

APR 69

MANCHESTER "17" MOTOR CYCLE CLUB .. NEWSLETTER APRIL, 1969

Once again I find my publishing date looming up and a lot of news to give you. (April 1st) I've just returned from the club where we had a couple of good films, - Canadian Hell Drivers and Sports Scrapbook 1953. Most of the chat was about Friday's coming scramble and Keith and Hilary's wedding on Easter Monday! Members present tonight made a collection and I'll let you know what we bought them next month. As I begin this issue I hope to include a report on the scramble at the end, and then quickly print over the weekend so this should still be wet when you read it.

March was a really ding-dong month for our sport. Speedway and road-racing started again, and the near future is full of attractive fixtures. Club activities were also at a premium and here are articles on three varied events during the month.

SHAW - Wednesday 19th March

I am a genius! I have thought of a way of getting you all out of another thrashing at cards, dominoes and draughts at the hands of Shaw M.C.C. No, I am not going to play them all myself; and all I need is one good darts thrower and four of the club's brainiest memory men for a type of competition when Shaw come back to the Red Lion. Will the above mentioned please step forward.

If I remember rightly we won one game of dominoes all night at Shaw, but once again the evening was a very affable affair with some excellent hot-pot thrown in, and the lucky ? thirteen who went were given a good time by our hosts. Yes, only thirteen, and they included a member of only two weeks, a bachelor whose days were very much numbered, a member at college until 9.0 p.m. that night and a penniless ex-road racer! What about all you other fun-loving people with free time on your hands?

ROCKET TRIAL - Friday 21st March.

At last! whether it was the points scheme or not, the bikes very much outnumbered and outshone the fug boxes on this event, and it was very cold! As you can see from the table, eight bikes and three cars entered our first main road event of the year, a rocket trial organised by Brian Hatton. We assembled at the quarries overlooking Marple Bridge and Strines, near the "Romper" much to the annoyance of some courting couples nearby. At 8.50 p.m. the first rocket went up and we all blew off down to Marple, except Neville and Dennis who were facing the wrong way! After a quick sprint down the New Mills Road in completely the wrong direction, I led a snarling Triumph and a "soon to be in pieces" Velo back to Marple Bridge and I believe that once again I was first to come nearest to our goal. But as on two previous rocket runs I had no real idea and carried on at full steam.

Brian was in a very canny position and soon we were all buzzing around the right area but not quite being able to pin-point him. Eventually before the noise of so many machines became a bit too much, he presented himself to Dave Lawson and three other competitors in quick succession and packed them off to the Red Lion before the locals complained. Although the last scheduled rocket went up, there were no other finishers, and everyone returned to the pub for a post mortem. Alan Kempster suffered a damaged fairing after a prang at Cataract Bridge, whilst gazing at the stars, but no injury or real harm was incurred and the points table now looks like this:

N.B. Start 10 points -- Finish 10 points

(Points are halved for a car)

Position points from 10 down to 1 for all vehicles.

PRESIDENT'S SOCIAL CUP
LEAGUE TABLE APRIL 1ST 1969

| <u>NAME</u> | <u>PASSENGER</u> | <u>VEHICLE</u> | <u>POSITION</u> | <u>POINTS</u> |
|-------------------|------------------|----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Dave Lawson | Margaret | B.S.A. | 1 | 30 |
| Dave Rowland | Doreen | Triumph | 2 | 29 |
| Dave Abrahams | - | B.S.A. | 3 | 28 |
| Paul Tootall | - | B.S.A. | 4 | 27 |
| Paul Sandbach | - | Triumph | N.F. | 10 |
| Alan Kempster | - | Velo | N.F. | 10 |
| Eric Castle | - | B.S.A. | N.F. | 10 |
| John Yates | - | B.S.A. | N.F. | 10 |
| Len Morton | Christine | Car | N.F. | 5 |
| Neville Hankinson | Dennis | Car | N.F. | 5 |
| Brian Kennedy | Anne | Car | N.F. | 5 |
| Brian Hatton | - | Car | Organisers) | 10 |
| John Roberts | - | Car |) | 10 |

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JOHN SIMISTER TRIAL AT CHARLESHEAD - MARCH 23RD.

There were still some traces of snow about around Kettlehulme, but the day of our first Centre Trial at the new venue was clear and bright if not exactly warm later on. I got up there about 1.45 p.m. after the Training Scheme in the morning, and most riders were starting their third or fourth laps. The melting snow and warmer weather made deep mud the chief obstacle on most of the sections at Charleshead Farm. While I was there, nobody managed the hill climb and its muddy approach at section 6. Funniest sight was Henry slowly sinking in the mire under his machine after having stopped. Alas, somebody realised before he disappeared and he was rescued to ride another day. A stream with a steep drop and narrow exit had several riders in trouble, and loop the loops were not uncommon on section 2. - a steep full bore climb out of mud.

Down at Pott Shrigley brickworks, a spectacular climb starting from somewhere in the depths of the earth was attracting quite a few spectators and I saw three very creditable cleans by Stuart Johnson on the heavy B.S.A.

The trial was very stiff on the whole, Bob Lydiatt even threw the Suzuki 30 ft. down a ravine in his attempt at section 10, and 10 riders retired. An entry of 41 took part and despite Dave Rowland's efforts, John Roberts was home with 61 marks lost; 30 clear of the field. Dave adds a few words:

"Brian helped me to plan the brickworks sections while John worked out some muddy ones that only his 125 Sprite seemed to be able to manage. Throughout the trial my ears burned terribly and when I arrived at the brickworks I realised why. Sections 7, 9 and 11 were almost impossible. Henry, Bob and quite a few others cartwheeled down the hillside bending bikes and pride somewhat, and, of course, muttering what they would do to the idiot who planned the sections. If John ever lets me loose with an armful of section markers again, I hope to do better (no comments please) Veteran J.R. rode very well and showed us all how it really should be done, well done John!"

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DAVE R.

Henry is in the news again with an amusing incident at a recent Denbigh - Mold M.C.C. trial. He looked round to ask what the observer had given him, and promptly rode into a tree! The result of his day's efforts was a first class award.

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Good to see Dave Nurse back in circulation after a bad dose of bronchitis which has kept him off work for two month's I believe. May we soon see you back on the bike and fully recovered, Dave.

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The RAC - ACU Training Scheme is well under way again now and eighteen learners are being shown the tricks of our trade under Trevor's watchful eyes down at Cheadle Heath. Trevor is now back on two wheels himself with a potent looking B.S.A. Road-Rocket bought from John Roberts' Motor Cycle Centre.

Don't forget the photographic competition, now summer is nearly upon us and the cameras come out of their dusty cases, your Scramble and John Simister pics. are eligible.

Very smart and colourful club badges will soon be available in embroidered cloth. We have ordered six dozen to start with, which works out at 8/6d. each to members.

Whilst doodling the other day I came up with a list of 18 road-bike owners whose machines are running and 13 of whom are keen enough to come out regularly on club runs. I think you will be surprised to see so many, as I was, but my aim is to get the other four on my list to repair or assemble their machines and get the whole 22 out on a run this summer - how about the National-Rally?

Return visit by Shaw M.C.C. is provisionally at the end of this month.

Many of you will be interested to hear that I have received a letter from "Our Man in Canada" - Brian Glynn. I am sending him copies of the newsletters and he is very pleased to read about the antics of his old friends. Brian is still hoping to come over with his wife Anne next Christmas, and then there will no doubt be a big merry reunion party. Brian sends his regards to everyone and in particular reminds Dennis, Trevor and John Bell of the incident in Wales of "Art-short-forks" and his Velocette, which is typical of the hilarious times he remembers from his club days in the "17"

All the best, Brian. We all expect more news from Vancouver in the near future.

Another letter to the editor, and at long last too, from Moses:-

DEAR CON-ROD,

In your last article you gave the impression that only recently has it become possible to buy a really high performance bike for the road. You mentioned the Triumph/B.S.A. 3's and the Honda four etc. I can understand you disregarding the B.S.A., Triumph and Norton twins as the vibration makes it very unpleasant to use their performance. Big singles may be fast but they lack bottom end power, yet how can you ignore the Vincent twin? There is always a good selection of Vins. for sale from about £30 upwards. A standard model is superior in quality and more advanced technically than most models in production now. If you are one of these peculiar people who must have a new unused bike and you have the money to spend, you can buy a Standard rebuilt Vin. from Harpers or an "up-to-date" version from Roger Slater in the form of the Fritz Egli Vincent. As this version only uses the engine and gearbox from a standard machine, it must satisfy even the Vincent-haters as they almost always complain about the frame and forks but are prepared to put the engine in that over weight forest of tubing, the Norton featherbed frame.

DAVE ABRAHAMS.

TAPPET CLATTER

Everyone has his own ideas about his perfect bike and apparently Moses worships the Vincent. Would it be too nasty to ask where his has been for three years? Seriously though, I didn't omit to mention the Vincent out of dislike but simply because a Vincent doesn't normally spring to mind, unless you own one, that is. I don't know that I agree with the technically advanced bit either, ever heard of O.M.C. for one thing? However I must admit that the Egli-Vincent is a very desirable machine if you are in the market for a high performance bike.

On the subject of 'perfect bikes', I understand P.C.Ian is thinking of putting a cast iron Ford engine into a B.S.A. frame, the result, which will no doubt sag in the middle, would be used as a solo. I have only one question. Why? A four cylinder bike might have some advantages but do they outweigh the disadvantages of impossible steering due to fantastic weight, low power output and heavy fuel consumption not to mention ugliness? Anyway if you go ahead with the plan, I can sell you a roller skate to keep the frame clear of the ground Ian!

Now how about an air-cooled all alloy four stroke with two horizontally opposed cylinders across the frame and shaft drive? I bet no one has thought of that before.

I hope this trend to large entries for social events continues. There was even a majority of bikes in the first Rocket trial of the year, I believe. Apparently an irate home steader called the police after being invaded by motor-cyclists looking for Brian Hatton at the bottom of his garden, unless the fairies were setting off rockets.

Perhaps we will see Len and Christine on a bike soon, or do they need a vehicle with side-by-side seats all the time? It's a pity Jeff doesn't fit curtains to his cars isn't it Len?

CON-ROD.

The editor does not necessarily agree with all views expressed by his correspondents!

APRIL 4TH - S C R A M B L E.

Once again we picked a glorious day for our first scramble of the season. The only bad side-effect was that the remaining snowdrifts melted and made the paddock entrance into a real quagmire. We struggled for a couple of hours to get the riders' vehicles in, but then the remainder had to park on the spectators car park across the road. Quite a good crowd turned up in the holiday sunshine and about 85 riders gave of their best on our strength-sapping mountain circuit. Frank Yarwood won two finals but fell to third place in his other one after coming off at the end of the starting straight in one of the glacier-rivers which cross the course! Peter Ormesher on a newly assembled B.S.A. provided the thrills by pushing Frank home in Event 4, third man being Tony Sharp on a 360 GE. Peter led Tony and Frank home in the first final - Event 2 - after Frank's mud bath, but after remounting Frank missed a gear at the top of the hill and his chances of regaining the lead slipped away. Bill Cocker, Ian Turner on the Walwin-Velo and D. Hall were the first three home in the final of Event 1.

Norman Barrow and Mike Winwood led Peter, who was riding for the first time in 6 months, into the places in Frank's Event 3 final win. Frank rode with a gear-lever borrowed from Bob McMinn after losing his own somewhere on a practice lap.

After much more hard work clearing up, and getting all the bogged-down vehicles out of the paddock, we left at 7.30 p.m. for home; but no rest.

About 9.30 p.m. at the Red Lion fifteen members and friends of Keith's drank to his health and his last few days freedom before his marriage on Easter Monday, and I speak for the whole

club in wishing Keith and Hilary the very best of luck and happiness in the future.

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Now here is a news item which, if you haven't heard it yet, will indicate a rare flaw in the Manchester '17' grapevine. However, you will no doubt join with me in congratulating Dave and Margaret Lawson, who are expecting to become proud parents in November. Who said Dave's on night shift all the time?

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Winner of last month's puzzle was John Yates from Dave Lawson who had only one mistake. Bob McMinn and D.W. Critchlow made up the rest of the entries. Here is a list of the correct answers:-

- Raleigh; Dot; Bultaco; OK, Supreme;
- Covenry-Eagle; b.S.A.; Zenith; Sprite;
- Matchless; Cotton; Scott; Metisse;
- Francis Barnett; Velocette; Panther;
- Honda; S.O.S.; Suzuki; Norton; Greaves;
- Rudge; Ariel; Triumph; Sunbeam.

Next month - a report on the Brighton Show from Alan Kempster and Malcom Saunders, and an interview with the bell-boy at Keith's honeymoon hotel in Jersey!

See you on Tuesdays.....

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