

WITLEY & DISTRICT MOTOR CYCLE CLUB - THE FIRST 75 YEARS

A History Published in 2001



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BY JOHN BRAMALL

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Cover photos:

Left: A.G. Brown and passenger attack a loose gradient on Army land on the Surrey/Hampshire border
Right: 1996 Natterjack Enduro: ISDE Award winner Richard Alldred on the Special Test riding his 380 KTM.

About the Author



John Bramall joined the Witley & DMCC in 1966, having first been introduced to motorcycle sport at a very young age by his father, who attended meetings in West Surrey in an official capacity as a member of the St. John's Ambulance Brigade. He took part in trials for a while; later came road navigation events and the National Rally. Owner at different times of fine and not so fine machines, John has been Secretary of the Meeting for just about every type of event that the Witley Club has run and has assisted in other capacities, going back to the heyday years of the Boxing Day Scramble in the late '60's, the Weston Trophy Trial and regional restricted road trials which were run with great success in the '70's and '80's. He also managed to fit in a few years as an instructor with the RAC/ACU Training Scheme.

He edited the Witley Club News from 1984 until 2000 and since retirement from the Civil Service in 1998 has taken over editorship of the South Eastern Centre Gazette.

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Introduction

The Witley & DMCC was founded in 1921 and became affiliated to the ACU in 1924. Affiliation to the SE Centre followed in 1926. 1924 is taken as the formal beginning of the Club, hence we celebrated our 75th Anniversary in 1999.

The Club, through the energy, vision and commitment of its members over the years, together with outstanding leadership, has been successful over the whole spectrum of motorcycle sport. The Boxing Day Scramble, grass tracks at Woolgars Farm, Peper Harow, and elsewhere, and trials, especially the Weston Trophy, have made an outstanding contribution to the promotion of motorcycle sport in the South East. The Club was involved in youth training as early as 1948 before setting up a fresh and very successful RAC/ACU Training Scheme from the mid 1960's onwards. Road racing has not been neglected – in 1965 our enthusiastic and successful group of Witley road racers won the team prize in the Manx Grand Prix. For the road rider, road navigation and regularity events have been run and teams have competed successfully in the National Rally on many occasions.

The Club has also had many very successful individual members, including winners of the British and Southern Experts, the Scottish Six Days Trial, and many other national events, and won the SE Centre Team Trial on numerous occasions between 1931 and 1980. Individuals have won SE Centre Competition Shields for trials, grass track and road trials several times. The Pinhard Prize, an annual award for the most meritorious performance in motorcycle sport by an under 21 year old, was won by Derek Adsett when a Club member in 1964. Individual members have also performed successfully in the ISDT, both at Trophy and Vase levels: in 1997 and 1999 Club teams were entered for the ISDE events in Italy and Portugal. As recorded later in this volume the Witley Club team emerged best of the 13 British teams entered and 6th overall out of 53 teams entered from all over the world.

The Witley and DMCC is one of the oldest clubs in the Centre continuously affiliated to the ACU. Its history is to some extent a reflection of the development of motorcycle sport in the 20th Century, and as we look to the future we have to take into account the world in which we live - pressures on the use of land, environmental considerations, the cost of competition, and the need to compete effectively with other forms of leisure activity. With a young and energetic membership, leavened with experience, it is a challenge we look forward to facing.

We started out to prepare this book during our 75th Anniversary Year, but it has taken rather longer to conclude than we expected. Nevertheless, we hope it will be an enjoyable celebration of our first 75 years and a tribute to those who have gone before to create a Club that we can all enjoy today. It does not purport to be a comprehensive history, rather a tour of the main landmarks, as a record and for the enjoyment of members past and present for whom the Witley Club has a special place in their hearts. We should respect and rejoice in our illustrious history.

*If you have any comments, new information or photographs relating to the contents of this book, and would be prepared to make them available for future editions, please contact:
John Bramall, 30 Jasmine Close, Woking, Surrey GU21 3RQ <jebramall@ukgateway.net>*



Above: Graeme Brown on the start line at Brooklands, early 1930's. Among the machines on view are Sunbeam, Norton, Excelsior and Rudge, with Graeme of course being Douglas-mounted (centre, facing camera).

Left: One of the last photographs of Graeme, pictured outside the shop in Meadow, Godalming, early in 1996.

Graeme Brown, Club President for some 50 years from 1947, first made his name in the 1920's at hill climbing and took up road racing at Brooklands in 1924. A works rider for Douglas, he opened in business at Godalming as Surrey agent for the marque in which he specialised throughout his life. He was still selling spares right up until his death as well as undertaking overhaul and repair of Douglas machines. He was a regular participant in the Pioneer Run and was eventually able to win the award for the oldest combined age of rider and machine.

• C H A P T E R 1 •

Overview

EARLY YEARS – 1921 TO 1939

In 1921 several lads from the village of Witley and the surrounding area used to gather, with their motorcycles, in Mullards' Builders in Witley. Riders from further afield joined the meetings; in 1924 the Witley and District MCC was formally born, and affiliated to the Auto-Cycle Union so that riders could enter into sporting competition. It had been three years previously in 1921 when the first recorded meeting of the South East Centre had taken place, when seven clubs were represented. The Centre's first Open trial was held on 8 July 1922.

The second important phase in the Centre's existence began in 1925 with new competition rules and general re-organisation of the ACU itself. There was some heated debate at the time as to whether these rules were in the interests of the sport but by November 1926 Witley had decided also to join the SE Centre, being proposed by Mr. Barnes, and seconded by no less a personality than Mr F.W.Pinhard. Fred Pinhard set up and edited the SE Centre Gazette in 1928 and later became a Vice President and Chairman of the Competitions Committee.

Only a handful of clubs still functioning can claim to be as old, or older, than Witley. During the late 1920's and '30's the number of members began to grow and the Club gained many good riders. The main headquarters was at the "Half Moon", Thursley, but in 1938 members agreed to move the HQ and Clubroom to the "Cannon" in Guildford where it remained until 1940 and through the war years. When persuading a landlord to agree to the use of a private room or corner of a bar, the persuading generally consisted of a promise to consume enough drink to make it worth his while. This did not usually prove to be difficult. If it proved possible to persuade a member of the landlord's family, or a friend, to join the Club that would be to the Club's advantage. The particular advantage of the "Cannon" was its proximity to Jackson's cycle shop, purveyors of high class motorcycles in the 1930's which was then located at the bottom of Guildford High Street, on the corner opposite Debenham's today.

One of the preoccupations on Club nights was playing cards – an activity which is rarely practised nowadays, but the main interest was planning the Club run, the highlight of the week. This was what motorcycle clubs were all about; a small group of like minded enthusiasts who derived their pleasure from the sociable activity of riding together at the weekend. Their destinations would vary, but the objective was always the enjoyment of motorcycling. Of course the roads were uncluttered with other traffic, there were no bypasses and the towns and countryside had not changed since Victorian times. Mostly the runs started from Hindhead – 9.00am on the dot and perhaps as many as thirty riders would set off for a journey of 50-150 miles to a trial, scramble or hill-climb, or place of interest.

The Witley Club was itself promoting the Weston Trophy Trial from 1932 and there are grounds for believing that the first trial was run in 1925 for the Farnham Trophy. The Chiddingfold Cup was presented in 1925 by Major John O'Neill Power for sporting competition but strangely enough has never been awarded. It is still in the possession of the

Club. The first scramble may have been as early as 1928, and certainly not later than 1934. Grass tracks do not appear to have been run by Witley before the war, but Gymkhanas certainly were, often on the Joseph's Road football ground, home of the former Guildford City. Road racing was less common than it is today for apart from Brooklands, which was mainly for cars, there were few road racing circuits in England before the war. Major trials, though, attracted huge crowds and the various sections on the London-Lands End trial, especially Beggar's Roost Hill, were always popular.

The format of the Club runs was always the same – the Club Captain at the front and nobody overtook him, with the Vice Captain bringing up the rear. Stopping places had been arranged beforehand including the tea stop on the homeward journey, where a café would have sandwiches, tea and scones awaiting the party. Points would be awarded for all riders who participated and a yearly award was made to the Club member who had turned out most often. Their vehicles were mainly single-cylinder four-strokes which by then had achieved great reliability so that breakdowns were rare. In 1935 and 1936 Alfie May was Captain. Dick May (no relation) had a 250 AJS, used to average 45-50 mph all day long, on the noisy side and it burned Castrol R, which made life a bit unpleasant for the followers. Then there was Joe Damant on his Norton, Ron May on a 350 AJS standard road model which cost £53 new – everything chromed including the mudguards, and upswept twin pipes. Other regulars were Charlie Wake, Dorothy Fisher, Dick Viney, Hugh Viney if he wasn't riding in a trial, and Jack Botting. Charlie Wake had become Chairman in 1932, a post he held until 1964; he was winner of the SE Centre Speed Shield when it was first run in 1932. Hill climbs were very popular and there was plenty of scope for this branch of the sport in the immediate area. Graeme Brown, Club President for some 50 years from 1947 first made his name in the 1920's at hill climbing and there was an occasion when he made fastest time of the day on his Douglas and then sold two similar models on the spot, on the strength of that performance.

In the 1930's more than 250 models of motorcycle were on sale in the UK. The 1932 "Motor Cycle Buyers Guide" listed 254 models of all shapes and sizes including a 500cc machine from Matchless with full touring specification, weighing 224lb and costing £35. Other well-known makes included the Levis, the Sunbeam and the Rudge, but although they were cheap by present day standards, it took just as long to accumulate the necessary capital to make a purchase; certainly it took a lot of saving at a time when the working week was usually forty-eight hours long. No wonder our former clubmen looked forward to their Sunday ride to escape the Monday to Saturday routine, and that the riders of the day looked on the mid-thirties with such pleasure.

The social side was always important and in 1934 "The Motor Cycle" reported that the Club had held its Annual Dinner Dance at the Abbot's Kitchen Guildford with Mr. F.W. Pinhard presiding. "An excellent number of members and friends attended and the Club was proposed in felicitous terms by Mr. G. Moxon-Cook, of 'The Motor Cycle', the response being made by Mr A. Boniface". The toast to "The Ladies and Visitors" was proposed by Mr. C.N.J. Weston, of Weston and Phillips, who had donated The Weston Trophy in 1932. In addition to music and dancing a film show was included in the evening's entertainment.

In 1939 the Club advertised itself as offering Open to Centre sporting trials, social runs,

gymkhanas, hill climbs, scrambles, a Club journal and a Club night. Subscription was five shillings a year. Scrambles were in the calendar to be run on 22 October and Boxing Day but after the outbreak of war there is no record of them having taken place.

1945 TO 1969

The war years had seen little motorcycling action, although there was a Scramble on the Hog's Back in 1940, in aid of Guildford Spitfire Fund, described in more detail in Chapter 4. Conscription had been established in 1939 and demobilisation was a progressive process from 1945 onwards, although National Service was retained until 1960. During the War those Club members in reserved occupations always tried to meet once a month and in 1946 the first post-war AGM took place and a new Committee formed, continuing with the chairmanship of H.C. Wake. A.J. Whistler was Secretary/Treasurer and Ron May Captain.

The immediate post war period was one of great social change, and the benefits of these changes only slowly became apparent; day to day life in the late 1940's could be rather dull and depressing. There were shortages of almost everything including money so motorcycle sport, even for those who could contemplate it as a leisure activity, had to be approached in a financially careful way. The tenor of advertisements for competition machines and equipment makes this plain. A competition machine might also be day to day transport, and clothing would often be second-hand military uniform. It was very much make do and mend. Even bread had to be rationed in 1947. And the weather too was unhelpful: also in 1947, when coal was in short supply and before the days of central heating, the winter was severe. A prolonged period of ice and snow, and a lack of sun, persisted for two months from January to March. Kew had 27 successive nights of frost from 11 February to 9 March and in parts of Surrey 14 continuous nights of frost were recorded. Ice floes were seen in the sea off the Kent coast.

Within the motorcycling fraternity the S.E. Centre Gazette was excellently produced each month by the Editor Jack Sutton. But it too was subject to the shortages of the time, in this case paper where the quota could not be exceeded, therefore contributions were often cut down in size and ever smaller type face was used.

One shortage of particular relevance to motorcycling was that of fuel. In the post-war period there was a world wide shortage of petrol caused by insufficient refinery capacity, shortage of steel and pipelines and the need to build an adequate tanker fleet. World demand for fuel was increasing and long before the days of North Sea oil, foreign exchange and macro economic issues caused difficulties for the Government. The result was severe restrictions for domestic and pleasure use – the Basic Allowance was a mere two gallons a month, which could be carried over from month to month to permit longer journeys. Within the rationing scheme there was no shortage of ingenuity in stretching the allowance or seeking to run engines on various alcohol or methanol concoctions, not to mention the inevitable black markets that arise in such circumstances. Matters came to a head with the abolition of the Basic Allowance of petrol and the cessation of motorcycle sport after 30 November 1947. This continued until the Spring of 1948 when matters eased and the Basic Allowance was restored. Although availability of fuel was still an issue restrictions thereafter became steadily less onerous.

Returning to 1945, notwithstanding these difficulties, which at that time were not as

severe as they were to become later, the Club was quick to become active on the sporting front and promoted a Scramble at Foxhills Pirbright on August Bank Holiday 6th August, followed by a Scramble on Boxing Day at Ash Ranges Aldershot. Grass track racing had taken place in 1945, at Gomshall on 28th October. In 1946 the Weston Trophy was run for the first time since the war.

To an extent the connection between motorcycling and the Army was close, due to the role of the Despatch Rider in military communications, and this link was particularly helpful to clubs at the western end of the Centre. Army lands, dating back to the Crimean War when they were first requisitioned for military training, had been made available to clubs, subject to military priorities, since the 1930's. There was initially a social aspect since London clubs had argued that they should have first refusal since there was precious little land available to them in the Metropolitan area. Subsequently, clubs generally at the western end of the Centre sought the use of this land and allocation was left in the hands of the Centre Secretary, within the overall amount of use permitted by the War Department. Looking back to those days the land available was extensive, and can be listed as follows:

- Weavers Down
- Frith Hill
- Bagshot Heath
- Norris Hill
- Fleet Pond
- Hungry Hill
- Long Valley
- Long Bottom
- Normandy Hill
- Tunnel Hill

The Witley Club was able to establish a sporting calendar which was based on some 4 or 5 grass tracks in the Summer, usually at Woolgars Farm, West Horsley; one Open to Centre Scramble, usually at Park Hatch Dunsfold; one Open to Centre Trial, the Weston Trophy on a series of pieces of private land in West Sussex; membership of a Group, initially the Star Group but later and continuing to this day the TVTC. And military land was available if necessary although it was after 1950 before we started to use this on a significant scale.

Apart from the sporting side, a major objective too was for the Club to get its own Clubroom, and during 1946 a disused Canadian army hut had been acquired from Hankley Common, but there was no site available. However, following talks with the Guildford Gas Light and Coke Company and its associated Social Club, permission was given to erect it on the gas holder site at Laundry Road Guildford. A peppercorn rent of one shilling a year was charged. A close relationship with the Gas Social Club was established and continued until the gasworks was sold to the Borough Council in the mid-1960's for redevelopment. For the two clubs there were three Committees – one for the running of each club, and a Joint Club Committee that ran the Clubroom, maintenance of the building, the Bar and ancillary matters. It was an enduring arrangement that suited the parties very well. A curious perk for the Witley Club was cheap gas for heating, since the Gas Board's Social Club was entitled to benefit in this way, and in terms of gas used it was impossible to separate the two consumers.

Fortunately at the time of the 1960's redevelopment there was a small area of land owned by the Borough Council in Mary Road just 100 yards away, and the Gas Board also fortunately had available some temporary offices they no longer required, sited in Bakers Passage at the top of Guildford High Street. Club members were invited to dismantle the offices, transport them to Mary Road and to re-erect them. All this was done, much work being undertaken by Bill Glover, Ernie Gigg, and a small band of helpers. Once re-erected they served the Club as a new

Clubroom in Mary Road until further redevelopment caught up at the beginning of the 1980's. By the end of the 1960's the 1946 second-hand army hut, made of wood, which had seen so much service, although apparently life expired was nevertheless sold to a Scout Group in Bognor for £100.

The post-war period was a time of boom for motor cycle sport especially after petrol became freely available. The immediate boom was due to two factors – pre war riders who missed out between 1939-45 having a last fling before becoming too old, and younger adults keen to become involved for the first time. Club membership reflected this. By the mid 1960's other factors were at work, not least growing affluence, and membership reached as many as 400 at that time. During the 1950's and 60's club and social events were well supported. Housey-housey took place at the Clubroom on the first Thursday in the month and was very popular. There was a Wednesday night cricket team – Gordon Adsett was wicket keeper for a time and later became Captain. Home matches were played at the SEGB Sports Ground, Shalford Park. In 1962 the team won 7 matches out of 8, at that time under the captaincy of “Snips” Brett. Gordon Adsett's wicketkeeping was described as “unbelievable”. Stoolball also became popular, having the additional attraction of ladies teams as opposition.

One activity that now seems a curiosity was for the Club to provide mobile marshals for the 1955 and 1956 Tour of Britain Cycle Races, using Lambretta scooters and BSA B33s respectively. This arose from the cycling background of some members.

There were regular Sunday night pub fixtures, (Red Lion, Shamley Green; Nags Head, Brookwood; Merry Harriers, Hambledon; Hautboy Hotel, Ockham; Dover Arms, Ash and the Hen & Chickens, Bisley being among the favourites), trips to the Coast in the Summer, and a Witley golf championship. Treasure hunts were well supported (one such in 1957 attracting 41 vehicles and over 100 Club members). There were Tramp's Suppers, quizzes, darts tournaments and Scavenger hunts. Indeed the whole tenor of the Club News of the time is of many and varied events well supported and well organised, although the number of helpers then as now was often less than was desired. The TVTC too regularly organised events with dances at the Hog's Back Hotel, the Packhorse Staines and the Griffin Hotel Kingston, and elsewhere.

Resources for sporting events were good. Apart from supplies of rope, stakes, tents etc., to help with the manual work associated with course construction the Club possessed a vehicle – Jessica the Jeep. One reason for acquiring this vehicle was that several Club members had no form of private transport. Jessica did many years of faithful service and was restored to good order in 1957. The Club News of the time records:

“From a somewhat battered and definitely part worn hulk as a result of years of hard work she has now emerged looking and sounding years younger. This very thorough and complete transformation is solely due to the skilled attention as a spare time job at the home of Fred Tidbury. Engine, clutch, brakes, spring set-up, a repaint of the body etc. and now looking really good and sounding silky, no rattles or vibrations. We owe a great debt of gratitude to Fred for his painstaking job, the cost of which is only a fraction of what it would have cost professionally. A shining example of the true Club spirit. How can we ever thank you Fred?”

During the winter of 1962/3 Dick Hysom died in a road accident, having won the 250 cc Cup in the Metropolitan Road Safety Contest in 1961. In his memory his parents presented the

Hysom Rose Bowl to the Club for the best performance by a Witley member in the competition the following year. Since that time, the Hysom Rose Bowl has been presented annually either for the best performance by a Club member in the National Rally, a road trial or some road type event which was Dick's particular interest. A list of the winners is at Appendix 2.

In 1961 the Club was invited to supply volunteer despatch riders for the local Civil Defence Department, on payment of expenses of 4.24 old pence per mile. Although noting that this was a convenient way of helping to pay for the bike the report warned that Civil Defence enthusiasts were often seriously into the military way of looking at the world which might make the money hard earned.

Local dealers advertising in the Club News at this time included E. Pascall Ltd., S.R. Jeffery Ltd., G.D. Brown, L. Savage and Comerfords.

Support for trials was good with a typical Closed to Club event in 1962 attracting 53 riders. As well as the grass roots, the Club's top aces were winning regularly to keep themselves and the Club's name to the fore and in the scrambles world John Clayton, Bill Elliott, Pete Jerred, Ray Bradman and others were doing well. The Club was also successful in road racing, and grass track. Overall club life went along happily and successfully on all fronts with hardly a cloud in the sky, until 1968...

1968 was the year of the great Guildford flood, on Sunday 15th September. The author recalls spending the morning in the town assisting with the RAC/ACU Training Scheme, and well remembers the torrential rain. The Witley Clubroom was close to the river Wey – perhaps the scene is best described in the words of Bill Boniface written at the time:

“We knew that Guildford was suffering the effect of flooding from the recent heavy rains, but on the Monday afternoon I had arranged to meet Ron May at the Clubroom to do a spot of cleaning. Not being able to get beyond Bellfields without traffic chaos I grabbed my holdall of cleaning gear, put on my gum boots and set off for the Clubroom on foot. The By-pass being impassable I had to double back up Joseph's Road and down Stocton Road: all seemed well until I arrived at Leas Road and found the Bus Garage flooded. My quick walk then broke into a trot – when I arrived to find a boat moored at the end of Laundry Road I don't think I have ever felt so bad before but when I realised that our Clubroom was under (I was informed by a Gas Board employee in charge of the boat) five feet of water my self pity was nothing. Ours was only a Clubroom, what of all the people's homes and shops that were in a similar plight? My cleaning rags were of no use that day.

“The floods receded on the Tuesday lunch time and an inspection of the Clubroom found that the water had risen to just over two feet. The billiard tables, the piano etc. had been saved but the stench of mud and silt was terrible.

“The Same Old Faces came down and Operation Cleanup was organised for the Wednesday evening. Hose pipes, buckets, mops, brooms, the little gang worked like mad and restored their Clubroom to habitation for the Thursday evening. What at first looked like a tragedy was turned by this band of stalwarts into a victory”.

Typical of the Witley spirit, it was back to normal for the Club night on Thursday, although connoisseurs of the billiard table reckoned thereafter that the balls always congregated in the same part of the table after a while, suggesting it was never quite so level again.

POST 1969

It was fortunate that the floods occurred towards the end of the life of the Laundry Road building, and not at the beginning of the new clubroom where life settled down comfortably with Arthur Eagle continuing behind the bar, well on the way to clocking up 30 years service. The Club celebrated its 50th Anniversary Dinner and Dance in 1974, with 216 members and friends present. Guests present included Arthur Boniface and Len Savage who both claimed membership back to 1929. As part of the celebrations a Reunion took place in April of the same year. The earliest member present was Cecil Langford, who joined in 1925, and close behind was Bert Raven (1926). Cecil was a solo member of our team that shared winning the SE Centre Team Trial in 1931, the first occasion on which the event was run: also present was Freddie Holt, who was the sidecar member of the team. From the competition side were members Ted Wilmot, Len Savage, Dick May, Francis Quick, Sid Mason and Dennis Trice. Francis had won the SE Centre Trials Championship in 1937. All these had figured well during the thirties and immediately after the war years. The administration side was also well represented: Secretaries Freddie Holt (1934-36); then Stewart Kelsey and Dick Viney, A.J. Whistler (1940-54), who later became Mayor of Havant, Ron May (1954-64, plus another stint in later years), Bill Boniface (1964-71), Fred James (1971-73) and the then Secretary John Capell.

The mid 1970's was another good period for the Club with many able and hardworking members: indeed the then Editor of the Club News in April 1976 offered the opinion that the Committee:

“Was altogether a group a people with enormous ability who are quite happy to put themselves out in the service of the Witley Club”.

1975 was a year when the Club achieved a clean sweep in the trials world – SE Centre Team Cup, TVTC Senior and Junior Aggregates, and best individual performances: the social side was thriving and in the National Rally the Club fielded 22 machines and 27 participants – the largest ever. The Boxing Day Scramble continued too as a major attraction, and we were again running the occasional grass track.

Circumstances in the Club were but a reflection of the wider motorcycling scene. Motorcycle sales were booming, and there were many attractive machines available. Even the weather in the Summer of 1976 was very good. These factors led to a massive demand at the RAC/ACU Training School, which was being run with great success under the leadership of John Capell: usually each course attracted 30-40 new recruits but, in 1976, 90 signed up and two annexe training centres were opened to cater for demand. The Club News reported:

“The instructors, who include many new members of our own Club, have responded magnificently to the new challenge and if we can teach 90 people how to ride a motorcycle/moped safely during the three month course, we will undoubtedly be one of the leading centres in Britain. Facilities are stretched to the limit but with help from Gordon Farley Motorcycles in the shape of a couple of extra machines, we should come through”.

The trials world too was thriving, as extracts from the following article by Bill Boniface shows:

“Looking back over the year the achievements of our trials riders have been remarkable. Up

and down and across the country every weekend Witley riders have figured in the awards. We have been represented in the Scottish, the Scott and all the Nationals, Open to Centres, Groups and Club events from Wales to the Yorkshire moors and back to Broxhead. Our close parallel association with the Surrey Schoolboy Club has been an undoubted success in that a lot of our young members can enjoy the best of both worlds and a steady flow of well trained, very able competitors are graduating into the sport. At the other end of the scale we have the experienced hands, the ones that have as much craft as art and can still get their name engraved on the silverware. At any Centre or Group event you can quickly see the whizzkids latch onto the tail of these characters to “crib” their line or extract any other little gems of wisdom. Some are the silent types that spy from behind a tree and others are the “where’s the line then?” type. They have the machines and the ability but you cannot buy experience and many a pearl whispered in the ear or a copybook demo has helped a youngster on his way to an award. This is what our sport is all about.

“For me, from the Club’s point of view, my moment came when we won the SE Centre Team Trial. I was delighted with the team I went with, that they were unbeatable I had no doubts and that they wanted the Motormyles Trophy for Witley as much as I did was proved by their excellent performance.

(Incidentally the Motormyles Trophy was presented for this competition in 1931 by the company of that name after being approached by Graham Walker, Editor of “Motor Cycling”, successful TT rider and father of Murray Walker, the veteran Grand Prix commentator.)

“In a wider sphere and involving a lot more of our regular competitors, we have again won the TVTC Aggregate Shield. This year has been one of the most competitive for a long time with the Normandy Club taking the lead on more than one occasion. We went to the final December event with a very slight lead and how our members rallied to the flag. No less than 41 riders turned out in Witley colours to stamp our supremacy on our rivals. I would like to congratulate and thank Normandy for the fight they put up this year: it certainly created a lot more interest and fun – for our rivalry is indeed friendly”.

As an example of the Witley influence in local trials at the time, here is a list of no less than 17 members in the awards list in the December 1975 Group Trial, organised by Kingston Club:

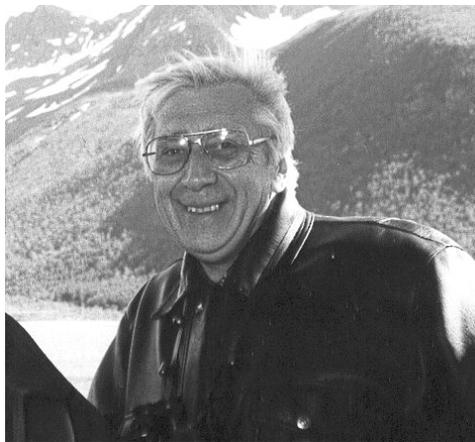
Premier Award: Derek Adsett; 200cc Cup: Colin Boniface; 250cc Cup: Chris Sutton; 350cc Cup: Derek Cranfield; Best Junior: Stephen Moore; First Class Awards: Ray Haslam, Tim Blackmore, Pat Smith, Clive Dopson, Len Hutty, David Clinkard, Alan McDine and Tony Heane. Second Class Awards: David Renham, Tim Clark, Michael Marshall and Graham Smith.

In the area of promotion too the Club was thriving: in the 1977-8 year the Club organised no less than 14 sporting events – two Open to Centre trials, three Group trials, five Club trials, the road trial, two Junior Scrambles, and the Boxing Day Scramble. We had riders successful at national and international level – especially John May in the ISDT, Chris Sutton and Ray Haslam in the world series, and Colin Boniface in the nationals. We were able to enter a team in the Scottish Six Days. The AGM – always a test of member participation – attracted around 60 people each year, against a membership of 300. Many social events were organised, including a coach trip to the TT, which ran for a few years and was a sell out each time. The only difficulties were the related ones of obtaining enough support to run events on the day despite

the large membership, and of encouraging cross-discipline support, e.g. to get scramblers to help at a trial. The disappointment over the use of Wisley for road racing was significant – had meetings become established the Club might have developed in completely different ways.

As the end of the 1970's approached we had to move from our home in Mary Road to make way for housing development so for the first time for 35 years we did not own our own clubroom. But our friends in the Gas Board very kindly let us use their clubroom, now a fine brick building in Baker's Passage, Guildford and we were able to continue with club life for the next 15 years more or less as we always had done. Ernie Gigg, a friend of the Club for many years presided over the bar as Arthur Eagle had done for many years before. But nothing is as permanent as sometimes we would wish and we had to move again after privatisation of the gas industry and the building was sold to make way for a shop. At the present time we meet at the premises of Guildford Horticultural Society at Bellfields which suits us very well.

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Bernard Jay has been the Witley Club Chairman since the beginning of the new Millennium. He has been a member of the Club for some 30 years and has held a number of other posts including that of Secretary. A keen participant in the National Rally, he still undertakes tours in mainland Europe on modern 'rocketship' machinery.



1. A postcard view of Foxhills near Brookwood, early venue for Witley scrambles.



2. A typical Club run in the 1930's, starting at Shalford Station. Left to right, back row: Jim Watt, Fred Woodford, Les Lipscombe, Ron May, Ted Wilmot, Tubby Tyler, Harry Tiller, Alfie May; front row: Bertie Thomas, Violet Watts, Alice Woodford, Florrie Tilley, May Wilmot (in chair) and Doss Fisher.



3. Witley members acting as marshals for the 1000 mile Tour of Britain Cycle Race in 1956: David Hull, Bill Boniface, Bill Brown, Roy Annells, Peter Manester.



4. Jessica the Jeep at the 1949 Selborne Solo Trial. Left to right: Dick May, Godwin Southon, Charlie Wake, Edie & Reg Whitcher, Doss Fisher, George Edwards, Wally White, Dolly & Ron May, Jack Botting. Behind: the Bryant brothers with Ken Heanes.



5. Witley line-up: Includes (left to right): standing: Elaine Woods, Joan Dismore, Hilda Beasley, Nita and Reg Fishlock, Benny Sutton, Reg May, Rag Sutton. Kneeling: Reg Blake, John Beasley, Roy Annals, David Hull, Mick Dismore, Mary May, Harry Harris, Ron Steadman, Mick Avery. Taken around 1960 beside Rag Sutton's baker's van.



Three photos from the Reunion in 1974 celebrating the Club's 50th Anniversary.
6. Left to right: Arthur Boniface, A.J. Whistler, Graeme Brown, Joe Damant, Ted Wilmot.



7. Left to right: C.W. King, Chris Miller, Ron May, Henry Kemp.



8. Long-serving members. Left to right: Freddie Holt, Bill Sadler, Marge Savage, Ron May, Graeme Brown, Bert Raven, Doss Fisher, Charlie King, Freddie Smith, Cecil Langford.

• C H A P T E R 2 •

RAC/ACU Training Scheme

The Club was involved in two distinct stages, from 1948 to the early fifties, and 1967-1978.

1948 ONWARDS

Originally known as youth training, what became known as the RAC/ACU Training scheme when it started out was supported by RoSPA. An early report on the Club's work appeared in the Gazette:

"After initial setbacks when starting the scheme in January 1948 I am pleased to report that the Witley & DMCC have now overcome their difficulties and things are working smoothly. Starting off with a dozen trainees, all of whom were in their teens, the only training ground that could be found was the yard of a gasworks which was used in the preliminary stages.

The main training ground was the Old Cattle Market. The Club was however fortunate in finding the 'ideal' site, a concrete road that had been laid for a proposed housing estate which was not proceeded with and they are now in possession of half a mile of private road complete with intersections etc. The first course is now over and a carefully marked out final test showed that the best student gained 95%, the lowest being 65%. For the immediate future these lads are invited to submit applications for Club membership at non-rider's rates, this will entitle them to Club and Centre literature etc. and to ride the James one Sunday each month until such time as they wish to take their driving test or become owners of a machine themselves. Enthusiasm has been excellent and the second course is about to start under the command of Messrs. C.G. Fincken and H.C. Wake".

The James was one of five issued to clubs, the others going to Streatham, Wimbledon, Sunbeam and Southern Sporting. The scheme grew in popularity and clubs were recommended to establish separate committees. 1948 was of course a period of fuel shortage, and arrangements were set up for instructors to obtain a supplementary petrol allowance provided they could demonstrate that there was no reasonable alternative means of public transport to the place where instruction was taking place. Despite being just after the war when women had turned their hand to many things, a contributor to the Gazette was still able to express surprise at the number of ladies joining the scheme. One instructor was overheard to remark "All goes well if I have a mixed class but if it consists entirely of females, clutch and coil become mixed with plain and purl".

The scheme continued for some years but declining support from Club members led to its later demise. In 1948 a very young Derek Prior was awarded the Guildford Road Safety Shield.

1967-1978

The resurrection of motorcycle training and Witley's link with the arrangements was almost accidental and shows yet again that "it is not what you know but who you know". The driving force behind the establishment of the Training Scheme was Guildford Road Safety Officer, George Cooper, an ex-police officer, who had been charged by the Council to make some

provision for the increasing population of teenagers in the town, many of whom were attracted to motorcycling. The Council's desire to make some provision was naturally supported by the police and the Superintendent of the local station was even willing to allow officers to spend time as Instructors with any Group which could be established: the Police were however not willing to organise the scheme, nor could they wholly be relied on to provide all the instructors, in view of the other demands on their time. George's search for a Training Organiser lighted on a Witley Club member, John Capell, who worked at the Guildford Education Offices on the opposite side of North Street to George's office. John was apparently the only motorcyclist employed in Guildford's local government offices and he seemed to possess the necessary organisational ability, have the right connections in the Witley Club, and crucially was willing to help. Initial meetings showed that the two could get on well together and soon George had established contact with Freddie Lovegrove and Stan Turner, National Organisers of the RAC/ACU Training Scheme, whilst John had meetings with senior clubmen at Witley. The first meeting took place on 22 February 1967, when it was agreed that the Guildford RAC/ACU Training School would be relaunched, with an official opening on 2 April 1967. RAC/ACU Headquarters would supply four machines; two Vespa 90 scooters, a BSA Bantam 175cc, all new, and an elderly Villiers-engined P&M Panther. George Cooper would arrange the use of the Borough Council car park at Laundry Road and storage of the motorcycles and other training equipment; the police and Witley & DMCC would provide instructors, and John was to arrange the use of the Guildford Youth Centre at Haydon Place for the theoretical maintenance sessions. Subsequent meetings confirmed arrangements. John visited the Woking RAC/ACU Scheme and publicity advertising the new scheme appeared in the local press. Lord Chelsam performed the opening ceremony on 2 April with approximately 20 trainees joining the first course.

The format of the course had not changed in the 20 years since Witley's first involvement: a 12 week course, initially off road, concentrating on riding control – clutch, throttle, braking etc., followed by group riding on the quieter roads, with instructors at the front and back and eventually pursuit only on the busier roads. In addition, the trainees were schooled in the Highway Code and how to maintain the vehicle. The lessons on the latter took place on Monday evenings at the Guildford Youth Centre until July 1968 when the Training School moved to the Guildford Corporation Depot, where its own training hut had been established.

Over the years many Witley stalwarts volunteered their services as Instructors and this involved considerable commitment and dedication. Sunday morning sessions lasted two hours, plus preparation and clearing up. There was no payment, only the satisfaction of helping young people (mainly, although folk of all ages were welcome) to learn to ride safely and to enjoy motorcycling. At the end of each course, pupils undertook a test on (a) off road machine control (b) highway code (c) maintenance and (d) a pursuit test over 2-3 miles of busy roads. The Guildford Training School quickly established a high success rate in these tests and most of the trainees also went on to success in the Ministry of Transport Driving Tests. The success rate, plus the evident enjoyment of all involved naturally led to increased demand, which necessitated more courses. In the summer months, extra courses could be held on weekday evenings, but in addition the Guildford Centre branched out to sub-centres, established at

Farnham and Godalming. By 1969, Guildford was third, nationally, in the number of trainees passing the test each year, behind such luminaries as Edinburgh and Watford.

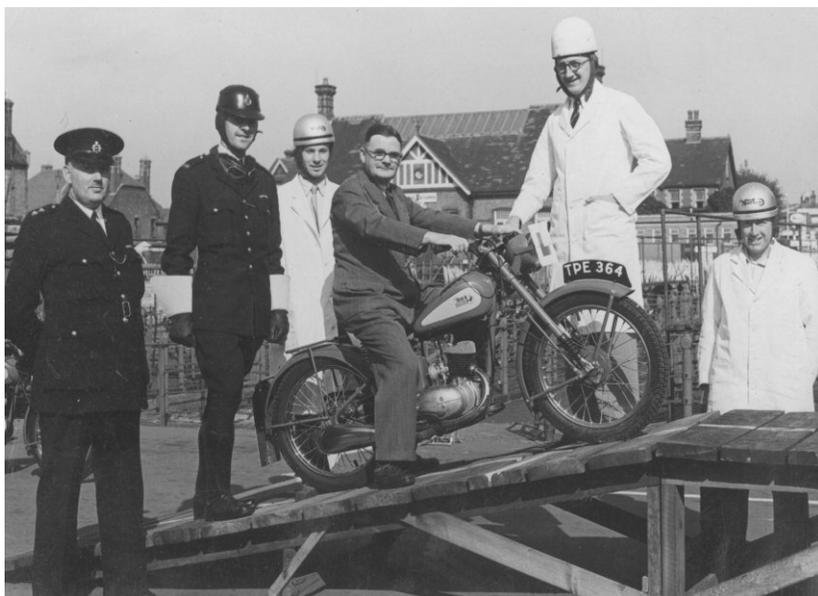
Another initiative pioneered by the Guildford Training School was a plan to purchase additional vehicles, funded by the sale of spares. Being located at the Corporation Depot meant that any unwanted or abandoned motorcycles were passed onto the Training School: some could be repaired/restored and used for training purposes, others were stripped for useful spares and before too long the Instructors were salesmen for anyone wanting a replacement part. The School was helped enormously when the stock of a deceased local motor cycle breaker was obtained by George Cooper and passed onto the Training School. Several lorry loads of frames, wheels, engines, etc., some of which dated back to the 1930's were deposited at the Corporation Depot, and suddenly the Training School became a mecca for collectors and restorers from all over the country. The sale of parts enabled the Training School to increase its stock of vehicles dramatically, to serve those trainees who did not possess their own machines.

By coincidence, the Guildford Corporation Depot was also used by the local branch of the Institute of Advanced Motorists (IAM) and what more natural than that the Motorcycle Training Group and the IAM should get together when national moves towards an Advanced Motorcycle Test were being discussed. George and John were contacted by IAM headquarters and in consequence the national launch of the IAM motorcycle test took place in Guildford. The test involved a lengthy pursuit test at appropriate speeds, involving good use of the road, observation, courtesy etc. and was conducted by a highly trained police officer: pre-test training was available at IAM Centres. The scheme has proved very popular throughout the country, as it should, given the number of high-quality, powerful motorcycles now available to enthusiasts. Somehow it seems the ultimate accolade that the Guildford Training School, which always sought to combine road safety training with enthusiasm for motorcycling, should be associated with advanced performance. The dedicated band of instructors were never limited just to tutoring young people to pass a test: they encouraged the trainees to see the course as a first step on the road to general enjoyment of motorcycling. Although most of the practice runs took place on local test courses, jaunts to more distant locations such as Surrey beauty spots, or off road 'green lanes' were not unknown. Some of the trainees joined Witley & DMCC, others became instructors, some instructors became examiners for the RAC/ACU Test in SE England.

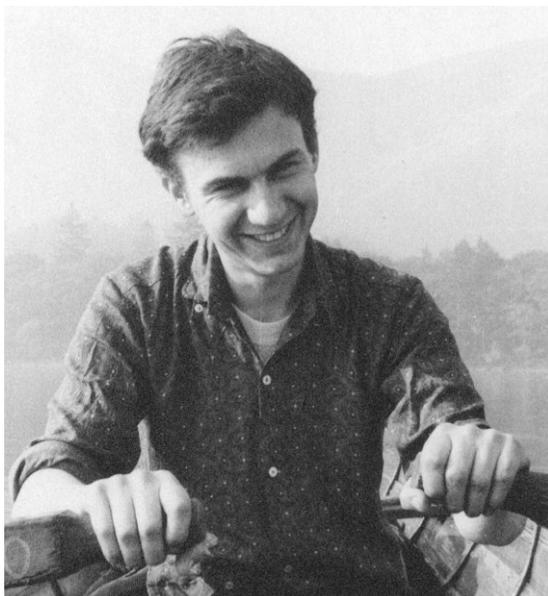
With the change in national legislation, motorcycle training changed in 1974 and the Guildford scheme was taken over by the County Council. Training continued, but now trainees were required to pass a Part 1 test at the training site before they were allowed to progress to the roads. George Cooper was not so intimately involved in local arrangements, moreover John Capell had moved to the Woking Education Office and although he continued to oversee the Guildford Training School, his time was increasingly taken up with examiner duties. By 1978 the Witley link with motorcycle training had lapsed when John handed over the reins as the Training Organiser. During the period from 1967, over 1,000 trainees passed their test at the Guildford RAC/ACU Training School, hopefully all became safer riders as a result of their experience and some became motorcycle enthusiasts.



9. The Club's first involvement in the RAC/ACU Training Scheme came in the late 1940's and early 1950's. The site was the Old Cattle Market off Woodbridge Road, immediately adjacent to the Clubroom building. The machines are 125cc BSA Bantams. Far right in this photo is Aubrey Thompson, RAC organiser, and to his left the Mayor of Guildford, Colin Wilkins.



10. Left to right: Supt. Hayward, PC Brown, Max Bradley, the Mayor, David Hull, Ron May.



11. A youthful John Capell. John ran the RAC/ACU Training Scheme very successfully for many years following its second incarnation in the 1960's. He also held a number of Committee posts over several years.



12. John Capell with Training Scheme members in the mid-1970's. George Cooper, Guildford Road Safety Officer, is on John's right.



13. The H.C. Wake Cup was based on a cup won by Charlie in the 1930's. The plinth was made by Bill Glover. The two silver bands for the inscription of the names of winners were donated by Bill Glover (upper) and Joe Damant (lower).



14. The Dick Hysom Rose Bowl, presented by Mr. & Mrs. Hysom for the the best performance by a Witley member in road-based competition, following the death of their son Dick in a road accident in 1963.

• C H A P T E R 3 •

Trials

INTRODUCTION

The cheapest, safest, and the most accessible branch of the sport - these are the basic reasons for the attraction of trials. The Club held its first event in 1925, for the Farnham Trophy. Trials - in various forms - go back to the very earliest days of motorcycling; they were immediately attractive to manufacturers as a way of showing what a machine could do, and thus to stimulate sales. For riders a delicate touch is needed - throttle control, balance, athleticism, concentration and dexterity are all needed to negotiate a section successfully. Trials have developed a lot over the years - from the problem of propelling 2-3 cwt of motorcycle up a gradient of 1 in 3, to designing sections that will provide a fair test for the machines of today, that are light, powerful, manoeuvrable and purpose built. Contemporary riders frequently do not tax and insure machines for the road - not least riders are often too young - so commonly events are contained within a single piece of land rather than being several areas of land joined by public highways. Marking systems have changed too: 0-3-5 and 0-1-3-5 have become 0-1-2-3-5, and other aspects, including inspections of sections, have also changed over the years.

The role of observers has always been recognised - indeed they are as much part of the sport as the rider. The 1947 SE Centre Gazette records that observers willing to volunteer should so advise the Clerk of the Course in writing, and at the end of the day should prepare a report and sign according to individual responsibilities, to be submitted to the Clerk of the Course. Observers were forbidden to communicate the results of their observations to anyone other than the Stewards of the Meeting and the Clerk of the Course.

THE WESTON TROPHY

Mr. C.N.J. Weston, of Weston and Phillips, Guildford, presented the Club with a trophy for trials and the first Weston Trophy Trial was run in 1932. It was won by Len Heath who won again in 1933, with his brother E.J.Heath winning in 1934. They went on to be joint Managing Directors of Heath Bros, Farnham who sold large numbers of cars and motorcycles in Surrey and Hampshire. During his heyday as a trials and scrambles rider Len Heath won over 400 cups and awards including the Scottish Six Days, the British Experts twice and the Scott Trial. He was captain of the British ISDT team in the 1930's and manager of the team from 1948 until 1954.

A list of winners of the Weston Trophy is at Appendix 2. The first year for which a programme has survived is 1933 when the event was held on 29th January starting from The Green Man at Burpham. The entry included 37 solos and 15 sidecars, with teams entered by Dittons, Sunbeam, South Reading and Streatham. Witley entered two teams - Witley No. 1, R.T. Viney (343 Triumph) F.H. Neal (429 BSA) A. Burningham (250 Rudge): and Witley Novices, A. Boniface (348 Ariel) D.G.W. Sex (550 Ariel) and H.A. Lloyd (493 Triumph sidecar). Two other names in the programme stand out - Bernard Matterson and Harold Taylor,

both riding for Streatham Club, who were partners in the motor cycle firm of Taylor Matterson of Balham.

The programme for 1938 has also survived, when the event was held on 27 March starting from The Half Moon, Thursley at 12 noon. Dick Viney was Secretary of the Meeting, Stewards were H. Stent and C.N.J. Weston, but no separate Clerk of the Course is named. The winner was A.F. Gaymer (349 Triumph) and he was a member of the Witley Team which also included F.E. Quick (497 Ariel) and S.W. Harding (BOE Special). (A.F. Gaymer went on to win the 1938 Centre Shield Competition). There was an entry of 64 solos and 11 sidecars, one of the sidecarrists being Witley Vice President Len Talbot on a 490 Norton. A breakdown of machines comprising the solo entry is as follows:

Triumph	16	Rudge	3	S.O.S.	1
AJS	15	Royal Enfield	3	Norton	1
Ariel	13	Matchless	2	Velocette	1
BSA	3	Levis	1	Special	1
New Imperial	3	Calthorpe	1		

37 solo riders were on 350's, 18 on 500's and 8 on 250's.

The route covered 40 miles with a set speed schedule of 20 mph. Anyone finishing before his scheduled time was to be disqualified. The marking system was, for stopping in a non-stop section – 10 marks lost; footing in any section – 6 marks lost; inspecting a section on foot before riding through – 10 marks lost. The Centre Steward's report said "A good course comprising 14 sections, most of which were sub-divided and a brake test: starting place not very well chosen and time allowance in brake test rather tight. One protest upheld. An excellent trial and well up to Open to Centre standard". So all in all a good day's sport. The reference to the quality of the event is significant – it is clear from reading a number of these reports that Centre Stewards were keen to uphold the standards to which trials were expected to be run.

The Weston Trophy Trial was not run 1939-45, took place in 1946 when the winner was G.M. Berry, not held 1947/8 presumably due respectively to exceptionally bad weather and petrol shortages. Had the trial run in 1947 it would have been interesting, as a note in the SE Centre Gazette stated:

"Following the very enthusiastic reception given to the handicap event in the Boxing Day Scramble, the Club has decided to make the Weston Trophy Trial a handicap as well. Apart from the premier award for best performance of the day all other awards will be decided on a handicap basis".

Normal service was resumed in 1949 and has continued almost without a break to the present day. The date has varied slightly from mid-February to mid-March.

An interesting note appeared in the Gazette of January 1949:

"Pillion Passengers in Trials: The practice of carrying pillion passengers in trials – unless in a pillion trial – is to be discouraged and organisers should take steps to cover this point in the supplementary regulations".

Regulations for 1949 described the course as "of a very severe nature, and will be approximately 25 miles in length, on the Surrey and Sussex borders". Entries were limited to the first 150 received. Certain sections were timed and marks were lost above Standard Time,

to the extent of 30 seconds, or part of, per mark above Standard Time, with a maximum of 10 marks. The Special Test was one mile in length. Help, as always, was requested and a separate note in the Gazette said:

“Dick Barton – special agent! Are YOU a superman too? Find out by entering our Weston Trophy Trial, an old fashioned mud-plug, solos only, a course laid on by experts. Extensive use of private property, spectators unwelcome by landowner’s request. Able bodied helpers and marshals apply Hon. Sec. or meet Leathern Bottle 10.00am”. Clerk of the Course was R.T. Viney, Secretary of the Meeting A.J. Whistler.

In 1950 Ron May was Clerk of the Course and A.J. Whistler Secretary of the Meeting.

For 1951, an entirely new area was promised, and, in the words of the advance publicity, “You are assured that this is no novice event or a short saunter of spoon fed taped nadgery!! (Neither are we concerned whether it rains, blows, or snows)”.

The Regulations referred to a route of 50 miles, and “some rock and gradient besides mud. Road work will be kept to a minimum”. The start was from the New Inn, Ramsnest, near Chiddingfold. Entries were down due to other clashing trials on the same day. In his report, Ralph Venables said:

“The Weston Trophy Trial made up in mud what it lacked in the way of back markers, and, here again, vile weather did little to prevent riders from having a whale of a time. The Witley boys, led by Allan Brown, have unearthed some choice new sections and some almost forgotten old ones... most of which favoured three wheels rather than two. L.A. Knock (497 Ariel sc) made best performance of the day, Basil Welch (497 Ariel sc) was best 500, Ralph Bower (498 AJS sc) was best novice, and all but two of the first class awards went to the sidecar brigade. In the opinion of BSSA, this was surely the finest trial of the year! Among the solos, Phil Mellers was easily the best, with Tom Gilfillan and Peter Richards taking the 250 and 350 cups. Weyburn won the team prize”.

In 1952 the start moved to a location 10 miles south of Guildford on the A286 road and “If the organisers deem it necessary they will use two starting points”. In practice only one starting point was used. Ralph Venables in his column said:

“The Weston Trophy Trial left no doubts as to the Witley Club’s intention – mud, mud, mud, all the way! Ray Peacock was in great form, and took the solo premier easily (ditto Frank Wilkins in the opposite class). Wal Conway, Pete Richards and Bert Gaymer were best 250, 350, and 500 respectively”.

In 1953 there was a deliberate decision to make the event less daunting as the Regulations said that the Course would be of a sporting nature, but rather less so than in recent years. Ralph Venables reported as follows:

“I spent the morning watching the Weston, and was pleased to see Witley carrying on the good work by indicating the limits of their observed sections with cards instead of tapes. It seems to have been a thoroughly enjoyable trial, easier than usual, and was won by Ray Peacock with a loss of 6. Father Bill was best in the sidecar class (53), and capacity class cups went to Messrs Quinnell, Barrett, Jackson and Wicken. Best Novice was Alec Strain, and there were too few teams to merit an award”.

The event was not run in 1954. In 1955 and 1956 the winner was Ted Usher. He was a

builder from Doddington, Kent, born in 1917. He rode in the ISDT for Matchless from 1949 to 1955, in the Vase Team and only once missed a “gold”. Apparently in his day few men could beat Usher at changing a tyre or carrying out any of the other maintenance tasks which had to be performed at lightning speed by ISDT competitors. And Ralph Venables report for 1956:

“Cloudless skies favoured the Weston Trophy Trial but there was still plenty of mud. Ted Usher was in his element and won by 3 marks from Mick Lynch (best 350). Messrs Peacock and Bartlett were best 250 and 500 and the highest score was over 160”. And the Centre Steward’s report: “A very good course containing 19 observed sections which were of the ‘mud plug’ variety with no tape being used throughout the trial. Course excellently marked and results published two days after the event. There were no protests. Organisation was of a very high standard”. The Clerk of the Course was A.G. Brown.

By 1956, Motor Cycle News (MCN) had been launched and was producing reports of trials events, albeit succinct: “Weston Trophy Trial: run over a course to the south of Guildford, big entry, brilliant weather, course muddy”.

In 1957 MCN was slightly more expansive:

“Always recognised as a well organised mud plug, this year’s Weston Trophy Trial by the Witley Club was no exception. The start at the Stag Inn, Balls Cross, was rather a distance for many of the SE Centre Clubmen and with the Collier Cup in opposition the entry of 108 in this solos only trial was quite satisfactory from the organiser’s point of view”.

Best Performance for the Weston Trophy was by E.Adcock (197 DOT); Class Awards: 250 cc: B.Fowler (197 James); 350 cc: T.A.King (346 Levis); 500cc: G.Bartlett (497 Ariel); Veteran Cup: T.S.C.Gilfillan (490 Norton). History does not record but this win by Eric Adcock was probably the first time the Weston Trophy had been won by a 2 stroke, and of course a British 2 stroke.

As MCN went from strength to strength, the report for 1958 is accompanied by photographs of Arthur Wheeler on a Tiger Cub and P.G. Harden on a 197 Francis Barnett and is worth quoting in full:

“The Witley and DMCC plotted a good course for their annual Weston Trophy Trial on 2 March. There were no impossible sections but any competitor who finished with a score under 50 could feel quite pleased with himself. Starting from the New Inn, Ramsnest, this solos only event was run on the figure of eight style, with the odd numbers facing first the more difficult sections on the western side of the course.

“The approach to the first sections on Jays Farm, fortunately not observed, caused most trouble, bulldozing during the week having made conditions pretty severe. Dick Langstone (348 Ariel) and R.W.Gollner (497 Ariel) were among the best on the first section of thick rutted clay.

“A hundred yards further on a particularly tricky section caught out all but Harry Rayner (498 Triumph) who was really brilliant. Langstone however was one of the few to complete the second sub without penalty. A long rutted climb through the woods came next and some good non-stop climbs were made by J.Brunton (499 BSA), Gordon Bartlett (497 Ariel) and Mick Lynch (498 Triumph).

“Excellent sections at Old Mill Farm, High Lane, Ebernoe and Mackerall’s Common all

took their share of marks. At Mitchell Park Farm the final group of hazards, Section 2 was the most difficult and only Jock Wilson (499 BSA) R.G.Hutcheson (497 Ariel) P.G.Harden (197 Francis Barnett) and K.G.Edwards (197 Norman) lost no marks. A thoroughly enjoyable event, the Weston Trophy favoured the earlier starters.”

Best Performance reverted to 4 stroke power with R.Langstone (348 Ariel) winner with 36 marks lost. The Best 250 cc award went to R.Potts (197 Norman) with as many as 77 ml. M. Dismore (346 Royal Enfield) was best 350cc with 43 ml and best 500 H.H.Rayner (498 Triumph) with 38ml. Awards were also won by Gordon Adsett (197 Cotton) and Peter Fraser (147 Francis Barnett).

The reference to the trial favouring early numbers was always likely to be a fact of life on the muddy clay encountered in the area and Clerks of the Course would attempt to minimise this wherever possible. On occasion the first 50 entries would be balloted so riders could help themselves by getting their entries in early as well as pressing on as quickly as possible during the event to avoid being among the last to attempt sections.

Ralph Venables described the day as “A really fine event in the true Witley tradition i.e. mud”. He also noted that every 2 stroke finished on the wrong side of 70.

In 1959 Bill Glover was Clerk of the Course with Ron May Secretary of the Meeting. Ralph Venables described the day in the following terms: “...glorious weather... and what an admirable event it was too. Everything was possible, at first, though several sections were ‘cleaned’ only once. Gordon Bartlett, who has previously distinguished himself in this trial, made best performance with a loss of 24 marks, class cups went to Gordon Coppuck, Ray Peacock, and the Team Prize to Witley (Messrs Dismore, Fowler and Cranfield)”.

In 1960 it was another story of mud when 161 riders enjoyed a hard but good day’s sport. Gordon Jackson (347 AJS) with 16 marks lost was the winner over a course of 25 sections. Readers will recall Gordon Jackson, winner of the Scottish Six Days Trial on four occasions, doing so in one historic week with but a single dab. Only two riders outside the first 50 earned first class awards (Graham Beamish 250 BSA and Arthur Davy, who started almost last and lost 61 marks overall on a 347 AJS.) Ted Usher, who had won the Weston Trophy in 1950, 1955 and 1956, was still riding and won the pre-1939 Veterans Award with 33 ml (on a 347 AJS).

Well known Club members in the awards were Mick Dismore (249 James); Reg May (249 DOT); Gordon Adsett (199 Cotton); Derek Cranfield (197 Greeves); Peter Fraser (249 Francis Barnett); Brian Fowler (249 DOT); and Bill Elliott (197 James). It was an indication of the size and strength of the Club at the time that this number of riders could take part leaving some 30-35 members to run the sections and manage the other tasks of the day including course openers and back markers to ride the whole trial.

The TVTC is dealt with elsewhere but on occasion the Club used its land in West Sussex for its annual Group Trial. 1960 was such a year and Harry Pead reported the day as follows:

“A foretaste of the Weston was provided by Witley’s Autumn Trial on September 11th. Held on one of the hottest days of the year, this gruelling test was a sharp reminder that when the Club includes a note in the regulations for their big event that ‘owing to the severity of the course novices are advised not to enter’ they aren’t kidding. In spite of the toughness of most sections, however, there were none which were impossible or dangerous and the decision of the

organisers not to pass up the opportunity of letting the boys tackle some real man sized sections for a change met with the approval of almost everyone who competed”.

Throughout the 1960's the event carried on much as before with a gradual dominance of two strokes emerging and the traditional pieces of land continuing to be used. The site of the start varied and so did some of the areas of land used for sections but the format continued broadly the same. Gradually riders became more reluctant to take part if the event included road work. Numbers declined, and this was exacerbated by a decline in rider support for trials generally. The Club persevered with the traditional format for as long as possible but eventually recognised the need for change so in the 1980's began to use a single piece of land, initially Fry's Cross Dunsfold. Landowners of long-standing who had kindly made their land available year after year included Mr. Francis of Jays Farm; Mr. Elcombe of High Hampstead Farm; Mr. Wadey of Butcherland Farm; Mr. Pyle of Skinner's Lane Farm; and Sayers & Son Ltd., of Ash Park Brickworks.

The Weston Trophy was won three times in succession by Alan Ketley in 1971-3, the first time this was achieved. Len Hutty went one better winning four times 1980-83. Alan Ketley was able to receive the trophy in person at an awards evening arranged in the Autumn of 1973 by John Capell. For several years around this time The Merry Harriers at Hambledon was used for the start and finish which provided a good social environment after the day was over.

In more recent years the character of the event has changed considerably and it has taken place on a single area of land, principally at Fry's Copse, Dunsfold and at Farley Green. The modern Weston is technically much harder than 30 or 50 years ago but not relatively so and it has lost its tag as being especially hard.

THE H.C.WAKE TRIAL

This was first run in 1968 as an Open to Centre event as a memorial to Charlie Wake and all he had done for the Club over many years. A Saturday was chosen as the Club wished to run the first event in the year in which he had died and only a Saturday was available. Brian Fowler was a driving force behind the idea. The entry was a very satisfactory 140 and the trial involved some 36 sections plus a special test. The machines were nearly all two strokes and mostly of foreign manufacture. The H.C.Wake Trophy was ready for 1969 when the winner was Geoff Galloway on a 246 Bultaco with 25 marks lost. Witley won the team award from 12 other teams with Brian Fowler himself, Jack Galloway and Roy Enticknap.

The H.C.Wake has been run on areas of land on the Surrey/Sussex border, much of it common to the Weston, some areas being used only for this trial. In order to fit into a full Centre trials calendar and to provide the event with the prominence deserved it has always been held on the Saturday before Remembrance Sunday, when no other Open to Centre Trials were taking place. On occasion it has been a qualifying round for the SE Centre solo Championship. The formula has been successful, the only significant change being when the venue was confined to a single area of private land. The first event held exclusively on private land was at Frys Cross, Dunsfold, but for 1998 the venue was moved to Woodhill, Farley Green.

The H.C.Wake Trophy itself was won by Charlie himself during a long and successful riding career. Bill Glover made the very elegant plinth on which the trophy stands. Situated on

the plinth are two bands of silver for the inscription of the names of winners, the upper band being donated by Bill Glover and the lower band by Joe Damant. In the early days Billy Elliott acted as Clerk of the Course and John Capell Secretary of the Meeting, succeeded by Bill Boniface and Fred James respectively. Other Clerks of the Course have included Colin Boniface, Peter Crummett, Dickie Dale, Peter Cannon and Neil Bowker. By 1972 the marking system had changed from 1-3-5 to 1-2-3-5, Clerk of the Course had become Peter Cannon with Brian Wilcocks Secretary of the Meeting. Over the years several members of the Committee have undertaken the major organisational functions – in 1998 Peter Crummett and Neil Bowker undertook Clerk of the Course duties, with Colin Boniface as Secretary of the Meeting.

The trial has taken place annually with the sole exception of 1996, and has not changed much although changing areas of land, and machine development have inevitably had some effect, as have changes in marking systems in response to these matters. More classes are also now catered for. In 1998 the venue was Woodhill, Farley Green, where the entry included former World Trials Champion Yrjo Vesterinen and Malcolm Simmons who was second in the 1976 World Speedway Final.

STAR GROUP/THAMES VALLEY TRIALS COMBINE (TVTC)

The TVTC was set up around 1932 and consisted of 10 clubs, most of which had been in close contact with each other for some years before formation of the Combine. The ten founding clubs were Aldershot, Bayswater, Leatherhead, Norwood, Panther, Ravensbury, Sunbury, Dittons, Twickenham and Weybridge. Witley did not join until 1948, previously being members of the Star Group. In 1938 the other members of the Star Group were Brighton & District, Brighton & Hove MC, Wickham MCC, Streatham & District MCC, Carshalton MCC and Sunbeam MCC. The Group system had the objectives of reducing the number of events and to act as a focal point of ideas for the running of events etc. Within the TVTC events were run throughout most of the year, each one promoted by one of the constituent clubs thereby retaining the individuality and variety of clubs' own events. In addition to conventional trials there were pillion trials, road trials and the occasional scramble.

Traditionally held on the second Sunday in each month (except November when events moved to the first Sunday to avoid Remembrance Sunday) the objective was to set a standard for riders above what could be expected in Novice or Closed to Club Trials but rather less than Open to Centre. Thus Group trials were intended to be a stepping stone and the severity of sections pitched accordingly. Reasons for Witley transferring from the Star Group are not clear but it is clear that the TVTC had its attractions as reported in June 1947:

“The recent TVTC Rally, held at Broadreed Holiday Camp, Selsey, was an outstanding success and attracted nearly 300 supporters for the weekend. The Clerk of the Weather rose to the occasion, and after lunch on Saturday, the majority of people spent their time basking in the sun on the beach. A Dance was held during the evening which was supported by ‘residents’ at the Holiday Camp. The following day, Sunday, a Gymkhana had been arranged, and was held in an adjoining field. The event caused a great amount of competition between the supporting Clubs and thanks are due to... for the very fine show they put on”.

In 1947 in their last year in the Star Group Witley riders did well in the Championship

instituted by the London Ladies MCC with Hugh Viney coming first, and Dick May (no relation to Ron) coming third in the Championship Table. Always a Club with many active trials riders, and always ready to lend a hand when not riding, Witley members are recorded in favourable terms by the London Ladies:

“The closed Trial in October attracted 14 entries and excellent performances were put up by Mrs. M. Savage, (Premier Award), Mrs. B. Howell (Runner Up), and Miss J. Bell Novice Cup). Thanks are due to some Witley boys who gave valuable assistance”.

1948 was a difficult year with the Basic petrol ration being withdrawn for much of the time and there is no record of Witley having run a Group event. During this period TVTC ran three trials on “dope” (methanol) fuel – these were organised by Norwood, Weybridge and Ravensbury. As an alternative - *faute de mieux* - bicycle trials also became popular at this time.

In February 1949, after a lapse of several years, “Along The Thames” reappeared in the SE Centre Gazette, edited initially by G.J. Bishop. He reported:

“The 1949 season started on January 9th with an excellent event organised by the Southern Amateur Club. On a glorious morning the 107 competitors assembled at the bottom of “Wind Up”, Pirbright, for the start of a course which included 17 Sections, 12 on the Pirbright area and 5 on Frith Hill. All sections were particularly well chosen, and it was a change to have some mud sections on this W.D. land”.

Witley members in the awards included D.C. Hull, R.C. May and J. Botting.

The February Sunbury event attracted 117 entries and Witley award winners included L.M. Talbot, R.C. May, D.C. Hull and R.T. Viney. And in March an inter Group Team Trial was organised by the Star Group. Teams of thirty riders, with every Club in each Group represented, was the preferred format. TVTC emerged winners, the TVTC team including Witley riders B. H.M. Viney, J. Botting, and R.C. May. It was the intention for this to become an annual event.

At the Ravensbury Group Trial J. Botting went one better and won the Premier Award, the Raven Trophy. In July Norwood attempted to put on a Scramble for TVTC riders but this was cancelled due to lack of entries. By August the club and individual leagues were hotting up, and the TVTC correspondent commented:

“...there is a great scrap going on... with nothing particularly outstanding in the way of star riders these clubs are fighting it out with the keenness that can only be found in well matched sides making full use of the enthusiasm and ability of the average honest to goodness clubman”.

Novelty was in the air for September as Norwood decided to arrange a Pillion Trial, to be held in the Pirbright-Normandy area. All passengers of award winners were to receive an award and all competitors with a lady passenger were to gain a bonus of five marks. The occasion seems to have been a success – “the five bonus marks for lady passengers certainly attracted the ladies for such a display of femininity has not graced a TVTC event for a long time”.

Witley had been officially admitted to the TVTC on 3 November 1948, having responded to a notice in the SE Centre Gazette. In February 1949 Witley offered a film show at their Clubroom, 10 tickets per club allocated, admission one shilling each. Ron May proposed that there should be a closed season 1 June – 1 September and this was carried. The first event organised for the TVTC was a Novice Trial on 8 October. Matters did not go entirely smoothly and the Steward offered some criticism re deletion of sections, route marking and the use of a

deep unobserved watersplash. The Club was reminded that the depth of unobserved watersplashes recommended by the Combine was 10 inches.

On 15 October TVTC were entrusted with the organisation of the SE Centre's Open Southern Trial and "We shall again require some good marshals and observers from each Club, so please reserve this date and also a drop of petrol. The course will be 25-30 miles long to be covered twice". The year concluded with Weyburn winning the Aggregate.

For 1950 a new shield was available for the Combine Aggregate League and Witley were the first winners after a close tussle with Sunbury. It is interesting to note the full result;

Witley	1055	Ravensbury	603	South Reading	403
Sunbury	1015	Leatherhead	600	Southern Amateur	382
Norwood	794	Dittons	535		
Weyburn	644	Aldershot	487		
West London	636	Weybridge	432		

The solo winner was J. Lilley of Sunbury

1951 was a time for Witley to defend the Combine League and conventional trials formed the major part of the calendar. Although it is natural to link the TVTC with off road trials, as mentioned earlier Combine events were on occasion road navigation trials. For example, the Dittons Main Road Trial on 8th July 1951 was previewed as "a very pleasant day out... covering a course through very pleasing and interesting countryside of some 90 miles, the start being at the Fox Inn, Bisley... this event will be suitable for all types of machine and will make a good day out for the wife and family". The finish was at "California in England".

In August was the Witley event and was promoted as something different – a timed and observed semi-sporting trial. But there were problems and everyone will feel sympathy for those concerned from the report:

"The Witley Midsummer Trial was unfortunately very badly supported, only 43 entries, of which 13 were non starters. The rain made what was intended to be a fairly easy timed and observed trial into one which was definitely super sporting. As it was, considerable modification of the course and cutting out of certain sections had to be resorted to on the morning of the event; consequently the few standard machines entered had a very sticky time. The event was further marred by the fact that a portion of the route marking was removed half way through the event. However the majority of the competitors were rounded up by the Club Officials and so finished the course but because of this the organisers decided to delete the last section and the final time check."

The Club apologised in the next issue of the Gazette – "We wish to thank all those who rode in and supported this TVTC event and sympathise with those who were inconvenienced due to outside interference with the marking".

As results of Group trials are scarce in the record books, here is the result in full. The Solo Premier was won by H.R. Kemp with 16 marks lost. Sidecar Premier was D. Bryant 65ml, Novice Award: F. A. Childs 41. First Class Awards were won by Messrs. K. Heanes, G. Sutton, and R. James, and Second Class Awards by V. Stelling, G. Plumridge, F. Keatch, E. Taylor, L.R. Cattell and B. Romany (s/c). September was the Leatherhead event with another Main Road Trial before off-road was resumed for the winter.

1952 was characterised by problems over the availability of MoD land and cancellations. Norwood emerged winners of the Aggregate League Shield, with Witley second, Sunbury third and Southern Amateur fourth. It was a good year for Norwood as they also fielded the Solo Aggregate winner A.K.Repton, and the Sidecar Aggregate winner B.Romany – the first time that one Club had won all three major awards. Statistics provided at the time record the average entry per trial as being 121, 141 newcomers coming into the sport during the year, of whom 24 won awards. Witley riders doing well in the Aggregate were R.C.May and P.R.Woods.

January 1954, run by Sunbury at Tunnel Hill, Pirbright produced several Witley members in the awards; L.Hutty, J.Botting, T.Maynard, M.Dismore, R.J.May and D.C.Hull. And J. Botting followed this up by winning the Premier at the following month's Border Club Trial, M.Dismore won the Premier in the West London Trial in March and the Southern Amateur event in April. Witley were again Best Team. Overall however Norwood had greater depth in numbers and won the Aggregate Shield again.

Throughout the 1950's Witley trials riders continued to enjoy Group trials and supported them enthusiastically. In November 1959 16 year old Derek Adsett won the Best Novice award in the Aldershot Group event with a loss of 28 marks, the lowest by any Novice during 1959.

At that time TVTC had 11 member clubs – Aldershot, Border, Dittons, Leatherhead, Norwood, Ravensbury, Sunbury, Weybridge, West London, Weyburn and Witley. Unfortunately Weyburn wound up at the end of 1959. After winning the Senior Aggregate for the second time in 1957, 1959 began a long period of Witley domination of the Aggregates, winning the Senior Shield 1959-66, 68-69,71-80, and 85-88. In the Autumn of 1961 the entry for the Witley Group trial was reduced by half, since most riding Club members (40-50) observed the convention of not entering to ride in their own event. Harry Pead wrote in 'Along the Thames':

“The unquestionable invincibility of Witley is the subject of far greater concern apparently to that Club than the rest of the Combine, but at their suggestion schemes are being discussed to devise a means of making the League Competition more open. Perhaps next year we shall have only a limited number of riders points counting towards the League. I doubt if it will alter the destination of the Shield, but at least it won't be a pushover. It was very sporting of them to bring the matter up. As a separate initiative the Club decided to disband the 'invincible' team (Reg May, Mick Dismore, Peter Baker), spread the talent over eight (sic) Witley teams and to start a closed to club team league”.

In 1963 the Witley Group Trial was in West Sussex and caused controversy due to the severity of the terrain after heavy rain, and one rider had the misfortune to break a leg. Clerks of the Course Reg May and Billy Elliott were uncontrite about the severity, the Club News of the time reporting “that they had their own ideas”.

In 1964 Derek Adsett made his first appearance on a Greeves at the Leatherhead Eldridge Cup Trial at Weavers Down and won the Premier Award, with brother Gordon runner up tying with Don Howlett. This was perhaps another example of the Witley domination at the time.

In 1966 TVTC was at full strength with 14 clubs, but Ravensbury left later that year and Twickenham joined at the beginning of 1967. By 1981, as Witley domination began to wane, there were 9 clubs in the TVTC – Border, Kingston, Leatherhead, Normandy, Norwood,

Twickenham, Weybridge, Witley, and Surrey Schoolboys. By 1991 this had declined to 6 – Kingston, Twickenham, Weybridge, and Surrey Schoolboys no longer being members and Dorking having joined. By 1998 this had declined further to Border, Leatherhead, Normandy, Surrey Schoolboys and Witley. Leatherhead have a record of over 65 continuous membership of the TVTC, although they are a slightly younger club than Witley who started out with the Star Group. The future of TVTC must be uncertain with so few member clubs, and with entries becoming smaller and with many different classes there must be problems of retaining the viability of events. MoD land is now not so readily available and there are less clubs in existence. In theory TVTC could seek fresh members to fill vacancies and could aim to diversify from observation only trials. They could also seek to amalgamate with another Group although this not would be a step to be taken lightly. Witley remain committed to the TVTC and indeed hope themselves to encourage a resurgence of trials members within their own ranks.

OTHER TRIALS

These have been legion over the years and range from closed to club events, for the Nash Cups and the Adsett Cups to the Southern National run at Coombe Bottom around 1980. There have regularly been extra TVTC events and since the early 1990's a Long Distance Trial which in character is close to the Weston Trophy of the 1930's. The Bob Gosden British Bike Trial is a popular Open to Centre event and has more potential than has hitherto been exploited. Certainly the club has to be alive to changing possibilities especially in the light of environmental considerations including access to private land. Since the beginning of trials in the early years of the century there have been many changes and we need to be flexible and able to adapt. In that way we will be contributing to the effective stewardship of the club and help it on towards its centenary.

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15. The Weston Trophy, presented by Mr. C.N.J. Weston at the beginning of the 1930's and still the Premier award for the Weston Trophy Trial today.



16. The Stag at Balls Cross, Ebernoe, for many years a popular starting point for Witley trials: the Weston Trophy, 1958



17. Start time at the Merry Harriers, Hambledon.



18. Derek Cranfield at Sethern, Dunsfold, riding a 325 Bultaco.



19. Bob Gollner at Sethern.



20. Sethern again: Tony Heane, 250 Kawasaki.



21. Simon Tyler, Beamish Suzuki, in action at Sethern.



22. Len Huty Jr. on a 250 Gollner Kawasaki tackles a section behind The Merry Harriers, Hambledon.



23. A young Bill Boniface riding a 350 Royal Enfield at Pirbright.



24. Mick Dismore (Greeves) at the January 1968 TVTC trial, Weaver's Down. Onlookers include Dave Campling, Peter Cannon, Bill Boniface, Ralph Venables, Mick Ball, Joan Dismore, Frank Romany, Kath Boniface, Rose Fowler, Mr. Fowler Sr. and Mr. Hiscock.



25. The author at a TVTC event on a 250 Cotton (Villiers 37A engine) at Weavers Down around 1968.



26. Always welcome at the end of a trial – Kath Boniface with the refreshments, Reg May on the 250 Greeves.



A round-up of Witley members in trials action.

27. Dick Viney (Hugh's elder brother) riding in the Talmag Trophy Trial, January 1957.



28. Bill Boniface attempts a gully on MoD land around 1960. Bill was Chairman for 28 years, previously Secretary and became President after the death of Graeme Brown.



29. Bill Boniface again, this time on a 197 James at Hammer Docks, Haslemere – MCC Team Trial, 1958.



30. Colin Boniface (325 Bultaco) at Laggan Locks, 1977 Scottish Six Days Trial.

1962 Sidcup 60 Trial. Alas, Sidcup's comprehensive records have one or two gaps including 1962, so we do not know how our Witley trio fared...



31. Derek Cranfield (250 DOT).



32. Billy Elliott (246 James).



33. Reg May (199 Triumph) at the 1962 Sidcup 60.



34. Father and son: Reg and John May (350 AJS and 500 Norton) in 1988.



35. Paul Fishlock and Barry Brockman on a 320 TX Gas-Gas – Star Group Trial in 1999. It was a good day as they won the sidecar class.



36. Neil Bowker at the 1998 Scottish Six Days Trial. The section is Chairlift at Glencoe. Riding a 250 Gas-Gas, Neil went on to win a second class award.

• C H A P T E R 4 •

Scrambles

The Witley Club's association with scrambling in the West Surrey area is an integral part of our history which started with the earliest beginnings of the sport in Southern England, and continued to the point in the late 1970's when sophisticated two stroke machines knew no equal, when personal fitness had become essential to success, when the ability of machines to tackle physical hazards had greatly increased, and when speeds had risen considerably so that controlling this aspect had become an important factor in safe and effective course design. Although records of the Club's earliest involvement are incomplete, much of the jigsaw can be put together from the amount of material that has survived.

The historical forerunner of rough riding against the clock was organised by Arthur Scott, Director of the Scott factory at Saltaire near Shipley as an event for employees. In 1919 it became known as the Scott Trial and became a great success which did not go unnoticed in the south. A Southern Scott event was run from 1925 and was won in each of the first three years by Arthur Sparkes. These events did not immediately engage the attention of the Witley club but it is likely that Charlie Wake and others influenced the club towards the running of scrambles from around 1930 onwards. Charlie himself had won the Centre Trials Shield in 1932. Certainly the first Witley scramble had been run in the early 1930's since there was a complaint from a contributor to the March 1934 Gazette that there were only three scrambles in the Centre, promoted by Bayswater, Sunbeam and Witley. The first time "scramble" is mentioned in the minutes of SE Centre Board meetings is in those for 12 May 1930 when a Steward's report refers to the Brighton Solo Scramble.

The first reference to a Boxing Day Scramble appears in the SE Centre Gazette, the report by "Longfellow" for Boxing Day 1936:

"The Witley Club held their usual Boxing Day Scramble on the Sunday after Christmas, and attracted an exceptionally good entry for an event of this kind. They were fortunate in having a truly perfect day, and this, combined with the usual Witley Scramble organisation helped to make a very successful and enjoyable day for both competitors and spectators." Although the report does not mention the location, this is likely to have been Foxhills, Pirbright.

The first full report of a Witley Scramble was of one taking place at Foxhills on 26 June 1937. There were two events – up to 350cc and Unlimited. The course consisted of a 2.5 mile lap completed 10 times making each race of 25 miles. The HQ for the event was the "Royal Oak" at Pirbright and the road from that point to the course was marked by coloured cards –so clearly the machines met the legal requirements of the time for use on a public highway. The course itself was marked with one line of flags, one practice lap was allowed and there was to be a massed start. Awards took the form of trophies, Clerk of the Course was Henry Kemp and Secretary of the Meeting Stu Kelsey. The club's advance publicity said "Several new sections of the Foxhills area are to be included – this is one of the finest scrambles courses in the south of England".

The Club followed up this meeting with another scramble at the same venue on Boxing

Day 1937. Arrangements followed the same lines as previously but the start changed to the "White Hart" in Pirbright. Clerk of the Course was Alfie May with H.C. Wake Secretary of the Meeting. The major innovation was the addition of a Handicap Race, which was referred to as follows:

"AN EXPLANATION:

"In the foregoing Scramble Regulations you will notice that we intend running a handicap. We have three reasons for this; first to give some of the people who are riding, with no hope of beating the cracks, a chance; secondly to maintain the interest for spectators and riders until the end; and thirdly to give the riders a new excuse if they are not in the first three.

"The handicaps allotted will be shown in the programme and if they are not quite what you expected, we hope you will realise that this is the first event of this description we have run, and have not very much to go on except our own observations at other scrambles and knowledge of our own course.

"The Handicappers are H.C. Wake, R.T. Viney, and E.G. Wilmot – so please throw the mud at them and not at the Witley MCC; anyway, leave it until after the race, as you might be better than you think."

The entry fee was four shillings, and two shillings and sixpence for each subsequent event. By the end of 1937 the number of scrambles promoted in the Centre had grown to nine. There were three by Bayswater, two by Sunbeam and Witley, and one each by Aldershot and Bermondsey.

1938 brought another summer scramble at Foxhills and for Boxing Day 1938 there were four events, the additional event being for all classes using standard tyres. A report appeared in "Along the Thames":

"As representatives of the Press seemed to think that bed was the best place to be on Boxing morning, I will give a few details of the Witley Club's Scramble. When I left London it was snowing steadily, and I was quite convinced that I was the only mug to go to a scramble in such weather. When I reached Foxhills, however, I found a real bunch of enthusiasts – mostly standing around a bonfire. Charlie Wake and Dick Viney set about altering the course, just in case the competitors wanted a ride, and they soon found that their labours had not been in vain. The start was postponed about an hour owing to delay on the roads, and then proceedings started with a swing over the modified course of about two miles – all covered in at least six inches of snow. Needless to say the Army riders had a hard time of it with standard tyres, but they stuck it out well. Jack Stocker had a most exciting race all on his own after being delayed at the start with a broken petrol pipe – he really went "all out" knowing that he had nothing to win or lose. In the 350 event Gaymer rode an excellent race, being hard pressed by K.D. Haynes till the latter dropped out with shortage of sparks, only to reappear in exactly the same position behind Gaymer on the next lap – just trying to put the wind up him!

"The overall winner in the 350 class was Bert Gaymer with Bill Sadler winning the 250. The organisers certainly deserve full marks for such an excellent event under extremely trying conditions."

With war clouds gathering Witley held a Hill Climb – called the Midsummer Hill Climb – at Hog's Back Hill, Compton, near Guildford on 2 July 1939. This was a change from the

original plan to run a scramble. The competition was run on the knock-out principle: there were the usual capacity classes and in addition a handicap was run for the semi-finalists in each of the main classes. The hill was described as a grassy slope, fairly straight and with an average gradient of 1 in 4 with a maximum of 1 in 2. Profits were to be donated to the local nursing association. The Supplementary Regulations said that silencers could be removed, but spikes/chains to allow extra grip were not allowed. The schedule of prize money was ingenious – £1 for the winner of each class for every 1,000 on the paying gate, ten shillings for second, and so on. The event was reported by Ralph Venables in his column for the SE Centre Gazette: “Quite good sport, despite being drowned on two or three occasions by semi-tropical showers. The winners were Maurice Street (250), Hugh Viney (350), Ted Wilmot (Unlimited) and Smithers (Handicap)”.

The Calendar for 1939 showed Witley to be running a scramble on Boxing Day but with the outbreak of war the Gazette ceased publication and there is no record beyond September. However a copy of a programme has survived for a scramble at Foxhills on 23rd June 1940, soon after the evacuation at Dunkirk and shortly before the Battle of Britain. Clerk of the Course and Secretary of the Meeting was Dick Viney, who lived at Cranleigh. There were 4 events – 250 cc over 6 laps of a 2 mile course, for which there were 8 entries, all 4 stroke machines; the 350 event attracted 28 entries also over 6 laps, and the unlimited was over 8 laps with 28 entries. Finally, there was a Consolation race of 4 laps over an altered course. For the fastest time of the day The Witley Scramble Cup was awarded, and there were awards for the first three in each capacity. No other details appear to have survived.

Apart from the specific experience of Witley, the development and control of Scrambles more generally is of interest. From 1925 onwards the SE Centre had been developing and improving the rules and regulations under which motor cycle sport was to progress and many of the rules we follow to this day were then being put in place. These were initially relating to trials, both road and off-road. By 1936 the SE Centre Board was turning more of its attention to additional regulations needed for speed events such as scrambles – speed events that in 1936 were comparatively new. New regulations included a requirement for it to be compulsory for the organisers to permit one practice lap, not earlier than one hour before the advertised starting time; in 1939 a regulation was created stating that no machine – solo or sidecar – with an engine capacity greater than 650cc be allowed to participate on tracks in the SE Centre. Insurance premiums were only to be quoted after inspection of the course. And details of the course, especially the start and finish, should not be disclosed in advance of issue of the programme (presumably to avoid practising in advance). In 1938 lack of roping became an insurance issue and at a Bayswater event the organisers went to an independent insurer (i.e. not the one regularly used for Centre events) to obtain third party insurance for the promoters to run a scramble on an unroped course. Insurance cover at this time was optional, and this extended to personal accident insurance for competitors. Competitors had to state explicitly that they were liable for Third Party risks and also for the result of accidents to themselves.

Following a fatal accident at a grass track, although responding sympathetically and constructively at the personal level, the Centre Board expressed their formal position:

“The Board is of the opinion that the risk of personal injury at any motorcycle competition

is a risk which must be borne by the individual competitor, particularly in view of the insurance facilities available and is not a risk which is in any way the responsibility of the promoters". Nevertheless times were to change and by 1949 the Board resolved that scrambles should include compulsory personal accident insurance for competitors, to bring them in line with grass tracks where such a decision had already been taken.

Returning to the pre war period, what was regarded as good practice for trials also read across to Scrambles: prior permission from landowners to be obtained before events could take place, lists of entrants to be sent to the Secretaries of all competing Clubs, events not to be promoted until a Permit had been issued, result sheets to be published. Some rules were unique for speed events – all races to be run in an anti-clockwise direction (i.e. left hand inwards) unless good and sufficient reason was forthcoming in which case the Competitions Committee would consider variation of this rule.

Despite the Bayswater experience it continued to be possible for a while after the war to run scrambles without roping. Indeed the programme for the Boxing Day Scramble run in 1945 states under Notes for Competitors:

"Keep to the right of all flags and do not run off the course as there are a few large pot-holes".

Returning to events themselves, even before the 1945 Boxing Day Scramble the Club had run an event at Foxhills on August 6th. A.J. Whistler was Clerk of the Course and Secretary of the Meeting, Machine Examiner Jack Botting, Starter Joe Damant, Timekeeper R.E. Luckham and Club Steward Charlie Wake. There were three events, for 250's (8 laps, 16 miles); 350's (10 laps, 20 miles); and Unlimited (10 laps, 20 miles).

To add to the picture of what early Scrambles may have been like, here is a summary of a report in "The Motor Cycle" for September 29th 1938 under the heading:

"Bayswater Club stages another enjoyable Scramble in spite of new rules: K.D. Haynes (348 Triumph) wins both 350 and 500 cc races and E.G. Wilmot (246 AJS) the Lightweight." This Bayswater event was run at Bagshot, a venue used by Witley on occasion after the war. Following the difficulties over insurance referred to above, there was an exhortation in the programme for spectators to keep well clear of the course and therefore out of harm's way. The first page of the programme was devoted to the need for the public to behave with safety in mind, and numerous notices were displayed to the effect that scrambling could be dangerous if people were on the course.

The course itself was on Bagshot Heath (now divided by the M3). It was some two miles long and included two hills known as Kilimanjaro (both Nos 1 and 2), Red Road and the Gully plus a tree root section and lengths of rough track. Ten laps had to be covered in the first event, which was for 250 and 350 machines (250 machines received a one minute start), and twelve in the second race, which was for machines of unlimited capacity. On the fierce gradient of Kilimanjaro, tow ropes had to be used and "there were acrid smells of burning clutch linings". To explain tow ropes, now redundant in our sport, to help stricken machines or riders unable to manage the steeper gradients a rope was laid down the gradient parallel to the track. When someone became stuck, a hook on the end of the rope was put on the handlebars, several marshals pulled as in a tug of war, and the rider, seated or pushing the machine and hopefully

with the engine running would help himself to the top. With heavy machines and steep slippery gradients, no doubt this procedure required much physical effort from all concerned, especially if a high proportion of the entry required assistance. It could also be used for sidecars in distress although sidecar scrambling had not commenced in the 1930s.

Apart from Ted Wilmot winning the Lightweight, A.J. Whistler, also a Witley member, was second on a 246 AJS: he was later and for many years Secretary of the Club, and later still became Mayor of Havant. Just to complete this insight into a typical 1930's, Scramble the winning time for 10 laps in the 250cc class was 44 minutes 10 seconds and for the 350s 41 minutes 10 seconds. In the Unlimited, covering 12 laps, the winning time was 50 minutes 2 seconds, with Ted Wilmot still on the 246 AJS coming 5th. During the afternoon altogether he spent some 90 minutes racing round Bagshot Heath.

The first time loudspeaker equipment was used at Bagshot was at a Bayswater scramble in 1939.

After the event of 23rd June 1940, Witley promoted a scramble on the Hogs Back on Sunday 27th October 1940. A report from *The Motor Cycle* has survived. It is remarkable that these events took place at all: the "phoney" war had come to an end in the Spring of 1940, followed by the evacuation at Dunkirk. And the Battle of Britain had been fought between July and September. It was a time when military bombing of civilian targets was taking place and a time too when rationing and other wartime restrictions were becoming more exacting. Perhaps the October event went ahead to benefit the morale of the population and as it was in aid of the Guildford Spitfire Fund it could be said to support the war effort. (Many towns had Spitfire Funds to help raise money to build more aircraft and commonly the planes were named after the towns which had financed their construction. Due to the intensity of war the planes did not last long and there was always a need for a fund) Finally there was the question of military training: some riders were already in the Armed Forces and it was possible, even if in a reserved occupation, to register to enlist as a volunteer motorcyclist Despatch Rider. "*The Motor Cycle*" carried such advertisements. For those who did enlist it was possible to request "*The Motor Cycle*" to be sent post free to wherever the Armed Forces were serving. So clearly there were good reasons for the event being given official permission to go ahead.

The banner headline was "ANOTHER BIG WITLEY SCRAMBLE" and the sub heading "E.G. Wilmot (AJS) wins two of the three races: thrilling sport on a difficult course: many Servicemen take part.

"An interesting and varied course had been plotted by the Witley and DMCC for its Scramble last Sunday. This was on private land on the southern slope of the Hogs Back, near Guildford. The meeting provided a speed hill climb, grass track racing and some genuine scramble fare all rolled into one.

"Individual entries totalled 70, though there were some non-starters, including H.J. Addie, who was wandering round with a tray of bits, but whose machine had failed to turn up, and some absentees, notably E.J. Frend, whose big twin Vincent-HRD would have been interesting to observe in the rough. The organisation was good considering present- day difficulties, and a gratifying crowd of enthusiasts came by all roads to pay their gap-in-the-hedge money and thus help to swell the Guildford Spitfire Fund.

“The course began with the steep ascent used in the Club’s hill climb at Easter. On that occasion the hump where fast climbers leaped into the air to land on a semi-plateau provided the chief excitement. Sunday’s course, however, continued in a half circle to the right, which brought competitors to an even steeper ridge. This had to be negotiated on their way down the hillside, so the upward leaps paled into insignificance compared with those executed by hurried gentlemen on their way down.

“After landing competitors could open the taps for a brief space down the hillside, then the brakes had to be applied hard for a sharp left (right-angle) corner which sloped the wrong way: this called for nice judgement, and several competitors overshot the mark.

“So far the surface was grass in nice condition for racing, and there followed a short level stretch, also of grass, which ended in a sharp right handed turn, composed of mud, which narrowed to footpath width and disappeared among bushes and trees, to emerge about 100 yards farther on. From the lie of the land one imagined a nearly level section of mud. Those who were inquisitive enough to explore the ‘bush’ were well rewarded, for about five paces brought one to the brink of a horrifying 1 in 1 drop of some 20 feet: to walk down it would have been impossible without spiked boots and an alpenstock. Followed a twisty, bumpy section of mud, and another level grass section, where calculated acceleration and braking were necessary for a sharp left turn at the end. From here the course led roughly in the shape of a half-circle behind a swamp, and so back to the start. Mud, twists, tree roots and other bumps were the obstacles which slowed the pace, while the narrowness of the path made passing on these scrambles sections next to impossible.

“Not quite impossible, however, as G.H. Baker (AJS) proved when he neatly slipped by R. McDonald (Rudge) on the swamp section on the first lap of Heat 1 in the 250 class to take and hold the lead. I. Fisher (Triumph) passed two men on lap 2 to take second place. The only other 250 cc heat was led throughout by S.W. Sadler (Triumph), with J. Larby (AJS) second.

“For the 250 cc final, held near the end of the programme, only Baker and Sadler came to the line; the latter got the best of the start, but Baker soon passed him to win, in the end, by nearly half a lap.

“Khaki-clad spectators and competitors were present in numbers, and Army riders G.F. Robertson and E.C. Bessant, both on Triumphs, opened the 350 cc class with a nice little scrap, but it was nothing to the hectic battle between E.A. Knight (Triumph) and E.G. Wilmot (AJS) in Heat 2. The pair went up and down the hill almost level, and Knight had the barest of leads when they disappeared into the “mystery” (1 in 1 section). After a complete lap Knight had not gained another inch: knowing that he was hard-pressed he roared round the top of the hill and took off into space – there is no other word for it – at the ridge: landing a very appreciable distance down the slope, the model snaked, flung its rider and turned several somersaults: Knight slid for many yards, breaking a collar-bone.

“Heat 3 provided an impressive ride by its winner, J.H. Bryant (Ariel), in neat blue city suiting and Wellingtons. Then a battle throughout Heat 4, which A.J. Whistler (OK Supreme) won from D.G.W. Sex (Ariel) by three yards. In Heat 5, Corporal G.M. Berry’s 350 cc Triumph had to be motored purposefully to stay in front of Baker’s smaller A.J.S., which was tailing him at the finish. Sliding his Royal Enfield round the left-hand turn at the bottom of the hill in true

sand-racing style, Dick Tolley, a Midland rider of note in civil life, won Heat 8 in a spirited yet perfectly judged ride.

“The first 350 cc semi-final provided two scraps – between Wilmot and Bessant for first place and between Bryant and Robertson for third – a very strenuous affair.

“Whistler drew ahead of Berry going up the hill in the second semi-final, so Berry took outside running round the top and seemed to pass his man actually in mid-air, making a longer leap from the down-hill take off: thereafter Berry increased his lead on every lap. Tolley won the third semi-final easily, but did not arrive on the line in time to start in the final, run later in the programme.

“In the unlimited cc heats J. King (349 Triumph) had the third race well in the bag when he was seen pushing a silent model round the swamp section on the last lap.

“Heat 7 saw Berry, Bessant and Whistler go over the up-hill jump in unison, but once again Berry risked a bigger down-hill jump to take the lead. Bessant retired later when lying second. J.L. Kendall (349 Triumph) performed notably in Heat 9.

“In the eleventh heat a quiet gentleman in battle dress riding a quiet machine, to wit, a 348 cc MAC Velocette, beat a high revving, high compression, megaphoned exhaust model housing a JAP speedway engine when the latter’s rider overshot the downhill corner and ran off the course almost into the paddock: the quiet gentleman’s name is Signalman Morton.

“Wilmot made no bones about winning the 350 cc final, which was run next, while Whistler, though the only other finisher, was a good second all the way. Berry was riding a borrowed machine, having decided that the big-end on his own was not entirely happy: after lying third for three laps, he returned the borrowed property at the end of the fourth with a smoking clutch. Bessant again retired, this time on the fifth lap.

“In winning the unlimited cc final, Wilmot completed a well-deserved double: he led from start to finish and rode a fine race. Kendall chased the leader hard for two laps, but his engine started backfiring slightly going uphill on the third, and Baker, right on his tail, passed him before the end of the lap and even got within challenging distance of Wilmot towards the finish”.

There are no more reports of Witley events to hand during the war, but the 29th October 1942 issue of Motor Cycling reports a Stamford Bridge Scramble at Bagshot Heath on 18 October. This was called “The Au Revoir Training Scramble” and is described as the final event of its kind until after the war was over. Ted Wilmot was again in good form, coming second in the 250 cc, on a New Imperial, second again in the 350 cc on a 346 AJS, and winning the Unlimited also on the AJS.

After the War the first Basic Ration of petrol for civilian use had been granted in January 1945. Witley were quickly off the mark with a Scramble at Foxhills on August Bank Holiday 6th August, followed by a Scramble on Boxing Day. The thinking behind the idea was inspired, offering riders, club members, and the general public a chance for a day out in the fresh air after Christmas Day. Usually run on free draining army ground that was not susceptible to cancellation through bad weather, and at a time when there was hardly any other competing motor cycle sport, the event was quickly able to establish itself as a leading occasion in the SE Centre Calendar. The venue for Boxing Day 1945 was Ash Ranges Aldershot: the Clerk of the

Course was Captain R. C May, Secretary of the Meeting John Whistler, Club Steward Charlie Wake. Starter was Arthur Boniface, Machine Examiners C.G. Fincken/R. Luckham, Paddock Marshals J. Botting/J. Blackwell. A very youthful David Hull took part on a 250 Velocette which he also rode to work

There were three events – up to 250 cc over 8 laps (15 entries, 11 different makes of machine); up to 350 cc over 10 laps (47 entries) and Unlimited over 10 laps (56 entries). No details of the winners have survived but it is interesting to look at a breakdown of the different makes of machine in the three events:

Triumph	14	Norton	5	Cotton	1
Velocette	12	JAP	2	Bitzer	1
AJS	6	OK-Supreme	2	Rex Acme	1
Matchless	6	Rudge	1	Sunbeam	1
Ariel	5	Excelsior	1		
BSA	5	Blackburne	1		

Among the competitors were: David Hull (350 Velocette) who became Chairman and Vice President of the Witley Club: Arthur Lavington (350 Velocette) who turned to road racing and was a regular TT competitor for many years; Bill Argent (350 Triumph) later a SE Centre official: Ron Hankins (350 Matchless) who became a top runner in local events (Ron together with his brother Titch were later tuners of machines ridden by Les Archer); Ted Wilmot (350 AJS) one of Witley's earliest and most successful scramblers; Eddie Bessant (250/350 Matchless) another top scrambler who sadly died at a young age in 1948 and whose ashes were scattered on Bagshot Heath (Stamford Bridge Club for many years ran the Eddie Bessant Memorial Scramble, several of which were held on their course at Bramley near Guildford); F.N. Pearce, who later and for many years ran a second-hand spares business from a bungalow in Brox Road, Ottershaw; and Alfie Bottoms who turned to speedway and became a star with Southampton.

Turning to 1946, this was the first time Park Hatch was used. The only surviving information is a report by Ralph Venables in the SE Centre Gazette, who described it as “a most excellent affair” and praised the lap scoring. The rest of the report I quote verbatim:

“The first race was a walkover for Ron Burns (250 Ariel) virtually unchallenged after Jack Lilley had drowned his OK in the liquid mud patch. This caused difficulty in the second race leading to the retirement of Jack Stocker, Ted Frost, and Racer Wickstead. Winner was Ted Wilmot, second... Parsons, third Jim Atkinson... Charlie Wake had worked out some very crafty handicapping for the last race, Jack Stocker working his way through from scratch into fourth place by dint of masterly riding. Winner was 17 year old Tubby Southon, Leo Shepherd (20 seconds behind) and George Tapp third.”

1947 was Park Hatch again and was the year Boxing Day came early, thanks to impending additional restrictions on the availability of petrol, in particular withdrawal of the Basic ration, for a period of six months until Spring 1948. The October SE Centre Gazette carried the announcement:

“In view of the impending fuel cut [the Boxing Day Scramble] will be run on November 2nd this year. All events run on handicap, good prize money and plenty of room for spectators. Regs in this issue”. And indeed they were. It was advertised as a “Handicap Scramble” and the

handicappers were H.C. Wake, W.J. Holland and A.J. Whistler. Entry fee was 5 shillings per event. Event 1 was 250 cc handicap, event 2 under 350 cc handicap, and event 3 Unlimited cc handicap.

The prize fund totalled £39, plus £1 to heat winners, plus a special prize of £2 for the competitor who “in the opinion of the Stewards of the meeting makes the most meritorious performance”. The Club Steward was G.D. Brown, soon to start a 50 year stint as President of the Witley Club.

Technical requirements for machines said that silencers must be removed and that two independent and efficient brakes were to be fitted. In other respects machines to be subject to machine examiner’s approval.

On to 1948, again at Park Hatch and fuel supply was not an issue. Regulations did not appear until the December issue of the Gazette and were only open for 13 days. An entry totalling 108 appeared in the programme. There were 3 events, of 6 laps, 6 laps, and 20 laps respectively. Capacities were combined and events were run as handicaps; in the main event the lower classes received either 30 seconds per lap start or as much as one minute. Safety had made another step forward with the requirement that “an approved ACU crash helmet and full protective clothing including gloves and field boots must be worn”. ‘Strong trousers’ were required but not defined. Riders had to be vigilant: “If your bike breaks down get it off the course, as the faster men will probably be in a hurry.”

Ralph Venables’ report encapsulates the occasion: “What unfortunate weather for the Witley Scramble on Boxing Day, but the clammy mist certainly imparted a wicked surface to the course. It struck me that Basil Hall (who only started riding a couple of years ago) and who won one race and retired when leading another has now developed a style which is nothing short of magnificent. Two other blokes were also a joy to watch, namely Harold Lines on the 350 Ariel and Ron Burns on the 350 AJS. And Wild Bill Portsmouth – complete with a handful of twist grip and a faceful of smiles. A word of congratulation to the two Matchless men – Ward and Hatch – whose consistent riding brought them home in first and second in the big race”.

An interesting innovation for lap scoring the 25 lap final was a tear off scoreboard indicating laps completed. This required marshals taking 3 riding numbers each, tearing off one sheet each time a rider appeared. The penultimate lap sheet was of a different colour, and the whole operation involved some 50 people.

Around this time the Chairman of the ACU Moto Cross Sub Committee (a new term in the UK at the time) wrote to the Centre Board asking for offers of a course on which to run an International Scramble. Witley offered Park Hatch, subject to the owner’s consent, but the proposal came to nothing. For 1949 and 1950 the venue for Boxing Day was Woolgars Farm, West Horsley, site of the Summer grass tracks. The 1949 programme explained:

“We are sorry the course is not up to the usual Witley severity and can say that it is only through the generosity of the landowner of our grass track that it was at all possible for us to help shake down your Christmas dinner, our Park Hatch course not being available this year”.

From the Regulations in the Gazette it is possible to see that the sport had gone forward: riders were classified Junior and Senior (and not by capacity of machine). Under the heading of safety machines now had to have self closing throttles. Ralph Venables was enthusiastic –

“Although the Witley Scramble took place five weeks ago, the memory of that battle royal between Jack Stocker and Harold Lines is still pleasantly vivid in my mind. Eric Cheney was motoring to some purpose too especially earlier in the day. But how about that congestion of spectators and competitors vehicles on the way in and out? There are some keen minds in the Witley Club – surely this problem isn’t beyond their solution”.

Course construction too was developing, as information to all competitors also contained the following:

“Where there is a single row of stakes, competitors must keep outside of them; where there are two rows they must ride between. In all other instances keep to the flagged course”.

The 1950 event was again at Woolgars Farm, and we can turn to Ralph Venables for a report: “The Witley Boxing Day Scramble was indeed a slippery do – thanks to a partial thaw after weeks of frost. But the conditions didn’t seem to worry Messrs. Newbold, Archer, Gordon and Ward, winners of the two stroke race, Senior race, Junior Final and Handicap Final respectively. Nor of course did they worry Jack Stocker – who really thrives on mud. “

For the first time a two stroke race had been arranged, 5 laps of a shortened course attracting 16 entries. 10 of the machines were 125 cc or less, including 5 BSAs. There were 3 197 James’s, 1 Ambassador and various specials.

There was a problem over the availability of an ambulance as subsequently the Club made an announcement in the Gazette:

“The Club wish to make it quite clear that the apparent lack of ambulance facilities at the Boxing Day Scramble was in no way due to lack of prior effort on their part. Despite the non-appearance of any ‘official’ body competitors were attended to by fully qualified Club members and equipment after a little delay”.

Ralph Venables also commented: “I noticed in one of ‘the books’ that the promoting club wished to make it known that the lack of an ambulance was in no way due to lack of prior effort on their part. I hardly think that anyone who knows the Witley Club would associate them with lack of endeavour, but it does raise an interesting point, namely, should a scramble be allowed to take place if an ambulance has not arrived?”

The programme contained details of the 1952 Club calendar. This involved 5 grass tracks, the Weston Trophy Trial, a TVTC Group Trial, and the Boxing Day Scramble.

For 1951 it was back to Park Hatch. A programme note said: “The hills, as you know, are very steep, but do not be alarmed if you over-run a corner as the deep bracken will pull you up, but you must regain the course where you leave it.”

The public were recommended to watch the racing from the top of the hill. Clearly the Club were proud of Park Hatch, as a prior announcement in the SE Centre Gazette said:

“You will never regret coming to our Boxing Day Scramble at Park Hatch Dunsfold. A magnificent course in a magnificent setting and just the place to blow away those Xmas hangovers.”

A total entry of some 150 riders took part in the 10 race programme. 47 Seniors took part, star names including Phil Nex (500 BSA), Jack Stocker (500 BSA), Harold Lines (497 Ariel), Ron Stillo (500 BSA), Graham Beamish (500 BSA), Derek Rickman (499 BSA), Geoff Ward (500 AJS), Basil Hall (499 BSA), Les Archer (500 Norton), Eric Cheney (497 Ariel), Jim

Sheehan (497 AJS), and grass track star Martin Tatum (347 AJS).

And Ralph Venables' view of the proceedings? "With so many star names in the programme, and so much mud, forecasting the results was a disheartening occupation – but Eric Cheney and Ted Ryman eventually emerged as clear cut winners in the Senior and Junior classes respectively. Les Archer too had his moments (particularly in winning the last race), and at odd times during the day I was duly impressed by the mud-scouring styles of Geoff Ward, Derek Rickman, Jack Stocker, Ron Stillo, Graham Beamish, Harold Lines, Phil Nex, Phil Mellers and (in the Junior Class) Mick Dismore. But it was really Cheney's day, with a fine disregard for the mud – and an Archer tuned Ariel which came fully up to expectations".

Alas, 1951 was the last ever Scramble actually run at Park Hatch. For 1952 it was back to Foxhills, Pirbright. This is not the area of land which later became the famous circuit at Tunnel Hill, Pirbright.

The regulations advertised sidecar scratch and handicap events which did not appear in the programme, no reason given, possibly this was due to lack of entries or perhaps the course was found to be unsuitable. The number of practice laps had increased to two. As always nuggets were to be found in the programme: Miss June Adams had married Harold Lines but there were no concessions for the Fair Sex since she was aboard a 498 Ariel; and Miss V.M. Rose, from Wandsworth, was on a 498 Matchless. Later in the decade Frank Wilkins and Kay Saunio achieved great success once sidecar scrambling became established, but not as early as 1951. John Clayton, on a 197 Francis Barnett, appeared in the Junior Class, and qualified for the Allcomers Final, although he could not at that time have been riding for long. For the technically minded he was the first person to use a 4 inch back tyre on a 2 stroke – since the standard swinging arm would only take a three and a half inch tyre it was necessary to carry out some modification. And Don Howlett, for many years working at Comerfords in the sales department, was riding a 197 Sun, which he did with great panache, having battles in local events with the John Clayton and also qualifying for the Allcomers Final. Alf Hagon, grass track, and later speedway, star, was having a rare scrambles outing on a 350 BSA.

Ralph Venables reported: "On Boxing Day everyone went to the Witley Scramble, as usual, and everyone bemoaned the loss of Park Hatch. I live in mortal terror of getting another rude letter from David Hull, so I'll confine my comments to the riding! Phil Nex was in full control of the situation – winning the two main races without the slightest effort, but Gordon Jackson and John Giles caused a few eyebrows to elevate. I think we might have a couple of Geoff Wards here, in another year or so".

In 1953, the venue was Bagshot Heath, incorporating the final round of the SE Centre Scrambles Championship. There was clearly a blitz on brakes, as the regulations refer to them in capital letters: "Any machine without two independent and efficient brakes will not be allowed to leave the paddock".

Boxing Day was the final round of the Centre Scramble Championship, where the twenty riders having the highest aggregate number of points were eligible to ride in the final race, to be organised by Witley, where double points would be awarded. Going into the final round the top three were Ken Heanes, D.S. Puddy, and Les Sheehan (of Sidcup, not to be confused with Jim Sheehan) with Geoff Ward some way behind in fourth.

Ralph Venables' report was as follows: "Everyone, as usual, went to the Witley Boxing Day Scramble but the actual racing didn't quite materialise as hoped. There were some very swift Triumph riders rushing around (Ron Tanner, Jack Wicken, and John Giles) and the Rickman brothers weren't exactly hanging about. Neither were Les Archer and Eric Cheney – but it was Geoff Ward who set the pace every time. The much publicised South Eastern Centre Scrambles 'Championship' misfired rather gloomily, with far too few star riders on the line (due, presumably, to the system on which the event is run). After a couple of false starts, the runners were eventually sent on their way – with Geoff Ward leading from start to finish. Geoff's frame broke in two as he received the chequered flag, which tended to distract the spectators' attention from the commendable fact that young Ken Heanes, on a 498 Matchless, had secured the 'Championship' title from Les Sheehan on a 498 AJS. But I do most strongly feel that the rules governing this affair must be so modified as to ensure a really big climax next Christmas".

The arrangement according to the programme was for some 20 top scorers to contest the final race, but only 12 entered for the meeting and no doubt there were some fallers by the wayside so the number on the start line must have been very small by the standards of the time – for example there were 54 Seniors in the Seniors race, and nearly 200 riders in the meeting as a whole.

The ACU Steward's report has survived, and was favourable. He records the shortening of certain races owing to the weather and darkness and commented "The car park got very waterlogged and muddy and I understand it took well into the dusk to get the spectators away".

The starter presiding over the false starts was Arthur Boniface. Perhaps this is a good opportunity to describe the starting procedure of the time. Dead engine, riders to line up 10 yards behind the machines, which were held upright by the mechanics. At the drop of the Union Jack, riders to run and start machines... petrol taps open... carburettor primed... piston past top dead centre on firing stroke... no need to use the valve lifter... long swinging kick... engine should burst into life: if not repeat procedure until it does...

In 1954 Ralph Venables was complimentary: "... as a model of slick organisation the Witley Boxing Day Scramble was an education. With an entry of just over 200, thirteen races were run off between 11.00 and 3.30..."

THE PIRBRIGHT YEARS

Once the move to MoD land at Tunnel Hill, Pirbright took place the Boxing Day Scramble was a story of continuing success. It was an all-weather course, with several steep hills and good viewing which attracted a large entry and a considerable public attendance, many of whom were not Scrambles fans per se but were very happy to have a vigorous day out on the common after the preceding Christmas Day. Top solo riders continued to support the event, sidecars were introduced and were always popular with the public. The event went ahead irrespective of the weather, although it could be seriously inclement and make life more difficult at times. More serious and longer term underlying problems were the nature of the use of the land, soil erosion and environmental questions, and the attitude of the MoD who also had to consider operational military requirements and the opinions of the public at large. Whether the views of the MoD were reached as a result of scientific study, and whether they were sufficiently flexible and

imaginative are questions beyond the scope of this volume. There were however two particularly difficult years: 1967, when we could not get on to the land due to an outbreak of foot and mouth disease, and the move back to Park Hatch for one year only in 1968, a plan that was destined to end in tears.

But first let us consider the event from the Club's point of view. Each year the Scramble could only take place with the willing help of Club members who needed to put in many hours of manual work often in bad weather at the darkest time of the year whilst balancing this with the attractions of family and friends over the Christmas period. It was David Hull, writing in the 1960's as Chairman of the Club, who perhaps encapsulated the whole question of running this major event at this time of the year:

"Very shortly the Boxing Day Scramble will be upon us as you will see from the Regulations in the Gazette. Primarily this Annual Classic Event is a sporting fixture of no small proportions: and it would be true to say that it has given enjoyment to many hundreds of riders and many thousands of spectators over the past 21 years since the War alone. This year we have incorporated it into the SE Centre Scrambles Championships for Juniors, Seniors and Sidecars resident in this Centre. This will entail an even tighter schedule of racing than before. The many jobs that have to be done before, during and after the day are hard, onerous and rewarding only in a sense of satisfaction at having helped to maintain the high standards which are expected of us.

"Some of you helping will see little of the racing, a few more none at all virtually; but all these jobs such as car parks, paddock marshals, scrutineers and so on are as vitally necessary as are Clerks of the Course, Marshals, Stewards and Secretary etc. (The fact that Boxing Day costs us about £***, possibly more, to promote and bearing in mind how our financial structure relies on not making a loss, you can see how vitally important it is that the non-paying gate area of Pirbright be closely controlled). Recruiting, if I may use the word, is now in progress and I look to you for assistance to those responsible for the course, car parks etc.etc. Many of you have heard all this before: many are qualified to grin when the cry goes up "same old faces" as another rope goes up or the ground shudders to the thud of sledgers driving home those seemingly endless piles of stakes.

"If you aren't already, then become one of the SOFs by turning out to help – remember your club mates need you".

There were also examples of outstanding loyalty. Jack Clifford, who lived in Petworth and was also a Special Constable, for many years devoted his Christmas Day to draining puddles on the course and checking gaps in the roping where areas adjoining the road had been fenced off to discourage free parking. For all these years Christmas Lunch on Christmas Day was not known to Jack, and his colleague Jerry Fisher. For good measure, Jack and Jerry also devoted just about every weekend to observing at local trials.

As to the course itself, and touching on Scrambling more generally, Bob Snelling, of Motor Cycle News, wrote a thoughtful piece later in the 1950's from which I would make selective quotations:

"Scrambling is riding on the crest of a wave and I for one hope it stays there. But, with the present tendency towards fast grass courses, I wonder whether we are not in danger of losing

sight of the true meaning of the description... through lack of rain most courses have become hard, bumpy and dusty apart from the occasional mud hole or natural spring or stream, and we now have a general pattern of fast grass circuits with the odd bit of "scramble" here and there.

"Is this something we want? Or do we want something in the nature of Pirbright where it is a rough ride for 75% of the way and the winners have to earn their money by riding ability and not sheer speed... It is all very difficult for the clubs and it is obvious they will never please all of the people all of the time.

"But who is to receive the first consideration, the competitor or the spectator? I for one am coming down on the side of the competitor. After all, he is risking his machine and his neck while the crowds – much greater now than ever before – are there for an afternoon's entertainment.

"Some circuits with narrow sections through woodlands are a bit dicey for riders and spectators alike, yet these sections must be used because that is often where the best bits of mud are found. But no rider wants to have to concentrate on dodging the customers as well as trees; he is there to put up a good show for his own or his own club's satisfaction and possibly win a few shillings to help with his not inconsiderable expenses.

"There are hundreds of entries these days but only a few of the riders can hope to receive awards... I believe that clubs must cut out the long drawn out meetings which are all too prevalent in some areas. Four hours or so of racing is plenty for any fan: seven hours must be the limit of anybody's endurance".

Moving on to the events themselves, as this volume does not purport to be a comprehensive history it is perhaps preferable to cherry pick on certain occasions rather than undertake a blow by blow account of each Boxing Day.

First, here are a few snippets all taken from Motor Cycle News, which first reached the newsagents in 1955 and was revolutionary at the time since it was in weekly newspaper format with up to date reports and fixtures – a real boon to the scrambles enthusiast of the time.

WEATHER...

"Heavy overnight snow and treacherous roads failed to prevent a good crowd of hardy enthusiasts from attending the traditional Boxing Day Scramble held at Tunnel Hill, Pirbright by Witley MCC. Neither were they disappointed for the record entry of both sidecar and solo competitors put on a fine day's racing in weather that was reasonable compared with the blizzard that had raged during the night". (1956)

DAYLIGHT...

Getting through a 12-14 race programme before darkness fell around 4pm was always a problem – no time for an interval!

"The last race of the meeting should have been an epic – the fastest thirty riders. But this rather fizzled out, with only eight riders coming to the line. Light was fading and the organisers did not waste any valuable time on a day that had been blessed with sunshine, although very cold,. The race for those eight starters was cut from six laps to three..." (1959)

THE OCCASION...

"Fast, exciting racing from a record entry of 249 solos and 27 sidecars with honours shared between the Rickman brothers, Tony White, Ken Heanes, Jimmy Robb, Alan Mayze and Rufus

Rose. That was the reward for the record crowd of spectators who turned out on a dull, damp Boxing Day to watch the annual Scramble at Tunnel Hill, Pirbright, efficiently run by the Witley Club.

“The course of approximately a mile and a quarter consisted of long climbs and drops and a couple of very fast straights which drew a certain amount of criticism, especially from Senior riders whose speeds reached 60-70 mph there”.(1957)

THE ATTENDANCE...

Not an exact science and one of the problems of Pirbright was the large number of ways of getting onto the common circumventing the Club's attempts to obtain some revenue from car parking and programme sales... figures of 7,000-10,000 appear in reports.

AND FINALLY... A MEETING REPORT...

From 1958, under the heading “Thrilling Racing at Witley Scramble”

“S.E.Centre clubmen could not have wished for a better climax to the Christmas holiday, or indeed to the 1957 season, than the Witley DMCC Boxing Day Scramble at Tunnel Hill, Pirbright.

“Though the atmosphere was a little damp, it was a bright sunny day, the course was well laid out, organisation was first class and racing was excellent. Young Ian Horsell (498 AJS), of the Streatham club, showed what an impressive scrambler he is by winning the Senior event and the race for the thirty fastest riders. Interest was added to this last event by the fact that after the Senior race Johnnie Giles (498 Triumph) and Ken Heanes (498 Triumph) were tying for the SE Centre Championship and they agreed that the “Thirty Fastest” be used as the decider. It was a great race. Horsell got away to a terrific start and was chased first by Giles and then Heanes when Heanes struck trouble and lost six places. Later Heanes fought back to fifth position but could make no further impression on the leaders.

“The Junior saw Harry Cheshire (499 BSA) take an early lead and he was never passed. Geoff King (499 BSA) beat Don Howlett (197 Greeves) into second place.

“The large crowd had all the thrills they wanted in the sidecar scratch race. All the aces were amongst the nineteen entries and Rufus Rose (500 RRS) put up a great show in beating Frank Wilkins (497 Ariel) and Bill Turner (497 Ariel).

“And the Senior race was another thriller. Joe Johnson (499 BSA) was hard pressed for six laps by Ian Horsell, but came unstuck on a muddy patch. Horsell now in the lead was hotly pursued by Giles and Heanes, but managed to retain his lead. Phil Nex (499 BSA), John Clayton (498 AJS) and Bryan Sharp (498 Triumph) came in some distance behind.

“More thrills followed in the sidecar handicap, but an unfortunate hold-up on one of the steeper hills allowed the back markers to pick up a lot of ground. The last three away, Turner, Wilkins and Rose, eventually worked their way through the field to finish in that order – the order of their starting.

There was a serious note struck by Ralph Venables in a separate report – drawing attention to the dangerously close proximity to the course that spectators were able to obtain along the faster straights.

The Boxing Day Scramble continued more or less in this vein until 1967 when an outbreak of foot and mouth disease among cattle led to restrictions on access to land by the general

public. Many events of all kinds were cancelled including the Boxing Day Scramble. The following year, 1968, Park Hatch became available for one year only and the Club decided to revisit this famous venue for one last time. The temptation must have been overwhelming, for historic reasons and for the opportunity to use a different type of land. There were inherent risks – with the clay and muddy ground there was always the possibility of bad weather causing cancellation, and with the Club's finances already weakened by the 1967 cancellation there was an underlying threat to the overall stability of the Club should things go wrong. Optimism prevailed, all plans were made, an entry of over 50 Experts and an 30 Sidecars was attracted, but an exceptionally wet December caused cancellation even before a stake had been put into the ground. It was very disappointing for everyone especially Clerks of the Course Peter Jerred and Billy Elliott and Secretary of the Meeting Bill Boniface who had put in so much work. The Club's financial situation quickly became parlous and an emergency general meeting was held immediately after the New Year. Around 60 people attended in the Clubroom in Laundry Road and it was resolved to invite each member to make a donation of £1 a head to restoring some sort of financial stability, so that immediate bills could be paid. The response was overwhelming and although continuing to be fragile the Club, with financial prudence being supervised by Treasurer Ron May, was able to get through 1969 to Boxing Day when a successful Scramble became an imperative.

For 1969 it was indeed back to normal at Pirbright and sponsorship – through Atlantic Petroleum – helped to ensure a viable occasion. The weather was kind, the entry including Bryan Goss, Malcolm Dearn, Gordon Adsett, Ken Heanes and Vic Allan, together with 30 Sidecars and the usual crop of Juniors encouraged a good public attendance and everyone was able to be happy again, including Clerk of the Course Peter Jerred who had a successful day at the helm.

So on to 1970, when the event entered its last phase. By now the day of the mammoth entry was over as the MoD would not permit engines to be started until 11.00 so the Junior entry had to be restricted to 100, selected by ballot. At its zenith around 300 riders could be expected, but this change reduced the total to rather less than 200 – still a sizeable task to fit in within the limited daylight available.

The 1970s was a period when sponsorship was sought on a selective basis and the Club had some success with this. It was used to swell the prize fund and included The Surrey Advertiser and local businesses. The power to attract some of the best contemporary riders continued and included Jeff Smith and Graham Noyce at different times.

Over the years many club members acted as Clerk of the Course, or as assistant. They include at different times Reg May, Derek Cranfield, Bill Boniface Alan McDine, Peter Cannon, Brian Bowler, Neil Rodgers, Richard Ayears, Mick Brown, and Mick Ball among others, who were happy to have their Christmases dominated by this event. Secretaries of the Meeting included Bill Boniface (again) Ron May, Bryan Wilcocks and John Bramall. Club members also consistently gave generously of their time for course construction, marshalling and dismantling duties.

Every year was much enjoyed. Perhaps the Committee discussion of January 1976 best encapsulates the spirit of the times:

“As you would expect, the main topic of last month’s committee meeting was the Boxing Day Scramble, and it seems the event attracted favourable comment all round. The Steward’s report was very flattering and we received many accolades from the riders and spectators alike – the best course ever seen at Pirbright was heard more than once from various people, great idea to start in the valley for a change, brilliant organisation, highly enjoyable day etc. etc. and one chap even made the trip round to Ronnie May’s to compliment the Club and ask for Ron’s poster as a souvenir. Fortunately the weather was absolutely ideal, a beautiful morning after a couple of miserable days, and this resulted in one of the biggest crowds ever seen...”

The Committee recorded votes of thanks in favour of Alan McDine, Peter Cannon, Willie Wilcocks and the many others who helped in any way and expressed particular appreciation to Tony Heane and Len Hutty for the provision of vehicles.

Towards the end of the 1970’s the MoD progressively withdrew permission for Scrambles on their land. First this applied to Pirbright and the last three Boxing Day Scrambles between 1979 and 1981 were at Long Valley Hill, Aldershot, after which in 1982 we began to run an Enduro at Hungry Hill, but that story is told in a separate chapter...

Although this Chapter has concentrated on the Boxing Day Scramble there were other occasions over the years. One particularly worth mentioning was that on 31 March 1957 when the club promoted a Scramble at Butts Hill, Chobham which by contemporary accounts was a success but attracted criticism in terms of speeds. Under a heading on the front page of Motor Cycle News “10,000 watch Witley racing” extracts from the report said:

“There had been some early criticism of the course both before and on the day and by a few of the competitors after they had completed their practice laps. Nevertheless, it could be considered more of a scramble than a glorified grass track with a few obstacles thrown in, and physical fitness played a great part for those who managed to complete the course.

“The attendance, estimated on parking figures, was in the region of 10,000 and spectators were rewarded with some excellent racing... The course, 1.75 miles in length on open common land, was fast, although very bumpy, and on the long straight from the start many were inclined to use too much speed, with unfortunate results. There followed a double “S” on the side of a hill, a long stretch of rutted mud, and a fast slope back to the start. The whole of the racing area was double roped and the general organisation was good...”

The result of the Senior race was 1st. John Clayton (497 Ariel), 2nd. Ken Heanes (498 Triumph) and 3rd. Jim Sheehan (497 Ariel) The sidecar scratch was won by Frank Wilkins (497 Ariel).

Butts Hill was used on a second occasion with John Harris Clerk of the Course and Bill Boniface Secretary of the Meeting, with permission to use the land being granted ‘By kind permission of the Chobham Common Preservation Society.’

The date was 11 October 1964. Proceedings got off to a dramatic start with the discovery of a mortar bomb which necessitated the attendance of the police before confirmation could be obtained that it was safe for the meeting to go ahead. As to the details of the day there were 90 Juniors, 20 Seniors, and 14 Sidecars. John Clayton, on a 497 Metisse, was unbeaten all day in the two Seniors races and the Allcomers, with Gordon Adsett being placed 4th twice and one retirement. John Clayton also won the 250 Seniors race. The Sidecar Scratch was won by Dave

Treleven, of Sunbeam, on a 499 BSA D Jones, Talmag, the Handicap on a 650 Triton. Jim Connor (250 Greeves) won the 250 Juniors, and Keith Winsor the over 300, riding a 500 Tribsa. Grass tracker Geoff Urben was also out, riding a 500 Tribsa.

In later years occasional Junior Scrambles were also run at Tunnel Hill, Pirbright. The last Open to Centre event was run at Normandy (not MoD land) in the mid 1980's, on a very hot day in July, and was a round of the SE Centre Scrambles Championship. It was the day after the National Rally and some members, after finishing more than 100 miles away, came down to lend a hand as soon as they could – feeling a keen sense of duty, and no little sense of fatigue. Since then fresh land has not become available and sporting riders have generally preferred to concentrate on Enduro. But should the opportunity arise the Club would be pleased to recommence the promotion of Scrambles, or moto-cross, to use the modern term.

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37. The St. John's Ambulance Brigade were always on hand at Witley speed events. This picture includes (second from left) Ted Bramall (the author's father), Len Inwood who supported the Brigade for many years and was president of the New Haw Brigade as recently as the 1990's, and (far right) Albert Knight. This photo was taken in the late 1940's.



38. Earliest scramble action: Ted Wilmott, mid-1930's.



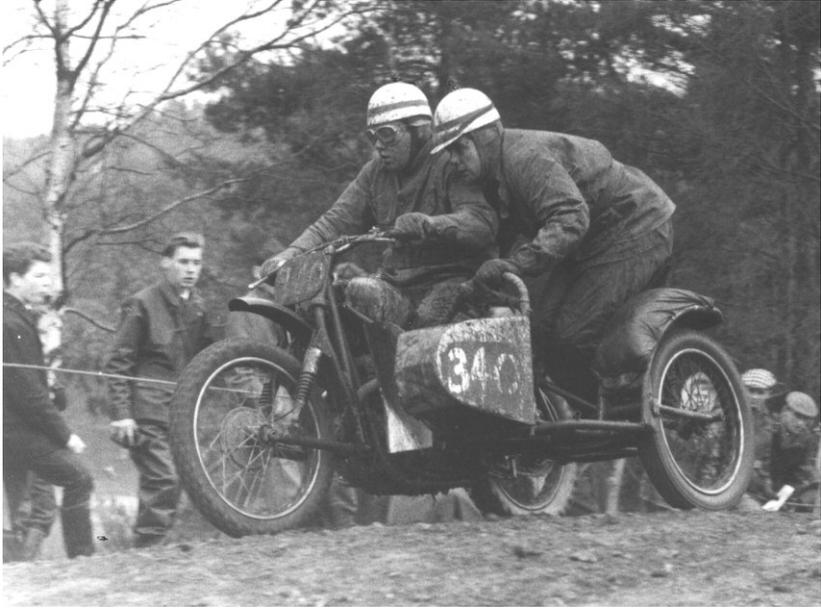
39. Tunnel Hill, Pirbright, venue for the many of the Witley Club's most successful and popular sporting events – the Boxing Day Scrambles.



40. Boxing Day Scramble, Pirbright 1958: 346 Jerry Byrne (650 Norton), 351 Wally Searle (497 Ariel), 353 A. Lawrence (500 Matchless).



41. Boxing Day Scramble, Pirbright 1958: John and Alan Reed (998 Vincent) – second in heat, third in final.



42. Boxing Day Scramble, Pirbright 1958: Winners Rufus and Tiger Rose (650 Triumph).



43. Ken Heanes (498 Triumph) in typical Pirbright action, 1961.



44. Boxing Day Scrambles were always a high point in the Club's calendar. Three distinguished officials – Ron May, Charlie Wake and Ralph Bower. Ralph was Treasurer of the S.E. Centre for many years and also a speedway referee.



45. Here we have Bill Elliott and Peter Sharp – Bill is carrying the result of the previous race as the public address system did not carry beyond the start/finish area.



46. The Christmas Day working party for the 1966 Boxing Day Scramble at Pirbright.



47. Geoff Urben campaigning his 500 Tribsa at Hurst Hill, Bramley, during a Stamford Bridge Scramble.



48 & 49. Two shots of Dickie Dale on board Arne Hendriksen's 350 JAP at the Surrey Hills grass track in 1959. Prompt action was required to prevent the machine from looping!



• C H A P T E R 5 •

Grass Track Racing

Witley do not appear to have run any grass tracks before 1939, but gymkhanas were held at Joseph's Road Guildford, then the ground of the former Guildford City Football Club. Programmes have survived for Whit Monday 6 June 1938 and Saturday May 27 1937. Apart from Gymkhana type events such as Surf Board and Obstacle Races, there were Scratch and Handicap Races – in effect grass track racing on the football ground – clearly more free and easy times than today. With entries including Hugh Viney, Alfie Bottoms, Frank Hayward and Francis Quick – not to overlook Dennis Trice on a 347 AJS – the competition must have been quite exciting.

In the immediate post-war period grass track racing in the Centre was dominated by Brands Hatch, advertised as “Britain’s finest grass track”. Racing was under the direction of the Brands Hatch Combine, a co-operative effort between Sidcup, Owls, and Bermondsey clubs who promoted events between April and October, once or twice a month. Racing was fast with the lap records exceeding 50 mph in 1947 rising to 54-56 with the advent of spring frames. Not surprisingly the SE Centre Championships took place at Brands Hatch even though, by this time, in the late 1940’s, there were the beginnings of the developments that have led to the Brands Hatch of today.

Witley were quickly into grass track and held their first event on Sunday 28 October 1945 at Gomshall, admission two shillings including car park. No programme or report has survived but a programme exists from a grass track held the following year at Great Goodwins Farm, Merrow, on 28 July 1946. The new Clubroom in Laundry Road was in use – it must have been very new – the back cover advertises the Club and says “We have a large Clubroom in Guildford with all the usual indoor games”. As to the meeting, Clerk of the Course was Dick May, Starter Arthur Boniface and the 23 race programme catered for up to 250/350, and 600cc machines. There were no sidecars. Dennis Trice was on a 250 Velocette, and came third in his heat but the main race of the day was won by Arthur Wheeler (350 Velocette). H.F. Deeprise, also on a Velocette was second, and F. Hayward, (250 New Imperial) third. The 36 strong entry included just two 500’s, one being top runner Jack Difazio who did not feature in the results on that day.

The SE Centre Calendar for 1947 showed some 58 events in a season extending from 30 March to 12 October. 16 organising Clubs were listed mostly in Kent or SE London with just 3 at the western end of the Centre – Leatherhead, Normandy and Witley. Witley grass tracks were on 22 June, 27 July, 17 August, and 7 September, which all took place at Woolgars Farm, West Horsley. Interestingly, for each date there was a clash with another grass track in the Centre – Bermondsey (22 June), Sidcup (27 July) Sidcup again (17 August) and Greenwich (7 September). Perhaps clashes did not present problems at that time due to size of entries, attendance levels or the mobility of enthusiasts that may have been limited by shortages of petrol. As it happened though the event for 17 August was postponed by one week to avoid a clash with the Centre Championships at Brands Hatch. Machines were less specialised than today – indeed they were often advertised for sale as “suitable for scrambles or grass tracks”. But

developments were on the move and by September there were rumblings of dissent about the vexed question of “dirt type machines that are so unpopular among the Clubmen” and the need for discussion at the Centre Competitions Committee. At that time a wide range of machines were capable of featuring in results – typically AJS, Excelsior, OK, Velocette in the solos and Norton/Douglas in the sidecars. One welcome technical innovation at that time was the development by Ashford Kent Club of a mechanical starting flag.

For 1948 there was some improvement to the track at Woolgars Farm increasing it to a full half mile described as a “Mountain Grass Track... really suitable for grass track machines.” Admission was two shillings, including tax and in a less mobile age public transport details were given: “15 minutes train service, Waterloo-Guildford: on Leatherhead-Guildford bus route” and “additional bus services provided by Green Line between Guildford and Longford Cross Roads”.

In 1949 there were four meetings at Woolgars Farm – 19 June, 24 July, 21 August, and 18 September and classes were for solos only, 250/350 and 600cc. There was a winners handicap, and on occasion a special non-winners race based on “devil take the hindmost”. The last rider on the completion of each lap was to be flagged off. By the end of the year A.J. Whistler had given up the dual role of Clerk of the Course and Secretary of the Meeting, David Hull was Clerk of the Course and a sidecar race – up to 1000cc – had been introduced.

1950 commenced with a curious proposal from the ACU – that “wire is in future to replace rope in grass track trip fences”. Discussed at the Centre Board meeting in February, it is recorded that Charlie Wake felt, and most of those present agreed, that it was wrong for the ACU to make such a proposal, so the Board resolved to instruct its delegates to oppose, which they did. The ACU backed down, and the solution reached was for posts to be closer together and the wrecking fence to be further from the track.

1950 and 51 were both full years at Woolgars Farm, with meetings on 25 June, 23 July, 20 August, and 17 September 1950, and 20 May, 17 June, 22 July, 19 August and 16 September in 1951. Two innovations were introduced – a scheme for regular riding numbers, to be registered by application to H C Wake: and at the meeting on 16 September 1951 a team race between Woolgars Farm and the Racing Riders Association. The outcome is not recorded.

A typical afternoon at Woolgars Farm would involve 70-80 riders and 30 or so races.

For 1952 a new course at Peper Harow had been found and David Hull was again Clerk of the Course. Meetings took place on 22 June, 20 July and 21 September, the latter meeting open also to sidecars. Hilton Woodrow has recalled an occasion during sidecar practice when an outfit went through the ropes to the spectator area and beyond, demolishing a tent that was in use as a gents toilet – fortunately no one was in it at the time.

In 1954 the club ran three grass tracks at Fair Oaks Aerodrome, Woking, within the airfield perimeter but away from the grass landing strip. These took place on 13 June, 11 July and 8 August. Ron May was Clerk of the Course and the track itself was described as a smooth three-quarter mile grass circuit. For the last of these three meetings Dorothy Fisher was Secretary of the Meeting. The fourth meeting that year on 19 September was at Cox’s Farm, Sutton Green, two miles north of Guildford on the Woking Road. On this occasion Jack Clifford was Clerk of the Course; it was slightly shorter at half a mile and there were solo scratch

races for up to 200/250/350/600cc, a non winners race, handicap for the 12 fastest riders, sidecar scratch and handicap, the sidecars were to be left handed and subject to a minimum of six entrants.

For 1955 it was to Russell Place Farm, Wood Street, Guildford: "nothing special, but at least it is a field for a meeting". Joe Damant was Clerk of the Course. It appears to have been used just once. The 32 race programme was for 38 solos and 11 sidecars, including Bert Brett on a 596 Norton. The surviving programme contains a note that Arnold Hendriksen mislaid a pair of goggles on the course.

There was a gap until 1958 when an event was held on 25 May at Tanglely Place Farm, on the Guildford-Bagshot Road at Worplesdon. Grass tracks then disappeared until 1965/6. But we had active riders, as the Club News reported:

1959: "Don Mussell and Roy Bowyer are beginning to find their feet now in the sidecar class and Don is well pleased with his latest passenger. Their best placings so far are two seconds at Basingstoke and West Meon. Dickie Dale also continues his much improved form and his best performance recently was at the Basingstoke meeting where he was first in the 350 final plus several heat wins and a third place in the 250 final".

And in 1960: "It seemed that half the Witley club were at Farnham Park on 22 May to see club members do battle in the local club's grass meeting. Don Mussell, Roy Bowyer, Dickie Dale and the Ward Bros. took part; Don and Roy were the most successful on Den Sharp's outfit, being second in their heat, and were narrowly beaten for first place in the final. In the second scratch race they were third, but in the handicap neither they nor the other back markers had any chance, being handicapped right out of the race". This was a good year for Dickie Dale since he went on to win the 250cc Southern Centre Championship on his 250 Ariel.

In 1965 there were three Witley events, on 20 June, 29 August, and 26 September at Home Farm, Worplesdon. This was a time for large entries with one meeting on 22 May 1966 attracting 115 solos and 46 left hand sidecars for a 47 race programme. Witley riders Don Mussell/Roy Bowyer (650 Triton) came second in the sidecar scratch. Geoff Urben rode his 500 Tribsa scrambler. Classes run were for 250/350/500cc solos, and two left handed sidecar unlimited races. Clerk of the Course was Brian Bowler, Secretary of the Meeting Bill Boniface.

In 1967 there were two events, at New Marsh Farm, Downside with Nobby Harvey Clerk of the Course and Bill Boniface Secretary of the Meeting. The dates were 21 May and 18 June. Since then there have been just three Witley Grass Tracks, all largely organised by the Tyrrell family: two were at West Horsley – on 14 August 1983 at Lower Hammond Farm: and on 12 August 1984 at Wix Hill. The last Witley grass track was at Burpham Court Farm, Burpham, on 11 August 1985. The 43 race programme was for an entry of 40 250s, (including Witley member Geoff Urben on a 500 Hagon/JAP), 46 500s, 12 left hand sidecars, and 25 right hand sidecars including Witley members Ray Blackall/Ted Wallcroft (998 Kawasaki) and Chris Tyrrell/Lawrence Tyrrell (987 Honda.)

In 1992 Geoff Urben became Southern Centre 250 Novice Champion, riding his 250 Godden Honda.



50. Grass track action at Woolgars Farm, West Horsley.



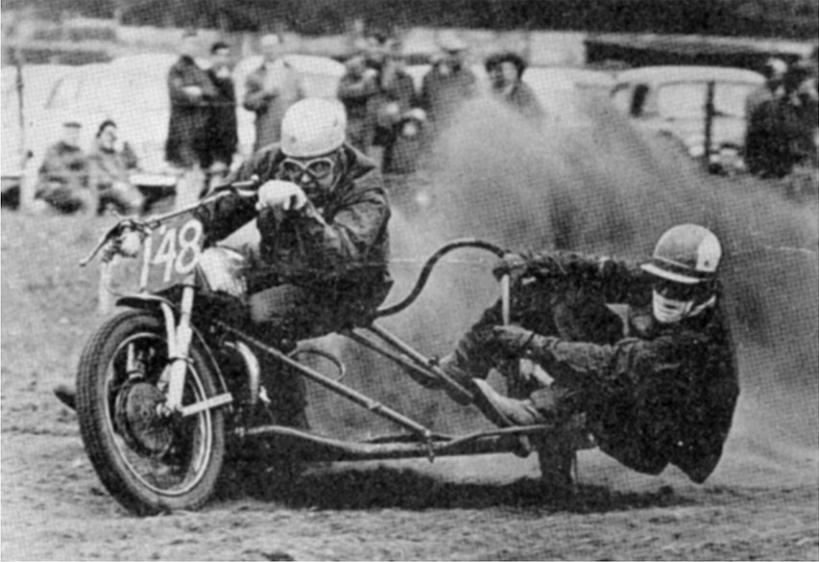
51. Woolgar's Farm grass tracks were very popular in the late 1940's/early 1950's. Left to right for the 600cc final: L.R. Archer, R.J. Dear, A.H. Wynes, H.J. Donovan, H.F. Deeprise, H.A. Appleby. Winner was R. Dear, 2nd Les Archer, 3rd H.J. Donovan.



52. Bill Elliott showing specialist grass track machinery a clean pair of heels at Dolly's Farm, Worplesdon, mid-1960's. No. 52 is Bob Arnold on a 250 Hagon BSA.



53. The Tyrrell brothers in exciting grass track action, Chris driving, Lawrence in the chair, one wheel on the ground.



54. Don Mussell/Roy Bowyer, left hand sidecar exponents.



53. Dickie Dale again on the 350 Hendriksen JAP, this time South Reading MCC at Arborfield in 1959.

• CHAPTER 6 •

Road Racing

Bill Scott was the proprietor of Antar Motors in Shere and became in effect the owner and manager of a team that included himself and Brian Davis. They raced together in the 1960's at all of the main UK venues including Brands Hatch, Silverstone, Crystal Palace, Thruxton, Castle Coombe and Snetterton. Bill was especially good at winning replicas in the Isle of Man, and in Ireland where in 1965 he scored a race win in the 500 class in the Cookstown 100. At the same venue in 1964 he had won the Visitor's Award. In 1967 Bill was 7th in the Senior Manx on Brian's old Matchless G50 at an average speed of 89 mph. Brian also scored many successes in a fairly short career and had the ability to achieve much more had he continued after 1967.

Brian Davis rode from 1960-67 and retired after a crash a Crystal Palace. He achieved his first race win on an AJS 7R as a Novice, although on that day his winning speed was greater than that of both the 350 Experts and the 500s. He reached his peak around 1964 when he was able to keep Mike Hailwood in sight at Snetterton when they were both G50 mounted, and on another memorable occasion Brian was leading Derek Minter until the rear brake cable snapped and he was forced to drop back. Generally, Brian considers that when everyone was riding more or less equal machinery success came from driving hard, for example revving an AJS 7R to 8,100 when the maximum recommended was 7,900 – the result would be more race wins, or seconds, but more retirements for mechanical reasons against the alternative of a series of mid field placings if the machinery was driven within recommended limits. Also it was necessary to rely exactly on last moment braking points, although these would vary, as brake performance was quick to deteriorate. In fact, on the TT course perfect brakes at the start would begin to go off by Brandywell on the first lap, at which point there were still five and a half laps to go. At the time a good G50 would do 150 mph on the Island.

One little remembered detail of racing in the '60's was that boots, by Lewis Leathers, were sold in threes, two right and one left: because cornering was mainly to the right it was the right boot that wore first, so the second boot could be used whilst the first was at the shoemender's, or even having worn out altogether.

Short circuit racing was very critical and the winning margins often a matter of a few feet: In a race at Silverstone in 1964, on the 7R with Peter Darvill riding a Francis Beart Norton, Brian took a dive up the inside at the last corner – Woodcote, as it was then laid out – and Peter looked out of the fairing to see what was happening, slowing him just enough for Brian to nip through for the win, his second of the afternoon. Over the years Brian came to like racing in the wet, scoring some of his best successes in such conditions – he believes it came down to a question of confidence and feeling comfortable in the conditions.

Production racing was a favourite and the Thruxton 500 a high spot. Bill and Brian had a Triumph Tiger 100, an exceptional model, which they shared in the BEMSEE 1000 Kilometre race. They were also Triumph mounted for the Thruxton 500 miler and with Bill and Brian sharing the riding the machine finished first in its class and fifth overall. In 1965 the 500 miler was at Castle Coombe, and on board a Honda CB72 Bill and Brian were 3rd in the 250 class and 5th overall. Peter Inchley was the winner, on a Cotton. Thruxton had mixed memories for

Bill since he crashed there in 1962 on the G50, breaking a shoulder.

Later Brian was very honoured when Bill bought a Thruxton Bonneville, the third production example available, and Brian was able to race it. It was a pleasure to ride – although one well remembered moment was heading for a race win at Silverstone when the machine missed a gear approaching the finish and Brian ended second to Ray Knight.

In 1964 well known TV actor Richard Wyler organised a racing trip to Daytona with a party including stars such as Mike Hailwood, Phil Read, Frank Perris, and Mike Duff. During practice on the first day there was a spell of rain – the US riders stopped but the Europeans carried on, showing up differences because at the time Americans were averse to riding in the rain. The track included part of the famous banking and some of the infield: for the European riders the banking took some working out, as the more throttle used the higher up you went, but the distance became further so it was a matter of balancing the two. Bill fell down the banking when on the G50 due to magneto failure. Brian finished second to Tony Murphy on a CB77, but unbeknown to almost everyone else he was disqualified and it was only 30 years later that the news came to Brian that he had in fact been the winner!

Ireland was always enjoyed as a place to race, with road circuits at Mid Antrim, Cookstown, Leinster, and the North West 200. One curiosity was that no practice was allowed as, unlike the Isle of Man, the roads were not closed for a practice period. So it was a matter of going round in a van or on a road bike, and getting the hang of the track over the first few laps. Perhaps the atmosphere of an event in Ireland can be noted from Bill's own words written in the Club News in October 1963:

“Later in the month we went to Ireland for the Mid-Antrim 150. The MCUI, in its wisdom or otherwise, allows its member clubs to hold race meetings over real road circuits, in this case over 10.5 miles long, without any official practice periods at all. In other words, all you can do is to go round the day before in a van or on a road bike, then hope for the best when the starter's flag drops, which is a bit dodgy. In the 350 race Brian started off tactlessly by colliding with the local champion (it wasn't his fault) on the starting line and putting him out of the race (the local champion was Billy McCosh)... 200 yards before the end of lap one Brian was lying fifth, one hundred yards after he was lying in the ditch, with a somewhat crumpled 7R up the bank. A fast right hander had tightened up since the day before (don't forget this is Ireland) and Brian had a broken ankle and facial damage... I came ninth in the 500 race, and that was that, but incidentally it was quite a course – with the 7R reading about 115mph in places, and the lap being over 103 in spite of the roads being definitely B Class”.

Turning to the Isle of Man, perhaps a good point to start is a reference to a report by Bill Scott in the Club News in the mid 1960's:

“And so to the Manx... too much has already been written about the Mountain Circuit for any observation of mine to be worthwhile, but it really is as deceptive as they say; many sections struck me as being like a trip on a fairground ghost train when you go belting towards an apparently solid brick wall which opens up at the last moment. I rather doubt whether I should ever be able to keep it screwed on flat out through Barregarroo, or pronounce it for that matter”.

A high point for the Club was the winning of the Team Prize in the Manx Grand Prix of 1965. At the time Percy May was well up with Brian Davis at BEMSEE meetings, so he completed the team with Bill Scott. The race start was postponed for two hours due to weather

conditions and then it started with wet roads, except in Ramsey where it was dry, which was an advantage since both Bill and Brian were happy in the wet. The whole operation went very smoothly, and was a very successful day for the Club and our riders. What was particularly satisfying was the fact that the team members could be seen at the Witley Clubroom on Thursday nights, unlike some Club Teams who recruited members from far and wide simply to make the team stronger. Percy May went on to win the British 500cc Championships in 1968 and '69.

1966 was another good year when Brian was 5th overall in the 500 Manx, at a winning average speed of some 92 mph. In many ways 1966 was Brian's finest season as he won the 350 Southern 100 on the 7R and was second in the 500 race on the G50.

Brian's retirement came in 1967 after an accident at the Easter Crystal Palace meeting in which he broke a leg. Riding the G50 at the time, the magneto was playing up, cutting in and cutting out, and he lost control through the left hand part of The Glades. In later years he came to regret retiring but more recently has been able to take part in parades at the TT (see photo), Goodwood and elsewhere. By good fortune the actual 7R, which Brian had raced in the 60's, became available again so the wheel has turned full circle and Brian is able to use the very same machine on which he had achieved so much success to this very day. It has turned full circle in more ways than one since son Dominic starting out in 1997 in the Gilera Piaggio Scooter series where he achieved some success moving on in the second half of 1998 to a CB500 Honda, a series in which he won the National 500 Cup in 1999. In 2000 he did Superstox with limited success, as well as the racing there is the question of sufficient sponsorship, which is very much necessary to achieve success at this level.

On the subject of the G50, the Easter 1967 accident was followed by an accident Easter 1968 at Snetterton in which Bill was pitched down the road, injuring a shoulder, the same one as in 1962, and in Easter 1969 when it crashed at the East German Grand Prix with Marty Lunde on board. Clearly, the G50 was unhappy with racing at Easter!

A report by Bill Scott in the Club News for November 1966 is interesting:

"At the end of September BMCRC held what may be the last ever motorcycle meeting at Silverstone. I celebrated the seriousness of the occasion by breaking the crankpin on my G50, but others were more fortunate. Brian Davis won the major 500cc race and was second in the 350cc event. Percy May won the other 1,000cc race, thus continuing a pattern which he and Brian established at Silverstone earlier in the season. Another member was Martin Ryall, whose Cotton carried him to third place in one of the 250cc races... I was fourth in the Invitation event and the 350cc only race on my somewhat revived 7R, whose carburetion seems entirely happy in the wet weather conditions. We think that after two years' struggling we may at last be getting to the bottom of its consistently inconsistent behaviour".

Some major individual achievements are recorded in Chapter 8. In addition to Bill Scott, Brian Davis and Percy May, Witley had several other active riders including Vic Argent, Brian and Jim Cannon, Graham Clutterbuck, John Dixon, Marty Lunde, Malcolm Brown, Dave Mattia, Martin Ryall, Nick Smith, Brian Kettle and Peter Young. Brian Kettle came 9th in the 1965 50cc TT, quite an achievement especially for a person of some 6 feet two in height. The array of machines ranged from the exotic – 7R AJS, G50 Matchless, and Manx Norton to the less likely 125 Rumi and 250 Adler. In addition to what is recorded above a fair amount of success was achieved ranging to good placings at Centre and club meetings to in the case of Trevor Pound at international Grand Prix.

In the mid 1970's the Club seriously considered promoting road racing events at Wisley Airfield which had at that time just become disused. There was a serious possibility that road racing would be permitted and senior Club officials met officials responsible for the airfield. About a mile and a half of tarmac would have been available and some sort of circuit could have been arranged. There were however concerns about noise affecting residential properties nearby and there were some safety aspects concerning boundary fences. At the time there were several enthusiastic road racers in the Club and the Committee, although expressing some anxiety about the scope of the



Four pictures of Brian Davis in action...
56. Early days on the Gold Star at Snetterton



57. On the Matchless G50: Silverstone 1966

project, agreed that negotiations with the airfield authorities should continue. Indeed, by the beginning of 1977 negotiations had reached the point where the Club was hopeful of running at least one event, on an experimental basis. Had the idea succeeded, and it came very close, Wisley would have been only the second road racing venue in Surrey, with Brooklands, the cradle of British racing, having opened in the first decade of the century. Negotiations with the Property Services Agency came to a conclusion in the Autumn of 1977 when the Club received a letter which said that road racing at Wisley would not be possible “due to future plans for the airfield”.



58. Isle of Man TT on the AJS 7R: Quarter Bridge 1966



59. Same bike, same rider, same place, 33 years later: the 1999 TT Parade



...and four of Bill Scott.

60. Bill on his way to 7th place on the G50 Matchless in the 1967 Manx Grand Prix.
Location uncertain but appears to be on the descent of the Mountain.



61. 1965 Senior Manx: taking to the air at Ballaugh Bridge on the G50.



62. 1966 Junior Manx; at Quarter Bridge on a 7R AJS.



63. Nearer to home; Brands Hatch practice day in 1961. Bill on a G50 new from the crate that day.

• C H A P T E R 7 •

Enduros

The Club's first Enduro – a milestone in our sporting history – was run at Broxhead Common on 21st October 1979. This stemmed largely from the enthusiasm of Brian Cannon and the knowledge of John May and Colin Beasley. The winner of this first event was Willy Budden: in 1982 when it became impossible to arrange a Boxing Day Scramble the club arranged an Enduro instead and this has continued to be the pattern to date. In the early years this was at Hungry Hill, Aldershot, and we were overwhelmed with a huge entry. A superb event, we started 12 riders every 30 seconds and it worked out at about 10 yards of course for every rider; everyone loved it. With the ever growing popularity of this discipline of the sport it had to be taken under control and rules and regulations drafted, which was only right, even though it did take away a lot of the fun of the early days. Later when Hungry Hill became unavailable we moved to Broxhead and Slab Commons near Bordon. In 1998 the Boxing Day Enduro was held at Four Marks. A complete list of winners is at Appendix 4.

Enduro is a significant growth branch of the sport and entries are regularly fully subscribed. Enduro is described as a test of man and machine against the clock. It is a long distance time trial where the rider pits his skill and the reliability of his machine against the terrain. It is not a race in the accepted sense and the aim of the rider is to stay on time and not arrive too early or late at the checkpoints along the route, where points are added for being late or early. There is also a Special Test which is used as required to eliminate ties and decide overall and class winners.

At local level Witley have won the SE Centre Enduro Combine Championship four years in a row – 1997-2000 – and individual riders have achieved success at both local and national levels. Rob Carey was 2000 SE Centre Champion. In 1997 a self financed squad of Witley riders and support crew achieved success at the ISDE in Italy with a Silver won by Neil Foster and a Bronze by Richard Alldred.

In 1999 the Club had a dream, and there is no better way of describing it than to revert to the pen of Gordon Ayshford, Chairman of our ISDE Sub Committee, who wrote this report for the SE Centre Gazette immediately after the 1999 ISDE in Portugal:

“INTERNATIONAL SUCCESS FOR SE CENTRE –

Best British Team, ISDE PORTUGAL, 13-18 SEPTEMBER 1999

“Win With Witley’ read the bold banner headline on their promotional flyer.

“From the position of reigning champions in the SE Centre Enduro Combine and veterans of the ‘97 ISDE in Italy, they had a dream: that in this, their club’s 75th anniversary year, their entry of two teams – the Witley & DMCC team and the Witley SE team, would live up to Witley’s reputation as a club of winners.

“Winners of the Cambrian Award for the Best British Club Team at 7th place in the ISDE club competition of world class entries, the Witley team of Neil Bowker (Silver medal), Peter Batt (Bronze), and Richard Alldred (Bronze) spearheaded a SE Centre double. The Witley SE team of Darryl Peach (Bronze), George Brent (no medal – incomplete 4th day) and Tim Hunt (Bronze) were the 4th British Club Team at 12th position.

“A large number of riders with a depth of Enduro experience at local, National, World Round and ISDE levels exists within the Witley membership. Team selection had caused headaches. Fund raising had been on-going since Witley returned from Italy. Local businesses and many individuals had made contributions as confidence had grown. The ‘Win with Witley’ slogan had however failed to bring the level of commercial sponsorship that had been sought. As the season had progressed and the competition date approached one headache was replaced by another – Witley were left with only four fit riders and paid-up entries for two teams of three within the ACU/GB quota. Now short of riders and funds bold action was required.

“Plans for a squad containing the Witley & DMCC team and a Witley SE team of riders from the top SE Centre clubs, Witley, Croydon & Kingston were cast. Approaches made to the SE Centre and the Enduro Combine were rewarded by their full support and generous contributions. George and Tim were invited having ridden many times beside Richard, Peter, Neil and Darryl, and they bonded well into the existing squad.

“The long ferry crossing to Santander brought the squad of Witley riders, family and ISDE stalwarts Dave Kavanagh, Roger Johnson, Paul Jay and Gordon Ayshford together with the Welsh and other GB teams into a larger family, though behind the camaraderie were there any doubts? Why were Witley sending out TWO teams? They just had to wait and see. At signing on in Coimbra the Witley riders were in uniform – matching yellow shirts, club logo and sponsors’ names. At the opening ceremony Witley riders were in blue shirts embroidered with their names and ‘Witley and District MCC 1999 ISDE Enduro Team’. The support team were in yellow and navy. Looking like the top national team they marched through the stadium with pride, they were here to do business: Witley had created a whole greater than the sum of the parts.

“This inner strength proved itself time and again through the six days of the competition Monday 13th through to Saturday 18th. The riders egged each other on with competitive jibes when they were strong and offered brotherly support in adversity. The support crew fulfilled a vital role in the success and pits managed by Alison Galpin provided the efficient base camp essential to any mission.

“Their tale differs from many other teams in that it does not feature serious injury which unfortunately tarnished this gruelling event for many top teams.

“Day 1: Monday...

“Day 1 left everyone wondering what they had let themselves in for. The first stretch of 25k of road work from the start at Coimbra ran out and up into the hills for the off-road business to begin. The dust was intolerable, visibility nil, with schedules set that required a superhuman effort. Everyone lost time due to queuing for special tests which did nothing to help the despondency felt by some.

“Richard twisted his front end in an impact, nothing serious, straighten it out in the morning, and Tim was dogged by fouling plugs on downhills. A pragmatic mood existed in the Witley pits.

“Day 2: Tuesday...

“Day 2’s course was a repeat of the mountain sections from Monday. Same problems, but not much time lost – Neil went clean, George’s bike was rattling and George was hanging.

Darryl changed his fork legs for a softer ride. Richard was feeling short of energy, but full of the fighting spirit. and Peter relied on his technical skill/sense of humour. Tim's plugs were still fouling – disaster as he lost his bum bag on the course but his day was saved by a passer by he had met the day before and who happened still to have one of Tim's old plugs – that he had cleaned! Broken bikes to the left of them, injuries to the right of them but the power was with the Witley lads to keep on going on.

“Day 3: Wednesday...

“Witley & DMCC were the highest placed British Team, all the riders got a boost and rode off fighting fit. The course was different for day 3 and some hoped easier. The sun was still baking down but it was cool in the dark woods for the morning lap. Everyone was suffering from the hard bumpy surface and Neil did a tyre change thinking the tyre was breaking up – but no – just hard going and air trapped in the forks. Darryl felt little benefit from Tuesday's fork change. Tim had learned to cope with the plug problem by opening the throttle gently(?).

“Day 4: Thursday...

“It was the same course as Wednesday and the same schedule. No relaxation of the times at all during the week for which the organisers were criticised. The element of danger arises from lack of control when the riders have to maintain ‘racing’ speeds. This was being borne out by the growing list of casualties from all levels. Disaster struck Witley on Thursday, but thankfully a breakdown not an injury. A message was relayed to the paddock that George's bike had given up the ghost – a replacement piston and rings were required. Visits to nearly all the teams running Yamaha 250's resulted in the choice of a ‘good’ second-hand piston from Dave Ball from the RAF Team, or a new one from Craig Douglas the Australian rider. When George's bike was returned to the paddock by trailer all hands set to work. The new piston didn't fit – too recent a model, the second-hand one did. The bike was rebuilt with fingers crossed(?). It started on the fourth kick and ran smoother than it had all week – into the parc fermé with only seconds to spare.

“ Day 5: Friday...

“Another hard day was in store with the focus on finishing safely to hold the existing positions. Tim, having finally cured his misfire with a jet swap, paced George all the way round to preserve the engine he knew was living on a wing and a prayer. The GB camp were amazed that the six Witley boys had kept going one day after another while so many ‘top’ riders paid the price of difficult riding conditions and over enthusiasm or loss of concentration. Finishing Friday brought a combination of elation and relief to Witley.

“Day 6: Saturday – Final Motocross...

“‘Ride carefully into Coimbra to the town's motocross track and wait for your race’ was the only instruction the riders required for Day 6. Then the heavens opened, all of September's rain could have fallen that day. The weather turned the motocross into a slapstick comedy and thankfully the results of day 6 were cancelled.

“Apres ISDE...

“A pizza party ensued for the high spirited Witley squad – and then on to the clubs in the town. Having returned a result that everyone in the South East Centre should feel proud of, the riders and support crew have fulfilled their half of the Win With Witley bargain. Everyone

reading this should be proud to be connected with the Witley & DMCC 1999 ISDE Teams. This effort must not go to waste within the South East. Sponsorship must be forthcoming for next year to show the others that a South East Centre Team can WIN OUTRIGHT”.

So all in all Portugal 1999 was a very successful occasion for the Club. Over the years Witley riders have achieved much success in Enduros, of which the following, in addition to the ISDE and Enduro Combine, are further examples:

1989: Phil Cannon won a gold medal in the ISDE in Germany.

1990: Danny Stalker – British 500cc Expert Champion.

1991: Paul Jay – SE Centre Expert Champion;

Neil Bowker – British 125cc Clubman Champion.

1995: Neil Bowker – SE Centre Expert Champion.

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64. The start of the last Boxing Day Enduro to be held at Hungry Hill, Aldershot, with Ron May officiating.



65. ISDE Italy 1997: in the Stadium, preparing for the day's work. Neil Foster and Peter Stabb on the spanners.



66. Portugal, 1999. The riders and support crew. Left to right: Darryl Peach, Gordon Ayshford, Dave Kavanagh, Neil Bowker, Roger Johnson, Peter Batt, George Brent, Richard Alldred, Tim Hunt, Paul Jay. Front row: Amanda Bowker, Julie Alldred, Alison Galpin.



67. Champagne uncorked after the Witley Club team's efforts in the 1997 ISDE in Italy. Left to right: Neil Foster, Richard Alldred, Paul Jay.

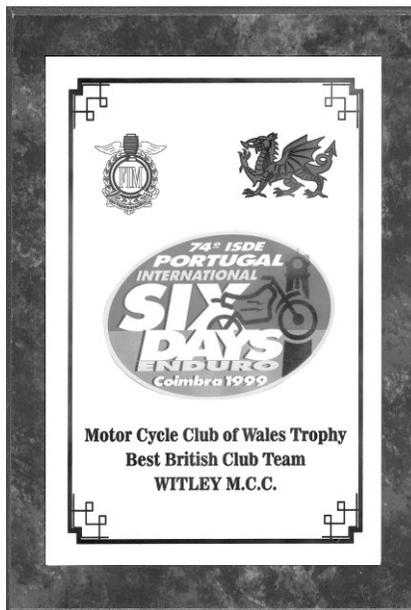


68-70. A group of pictures of Neil Bowker in action in Portugal during the 1999 ISDE.





71. Neil Bowker again. The rider emerging to the right of the picture is Richard Allred.



72. The Best British Club Team award for 1999.



73. Loitering within tent – preparing for a Boxing Day Enduro at Four Marks.
Includes: Dave Kavanagh, Manny Bernardez, Neil Bowker, Peter Stabb,
Barry Brockman and Richard Alldred.



74. Enduro Working Party: Neil Bowker, Peter Batt, Paul Jay, Reg Bowker, Peter
Stabb, Manny Bernardez, Richard Alldred, Shaun Smith. Sitting on the scooter is
Rob Carey, 2000 S.E. Centre Enduro Champion.

• C H A P T E R 8 •

Major club and individual achievements

TRIALS

SE CENTRE TEAM TRIAL

This event was a good barometer with which to assess the overall strength of clubs at different times in the past and the Centre Team Trial has been won by Witley on many occasions. The first Team Trial was held on 19th April 1931 starting from Epsom Downs and finishing at Shere. Winners were Witley, but after a protest by Sunbeam, the title was held jointly. The Witley team was Charlie Wake, Ken Mitchell, and Dick Bott on solos, with Freddie Holt and Ralph Luckham on the outfit – Len Savage cleaned the course and was presented with a special award.

1932-1935 were Sunbeam years, but in 1936 Witley were victorious. Original material for the 1934 event has survived. Held on 25 March, the start was at “The Princess Royal” Runfold, the finish at the Tattenham Corner Refreshment House, Epsom Racecourse, a distance of 55 miles. The route had to be completed in not less than 2.5 hours and not more than 3.5. Teams consisted of four riders, three solos and one sidecar. To qualify for starting each club was required to provide two additional riders (with machines) to act as observers if not called up to fill a vacancy in their teams.

Clubs were invited to run sections, and under Vachery Lane the programme records “H.W. Louis Esq., and members of the Witley and Sydenham Clubs”. The Final Instructions said “Arrangements are being made for the entertainment of the supporting clubs at the finishing point”. 25 teams entered the event, Witley being represented by: H.C. Wake (capt) (346 Sunbeam); E.G. Wilmot (498 AJS); R.T. Viney (343 Triumph); R.L. Luckham (560 Ariel s/c). Reserves: A Boniface (498 AJS); H. Lloyd (560 Ariel s/c).

The results were calculated using a system of marks gained i.e. cleaning a section obtained an award of 10 marks. After 38 sections winners were the Sunbeam team with 1161 marks awarded (L. Heath, E.J. Heath, R.G. Tomson, G.S. Hadfield). Second was Witley, 1131 marks gained, and South Reading were third with 1101.

In 1937 the organisers were the North Kent Trials Combine, the start was at the top of Detling Hill. There were 17 teams and the course was of some 40 miles. Winners were Sunbeam, second Carshalton, and third Witley. The Witley team was Dick Viney, Ted Wilmot, Francis Quick and Bert Gaymer. The average loss of marks was 18 per rider, but Dick Viney was one of only two riders who retained clean sheets.

Another win was recorded in 1952 – at the time there were complaints about the absence of detail, including a published result sheet.

There was a gap to 1960. A contemporary report by Ralph Venables has survived:

“Surely the most dramatic in the long series, the 21st Centre Team Trial, organised by the Star Group at Liphook on October 30th was above criticism in all respects except the inclusion of deep water at two or three of the sections. At first this looked as if this would cause the retirement of Witley’s Reg May, but he recovered his missing sparks after a prolonged search and

pressed on. His teammate Jack Taylor was less fortunate and retired at half distance when making best performance among the Witley men. Sunbeam's John Giles finished the last half of the course handicapped by much misfiring (and doubled his score in the process) but Gordon Jackson had to admit defeat with a completely drowned magneto. Despite these misfortunes, it was Witley and Sunbeam who finished far in front of the other 29 teams (positions were determined by the best five performances in each team). Witley's total was 147, Sunbeam's was 150, and all others were well beyond the 200 mark. On a course where every section was ridden clean, not one of the Witley teamsters dropped less than 21 marks – but none dropped more than 34. Individual Sunbeam totals on the other hand varied from 15 to 47. Highest individual score was 136, and highest team 443. Too tough for a team trial? Not a bit of it! I say again every section was ridden clean and it was only the deep water which marred an otherwise perfect event”.

There were 186 starters. The Witley team was Reg May, Peter Baker, Derek Cranfield, Gordon Adsett, and Billy Elliott who pluckily rode with an injured hand received at work.

1961 was another good year for our trials riders – quote from the Club News:

“PRIDE OF PLACE must surely go to our Trials Aces who are carrying all before them. They have won the Home Counties Team Trial, the MCC Team Trial, and the SE Centre Team Trial, which makes a hat trick of the major team events in the South in the past 12 months. Representing us in the Home Counties event were Derek and Gordon Adsett, Billy Elliott, Derek Cranfield, and Reg May. In the MCC Trial, Derek, Gordon, and Reg May. Reg, incidentally making a welcome return to form after what was for him a rather lean period, put up best performance for this event.

1962-1973 was a mixed period. Witley won the Team Trial in 1962 and 1964. 1963 was not a winning year, but the Witley team was Gordon and Derek Adsett, Reg May, Billy Elliott and Mick Mills. Teams were required to provide one Novice and the choice fell to R Huxtable. 1966 was a Sunbeam year and Witley were runners up, not quite being able to produce their best rides on the day to ensure a victory. They were Billy Elliott, Brian Bowler, Mick Dismore, and Roy Enticknap. However, the club had some consolation in that best individual performance went to Derek Adsett.

In 1968 the Team Trial was held at Weavers Down and Witley were represented by Derek Cranfield (250 Greeves), Mick Dismore (250 Bultaco), Brian Fowler (250 Bultaco), Tony Leach (250 Bultaco), John May (250 Cheetah), and Reg May (250 Greeves.)

The next successful year was 1974 with a team including Mick Dismore, Derek Cranfield, Derek Adsett, Tony Heane, Adrian Cooper, Clive Dopson and official observer (who was part of the team) Pete Cannon.

The club was now set on a course of success that led to victory each year to 1980. The Club News, through its Editor John Capell, carried a report for 1975:

“Congratulations to the Witley team which completely dominated the Inter-club trial for the SE Centre. Led by Gordon Farley and Derek Adsett, our lads romped away to an easy win totalling less than half the next team's total points. The tally was 155 for Witley, and 361 for Gravesend who were second. Fellow teamsters Colin Boniface, Clive Dopson, and Derek Cranfield were all in the individual awards and it is excellent to see Witley riders doing so well against strong opposition, for all the well known SE Centre aces were out, in a demanding trial

in the Chichester area. Gordon Farley had a particularly fine ride to finish on 16 marks lost with his 325 Bultaco and 5 of those were due to a whiskered plug on Trundle Hill, which he rode to within a few feet of the top, nevertheless, one handed, tickling the carb with the other. As a result of their efforts, a fine cup has come our way and no doubt this will occupy a prominent place at the Annual Dinner”.

In 1977 the Team Trial was organised by the Tenterden Club in the Hawkhurst area, being a one lap circuit of some 30 miles with sections from slippery to deep mud. The winning Witley team was Derek Adsett, Clive Dopson, Colin Boniface, Derek Cranfield, Pat Smith, Gordon Farley and official observer Pete Cannon. The win was not without incident however due to breakdowns en route to the start. The trailer transporting machines for Colin Boniface and Derek Cranfield lost a wheel on the M25 so the last 35 miles of the journey was completed with Derek and Colin riding to the start. More disastrous, potentially, was that Gordon Farley's machine failed to arrive so he was classified a non-starter, but it was not of consequence since the five riders to count all did sufficiently well to win.

The Weston Trophy was selected as the occasion for the Team Trial in 1978, an appropriate choice since Witley had won the event for each of the previous three years. The Witley team was again victorious, with Gordon Farley, Colin Boniface, Len Hutty, Clive Dopson and Derek Cranfield beating runners-up Gravesend. Colin Boniface won the Premier Award, the Weston Trophy. It was a wet day, sections had to be changed at the last minute, but 43 observers turned out and the day was a great success. Sethern, and Frys Cross Farm, Dunsfold, were both used for the first time.

In 1979, the Weston Trophy was again the setting for the Team Trial, and again Witley emerged the winners. The team was Colin Boniface, Steve Moore, Clive Dopson, Len Hutty Jr., Gordon Farley and Derek Cranfield. The team score was 266, with Worthing on 344 and Brighton on 409. Witley 'B' team was fourth on 409.

The club's last win in the Team Trial was in 1980.

CENTRE TRIALS SHIELD

Hand in hand with success in the Team Trials went individual success and the Centre Trials Shield is a convenient benchmark. Witley successes came in 1954, 1959 and 1960 (Mick Dismore), 1961 Gordon Adsett, and Derek Adsett three times 1963-4, and 1966. Brian Fowler won in 1968 and Colin Boniface – the first person to score a straight hat trick – 1978-80.

Before the war Charlie Wake won in 1932, Herbert Addie in 1936, Francis Quick in 1937 and Bert Gaymer in 1938.

TVTC

Witley won the Solo Aggregate in 1957, 1959-66, 1968-1969, 1971-1980, 1985-1988. Individuals have also won the Senior and Junior Aggregate on many occasions, for example Reg May won the Senior Aggregate in 1960, Gordon Adsett in 1961. As an indication of Witley dominance, in the 1960 Sunbury event, Witley A were best team, and teams, B, C, D and E finished second to fifth in that order.

OTHER TRIALS

The Home Counties Team Trial was an important event at one time and was open to members of the Eastern, South Eastern, South Midland and Southern Centres of the ACU. A Witley team won in 1948, Weyburn second and the rest a long way behind. The Witley team comprised Messrs. Benton, May, Hull and Botting. In 1960 Witley fielded the best novice team and were third in the experts class. As noted above Witley were also winners in 1961. And in 1966 we were in third place.

Witley teams have been entered for many events ranging from the Scottish Six Days through nationals to the Greybeards, often with great success. Reg May was winner of the Greybeards in 1968.

At its zenith the club could raise some 60 entries for a closed to club trial and perhaps up 100 riders riding regularly at all levels with some 20 or so up to national level. Trials are the grass roots of the sport and have been for the whole 75 years of the club's history. It is not practicable to produce a comprehensive study so I would chose three riders each from a different era.

Charlie Wake was a leading rider from the earliest days. He was a member of the winning team in the first ever Centre Team Trial in 1931 and won the first Centre Shield in 1932. He became a works rider at trials and Scrambles for the Sunbeam motor cycle company. He had joined the club in the late 1920's and was Chairman for 32 years and was made a Life Member and Vice President on his retirement as Chairman. He was President of the SE Centre of the ACU, also Life Member of the Sunbeam MCC. He was a very public spirited man. Before turning to the organising side of motorcycling, he was very good at many sports and always had the will to win. He won many awards boxing in the Royal Flying Corps in the 1914-18 war and locally on demobilisation, competed successfully in athletic events and then turned to sprint cycling in this country and on the continent.

Hugh Viney started riding before the war and rode works AJS afterwards with conspicuous success. Winning the 1947 TVTC championship as a hors d'oeuvre, in 1949 riding a 347 works AJS, factory publicity said he had won more open trials than any other rider. Wins included the Colmore Cup, Travers Trophy, Alan Jefferies Cup and the John Douglas as well as the Scottish Six Days. Won the Southern National three times in four years. Won British Experts Trial 1948 from a field of 70 competitors. Altogether won Scottish Six Days Trial four times 1947- 49 and 1953. In 1955 won a Special First. Fifth in the 1950 Scott Trial behind Bill Nicholson, John Draper, Stan Holmes and Rex Young.

Of his 1948 Scottish win the Gazette reported as follows:

“Hugh Viney repeated his brilliant win of last year, and although not leading until well on into the week, this appeared not to trouble him one iota. But once in the lead, he proceeded to put the screws on the others to such effect that he finished up with 12 marks less than the runner up, Allan Jefferies”.

He had a long career in local events: last recorded ride was in the Centre Team Trial at Ashford in 1959 when Sunbeam recorded their 13th win. He was on the SE Centre Competitions Committee in the late 1940s.

Derek Adsett won the Pinhard Memorial Trophy in the early 1960s and the Centre Trials Shield 1963-64 and 1966. He won hundreds of awards at all levels up to national and the

Scottish Six Days Trial and including the TVTC Solo Aggregate during an 18 year riding career in which he received factory support from Francis-Barnett, Greeves, Ossa and finally Bultaco. It is also worth mentioning that he won the Weston Trophy in 1963 and 1968

Although Gordon Farley was a club member from the mid 1970's and featured in several of our wins in the Team Trial he was not a club member when he won the British Championship in 1970 and 1971.

Perhaps our most successful lady member was **Jill Savage** who rode in trials for several years including the 1960 Scottish where she won a first class award. (She was also a regular participant in the Pioneer Run – when she rode a 1913 Douglas in 1965 at the age of 17 the machine was 25 years older than her.)

SCRAMBLES

The club has had many scramblers but the one to achieve perhaps the greatest international recognition was again Hugh Viney who was a member of the international Moto Cross des Nations Team in 1949/50. Ted Wilmot was a works rider for AJS in the 1930s, and was a first class welder (many riders in the 60s and 70s got used to saying “Ted'll do it”).

A light moment is recorded at the Wickham Solo Trial in 1937:

“...The first two laps saw some very good riding, a notable effort being that of Wilmot of Witley, who charged the crowd and collided with a lady, who evidently saw the funny side and provided the crowd with a laugh...”

Other riders including John Clayton and Gordon Adsett rode extensively on the European mainland with success. The Centre Scrambles Shield was instituted in 1953 but no Witley member has won it. John Clayton was runner up to Jim Sheehan in 1955, runner up to Ken Heanes in 1956, and third in 1957 after John Giles and Ken Heanes had managed a tie. In 1964 he was fifth, ahead of Gordon Adsett, who improved his position in 1965.

Gordon Adsett became an outstanding scrambler, being one of the leading British riders on the European scene and his frequent forays onto the Continent often brought home the gold: in addition he rode successfully in Australia and New Zealand, as well as in America. He retired from international events in 1975, henceforward confining his activities to the UK.

Other successful Witley riders in the expert class have been Bill Elliott, Pete Jerred, Pete Crummett and John May.

GRASS TRACK

Successful solo riders have included Francis Quick, George Tapp, Frank Hayward, Dickie Dale and Geoff Urben. Ted Wilmot rode a Velocette on the grass until around 1950. Sidecars have included Bert “Snips” Brett, Don Mussell, Ray Blackall and Chris Tyrrell. Perhaps the most successful was Bert Brett, coming fifth in the Centre Speed Competition in 1954, and runner up to Hilton Woodrow in 1955 (Hilton had won 1953-54-55). Bert won in 1956, with John Steer runner up. There was then a gap before Bert won again in 1964. The Centre Gazette noted:

“On the right hand circuits, Bert Brett, Jim Waller, Arthur Wicken and others all turned in some sparkling performances and towards the end of the season there were definite signs that some of our right hand chairmen could soon constitute a very serious threat to the supremacy of the all-conquering Midland and Northern stars”.

ISDT

It is difficult for others not to stand in the shadow of Hugh Viney who in addition to his talents at other disciplines of the sport excelled at the ISDT, where he rode a 500 rather than a 350 AJS. He was a member of the British Trophy Team 13 times and a member of the 1951 Team that won for the fourth year in succession. He was captain for some time and manager for the British Teams in 1962.

Others achieving success include John May. He won a silver medal riding a Bultaco as part of the Trophy Team in 1977, missing out on a gold by just a few minutes. It was a hard event for machines, John getting through half a dozen rear tyres, three chains, and two sets of brake shoes. He was also selected for the 1978, 79 and 80 Trophy Teams. In Sweden in 1978 he was the best British rider in the team that was placed third in the Trophy contest, behind only the full time teams from Czechoslovakia and East Germany. (John also rode with conspicuous success in trials and moto cross, and in the domestic enduro field won the national ISCA enduro in the Brecon Beacons in 1978).

Reg May, father of John May, took part in the 1961 ISDT, riding a Comerford owned, self prepared Matchless, and was unlucky to miss a gold medal due to someone parking temporarily right in front of the route marking which he consequently missed and lost time. He had the consolation of a silver medal.

Jill Savage also rode in 1961, winning a bronze medal, riding what was described as a "strange" Cotton two speeder.

ROAD RACING

Graeme Brown first made his name in the 1920's at hill climbing and took up road racing at Brooklands in 1924, which he continued until 1935, winning the Essex Cup in 1925 and the J A Prestwich Cup in 1930. He was a works rider for Douglas. A 1927 499cc works Douglas used by Graeme for competition and record attempts is on display in Brooklands Museum. It has a 1926 TT frame and OHV special long-stroke engine, and is accompanied by a touring bike with sidecar used to bring the racing bike to Brooklands in the 1930's. This model is a 1930 S6 with 600cc side valve engine with dry sump lubrication, designed by Freddie Dixon.

Graeme owned his first Douglas in 1923. Aged 23 he opened a motor cycle business in Godalming as Surrey agent for Douglas, a marque in which he specialised throughout his life. On closure of the Douglas factory in 1957, when manufacture of Douglas motor cycles ceased, he bought up the large quantities of factory spares and continued supplying these on a world wide basis; indeed, he was still selling them right up until his death as well as undertaking the overhaul and repair of Douglas machines. One of Graeme's prime interests was riding his collection of early Douglas machines: he was a regular participant in the Pioneer Run since it was introduced and eventually he was able to win the award for the oldest combined age of rider and machine.

In the late 50's and 60's the Club was well represented in the road racing world with riders including Brian Davis, Bill Scott, Dave Mattia, Frank Dixon, Brian Cannon and Trevor Pound. Witley won the team award in the Manx Grand Prix in the early 60's, and John Dixon achieved a moment of fame at Biggin Hill in 1959:

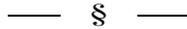
“...John Dixon had a terrific scrap with Mike Hailwood in the 250 class and in the midway stages got by to take the lead but the extra steam in the Mondial told in the end and John had to be content with second...”

Australian Trevor Pound came over in 1961 and joined the club. He rode in the Junior and Senior TT on Manx Nortons, also the Dutch and Belgian GPs. In the Netherlands he was 10th. in the 350 behind Bob McIntyre and Gary Hocking, and 8th in the 500. At Spa-Francorchamps he achieved a 111mph lap and dead heated 8th place with Jack Findlay in a race won by Gary Hocking. Whilst in mainland Europe he won an international event at Strasbourg.

Marty Lunde was a successful rider in the 1970's and for example held the Lydden Hill lap record in 1976.

ROAD EVENTS

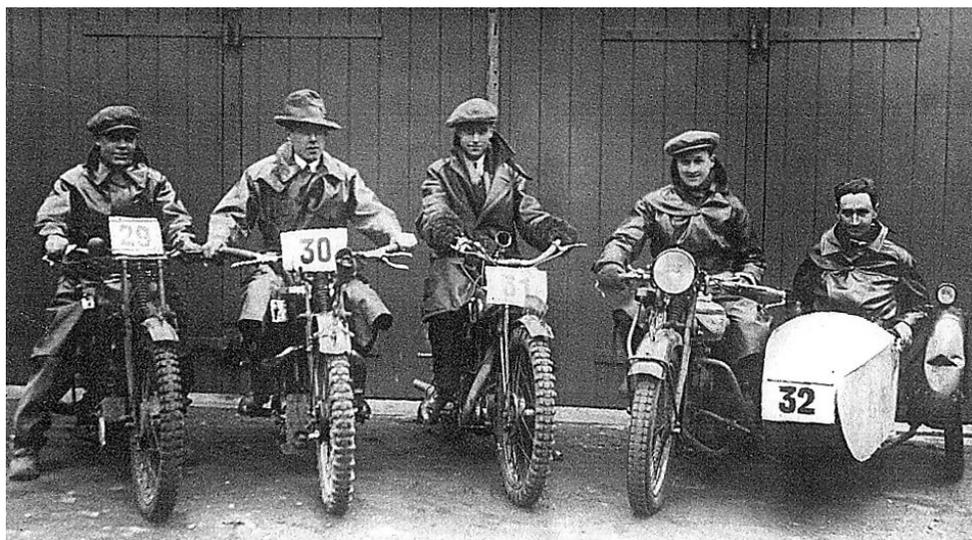
These have been very popular over the years, especially the National Rally where the club won the team prize in the late 1960's. Some years there were more than 20 Witley entries. Road trials were also popular and the club organised one each year from the late 1960's to the early 1980's. Alec Jay won the Centre Sidecar Shield in 1975 for best performance by a sidecar driver (with Helen as Best Navigator) and John Bramall won the Solo Shield in 1980.



75. A typical National Rally finish – Dave Kavanagh, Laurence Richards and Betty Prior at Wolverhampton in 1996.



76. Master at work. Hugh Viney, four times winner of the Scottish Six Days Trial, and 13 times a member of the ISDT British Trophy Team, seen here in 1950.



77. Charlie Wake is on the left on No. 29 with the rest of the Witley team for the 1932 Inter-Centre Team Trial. No. 30 is Dick Bott, 31 unknown, 32 Fred Holt with passenger Ralph Luckham.



78. Gordon and Derek Adsett at the 1962 British Experts.



79. Witley's success at the 1977 S.E. Centre Team Trial. Left to right: Clive Dopson, Colin Boniface, Derek Cranfield, Gordon Farley, Derek Adsett.



80. All Witley members: Left to right: Barry Roads, David Renham, Bernie Schreiber (at that time World Trials Champion), Philip Edwards, John Dismore, Philip Miller.



81. A mid-1960's photo, taken at Bramley, of Ray Bradman receiving the Centre Junior Scramble Trophy from Ken Heanes. Charlie Wake looks on.



82. Colin Boniface collecting the S.E. Centre Trials Shield on one of his winning occasions 1978-80. President Timber Woods is making the presentation.



83. John Clayton (249 Greeves) at the 1960 Inter-Centre Team Scramble, Glastonbury.



84. John May (1949 500T Norton) at the 1990 Arbuthnot Trial.



85. Versatile Bert Brett in scrambles action on an AJS. Note the bow tie.



86. Bert Brett, grass track sidecar champion, manning the flags at a Boxing Day Scramble.



87. Brian Davis collects the Manx Grand Prix Team Prize, won by the Witley Team in 1965, from Mrs. Jane Brown.



Veteran Parade

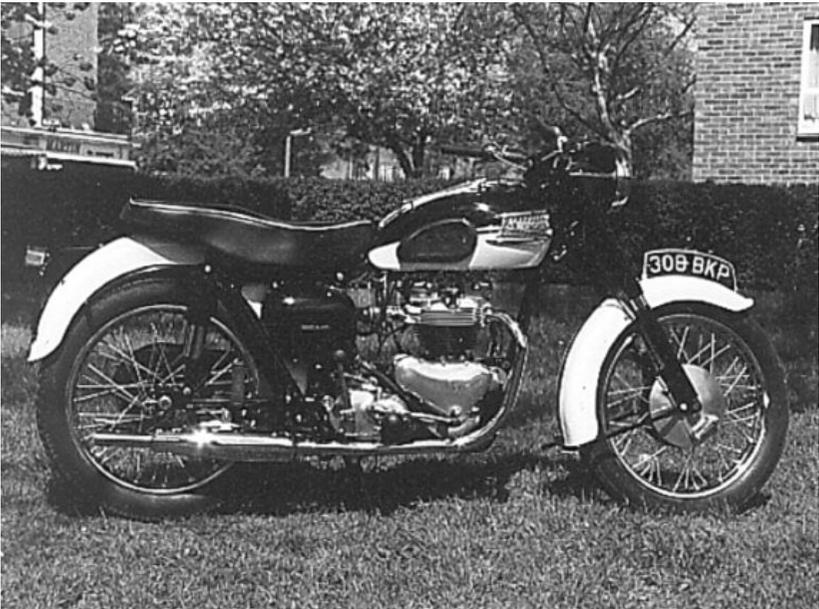
88. Dolly May (1911 Rudge) starts the 1949 Sunbeam Rally from Newlands Corner...



89. ...and Ron May on the seafront at Brighton, having completed a Pioneer Run.



90. Sunbeam Veteran and Vintage Rally near Newlands Corner, September 1953.
Ron May, Godwin Southon, Dick Little.



91. Alec Jay's Tiger 110, taken after restoration in the mid-1980's.



92. Witley members at the Langley control prior to starting the National Rally in the early 1990's. Included in the picture are rally regulars Betty and Derek Prior, John Capell, Alec Jay, Bernard Jay and John Baxter.



93. National Rally finish at Donington Park. Alec Jay and Laurence Richards in view.



94. Gymkhana action in 1974 at Stoke Park – where the Spectrum now stands. Alan McDine riding Alec Jay's BSA Super Rocket with Watsonian Monza sidecar.



95. More from the Gymkhana – the flag is about to drop for the Bread-Spearing Race. Laurence and Jane Richards on the Suzuki, Andy Hewett and Ian Hayward on the Ariel. Len Hutton Sr. looks on.

• A P P E N D I X 1 •
Silver Badge Holders

1931	H.C. Wake	1967	D. Cranfield
1932	F. Holt and R. Luckham	1968	G. Storr
1933	C. King	1969	W. Elliott
1934	R. Whitbourn	1970	P. Jerred
1935	A.W.May	1971	J. Bowler
1936	R. Underwood	1972	P. Cannon
1937	<i>Not Known</i>	1973	F. James
1938	A. Boniface	1974	B. Wilcocks
1939	<i>Not Known</i>	1975	J.E. Bramall
1940-45	<i>Not Awarded</i>	1976	J. Capell
1946	R.A.May	1977	A. Jay
1947	J. Fincken	1978	M. Brown
1948	R.G. Edwards <i>and Miss D. Fisher</i>	1979	R. Ayears
1949	D.C. Hull	1980	L.A. Hutton
1950	T. Holbrook	1981	A. Eagle
1951	A.G. Brown	1982	C. Tyrrell <i>and R. Tyrrell</i>
1952	P. Perry	1983	B.C. Jay
1953	J. Norton	1984	G. Welsman
1954	G.D. Brown <i>and W.F. Damant</i>	1985	R. Bowker
1955.	G. Southon	1986	Mrs. A. Welsman
1956.	R.A. Sutton <i>and Mrs.D.A. May</i>	1987	D. Dale
1957.	A.F.Brett	1988	B. Cannon
1958	J. Clifford	1989	L.G. Richards
1959	W. Horner	1990	P.R. Crummett
1960	P. Brewer	1991	G. Adsett
1961	R.J.May	1992	D.J. Prior
1962	P. Sharp	1993	B.J. Brockman
1963	L. Talbot	1994	G. Shaw
1964	J.W. Boniface <i>and Mrs.K. Boniface</i>	1995	P. Piercey
1965	B. Bowler	1996	E. Gigg
1966	W. Glover	1997	P. Jay
		1998	Mrs. J. Piercey
		1999	C. Boniface
		2000	D. Kavanagh

• A P P E N D I X 2 •

Premier Award Winners, Major Trophies

Weston Trophy Winners

1932	L. Heath	1972	A. Ketley
1933	L. Heath	1973	A. Ketley
1934	E.J. Heath	1974	<i>Not awarded</i>
1935	G.W. Wilkin	1975	G. Monk
1938	A.F. Gaymer	1976	G. Farley
1946	G.M. Berry	1977	G. Farley
1949	A.F. Gaymer	1978	C. Boniface
1950	E. Usher	1979	D. Clinkard
1951	L.A. Knock	1980	L.J. Hutty
1952	R.W. Peacock	1981	L.J. Hutty
1953	R.W. Peacock	1982	L.J. Hutty
1954	<i>No competition</i>	1983	L.J. Hutty
1955	E. Usher	1984	M. Crowder
1956	E. Usher	1985	S. Levett
1957	E. Adcock	1986	D. Wicken
1958	R. Langstone	1987	P. Morphett
1959	G. Bartlett	1988	M. Crowder
1960	G.L. Jackson	1989	T. Skilton
1961	R.J. May	1990	G. Cooper
1962	M. Jackson	1991	G. Cooper
1963	D.J. Adsett	1992	L.J. Hutty
1964	M.J. Waller	1993	A. Newbery
1965	R.J. Davy	1994	G. Cooper
1966	J. Connor	1995	A. Newbery
1967	G. Farley	1996	P. Morphett
1968	D.J. Adsett	1997	A. Newbery
1969	G. Farley	1998	K. Morphett
1970	G.J. Best	1999	L.J. Hutty
1971	A. Ketley	2000	A. Newbery

H.C. Wake Trial Winners

1969	G. Galloway	1985	D. Wicken
1970	R.A. Whitebread	1986	S. Lovett
1971	R A Whitebread	1987	D. Clinkard
1972	D. Wakeford	1988	P. Morphett
1973	R.A. Whitebread	1989	A. Hall
1974	S. Palmer	1990	D. Sherlock
1975	G.A. Budgen	1991	L. Hutty
1976	C. Sutton	1992	L. Hutty
1977	C. Boniface	1993	W. Holdsworth
1978	C. Boniface	1994	L. Hutty
1979	C. Boniface	1995	P. Morphett
1980.	L. Hutty	1996	<i>Not awarded</i>
1981	N. Repton	1997	A. Newbery
1982	L. Hutty	1998	S. Connor
1983	L. Hutty	1999	A. Newbery
1984	K. Morphett	2000	S. Hiscock

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Dick Hysom Trophy Winners

1965	P.F. Brewer	1983	B. C. Jay
1966	R. Potter	1984	J. Capell
1967	R.T. Bell	1985	L.G. Richards
1968	S.A. Baldwin	1986	L.G. Richards
1969	P. Jerred	1987	A. Jay
1970	P. Manester/P. Sharp	1988	B. C. Jay
1971	<i>Not awarded</i>	1989	P. Cannon
1972	<i>Not awarded</i>	1990	D. Prior
1973	G. Shaw/M. Smith	1991	L.G. Richards
1974	B. C. Jay	1992	L.G. Richards
1975	N. Rodgers	1993	L.G. Richards
1976	N. Rodgers	1994	P. Cannon
1977	D. Gravestock	1995	D. Kavanagh
1978	A. Rice	1996	D. Kavanagh
1979	A. Hewett	1997	D. Kavanagh
1980	R. Ayears	1998	L.G. Richards
1981	I. Hayward	1999	<i>Not awarded</i>
1982	A. Hewett	2000	<i>Not awarded</i>

Bob Gosden Trophy Winners

1982	K. Marshall	1992	R. Enticknap
1983	M. Barnes	1993	D. Shave
1984	P. Dale	1994	J. Dismore
1985	M. Francis	1995	A. Steele
1986	C. Harvie	1996	J. Greygoose
1987	J. Dismore	1997	A. Ketley
1988	R. Hodges	1998	R. Fleet
1989	M. Dismore	1999	L.J. Hutty
1990	S. Scott	2000	<i>Cancelled</i>
1991	M. Dismore		

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G.D.Brown Cup Winners

1956	R.J. May	1978	S. Moore
1957	G. Bartlett	1979	G. Haslam
1958	M. Dismore	1980	L.J. Hutty
1959	M. Dismore	1981	J. Dismore
1960	R.J. May	1982	J. Sands
1961	P.C. Wilson	1983	C. Boniface
1962	A.J. Day	1984	N. Repton
1963	M. Dismore	1985	N. Repton
1964	M. Dismore	1986	N. Repton
1965	P.C. Wilson	1987	D. Stalker
1966	R. Davy	1988	N. Repton
1967	P. Gaymer	1989	G. Adsett
1968	A. Ketley	1990	N. Repton
1969	G. Monk	1991	J. Welland
1970	M. Conway	1992	N. Repton
1971	D. Wakeford	1993	N. Repton
1972	D. Wakeford	1994	M. Weller
1973	D. Dew	1995	M. Weller
1974	A. Cooper	1996	R. Thurlow
1975	A. Haslam	1997	K. Nolan
1976	D. Clinkard	1998	D. Stalker
1977	D. Clinkard	1999	J. Welland
		2000	S. Hiscock

• A P P E N D I X 3 •

Boxing Day Scramble – Locations

pre-1936	Foxhills, Pirbright
1936-1938	Foxhills, Pirbright
1945	Ash Ranges, Aldershot
1946-1948	Park Hatch, Dunsfold
1949-1950	Woolgars Farm, West Horsley
1951	Park Hatch, Dunsfold
1952	Foxhills, Pirbright
1953	Bagshot Heath
1954-1966	Tunnel Hill, Pirbright
1967	<i>Cancelled – foot and mouth disease (venue would have been Tunnel Hill, Pirbright)</i>
1968	<i>Cancelled – waterlogged ground (venue would have been Park Hatch, Dunsfold)</i>
1969-1978	Tunnel Hill, Pirbright
1979-81	Long Valley, Aldershot

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• A P P E N D I X 4 •

Boxing Day Enduro: Past Winners

1979*	W. Budden	1990	A. Smith
1980*	R. Ferguson	1991	C. Koch
1981*	J. Cordrey	1992	D. Stalker
1982	C. Harris	1993	C. Benford
1983	L. Hutton	1994	L. Hutton
1984	G. Monk	1995	L.Hutton
1985	C. Koch	1996	G. Brent
1986	J. Cordrey	1997	G. Brent
1987	C. Koch	1998	L. Hutton
1988	P. Archer	1999	D. Stalker
1989	P. Batt	2000	D. Stalker

**These early Enduros were not held on Boxing Day as at that time the Scramble was still being run.*

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96. Party atmosphere in the 1950's. Don Lewis, Rita and Reg Fishlock, Kath Boniface – but who is the gentleman at the front wearing the hat?



97. The Clubroom at Mary Road on a typical Thursday evening in the late 1970's. Recognisable are Kath Boniface, Gerald and Val Storr, Lofty Mumford, Graham Ford and Jim Drury. The football table in the foreground provided much fun over the years. The picture on the wall is of Graeme Brown with one of his veteran Douglas machines, alongside the board listing Silver Badge holders.



98. At the Clubroom: David Hull, Peter Fraser, Derek and Daphne Cranfield.



99. Graeme Brown, Ann Hutty, Hilda Beasley, John Beasley and David Hull.



100. Bridget and Ian Hayward, Jane Richards, Dolly May, Ken Lock.



101. Ladies of the Club, always ready to give a helping hand.
Left to right: Joan Clifford, Brenda Tapley, Esther Wilcock, Jill Sharp.



The author sets off for the Exeter Trial on unlikely machinery, 1972.

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David Hull

Ron May

Motor Cycle News

Nick Nicholls

Tony O'Brien

Derek Prior

Laurence Richards

Richard Rosenthal

Bill Scott

Danny Stalker

Geoff Urben

Ralph Venables

JOHN BRAMALL

Woking, July 2001

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A selection of programmes from 1938 to 2000.

