

JAN 72

MANCHESTER "17" MOTORCYCLE CLUB

NEWSLETTER - JANUARY 1972.

Happy New Year Everyone!

..... and let's hope it will be a prosperous and successful one for the "17".

Things have started off well as far as I'm concerned for I have landed a new job which will mean working in Manchester. I can now attend club, and committee meetings more regularly and thus do a better job.

In this issue we cover the Northern Experts' with Dave Rowland on a 25cc Scripto ballpoint. Moses has detailed the talk by Don Green on November 30th and we start a new series by Tom Dugdale entitled "Vintage Sport".

Dates for your diary.

January 11th 1972	-	Film Show
January 18th 1972	-	Talk by Ken Eyre
February 12th 1972	-	Club Dinner Dance
February 15th 1972	-	Dart Board social

The return football match against the Peak club was to have been on January 16th, but we have had no luck in finding a pitch for a Sunday game. The chances are better for March however. Dave Nurse has also contacted Roy Fidler of car rally fame and we hope he'll be able to give us a talk some time in March.

For the dartboard social on February 15th, we have decided to invite both the Shaw and Peak clubs for a three-way match.

The "Boxing Day" trial is reported elsewhere, but it's sad to report that we lost the team competition with Sheffield and Hallamshire by an aggregate of 170 marks even though we signed up Ossa ace, Dave Thorpe, on the morning of the event! Fair revenge for past defeats for S. & H., but a sad reflection on our efforts without Dave R. in the team.

\*\*\*\*\*

A.M.C.A. Discussion.

8.30, Tuesday evening, the 30th November saw a rather poor turnout for the A.M.C.A. talk at the club. Eventually the room filled and Don Green, the secretary of the A.M.C.A. started his talk. Afterwards he invited questions and answered them fully. Paul has asked me to write this report of the meeting for the benefit of members not present at the talk and I think the best way to do this is to put down what I learnt from the talk rather than report it verbatim.

The A.M.C.A. or Amateur Motor Cycle Association to give it its full title was founded in 1932 and is confined mostly to the Midlands. A motor-cycle club can apply to be affiliated to the A.M.C.A. in much the same way as clubs apply for A.C.U. affiliation and the A.M.C.A. magazine for October/November lists twenty-one clubs, four of them in the Cheshire, Derbyshire or North Staffs area. It is a requirement for A.M.C.A. affiliation that a club runs some organised sporting events, mostly scrambles and trials at present although they are considering road racing for the future.

The A.M.C.A. itself is a member of the IMBA which is the "amateur" equivalent of the F.I.M. apparently, and many continental events are entered by British riders under the IMBA. The A.M.C.A. will not accept competitors who are sponsored or receive works' support, although Don Green admitted this was impossible to enforce completely and was rather unconvincing in explaining Michael Hewitt's support from the A.J.S. factory. Hewitt is the 1971 250cc scrambles champion as proclaimed in A.J.S. adverts.

Clubs are expected to provide marshals and observers when required at any A.M.C.A. event whether or not the club has organised the event. In fact, if an event is short of officials on the day, then clubs will be told to supply men from their own competitors or none from that club is allowed to ride. In the same way, no competitor leaves the paddock until the ropes and stakes have been gathered in and the litter collected.

The A.M.C.A. caters for the sporting rider only and in 1971 over 50 scrambles, five of them international, and 30 trials were held. No regs. or entries are sent in the post. A competitor must regularly attend his club meetings to learn of events and collect regs. and entry forms.

The A.M.C.A. own a Land Rover, race control caravan and public address system all of which may be hired by clubs for their events. The caravan is equipped with ropes and stakes which must be a great boon to clubs. No levy is charged by the A.M.C.A. on the takings although they stipulate what percentage of the "gate" should be paid in prize money. Riders pay £1 for an A.M.C.A. licence.

Safety requirements at A.M.C.A. scrambles are far less stringent than at A.C.U. events although the A.M.C.A. now recommends that double roping be used following the death of a spectator last year. Riders are not insured as in A.C.U. events, but there is a benevolent fund which pays £5 per week to riders off work through injury.

Don Green said that the A.M.C.A. has no ban on A.C.U. members competing in their events providing they comply with A.M.C.A. rules. One rule is that the rider must not ride in an A.C.U. event if there is an A.M.C.A. meeting on the same day. As there is an A.M.C.A. scramble almost every week, this amounts to a ban. He denied knowledge of riders using false names to get around this difficulty.

He claims that the aim of the A.M.C.A. is to further motor-cycling and apparently this means securing as much land as possible for use as scrambles and trials courses.

Above are some of the facts as I understand them regarding the A.M.C.A. My personal impression was of one large organisation split into closely knit units called clubs. These clubs exist solely for running scrambles and trials. They do not cater for road riders or even the ex-rider who now wishes to organise. Don Green thought it a point in their favour that no club official was over a certain age (35 I think). He seemed vaguely surprised that anyone who didn't ride a scrambler should want to join a club but said that the A.M.C.A. would cater for road members if the need arose.

He mentioned that one A.C.U. affiliated club in the Cheshire Centre was going A.M.C.A. next year but I gather this is unusual. In fact most new A.M.C.A. clubs seem to be formed when an existing club sub-divides. To quote from the A.M.C.A. magazine "The Clubman" :-

"The North Staffs group who have been operating as one club, are now strong enough to split into four clubs and already the members in the Chester area have formed a club and elected officials. The lads from the Manchester area are doing likewise, and will be the strongest judging from the number/ ...."

judging from the number/

of members they have in that area. The third club is at Buxton and they will be just over the border in Derbyshire, while the members around the North Staffs area will remain the North Staffs club .....

To sum up, I found the talk very informative and interesting. I have spoken to most members who have attended club meetings since this talk and I am pleased that with one exception everyone who expressed a view at all was of the opinion that the A.M.C.A. has nothing worthwhile to offer us except some ideas for getting competitors more involved in organising events. However, my own view is that any measures taken along these lines would probably be ineffective unless carried out by the A.C.U. as a whole. For instance, imagine us saying to scramblers "You must come down to the club to pick up entry forms and then come to the course to help us rope up".

We would probably end up with Don Wilson as the only competitor.

Dave Abrahams  
Secretary.

\*\*\*\*\*

#### Vintage Sport.

It would be impossible to list all the changes which have taken place in motorcycle sport since the vintage years. The changes are too vast, and so complete. The vintage years come just about half way in the evolution of the sport; take trials riding for instance - originally a reliability test of machines and riders. In the days of the earliest machines with their single speeds, belt drives, beaded-edge tyres and frames which were little more than strengthened push-bikes, even main-road hills were possible stoppers!

Observers were stationed on such hills during test runs to see whether the competitors climbed them without stopping and without using their feet - often running alongside a failing machine!

I have often wondered how the observers reached these sections - by horse I suppose!

As the bikes and riders improved, more and more difficult obstructions had to be put in their way to sort out a winner, until the trials game developed into the crazy business that it is now. By this last remark I don't mean that trials riding is no longer good clean fun; it undoubtedly is; but I think it lacks a lot of the similarity to normal transport, and at the same time a lot of the adventure that it had.

In the days when the club started, a trials rider felt as if he was going somewhere. One section was part of the route leading to the next section and even when the trial finished at the same place as it had started, he still felt as if he had been somewhere.

There was very little tape about on sections, and if an observer wanted to keep riders off an easy going route he placed a large rock, tree trunk, or even a parked bike on it!

Time counted for as much as performance in the observed sections, the usual ruling being, the loss of one mark per minute for going into a time check early or late outside an allowance of one minute each way. Each competitor/ .....

Each competitor/ carried his own watch in a sealed case with a glass front and the competitor's watch was used for checking time in at the time checks providing it did not vary by more than five minutes from standard time. If so, standard time was used. Some of the really keen types would spend the week before a trial regulating their watches so that they would lose exactly five minutes over the period that the trial was scheduled to last, then if there were any "tight" sections, they had an extra five minutes to play with.

The lads became so expert at messing the time schedules up that more often than not the organisers had to ignore the timing and judge the results on performance in the observed sections only. The riders could never be sure that timing would be disregarded however, so the dawdling about at sections, and the weary long hours of waiting experienced by observers at the later sections in a trial were avoided.

An "Open-to-Centre" trial was quite an event on the calendar. In the early 1930's most clubs ran a series of small trials for their own club members. This meant that every Sunday there was one or more trials in the popular areas; sometimes two clubs would be trying to use the same section and the locals were not keen on having their roads and tracks used for trials on every Sunday in the year.

To cure these problems, "trials groups" were formed; the idea being that one club would organise a trial for riders from all the clubs in the group, but the riders were competing against members of their own club for their own club's awards. The East Cheshire Trials Group was excellently run and well established before the "17" was formed, and soon after we became affiliated to the A.C.U. we joined the Group. The Group programme was fixed at twelve events per year, mainly half-day trials, but including a pilchion trial and an 18 hour trial. The entry fee for the trial was about 5/- and about half of this was returned to the club to buy awards.

Riders in the Group trials were divided into expert and novice classes and after the initial sorting out a rider had to win the novice section to become an expert.

Awards were given by the Group to the winner in each section.

With the cash received back by the club for each trial we were able to give our own members "best performance" awards, and first-class and second class awards to 20% of finishers. The best performance award was usually an engraved one pint pewter tankard, the first class awards - half pint tankards, and the second-class awards - ashtrays. To start with, we had no expert riders, but in the last-but-one trial before the war, Percy Reece (350 Triumph) won the group novice award, and in the last trial Bert Lacey (500 Ariel) won the novice award whilst Percy won the expert award.

#### Tom Dugdale

#### Training School.

Local Authorities in the Manchester area are currently having a purge on road safety and substantial amounts of money are to be allocated to organisations practising road safety tuition. With the departure of Ian and the 16 year olds a successful training scheme will be difficult but vital necessity. Trainees may become completely extinct but our part in prolonging motor cycling must be played with vigour on Sunday mornings in the new session. Time will tell if there is anyone left to teach.

## THE NORTHERN EXPERTS'

The 1971 Northern Experts was blessed with a mild, fine day. For two years now the weather has treated us kindly, which has certainly made everyone's job much easier.

The entry, which was slightly better than last year, was ready to struggle over the rockery at 10.30am. For the first time I was riding in the sidecar class; ably assisted by Ray Armstrong. Not having ridden an outfit on our local rockery, I was just riding and hoping for the best. After making a mess of the first section I (we) settled down and enjoyed the trial.

As for the solo entry, Rob Edwards was not quite riding with enough determination to become Northern as well as British Expert, which is a pity because he is one of the most sporting and likeable lads around. Malcolm Rathmell was determined though. Over a harder course than last year Malcolm became Northern Expert losing 17 (same as the winner last year), a very good and consistent ride. Norman Eyre was best "17" solo rider, just getting a 1st class award, with Henry, Harvey, John and Duncan not too far behind. With some riders getting to the finish in the dark, the 1971 "Experts" drew to its close (for some)! On reflection a good trial; as always, improvements can be made, but if we ran perfect trials no one could criticize or talk about our mistakes!, thats life!

I personally would like to thank all those who helped to make the M/cr 17 Northern Experts' the success it was.

Thank you. D.R.

\*\*\*\*\*

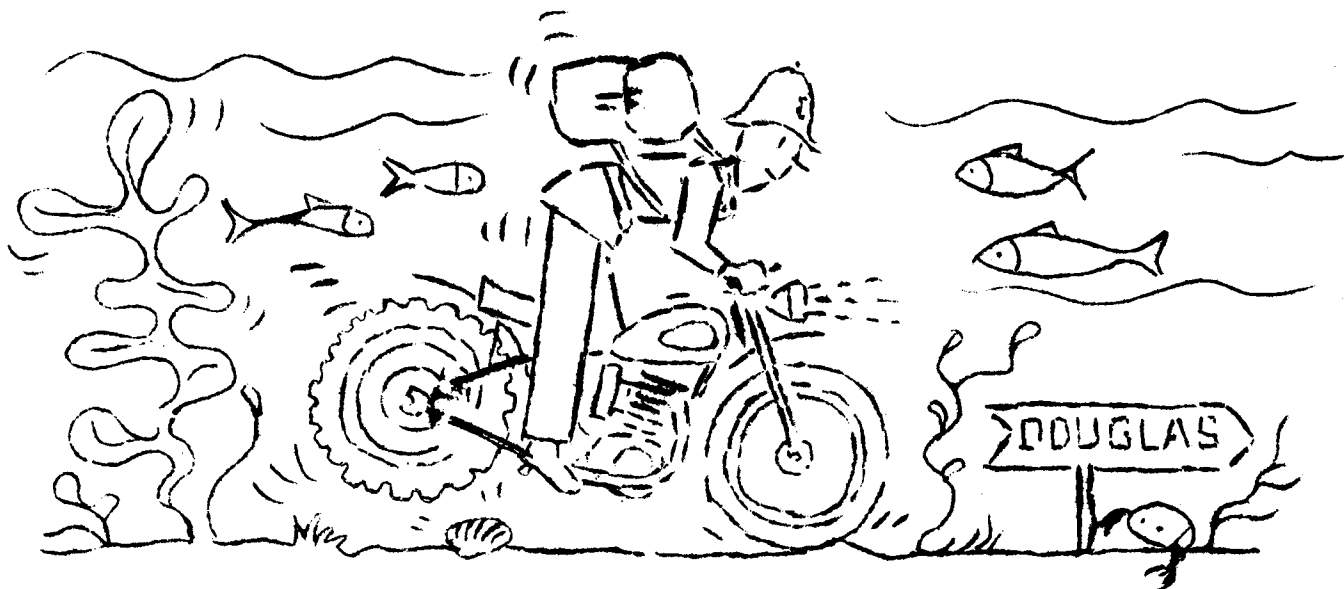
### RESULTS.

Northern Expert - Malcolm Rathmell - Bultaco - 17 marks lost

1st Class Awards:- Shepherd 26; Hemingway 26; Edwards 30; Gaunt 34; Lampkin 42; Thorpe 42; Sunter 42; Sandiford 45; Milner 49; Eyre 52.

Sidecar Winners - Phil and John Mountfield - Ariel - 43 marks lost.

Runners up: Alan Morewood and Gerry Holmes - 57  
Dave Rowland and Ray Armstrong - 57



At the end of the Experts', Henry was leading the Club championship with 38 points from John Roberts with 37 and Harvey with 36; all very close and exciting for the last round on Boxing Day.

Dave Rowland wins the Castrol award for the best "17" club member in the Northern Experts'.

\*\*\*\*\*

The raffle for observers at the Experts' was won by Dave Lawson; second was Granam Bennet from the Peak club and third, Frank Greenan. The prizes were £3, £2 and £1.

\*\*\*\*\*

#### Advertisements.

FOR SALE Two pairs of size 10 boots. These are rejects (undetectable faults) from an Air Force contract at a famous Northampton firm. Worth £8 a pair, selling at £4 only. Welded sole, integral waterproof tongue, very high ankle for support, soft calf hide - hard wearing. See me (the Ed) or ring 061-427-2040.

1969 125cc Sachs Sprite trials.  
New (Jackson) fork fitted to sell. £85.00 Ring 061-748-6051.

#### Club Badges.

1969/70 size, REVERSED transfers to stick inside glass or screens. 10p each.

\*\*\*\*\*

The "Newsletter Article of the Year Award" will go to Tom Dugdale for his series: "The Vintage Years". A suitable award will be purchased but will be a secret for now and Tom (if you're reading this) will have to "wait and see!" This series of Tom's is very interesting indeed to me and I'm sure to many of you. This month's trials history will surely enlighten many of you modern bog-wheelers as well. There can be no doubt that on sheer volume alone Tom is a worthy winner of the award this year.

Well Done!

\*\*\*\*\*

Seen on Boxing Day near Chapel: Gordon and Brenda looking for a trial!?!?!?

Heard in the festive season: D.R. has an A.M.C.A. trophy in his showcase! No; not another wandering sheep; it's an Army Motorcycle Association award!

\*\*\*\*\*

#### The John Hartle Memorial Trial. - Christmas Sunday - December 26th

Henry Rosenthal is the new Club Champion after a great battle with John Roberts on our traditional Christmas mud and limestone.

Congratulations, Henry on a great season! Well done also Dave-the-Trials-Sec for building the reputation of "17" club trials to the extent of an entry of 88 at this time of year.

This was a tough trial for those who expected the more usual Yuletide frolic, but somebody forgot to tell Dave Thorpe about goodwill and all that for he cleaned up with a loss of only 12 marks! Dave reached Vernons on his second lap before dropping a mark and after much deliberation he went the way of many others on the 3 foot step out of the ditch - a crankcase 5! John Roberts, Norman Eyre and D.T. were the only leans all day here, and all on the first lap. After that it was a case of "blurbly-blurbly and strip the motor later!"

Bolt Edge was as greasy as ever and a big step on the first section at Bettfield fooled many.

7.

The winner gave away 5 at the Gents' loc on the last lap and a 2 on the greasy hill in the quarry at Harrat Grange but hard luck hit Gordon Snowball - bald gear box sprocket; Norman Eyre - plug trouble and Duncan McDonald - no first gear.

The sidecars - three in number - had a friendly lark about (the class was scrapped for lack of entries) but a good time was had by all.

The weather was foul with freezing mist, but this is surely no excuse for leaving flags etc. at the sections. So let's give Dave more of a hand with every little assistance we can - his is almost a full time job at this busy time of the year.

ED.

### RESULTS.

The John Hartle Memorial Trophy - Dave Thorpe - Ossa - 12 marks lost

1st Class Awards - Henry 28; John R. 33; Mick Ransom 37; Alan Clarke 37; Phil Clarkson 46.

Intermediate - Bob Baker 84.

Best Novice.- Chris Clarke 79.

### Trials Championship Final Table.

Henry	48	Ransom	23
John	46	Thomas	21
Harvey	41	MacDonald	18
Norman	34	Acton	14
Dave	29	Karle	12

Our next trial will be on January 23rd at Marksand Quarry near Macclesfield.

IN BRIEF: Ian had a successful send-off at the club on December 28th - he bought the butties!

The present Social Cup table will stand as the result - Keith is the 1971 winner. (mutter, mutter, Well done!, mutter, mutter.)

DON'T FORGET!

SUBSCRIPTIONS NOW DUE - - only 87½p  
as usual send your P.Os. and cheques  
to ; Mrs. D. Rowland,  
9, Coniston Avenue,  
Handforth,  
Cheshire.

IT IS STILL THE CHEAPEST AND BEST VALUE IN THE NORTH!

Toodle-oo!

Paul.

CC, SOCIETY'S P. 27  
C.H. HAN

P. LAMBERT

D. ASHTON

M. WILLIAMS

R. YARWOOD

M. HALL

R. GOULDEN

(2) S & P. KERSHAN

D. NURSE

M. HACK

L. MORTON

ROURKE

P. SANDBACH

McHUGO

B. MOORES

KEMPSTER

D. RAWLAND

PHIPPS

P. ATTWOOD

R. LAW

D. WILSON

~~TURNER~~

H. ROSENTHAL

~~TURNER~~

J. ROBERTS

~~TURNER~~

K. EYRE

K. RHODES

B. HOLT,

~~TURNER~~

B. CYDIATT

H. WOYD

D. LAWSON

G. RUFFLEY

RAY. ARMSTRONG

G. LONG

MANWARING

E. ROBERTS

S. WILDE

R. WIDD

J. BELL

W. EARLAM

KARLE

BRASSINGTON

43x2  
x99

