kingsbury Circle track (two minutes from Kingsbury Underground), six Wembley riders will line up for their challenge match against the Dutch team they have adopted, the "Hollandse Welpen." There will be an air of the supernatural, for their opponents will be riding a track nearly three hundred miles away.

The Dutch riders apparently suggested this fixture some time ago and it was turned down as impracticable, but with the Dutch insistence, the "phantom" fixture was arranged, and this is how it will be run.

Each team will consist of six riders, who will each ride in three races. In each of the nine heats, two riders from each team will be timed to one-fifth second by a stopwatch. The fastest rider in each team will receive three points, second fastest two, third fastest one.

Each track will measure exactly 60 metres and each will be a replica of the other in shape. Each is a disused tennis court and the surfaces will be much the same. The only thing that Mr. White, the Control Board manager, is worrying about is the weather. If it is raining in one country and not the other, then the times will be seriously affected.

However, he thinks that will not matter so very much in view of the publicity that cycle speedway will receive in both countries. I understand that the National Press will have representatives at the track. In addition to the newsreel companies, and it is not unlikely that a well-known film star will make a personal appearance and invitations have been sent to various Speedway riders.

In short, this fixture looks like being the match of the year, for after the international at Middlesex All-

Stars' Championship will take place, which will include the six Wembley riders taking part in the international, Ken Cooper and Curly Colletta from Herts., Dennis Peters and Ron Hawkwood from North-West Middlesex, Les Wilman from Harrow, and three riders from the newly-formed Thames Valley League. Proceeds from this match will go to the Southern Region Cycle Speedway Control Board's funds.

THE TEAMS

WEMBLEY.—Ray "Buster" Brown (Wembley Panthers) (capt.) and Del Green (Wembley Panthers); Dud Smith (Acton Acorns) and Don Morris (Acton Acorns); Roy Rogers (Wembley Hawks) and Don Mahoney (Colindale Aces).

HOLLANDSE WELPEN.—Henk de Bruin (capt.) and Pat Quist; Maub de Haas and Theo Binda; Tom Somers and Keizen Wetfer.

Cycle Speedway riders everywhere will wish both teams the best of luck, and I would remind readers that, whoever wins, this will be the greatest publicity that the

George Delderfield's
Cycle speedway
gossip page

sport has ever received, and I am sure we must congratulate both Hartog de Ronde, President of the Dutch Cycle Speedway Association, and T. A. White, Manager of the Southern Region Cycle Speedway Association, for their enterprise.

SURVEY NO. 2—GLASGOW

Miles away from East London to the banks of the Clyde, where the ships that carry our "Hearts of Oak" are built.



One of the most notorious cycle speedway matches of all-time took place on 22 January 1949 when Wembley took on Dutch champions Hollandse Welpen in the famous "Ghost Match". The Wembley team raced on the notorious Kingsbury Circle track while the Dutchmen used their own track over three hundred miles away. Both circuits measured 60 metres, and each was a replica of the other in shape. A crowd of over three thousand were at Wembley to watch the enthralling event. In each team, two riders lined up and were timed to one fifth of a second. Fastest received three points, second fastest two, third one over nine heats.

The Dutchmen won the match with ease but unfortunately there is no record of the result or the scorers but for the record book the teams were:-

WEMBLEY

Buster Brown (Wembley Panthers), Del Green (Wembley Panthers), Dud Smith (Acton Acorns), Don Morris (Acton Acorns), Roy Rogers (Wembley Hawks), Don Mahoney (Colindale Aces).

HOLLANDSE WELPEN

Hank De Bruin, Pat Quist, Map De Haas, Theo Binda, Tom Somers, Keizan Wetfer.

Moving pictures of the Dutch racing were flown to England to make a film of the event together with English pictures. The completed film was shown at a West End cinema in London.



From: LES GUSTAFSON

I read these pages from the VCSRA Cuttings section. What was particularly interesting was the report of the newsreel shots of the match, where it was pointed out that although the two tracks were nominally similar in length, the Dutch track had very long straights and tight, 'suicide' bends, so that they could race faster, and that the surface was slick and hard, 'as hard as Birmingham Speedway' (presume it wasn't a tarmac track at that stage of Dutch CS?) - not to mention the Wembley Council dumping a load of cinders on the Kingsbury track prior to the match, as you mentioned

NEWS REEL GIVES WARNING TO OUR CYCLE AUTHORITIES.

In a little News theatre in Oxford Street I saw the greatest tribute yet paid to a great Youth sport, the newsreel account of the "phantom" cycle speedway match between Hollandse Welpen and Wembley.

For two minutes I sat enthralled as the cameras flashed to and from England and Holland, giving us the most thrilling moments of each match.

Shots of the Dutch track should serve as a pointer to the Control Board when our Dutch visitors arrive here, but more especially when our lads go to Holland. The film shows the reason for the English riders' failure, for, although the tracks measured exactly the same, there was a vast difference in the shape; the Kingsbury track with sweeping bends and the Hilversum track almost suicidally sharp

Track surfaces were different, too, with the Dutch track looking slick and hard, as hard as Birmingham Speedway.

Longer straights and a slicker surface, coupled with broad-siding and bend control which is unequalled in England, puts the Dutch cycle speedway scene far in advance of our own. Add to that their specially-constructed frames, and I am prepared to state that, although England may be streets ahead in organisation, our riding ability is still in the novice class compared with the Dutch.

Has anybody seen this film? As well as this article it, is mentioned in "50 years of Speedway Cycle Speedway". I would be very interested to see it, as obviously I knew all the Wembley riders.

Pathe News and British Movie tone news have Cycle Speedway clips, as does you tube. I did find one entitled "Cycle Speedway in Holland 1949" It only lasts for about a minute and a half, it does show two Dutch riders riding on there own at the beginning, which could be the "Ghost Match" followed by a race with 4 riders, ending with them all falling off! The commentary was in Dutch, so I am not sure.

Further thoughts on the match, I believe that the Sunday Pictorial was the only newspaper to include a photograph of the event, although as you can see, (from the lack of a crowd), that it was obviously not taken during the actual match, but was "staged" just for the photographer.

The Local Wembley Newspaper, did have a short report on the match and the "Middlesex All Star Championship" that followed, but no photograph. (I would have thought Bill Kitchen having a match race with Jim White, would have warranted a photo) The paper did in fact give more space to the very long letter from Jim White chastising the Wembley Council for not loaning them a steam roller. (Both articles have appeared in a previous issue of the Track Record.)

It is easy to be wise after the event, but I would of checked to see if a steam roller was available before dumping four tons of cinders on the

In any case the track was perfectly all right, and would have been better left as it was.

Incidentally the Speedway World refers to the "Now famous Kingsbury Circle Track, Whereas the article in "50 years of Cycle Speedway" it is the notorious Kingsbury Track.

Both the book and the Newspaper gave the crowd as 3,000, which is at least one zero too many.

Finally regarding Wembley Councils refusal to help, the track was not in Wembley, according to my calculations at least half if not all of the track was in Kenton, which would come under the Harrow Council, the remainder of the waste ground on which the track was situated was in Kingsbury, which is N.W.9.

Bill Gadsby

From: L GUSTAFSON

My old mates in Newcastle have asked me to point out that in the photo of Terry Kirkup in the last issue of 'Track Record' it was not his dad Ernie looking on. As can be seen in the attached photo (which also featured in the article in '50 Years of CS'), on the day Ernie was also wearing a white shirt- but under a 'V' (Vikings) race-jacket, not 'Stars' (my excuse that the white-shirted rider in Terry's photo had his head cropped off). The attached photo is also in the Newcastle history website (1965-70). The day was a visit by Halifax teams Boothtown Rapiers and West Vale Wolves to Newcastle, against the home Vikings and Stars.



DIRECTORY AMENDMENTS, MAY 2018.

ROY HASELDEN – c/o/a – 10, Barley Mow Park, Eastbourne Road, Uckfield, E.Sussex. TN22 5QL.

DENNIS BOTTAZZI – delete e-mil address.

STEVE COPPING – add landline 01 394 448618.

KEITH DYER – add mobile 0740 002 0632.

STEWART JONES – add mobile 0773 327 2313.

IAIN MORRISON – new e-mil morrisoni352@gmail.com

new mobile 0792 562 2551

new landline 01 214 538746

PHIL PILBROW – add landline 01 508 491856

JIM PREDDY – add mobile 0781 210 3243

ROBERT SCRUTTON – new e-mil robs1103@outlook.com

LAWRENCE SPAULDING – add Daughter's e-mil louisecristtam@googlemail.com

Malcolm Belchambers (Hon. M/ship Sec.).

LATE AMENDMENTS:-

New address

Phill Hemming-5 Osborne Close, Kidderminster, Worcester, DY10 3YY Tel.01562745462

Email correction for CHRIS CULLUM ccullum.12@btinternet.com