

OCT '68

October 1968

MANCHESTER "17" NEWSLETTER

Dear Fellow Members,

Before our usual news this time, we have in this newsletter to record two sad events. The death of the Club President, Bill Parkes, and the death of our distinguished member - John Hartle.

You will all have read the many tributes to John, but perhaps some of you did not know that he had been a member of this Club from the start of his career in 1953.

His record as a works rider for Norton, M.V. and Gilera puts him among the greatest riders of his day, he was in fact the only man ever to race the ill-fated M.V.6.

A serious accident at Imola in 1964 brought about his retirement, but in 1966 he decided to make a come-back. A very successful one it was as we all know. His death in a relatively unimportant meeting at Oliver's Mount brought his fine career to a tragic close. The white helmet with the coat of arms of his native Chapel-en-le-Frith will be sadly missed indeed.

C.H. (Bill) Parkes

At the beginning of last month Bill Parkes died after suffering illness for over a year. His going is a great loss to the club of which he has been a member for over 20 years and our President for the last six years.

Bill joined the "17" in March, 1946, and during all the time he was a member took an active interest in club affairs and particularly in the sporting side. A competitor himself until a few years ago, he could always be relied on to help in running our scrambles and trials and when the Training Scheme restarted in 1958, he joined in as an instructor and gave unfailing support every year until illness prevented him from carrying on.

He will be long remembered by all members who knew him. Quiet and unassuming in his ways, he brought a wealth of experience and enthusiasm to the sport. Our sincerest sympathy goes out to Mrs. Parkes and her daughters who have so bravely sustained and cared for Bill over his last months.

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Now to more happy events over to Pev:-

Now that the scramble season is over and the last competitor has roared up the straight at Golden Hill Farm in 1968, it seems a good time to take stock of the year's events - certainly the most profitable and successful series we have run for some time.

The fact that we were blessed with fine weather for the first three meetings must have been a big factor in influencing the balance sheet in our favour just as the unpleasant conditions prevailing at our last meeting undoubtedly kept many of the spectators at home, resulting in a loss to even things up. However, the overall picture

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shows a small profit, about £30, on the season and a much larger figure or around £90 as a result of the additional members we gained by running the initial closed-to-club meeting and the subsequent clubman's event which was run as a series with scoring on a points basis at all four meetings.

All this talk of money-matters may cause one to lose sight of the fact that we do not run as a profit-making organisation and that the main object of putting on scrambles is for the enjoyment of riders and spectators and the furtherance of motor-cycle sport, nevertheless, we must always make sufficient to cover ourselves not only on each meeting but against the time when we get a real stinker of a day and lose a packet on that meeting. As things stand at the moment, we can well afford to look forward to running another series next year.

This brings me to the next point concerning the course itself. Although the terrain at Golden Hill has been able to provide us with quite a spectacular and exciting course, it has become fairly obvious that the track will not stand up to the kind of use that we have been giving it and the hill section must be the roughest for miles around. By agreement with the farmer, we cannot vary the original layout of the course and this means that we shall have to consider a fresh venue for the 1969 series - a great pity in many ways as the position and layout of the car park, paddock, entrance and its proximity to the main road has a lot to commend it. We have also had plenty of help and support from Mr. Bullock and that too is hard to find these days.

The actual racing was of a good standard throughout although the toughness of the course certainly sorted out the men from the boys and resulted in the riders becoming rather strung out round the lap. The series was dominated by the fine riding of Frank Yarwood who made sure of his first prize in the Clubman's Event by scoring a total of 17 points with Eddie Morris the runner-up with 14 points. Third was J.A. Wilkinson who gained 11 points.

The September meeting produced the closest racing of the season. Peter Ormesher who had bike trouble in the earlier meetings and leg trouble at the August one really found his form and saw Frank off in two of the main events. There was certainly no shortage of competitors, the September meeting being the only one not over-subscribed, probably due to anxieties of the state of the course after the August event. We had riders coming from many parts of the country, quite a contingent from the Lake District, Shropshire, South Wales and even one from Ilford, Essex. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said for our own marshals; most meetings commenced with the course severely undermanned and Glynn really had to scrape the barrel to get enough flags waving around the course. Usually by Event 2 the problem resolved itself when members had digested their Sunday dinner sufficiently to wander up to the course - a bit galling when some of us had been there since 9 a.m.

Attendance at working parties could normally be counted on one hand - a sad reflection considering the size of our membership and made one wonder at times whether all the hard work was worthwhile, certainly four meetings a year has strained the old resources and just a little extra help is worth so much.

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This is an old problem shared by most clubs these days but one that is obviously worth airing and I feel that some could well reflect on the thought that you don't get much out of a club unless you put something in.

Anyway, for better or for worse, we shall soon be arranging our next year's fixtures, so in the meantime our thanks to those hardy perennials who keep the organisation ticking over and all those riders who we hope have enjoyed the series even if they didn't manage to collect any prizes.

See you in the paddock.

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Trial October 27th is the date of the next trial. 11 a.m. start at Clulow X, Wincle. Observers are needed, so please make an effort, and give your name to John Roberts. If you don't see him in the meantime, well come anyway!

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#### Road Trial

Support for this much-postponed event was poor. It was run over a course of 142<sup>+</sup> miles, mainly in Ribblesdale and the Lune Valley - the weather was dry at times, but more often wet and windy, or so it seemed. From the 6 entries (4 motor-cycles and 2 "others") the winner was Dave Linney, who lost 9 points, and the runner-up Dave Lawson - 24 points. Dave Nurse aboard his 80cc "Ying-tong" device finished 4th after losing nearly half his marks for being too early at one check point. Some had problems in finding their way at times (a Highway Department repaired one signpost and removed another while the course-plotter fogged the issue at one place) but all got to the finish - eventually.

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#### Annual General Meeting

The A.G.M. of the club will be held in the middle of next month (November) and election of a committee for the next year takes place at the same time.

Nominations for committee are wanted. All who are full members of the club are eligible or are asked to put forward their choice for the various posts. Lists for nominations will be available at the two clubnights before the A.G.M. and names can also be sent to the Secretary or other Committee member for including on the list, but do please be sure that the one you put on the list knows about it and is willing to go on the committee!

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The other week everyone expected to see the 1967 T.T. film but there was a bit of a mix-up because instead of ordering it for the first Tuesday in the month it was ordered for the second Tuesday. However, it was the first time for ages that the club has seen so many members turn up, and it looks like the only way to get good attendance on club nights is to fool everyone by telling them there is a film on. Perhaps then we will have the club jam-packed like the other night. Surely you can come to the club for a chat etc. without there having to be something for you to stare at, just like T.V. Some of you may have noticed that there are not many new members in the club. With the attendance being so poor the would-be new members come one week, take a good look at THE CLUB and disappear, never to be seen again. Come on where's the good old club spirit!

One or two members have built-up old bikes and got them on the road. Last Tuesday there were about 8 bikes outside and it does look as though we may become a MOTOR-CYCLE CLUB again. Although people have complained about it being a Car Club rather than the Manchester "17" Motor-Cycle Club, everyone of you have at some time or another come in a car. So stop calling each other and let's hope that we are all going to get the good old Manchester "17" Motor-Cycle Club back on its feet again.

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Finally, congratulations to our three members who have won Centre Championships - Peter Ormesher - Centre Scrambles Champion, Jack Mathews - Centre Grass-Track Sidecar Champion and Roger Kyffin - Centre Hill Climb Champion.

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