

Hot from the press, ladies and gentlemen, comes a brief report on last Sunday's scramble at Harratt Grange Farm. I use the term 'brief' advisedly, as the response to requests for marshals does not suggest that many members of the club are in the least interested - however, since the newsletter goes further afield these days to many riders and clubs in the north perhaps it may not go amiss.

Sunday morning - 7 a.m. and it appears as if our usual prayers to the sun-god have gone unheeded as rain and mist lashes the Derbyshire hillsides with typical June ferocity. We think dismally of the midnight oil squandered on sorting out entries, programmes adverts and all the sundry details required to put a scramble together all to be washed away in what may well be our wettest meeting for six years. However, prayer-mats out and before the sacrificial goat can be prepared - behold, the rain has stopped and by 10 o'clock a stiff breeze is helping to dry the course out - a little too stiff for most folks and its on with full winter riding gear.

By 2.0 p.m., the first race is held in windy and wintry conditions which is reflected in a marked lack of spectators early on, but at least the rain holds off. Three closely contested heats for the non-experts are run off ( some appear to be more expert than others ! ) and in the final, Joe Holt (400 Husky) takes the chequered flag just in front of Geoff Stokes and Charles Miller. For the next race, we have a real line-up of experts and it appears as if Bob Wright (380 Shutt-Greeves) will have a battle on his hands to retain the supremacy he showed on Good Friday, but although it is Bob Wilkinson who leads at the end of Lap 1, he is soon overhauled by the flying Wright who leads for the remainder of the race with Peter Ormesher (500 Cheney-BSA) in good form, moving up to second to lead Wilkinson home in third spot.

The pattern is again repeated in the Seventeen Scramble with Bob Wright never seriously challenged throughout and a battle developing for second place between Pete Ormesher and Mike Barnes with Peter finally coming through to second place once again. The next event is the long awaited handicap race, the computer (that's me) having worked overtime with stopwatch during the first part of the meeting, trying to log everybody's lap time. Well, they do'nt all cross the finishing line together but all competitors have passed the flag within a period of 30 seconds which is not too bad. Bob Wright, back marker, of course, makes valiant efforts and is rewarded by passing the first men off half way through the final lap but Bob Wilkinson is going like steam and is too far ahead for even the redoubtable Wright to catch him. Not far behind them comes Mick Bowers in third place on his 250 BSA.

The day ends with the second leg of the Club Championship race dominated by - guess who ? - Bob Wright once again followed home at a respectful distance by Wilkinson and Ormesher. This third place of Peter's gives him a lead in the championship with a total of 9 points with Wright next having 7 and Terry Silvester with 6 points.

Our thanks must be extended to the lads of the Peak M.C.C. and the N-W. Marshals organisation for their help in providing the major number of what turns out to be the very minimum number of marshals consistent with safety. It is appreciated that there was on the same day a road-race meeting and an important trial and that some of our regular stalwarts were competing in these events - fair enough ! But out of the entire club disregarding the main officials and those on the gate it seems absolutely appalling that we could only field three marshals - THREE !!!

A puzzling and disappointing state of affairs when we are acknowledged to run some of the best scrambles in the centre that there should be this lack of enthusiasm and interest. Perhaps at least the riders and spectators appreciate our efforts.

Over the years, many thousands of letters and phone calls must have been made to the BBC regarding its apathetic coverage of the world's greatest road race - the T.T. I myself have seen the broadcasts dwindle from a reasonable 30 minutes coverage to a miserable 1 minute on Radio 1 if you're lucky. All complaints to no avail; Auntie goes her own sweet way and gives the cold shoulder to motor sport in general and motor cycling in particular.

Recently I was in Spain on holiday and was lucky enough to watch a T.V. transmission of a road race meeting at Madrid, nothing very special - the equivalent of a national meeting at Brands or Oulton.

The difference was that this programme lasted for 1½ hours during which time we were thrilled to see superb coverage of really scintillating racing when the leading positions were continuously swapping. It mattered not a whit that we could hardly follow any of the commentary.

I have no doubt that the Spanish Television Company has many competing interests in the world of sport, yet they evidently think it worth while to show racing at its best to the public at large.

Perhaps the moral is that we should stop taking things lying down and make a nuisance of ourselves with the BBC and for that matter any authority who tends to curb our sport.