

MANCHESTER '17' MOTORCYCLE CLUB NEWSLETTER

July/August 71

Not much space for editorial prattle this month so straight into it. By the way, did anybody see which way July went?

Moses

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BITS AND PIECES

The Helicopter Fund now stands at over £800.

Congratulations to John Wilson for his first win in the C Final at Cadwell. He'll have Paul and me breaking our necks trying to better that.

The training scheme started again on August 1 and, as usual, there is a shortage of help. Any willing hands please see Ian Bradshaw, George Long or go down to the course on Sunday mornings.

FOR SALE - 350 AJS Scrambler
£30 ono
Steven Wild at the Club or
phone 061-480 0536

FOR SALE - 250 cc Husqvarna Sprite
American Eagle cadmium plated frame
Ceriani forks, Husky front wheel
Very quick, this machine is a race
winner, will accept Raquel Welch or £125
Tel: G Greaves 061-439 4732

Who's going to the Island in September? Keith and Ian are going to both the GP and ISDT, but don't let that put you off, it's a big place.

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CORRESPONDENCE

I feel we have read enough in recent newsletters about who wants to do what, and why he shouldn't help the other party, etc. In my opinion all a little pathetic and childish. One wonders after all this arguing who is going to lose, and if we are not careful it will be the Club.

We should all be proud of the Club we are members of and those past and present who have helped to put the '17' on the map. Only last week, I was in the wilds of Wrexham examining at a Training Scheme and the organiser - an older gentleman - saw the club badge and began to reel off the names of most of the members past and present ending with the words "one of the best Clubs in the North". Well words like this makes one proud to be a member.

therefore isn't it about time we carried on the old tradition and keep it the best Club in the North?

Regarding means of transport and the lack of motorcycles on a Club night, enthusiasm for motorcycling doesn't have to be shown by riding a motor cycle. Far from it - everybody does not have the money to run more than a car, and this is surely the ruling factor!

George T Long

(Hear, hear, subject now closed - Ed)

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CLUB RUN TO THE LAKES

This was certainly the best turn out and the most enjoyable run the '17' have staged for many a year.

It was a beautiful morning when we all met at the Red Lion at 9.0 am on the Sunday. I was the last to arrive (as usual!) and I nearly fell off my bike when I saw the huge company assembled in the car park.

There was myself and Sharman (BSA) Dave, Doreen and Scott (Triumph sidecar) Keith and Hilary (Triumph) Ian and Chris (Triumph) Len and Chris (Triumph) John Y and Chris (BMW) George and his latest (Norton) Paul and Isabella (Triumph) Malcolm and Beryl (Honda) Glyn and Diana (Trinorbaa) Wilf and Diane (BSA) Moses (BSA) Rod and Roger (BSA) Dave Nurse (MZ) Jim Phillips (BSA) Alan and Pete on Hondas, Jerry and Jean (Honda) Frank, Jean and family (Norton sidecar) Brian Moores (Norton) and Pete Lilley and Sue (Norton).

We all stuck together throughout the day and Grasmere was the lunch spot where we stopped for a few hours for swimming and boating.

If you missed this run, don't worry because it never really happened anyway; 39 people, 21 bikes - you must be joking!

No, it was just a dream; but it could be reality...How about it?

Paul T.

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Below is a letter sent by Ian Bradshaw to the MoT on behalf of the Club.

Dear Sir

I have been asked by the Manchester '17' Motor Cycle Club Committee to write this letter as we feel very strongly about the raising of the age limit to 17 years before a person can hold a motor cycle licence.

At the outset let me point out that the Manchester '17' MCC is very safety conscious and does whatever it can to improve road safety amongst motor-cyclists. We run the RAC/ACU motor cycle training scheme in Stockport, assist with the Annual Cheshire Constabulary Road Safety Event, and a number of our club members have been awarded the Shell BP road safety award.

The main concern with the raising of the age limit is that it will do very little to reduce accidents amongst young riders, it will only delay them for a year, surely a better and more positive approach would have been to increase the training for motor-cyclists by providing training schemes such as those run by the RAC/ACU, which already do a worthwhile job in reducing accidents.

If you do decide to change the minimum age to 17 years would it be possible to allow 15 year olds to hold a licence to ride mopeds, this would be a safe and natural progression from pedal cycles to larger capacity motor cycles. It is a well known fact that motor cyclists tend to make safer car drivers as they appreciate the changes in road conditions, etc.

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PRESIDENT'S SOCIAL CUP

This cup is awarded annually for the best performance overall in a series of competitions run throughout the year.

Since there appears to be considerable interest shown in this year's competition, I thought it may be of interest to outline the present scoring system and suggest some improvements which may be built-in for next year.

For any competition the points scoring is the same and run as follows:

10 points are gained for starting in any event whether on a motorcycle or in a car.

10 points are gained for finishing in any event on a motorcycle but only 5 points are awarded for finishing in a car. Obviously, this was designed to encourage the use of a motorcycle since we are reputedly a motorcycle club and not a car club as some would like to think.

10 points are awarded to the winner of the particular competition for which he or she has entered then 9 points for second, 8 points for third and so on.

Third place points are awarded to the organiser of the event but only 2 events may be run by any one person during a period of 12 months.

In an effort to make the system a little more fair, I would offer the following suggestions for improving the scoring system.

10 points for starting (car or bike)
10 points for finishing (bike)
5 points for finishing (car)
20 points for organising an event (car or bike)
10, 9, 8, etc. for positions in competitions.

The above are virtually the same as before but imagine the case of a regular competitor on 1 or 2 occasions travelling as passenger to someone else. I feel that he or she should be awarded start and finish points but not competition points. This would keep them in the running whilst not giving them an unfair advantage as obviously they will have contributed to the competition. Their driver would of course score points in the normal way.

Perhaps I could also suggest some definitions of the various competitions for those of you who have not competed and for perhaps those would be organisers.

Road Trial

The entrant is given a series of map references in any order. He plots these on a 1" ordnance survey map and plans his route between the various places so as to give him the shortest possible recorded mileage. At these places which should ideally be reasonably obvious he must answer a question to verify his visit. This may be the number of a telephone box in the market square, etc. The competitor with the lowest mileage is deemed the winner, assuming he has answered the questions correctly.

(The above describes the last two road trials, but previously we have used written routes without maps - Ed)

Treasure Hunt

Here the competitor is given a set of clues to which he has to find the answers. His route may be written into the sheet or given in the form of map references. There may be articles to collect en route but the mileage covered will only be taken into account when there is a tie for positions in the competition, i.e. the winner is the person who answers all the clues correctly.

Rocket Run

This third form of competition is limited to the dark nights, and as such is not a summer sport.

Basically, the entrants congregate on a piece of high ground and are told to look in a particular direction. At a predetermined time, say 8.30 pm someone at a place unknown to the others some miles away lets off a rocket and continues to do so every 10 minutes. The first person to find the organisers rocket launching area is the winner. These events are decidedly hairy but nevertheless entertaining and are usually the best supported events of the three.

If anyone can suggest alterations or additions to the above, or indeed another form of competition altogether, would he kindly write them down and send them to me at the club room or my home address:

5 Waltham Drive
Cheadle Hulme
Cheshire
SK8 7QW

Keith R.
Secy

TABLE OF POSITIONS IN THE SOCIAL CUP COMPETITION

| | No of Events | Points Scored |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| Keith and Hilary Rhodes | 6 | 137 |
| Dave & Doreen Rowland | 5 | 123 |
| Dave Abrahams | 5 | 123 |
| John Roberts & Geoff Brassington | 4 | 99 |
| Alan Kempster | 3 | 84 |
| Paul Tootall | 3 | 73 |
| Pat Roberts & Pat Brassington | 3 | 69 |
| Chris & Kenny Eyre | 3 | 66 |
| Dave Nurse | 2 | 60 |
| Pete Pownall | 3 | 60 |
| Pete Lilley & Susan | 3 | 55 |
| Paul Sandbach | 4 | 48 |
| George Long | 2 | 46 |
| Beryl Brown | 3 | 46 |
| Bob Lydiatt | 3 | 44 |
| Ian & Chris Bradshaw | 2 | 40 |
| Rod Yarwood | 1 | 30 |
| Wilf Oates & Diane | 2 | 28 |
| Dennis Rourke | 1 | 27 |
| Graham Acton | 1 | 25 |
| Harvey Lloyd | 1 | 24 |
| Steve Wild | 1 | 24 |
| Malcolm Brown | 1 | 23 |
| Pev Attwood | 1 | 22 |
| Jim Phillips | 1 | 22 |
| Brian Moore | 1 | 10 |

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ROAD TRIAL 18 JULY

So there we were, all congregated at the Red Lion, when from a cloud of smoke a familiar figure appeared dressed in oh! so unfamiliar garb. It was the club sec on a motorbike would you believe. There he was complete with wife on the biggest smouldering dung heap that had ever left Meriden.

Slipping in the pool of oil already formed under his machine, Keith gets off and removes goggles, crash hat and all else to confirm that it is him and not Jim Phillips doing a good impersonation. Besides, Jim was already there changing the main bearings round the back of the pub, at least that's what his female companion said he was doing.

With great haste everyone got down to the business at hand and that was to decide on just what devious route had been contrived by Dave and Doreen for their Road Run.

After some minutes most people got away to a clean start with Chris and Kenny gating very well in their super fug box with Mk IV cow catcher dragging along behind. Most people that is, with the exception of Paul Toots who still seemed to be orienteering around his 1" ordnance survey map. But worry not ye doubters, this semi-haggis was to rattle off within the hour to make the mid course check point in time to collect his points.

Blow me here's Keith and Hilary still dribbling their oily way along to Cluelow Cross Cafe on almost two cylinders.

Most of us arrived at this check point in plenty of time, but alas Jim Phillips was nowhere to be seen. Perhaps he has nipped down to Santa Pod to show them what dragging is all about. Other more callow members were muttering about inserting himself up his exhaust pipes and blowing his plugs out.

After a short break the peace and serenity of the Peak National Park was once more shattered as we all scratched off clutching maps, route cards and anything else that was in reach for that matter.

Dave Nurse on his "M"ini "Z"epplin being pushed hard by Paul S, on foot I might add, soon set a hot pace. Alan Kempster blurred his way past me on several occasions only to be caught up when clue spotting.

Pete Pownall wasn't seen after the start (no wonder once he lost his map). George Long complete with a dishy little blonde from the training scheme was seen plodding around the countryside as only a Norton with variable rear dampers will plod.

Then there was Moses making an even bigger cut away on the silencers of the ex-Melvyn Cranmer Flyer.

The finish saw us all at the "Santa Rosa" cafe on the Chapel to Whaley Bridge Road. Pete Lilley and Susan, regular competitors these days, were early finishers together with eventual winners Dave Nurse and P.S.

A thoroughly enjoyable event held in marvellous weather, a pity a few more of you weren't there to enjoy it. And if it isn't our dribbling sec at the finish after many heated words with wife and many mistakes on answer sheet. Still never mind at last the critics of the non-motorcycling members can strike another from their list.

The dribbler himself

O B I T U A R Y

It is with deep regret that I have to announce the death of Reg Hunt, Landlord at the Red Lion Hotel, Hazel Grove the site of our clubroom for the past four years.

Reg, known and liked by many of the regular club members, died suddenly on Sunday 20 June and his cheery face and jovial personality will be sadly missed by us all.

It was he who prevented the collapse of the "17" in 1967 when we were obliged to quit our previous clubroom. He made us more than welcome at the Red Lion and helped us run parties and socials on several occasions.

I am sure I speak for the entire membership of the Manchester '17' Motor Cycle Club when I extend our deepest sympathy to his family and relations, he will be missed by everyone of us.

K T Rhodes
Secretary

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A SUNDAY IN WALES

As we all know, the greatest authors always retire to the country to write their masterpieces; so here I am in a rowing boat on Coniston Water after work....!....!

Several ideas and intentions were fulfilled when six '17' members clocked 300 miles around North Wales on Sunday 11 July. Three BSAs and an MZ made up the transport with scratcher-Moses, the new record holder for the Betws-y-coed - Capel Curig Grand Prix; Decibel-Yarwood and Roger-the-rubber-solution; Dave Nurse, the last of the long rifles and his passenger - Sunburnt Sandbach, the helmet throwing champion. Last of all, in the party (and usually on the road) Tootall the tappets!

Moses and I were late in arriving at Paul's for the scheduled 9.0 am start, and the MZ didn't fancy Wales at all, so it was 10.30 before we left Timperley with a full crew. Following a minor shunt at the first set of lights, Rod and I trailed the field as we bobbed down to Chester and our first 'pit-stop'. A change of plugs in the ex-Bob Heath BSA and a rebuilt Yarwood 12 volt candle and we were off towards Mold. The roads were reasonably quiet and after some delightful swervery we landed up in St Asaph at 12 o'clock, eating ices in 80° of Welsh Farenheit.

On up the A525, Rod and Roger left to visit relatives and the rest of us went to inspect Prestatyn's unique concrete beach!

We wanted to park where arranged with Rod for the afternoon meeting point, but a good looking, sunburnt 36-24-36 traffic warden didn't seem to like the idea and we ended up in a side street! Some bikes parked at the end of a cul-de-sac had been unnecessarily "ticketed"; they were completely harmless and the owner of one was dumbfounded when we pointed out his misfortune. The car park charge for bikes was 15p.

Well, we ate our lunch sitting on a concrete wall on the concrete beach overlooking the concrete slipway in front of the concrete amusement arcade by the concrete shops and concrete toilets, marvelling at the contrasting tarmac car parks and gravel donkey run!

Either the local authority or the holiday maker is made - or all of us are! It was ghastly, and we left as soon as possible - disillusioned by that and the flabby females in bikinis waddling up and down!

By 2.30 we were all together again on the coast road to Colwyn Bay and Conway and then up the Conway valley to Betws-y-Coed and Capel Curig, finally stopping at Llyn Gwynant near the Lanberis pass on the Beddgelert road.

For reasons best known behind the Berlin Wall, the MZ refused to start after each halt, and it was only after several Concorde-like bangs and clouds of blue smoke that we got away. It was all quite funny until Moses was nearly asphyxiated!

Having rejected Moses' plan to swim across Caernarvon Bay from the Llyn peninsula, the water at Gwynant looked too inviting and Rod and Moses were in and swimming across the $\frac{3}{4}$ mile lake in no time at all. Roger joined them after being rudely awakened by an exploding tin of rubber solution in his knapsack!

At 7.30 we left for Llangollen to look up old friends. Sandbach must have been reading his porridge packet at breakfast and he launched his second helmet of the day down the road. After I had re-jigged my carrier and Dave had "shot" a few more sheep, we got under way.

Moses had a little dice with an MGB GT. Dave Nurse gave us all kittens on the way back to Betws-y' and Paul, his ballast, must have done something rather childish when they took on a row of cars, wet tar, loose sand and a sharp bend all at once!

After going round a bemused traffic cop the wrong way we retired to "The Grapes" in Llangollen. Here, we paid over £2 for six snacks, and sank a few pints with locals Jack and Gareth, vintage enthusiasts and old friends from our regular Isle of Man digs.

On the way home through Whitchurch, Crewe, Sandbach and Holmes Chapel, we stopped first of all to ask each other who wanted to stop anyway? (work that one out!) and later when "old man" Nurse suffered cramp in his cog-swapping leg.

At Holmes Chapel, Moses and Rod went straight on as Dave and I turned off for Chelford.

We arrived home about 12.30 after what was generally agreed to be a most enjoyable day. "It's like a short holiday" said one, and "you really feel as if you've done something useful with your weekend when you go back to work on Monday".

If you need convincing, Dave has about 30 colour slides of the trip to show, and he promises not to stand in front of you when he's kicking over the MZ!

See you on the next run..... Yak-i-da!

Toots

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THE VINTAGE YEARS - PART TWO

The second club run was to the Castleton district I can't remember much about this run except that it was a nice day, we all lay sunbathing in one of the steep sided valleys they have round there, until someone rolled a piece of rock down the hillside, and Cyril Binks stopped it with his head. It didn't do him a lot of good, but Cyril could behave very queerly at any time so it was difficult to decide if he was really fit enough to ride his own bike home, however after he had been patched up and taken a rest, we decided to risk it, and fortunately Cyril got home safely. Something unusual seemed to happen on every run we held. There was the time when after a run round North Wales we were motoring home in the dark in pouring rain when we ran into a patch of flooded road. Several of the members bikes stopped with water in the works and we struggled to get them going, but as fast as we got one going the rain or flood water soaked into another. Finally, we realised that the best we could hope for was to get half of the bikes going, so we "borrowed" some fencing wire to use as a tow rope, and the fortunate half of the members towed the unfortunate half home, or was it the other way round? I know some members used a lot more petrol than others!

In the impecunious pre-affluent days we used to do a lot of camping. The first club camp was at Black Rock near Criccieth. Most of the members rode solo and the luggage carrying capacity of a solo motorcycle is strictly limited, so to spread the load one member took the tent pegs, another the poles, the cooking stove, the blankets, etc. etc. Groups of members set off at different times during the day, the main group numbering about a dozen members being the last to go. For some reason or other we were delayed en route and didn't reach the camping spot until well after dark. We couldn't find the others who had left earlier, so we sorted things out to see what camping kit we had. We found that it amounted to only one complete medium-sized tent, and three blankets. It is surprising how well you get to know each other when there are twelve of you crammed into a tent and trying to keep warm under three blankets. I am sure it helped to weld us into one big family and did the club a world of good. Another time approaching the same camping site I was in Arthur Faulkner's sidecar, we were on our own and it was dark, Arthur's headlamp was U.S. so we were running on parking lights only. Close to the camp there was a long downhill stretch, quite steep, with a loose surface. I knew that there was a closed gate across the track but Arthur didn't. We had had trouble with the bike, but it was running beautifully now and Arthur was full of the joys of spring, singing at the top of his voice. I, of course, was howling my head off trying to tell Arthur about the gate, but he took no notice. At the last moment Arthur saw the gate, braked as much as he could, then pulled himself forward up the tank, got his foot on the gatepost and took the worst out of the crunch with his leg. Then he turned to me and played hell with me for not telling him the gate was there. I was most grieved, and "explained" that I had been shouting at him all the way from the top of the hill. "Oh!" said Arthur "I thought you were join-

ing in the chorus!"

Jack Hine rode in the National Rally. He plotted his course so that after riding all day he would arrive home at about 8 pm on Saturday to have a meal and a wash before setting out on the night shift. Of course we all turned up to see what state he was in, and we were mildly surprised to find "he was still enjoying himself" but was feeling lonely and invited any of us to do the rest of the trip on his pillion. The bike had a rigid frame and the pillion seat covered the legal requirements, but only by the same margin that a pair of hot-pants do, and unlike the hot-pants, the pillion seat was stuffed with sawdust. At first no-one would accept the ride, then Geoff Machan who always had difficulty in refusing a free outing was kidded into it, but only after I had promised to lend him my Sidcot suit. A Sidcot was what the Royal Flying Corps used in the 14/18 war. It was shaped like a double-breasted one-piece trials suit and lined with teddy bear fur. Geoff stood less than 5' 2" tall and the suit was made for an average sized man, so there was plenty of room for a couple of cushions in the seat of the suit as well as Geoff. You can imagine what Geoff looked like when ready for the fray. I forget how we got Geoff home from the finish of the rally the next day, but I know he didn't go home on Jack's pillion.

Pre-war it took about the same time to complete a journey as it does now, but conditions were quite different. Now the main restricting element is the traffic, previously it was the roads themselves that kept speeds down. Roads were narrower, corners sharper, the outside of a bend usually had an adverse camber for drainage, and the road surfaces varied greatly. The best surfaces were as good as any of today's but others were really dangerous, and there was no warning of a change in surface. Perhaps the worst surface of all was made up of wooden blocks, these were laid outside hospitals, not as a matter of convenience but to quieten the traffic noise, and outside council offices, etc. When wet and greasy, these wooden blocks provided practically zero grip for a rubber tyre. Tram lines in the road surface of towns were another great danger, and even after the tramcars were replaced by buses it was a long time before the lines disappeared. I think that the pre-war road users were more considerate and careful than they are now. But maybe that was because they had to be if they were to keep out of trouble. The prices of every thing were quite different too. When I started riding on the road my third party insurance (I was 19 and living in Manchester) was 15/- per annum. Petrol was 1/3d per gallon and oil 1/1d a pint, but my wage for a 47 hour week was 16/-. I paid 2/6d insurance, gave my mother 10/- for my keep and ran the bike on the remaining 3/6d.

Bernard Braden once said, "If I had my life to live over again I would make all the same mistakes but I would make them sooner" I would not have missed one minute of my motorcycling, but if I had my time over again I think I would be just that bit more careful with myself, taking the trouble to change my clothes when they were wet through, and get bruises and cracks attended to, then perhaps I wouldn't have quite so many aches and pains in my old age....?

Tom Dugdale