

Editorial

Well I hope you have all prepared or at least started to prepare the trials bike ready for the coming season. Yes, we here in the E.F.A. still work approximately to the ways of old. By the middle of the month of October we should have given up scrambling, camping, caravanning and all the 'summer' sports and got ourselves involved in our winter activities. Our season has already 'kicked off' with the 'Training Day' which was held in glorious weather at Snaque Pit. But now we are really into the serious stuff.

Mike Harden and his merry men ran their Classic British Bike Trial at Covenbrook Hall rather earlier in the year than is their norm. I appreciate their reasons for doing so but I was quite disappointed with the, to me, low entry they received. However, Mike was quite happy so that is all that matters. A bit easier than last years, it saw clean rides on both routes - mind you, those who went clean would have still 'won' their respective classes/routes even if the trial had been set as a British Championship Round. Many people seemed to be unaware of John Bull, who went clean along with Mark "wake me up when its time to start" Fletcher. Now John, back in the seventies was one of the top men of the South Midland Centre and was always there or thereabout when it came to winning trials so he was no mean rider. Then of course we have the winner of the 'easy' route, none other than Don Smith. It won't be long before Don is back to riding the hard route I am sure but before then quite a bit of 'bike fitness' has



Peter Teager 250 B.S.A. At Covenbrook Hall

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The October Plonkaround

Raydon Pit, Wades Lane, Raydon, Nr Ipswich, Suffolk

Saturday 18th October 2003

Start: 12.00 noon

Trials practise for:

Pre 65 solos • Pre 65 sidecars • Twin Shocks

Youths • Twin Shock sidecars

to be achieved. Once again the Greeves Riders Association provided a goodly part of the entry and it was nice to see riders from quite far afield enjoying themselves amongst the streams and tree roots of wildest Essex.

On talking with Don, I was pleased to find that there is a move away from the extremely un-British Mikuni carburettor towards a very British (not Spanish/British) carb. It seems that Peter Gaunt has been experimenting with a Villiers carb on 'Eric's Dad', his C10, and found it to be rather good. This has led Mick Grant to fit one on his 'very special' Cub with similar results. So now it looks as if the old, unwanted Villiers carb has gained a second lease of life. Mind you it has always been known that when compared with an Amal Concentric, the Villiers IS a true concentric AND it doesn't show signs of wear anything like so readily. So there we are, look out all those Villiers carbs - haven't heard about one being fitted to a Henfield yet but . . .

Our training day took place at the Snaque Pit and was ably managed by Graham, Roger and Ted - (apologies if I have left you out of the 'management' list). The ground was what might be called 'firm' - not the consistency which made falling off something to be considered lightly! Alright, I realise there was a covering of dust in places but underneath the ground bore a very strong resemblance to concrete. No doubt by the time the winter arrives we will be complaining about the ground being too soft! 'Er indoors, took the opportunity of having her 'annual outing' and seemed to enjoy herself but

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John Blake

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found it all a bit tiring and gave up half-way through the trial, but she enjoyed what she did so that is the main thing.

I found it a little disappointing that there were several of our members, who in my opinion could have made good use of some tuition, missing from the days activities. There seems to be a distinct reluctance amongst some beginners to learn from those who have spent a lifetime of involvement with trials. Trials isn't,

and never has been, a case of just getting on the bike and riding it. When starting in trials almost any bike can be set up to be more capable than the rider but this is often not the case, the beginner is not only fighting the steering of the beast but also fighting the reluctance of the machine to respond in a satisfactory manner and not having the slightest idea of how to position oneself within the bounds of the section to make it possible to ride and subsequently enjoy. Bad machine set up, lack of section/line appreciation all contribute to additional risk when taking part in what is essentially a very safe sport.

The Eastern Centre is holding a Dinner to celebrate the centenary of the A-C.U. - yes the Auto-Cycle Union should have received its telegram from the Queen! Contrary to rumours circulating, the event is taking place at the Colne Valley Golf Club and NOT the Earls Colne chippy well loved by the patrons of Tims Tours!

Get your pins and winkle pickers out! Its that time of year again! Yes, we go to Wivenhoe for the Crab and Winkle Trial on the 19th October - regs stapled in the centre of the newsletter. Once again we are the guests of Brian Horrigan to ride in his own private nature reserve and of course we park in his back garden/orchard. Please do your best to do as little damage as possible to the surface of the parking area and also can I make a plea to try and park within the confines of the orchard rather than out on the road as this IS a residential area and we must NOT upset any of the local residents, Brian lives there, we don't!

FOR SALE

1953 Featherbed Dommi

£2500 o.n.o.

Don Daley

01787 477045

(before 9pm please)

WANTED



One of my friends is a chef at an old peoples home in Saxmundham in Suffolk and makes a lot of home made jam/chutneys etc for sale to raise money to help pay for outings etc.

He is in desperate need off any old jam jars with lids or coffee jars.

Please save any jars and give them to me at clubnight etc

thanks in advance

Paul Game

OK if you arrive in an artie then no doubt you might be excused but . . . if you can park inside then please do so.

I understand that things might be a little different this year as Brian has done a bit of land swapping whereby the land containing the sections beyond the footpath no longer belongs to him but has been replaced by another area.

See you there? Hope so, it is one of the jewels in the crown of E.F.A. trials land.

Don't know how to get there? Just drive down the main street into Wivenhoe and follow the signs/cards - as easy as that!

Was sorry to read of the death of Norrie Whyte, long time journalist on the MCN. I can vouch for some of what John Dickinson wrote in T+MX about Norries reporting techniques. Back in the 70s I don't know who spent longer hours at the bar at the SSDT, Norrie or some of the trial organisers. I don't know how he would fare with some of today's riders who fitness and/or alcopops as their staple diet rather than pints of best bitter. I had always taken Norrie to have been much older than myself. His larger than life presence was something to be aware of. A very very different person than our revered Ralph but someone whose passing will leave a gap in motorcycle sport.

This part of the world, and the E.F.A. in particular, entered the Arbuthnot in force and we have a couple of reports in this issue of the magazine. It makes one wonder whether there is a possibility that something like this could be run in this part of the world. I have my doubts but I hope that someone can prove me wrong.

If there is more interest being shown in long distance trials then may I suggest that the events run by Sidcup and the Owls in the South Eastern Centre be considered for next year. Sadly neither of these would be able to compete with the Arbuthnot for route and countryside passed through but beggars cannot/should not be choosers.

Don 'High Speed' Daley has written a report on the Woodbridge Sprint and I feel that Don is hiding his success under a dirty great barrel - is he the rider of the fastest non-works Velo?

Did you go to the Shrublands Park reunion/walkabout? I haven't heard anything about it but I understand that some of our members may have attended. Shame on me but I never attended a Shrublands meeting, well not a scramble - went there when the Mardle Trial used it for sections but I only arrived in this part of the country when Shrublands was undergoing its last rites and I was always in other parts of the country when scrambles took place.

Thumpers time is here again! 'Er indoors should have a supply of regs with her at clubnight and for those of you entered last year and didn't venture out to the Alma, don't despair, you should receive a set through the post within the next week or so. As usual, if you don't intend to ride then your assistance will be greatly valued by Chairman Ted, so please give him a call on 01206 841519.

Don't forget the Crab and Winkle and also Mike Hardens Plonkaround.
Best wishes,

Jim

Secretarys Scribblings

Phew, what a scorcher our Practice Trial turned out to be. It was a day when riding gear doubled as a sauna. Still we enjoyed what we did and are grateful to everyone who helped make the day possible. It was nice to have a "play" at Snaque Pit.

Seems a long time ago since the last Tim's Tour (probably 'cos it is) but thanks to everyone who supported them, through the summer, especially Doug Huxtable who came on all of them. The money we collected went to the ACU Benevolent Fund, East Anglian Childrens Hospices (Ann and Don French's choice) and the £20 we collected from the September Tour has been sent to Mark Canham's wife to add to donations she is collecting in his memory (more about Mark in the Management's article elsewhere in the T&T).

John Beet was helping at the end of the recent Essex Air Ambulance Run where all the bikes ended up in Harwich and he asked for thanks to be passed on to everyone who put into the collection for him when he crashed out at the Chattisham trial. He donated the money to the Air Ambulance Appeal in return for the lift they gave him to hospital. It's taken a long while to get mobile again but he's well on the way now and may come to Club Nite if he can hitch a lift with some of the other Harwich lads.

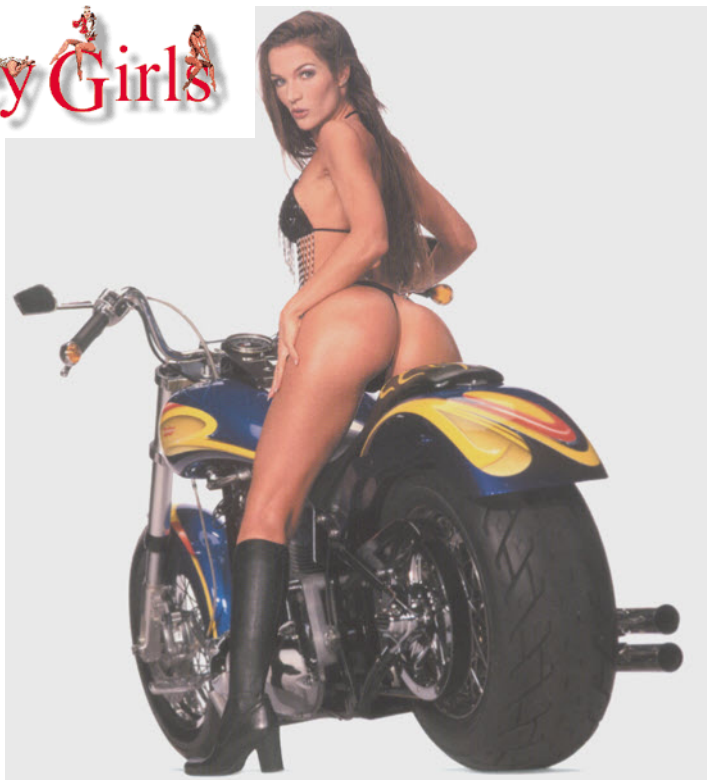
Club member Paul Weavers has dropped us a line to tell us about a collection of engines his family has at West Mersea. These are powered by different fuels - diesel, steam, petrol and paraffin. They are fired up from time to time and the last time for this year will be on SATURDAY 18TH OCTOBER. Paul has very kindly invited Club members and friends to go along and have a look at the collection from 12 midday onwards at 20 Mersea Avenue, West Mersea. Refreshments will be available free of charge and Paul and his brother will be on hand to answer any questions you may have. If you need any further information please give Paul a ring on 01206 383210 - that's Saturday afternoon 18th October.

Have received some flyers from the Eastern Centre ACU advertising a Centenary Dinner to celebrate 100 years of Motor Sport. It's at the Colne Valley Golf Club, Station Road, Earls Colne on Saturday 15th November. Tickets are available from Derek Clampin, Stone House, Halstead Road, Fordham CO6 3LL or Lyn Berwick, 23 Tymmes Place, Hasketon, Woodbridge IP13 6JD and cost £20 each.

Don't forget our Wivenhoe Trial on 19th October, the Woodbridge trial at Tunstall on 26th October and the Boxford Bonanza (which unfortunately clashes with the Guy Fawkes and Old Codgers) on 2nd November - now that the price of fuel has gone up it makes sense to support your local events!

Heather

Harley Girls



Trials Forum

A trials forum will take place on Tuesday, 28th October at the Cock Public House in Bramford starting at 8 pm.

With several trials having to be cancelled recently due to lack of entries, the Eastern Centre Trials Sub-committee feel it is important that they get not only the organiser's point of view but that of the rider also.

So if there is anything you think needs to be changed within the trials world of the Eastern Centre, then this is the opportunity to have your say.

Of course, if you have any comments regarding our own club trials then make your point or points to a member of the Revolutionary Council and no doubt it will be discussed and disregarded at our next committee meeting. No I didn't really mean to say that!

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THE ARBUTHNOT

A trial from between the wars, run today by the Salisbury Motor Cycle Club

The Arbuthnot commemorates Rear Admiral Sir Robert Keith Arbuthnot KCB, a real pioneer motorcyclist. He came third in the 1908 TT on his Triumph and later won the Motor Cycling Club's London-Lands End-London Trial on the same machine. He died when his ship HMS Defence went down in the Battle of Jutland. He went down with his ship as did his Trusty Triumph! Some of his ex-Naval colleagues perpetuated his legend by running a trial in rural Wiltshire, for Naval Officers originally, and so the Arbuthnot was born. The trial ran between the wars, latterly being opened up to all Naval ranks and by 1938 it had been absorbed into the Services Trail, the Arbuthnot award going to the best Naval competitor (more of the Services at a later date). After the war, the services continued, and still do, but we had to wait until 1982 before the Salisbury club re-launched the Arbuthnot on the glorious Wiltshire/Dorset borders between Salisbury and Shaftesbury.

Enough of the History, as Mr Don Daley (is he the fastest man on a Velocette?) reported last year, a bunch of men from Essex made a trip down to the West in September. This year the EFA were represented by a team comprising (in age order) Mustaffah (alias Mick) Brown on a Royal Enfield model G (Yes! the ex-Roger Birch Model), Don Daley on his Norton 500T and young Mark Wilson on the 350 Bullet. Also there from the EFA was Dick Hobart on an ex-WD350 Matchless G3L, Keith Fitz-John on his Norton 500 M18 and Ted Collins on his Norton 500 16T who I believe is a friend of the EFA. The team met up on Saturday night at the Barford Arms, also the trial start, a very wise move by Messrs Daly and Wilson (as they stayed the night here). Mustaffah stabled himself, his minder and his camel (sorry Henfield) just a mile up the road. The other brave souls I believe camped in the surrounding countryside!

Sunday dawned fine and dry and we were all away by 9:45, no punctures or falling off between sections this year! A surprise considering the amount of falling-over tonic consumed by some of the team! As last year, 75 miles of mainly ancient tracks with very hard unforgiving ruts, only ten sections and a special test - and fabulous views with the Isle of Wight just visible on the horizon.

We all gained finishers certificates apart from Ted who unfortunately retired - I don't know the details why. Dick finished as a hero with a broken footrest retaining bolt. Mark won a 1st class award in the Pre-Unit fourstroke solo spinger class, as he did last year. Mustaffah also won a 1st class in the Colonial Class (road bikes with lights and road tyres). Don should have won an award for Artistic Interpretation for his performance on the last section, he tells me he's still carrying the bruises!

Roll on next year! or are there any other similar events? Any ideas? What about an EFA event?

Mick Brown

The Woodbridge Sprint

Several E.F.A. men were present at this very important meeting, known as the 'Classic Bike Speed Weekend'!

My back up crew consisted of son John and grand daughter Ellie. We met up with Mark and Ray Gibb, Trevor Rumsey, Pete Haylock ex CRMC membership secretary (Pete used to trial years ago with Ken Keely on an outfit in Eastern Centre events).

I'd an entry for both days this year and got the KTT going reasonably well, the Inter was along as spare bike as none of the other sprint 'projects' was anywhere near ready.

Saturday started awfully. Having fired up the Velo amid the usual huge cloud of smoke I took the 1½ miles to the start of the 'Flying ¼' course only to oil the plug right at the bottom of the slope, so pushed the thing all the way back.

Tried about half a dozen plugs - all the same - oiling up - then took the ancient N4 Champion out of the Inter - never looked at the plug again for the rest of the weekend. First Ray Gibb and then Alan of Hitchcock Motor Cycles helped out with plugs (I'd used all mine) for the Inter till we found one it liked.

Luckily I'd been sponsored for the weekend with a lovely set of starting rollers by Phil of Helbac Automation (Southend) so we didn't have to keep pushing the bikes while this was sorted out. These rollers are great for a shy bloke like me - everyone is your mate when they want to use them!

Steven Harvey brought along the two Inter Nortons tuned by his father plus some Methanol for me. Unfortunately Stu Rogers couldn't make it.

We had a really lovely evening on the Saturday. John cooked up some Spagbol and I had a drop of Blandy's Madeira to put me to sleep in the back of the van whilst they slept in the tent.

We had the Gold Star men turn up on the Sunday - five lovely bikes and a real credit to their owners and Phil Pearson who I understand does most of the engineering on them.

Along with Tom Reynold's Minter 'Manx' they were parked next to the old Velo and made it look really shabby.

I forgot to mention the panic that occurred when the Velo burnt its clutch out on the line at the start of the Flying Quarters. We had take all the pattern bits out and replace them with 50 or 60 year old worn out parts that've been round the world twice - result no more trouble, there's a moral in there somewhere!

Steven had gone home unwell on the Saturday night, even so he put up a 120mph terminal flying ¼.

The Gibbs won their class - 'Up to 600cc Modern' - at 132mph.

My Velo did 123, 127, 128 and 129mph to win the 'Up to 500cc Post War Vintage'.

And the old Grey Inter did 98 mph with the valves floating.
I think the results should be in Classic Bike before long.
And I've not one bruise to show for it!

Don Daley

Guarenteed Weight Loss

A man was ordered by his doctor to lose 75 lbs. due to very serious health risks. As he wondered how in the heck he would ever do it, he ran across an ad in the newspaper for a GUARANTEED WEIGHT LOSS PROGRAM. "Guaranteed.Yeah right!" he thought to himself. But desperate, he calls them up and subscribes to the 3-day/10 pound weight loss program.

The next day there's a knock at his door, and when he answers, there stands before him a voluptuous, athletic, 19 year old young lady dressed in nothing but a pair of Nike running shoes and a sign round her neck. She introduces herself as a representative of the weight loss company. The sign reads, "If you can catch me, you can have me!" Without a second thought he takes off after her. A few miles later, huffing and puffing, he finally catches her and has his way with her. After they are through and she leaves, he thinks to himself, "I like the way this company does business!"

The same girl shows up for the next two days and the same thing happens. On the fourth day, he weighs himself and is delighted to find he has lost 10lb. as promised. He calls the company and orders their 5-day/20 pound program.

The next day there's a knock at the door and there stands the most stunning, beautiful, sexy woman he has ever seen in his life, wearing nothing but Reebok running shoes and a sign around her neck that reads, "If you catch me, you can have me." He's out the door and after her like a shot.

This girl is in excellent shape and it takes him a while to catch her, but when he does, it is worth every cramp and wheeze. For the next four days, the same routine happens. Much to his delight, on the fifth day, he weighs himself and found he has lost another 20lbs as promised. He decides to go for broke and calls the company to order the 7-day/50 pound program.

"Are you sure?" asks the representative on the phone. "This is our most rigorous program." "Absolutely," he replies, "I haven't felt this good in years". The next day there's a knock at the door and when he opens it he finds a muscular guy standing there wearing nothing but pink running shoes and a sign around his neck that reads, "If I catch you, you're mine."





The fourth and final tour for this year took place on September 6th.

Those taking part were Roger Birch - B.S.A., Peter Eaves - Kwacka, Roger Finch - Ariel beige sofa, Chris Huxtable - B.M.W., Chris' Dad - on his scooter (the only participant to undertake all four tours), Graham and Jacqui Braybrook - gleaming Harley, Brian and Chris Fletcher - smokey Henfield, Jeff Fincham - another gleaming Harley, Paul and Luke Gray - 500 Triumph trailie, Rog and Heather - in the bath tub, and yours truly - Beeza.

Before we set off, a short silence was observed in respect of Mark Canham who died on 31st August aged 42. Mark took part in several of our tours and will be remembered as the big cheery chap on the bug red Kwacka which resembled a pre-war Indian.

As was usual a collection was made and at the suggestion of Rog and Heather this was forwarded to Mark's wife, to be donated to a charity of her choice.

The route taken by our tour was through Aldham to Bures, then passing through Pebmarsh, Wickham St Paul, Castle Hedingham, Toppesfield, Blackmore End, Beazley End, Bocking, Greenstead Green and yes, would you believe it, the Earls Colne Chippy.

We had all but finished our nosh when it started to rain but fortunately it turned out to be a short shower. After this it was homeward bound. All this machinery behaved well and the event passed quite uneventfully. So endeth another season of our tours.

Plans are already in progress for next year and the management have an all day tour in the pipeline but more about that in the future.

Thanks to Rog and Heather for their continued support and help. Also to Roger Finch for supplying the route for the French Connection and also to everyone who took part.

Respectfully yours,

The Management

QUICKIE:

Life not only begins at forty but it begins to show

Marriage seminar

While attending a marriage seminar on communication, Colin and his wife listened to the instructor declare, "It is essential that husbands and wives know the things that are important to each other."

He addressed the men, "Can you describe your wife's favourite flower?"

Colin leaned over, touched his wife's arm gently and whispered,

"Self-raising", isn't it?"



A.H.Kenny - 349 B.S.A.

OUCH!

A chap falls asleep on the beach for several hours and gets a horribly sunburnt. He goes to the local hospital and is promptly admitted after being diagnosed with second degree burns.

He was already starting to blister and in agony. The doctor prescribed continuous intravenous feeding with saline and electrolytes, a sedative, and a Viagra pill every four hours.

The nurse, rather astounded, said, "What good will Viagra do him?"

The doctor replied, "It'll keep the sheets off his legs."

MOVIE STAR IN HOLLYWOOD



A good looking man walked into an agent's office in Hollywood and said, "I want to be a movie star."

Tall, handsome and with experience on Broadway, he had all the right credentials. The agent asked, "What's your name?" The guy said, "My name is Penis van Lesbian."

The agent said, "Sir, I hate to tell you, but in order to get into Hollywood, you are gonna have to change your name".

"I will NOT change my name! The van Lesbian name is centuries old, I will not disrespect my grandfather by changing my name. Not ever!"

The agent said, "Sir, I have worked in Hollywood for years... you will NEVER go far in Hollywood with a name like Penis van Lesbian! I'm telling you, you will HAVE TO change your name or I will not be able to represent you."

"So be it! I guess we will not do business together." the guy said and he left the agent's office.

FIVE YEARS LATER The agent opened an envelope sent to his office. Inside the envelope was a letter and a cheque for \$50,000.

The agent was awestruck.. who would possibly send him \$50,000? He read the letter enclosed:

"Dear Sir,

Five years ago, I came into your office wanting to become an actor in Hollywood. You told me I needed to change my name. Determined to make it with my God-given birth name, I refused. You told me I would never make it in Hollywood with a name like Penis van Lesbian. After I left your office, I thought about what you said. I decided you were right. I had to change my name. I had too much pride to return to your of office, so I signed with another agent. I would never have made it without changing my name, so the enclosed cheque is a token of my appreciation.

Thank you for your advice.

Sincerely,

Dick van Dyke



Seen at the Arbuthnot

John Shaw from Halesowen with his 1940 MDD 348cc Velocette

Owls Long Distance Trial ...

On August the 17th 2003, the 'Owls Club' which was formed as long ago as 1926, took a popular decision to run a long distance trials competition around the many byways and country lanes of Kent.

So on the Sunday morning at 'Deepdale' in East Sutton near Maidstone, 61 starters lined up to do battle with a 90 mile course which included several interesting and varied observed sections plus a special test at the end of the day. The whole event was an enormous success and every body I saw had that silly grin on their face at the end of it, including me.

The 'Owls Club' was the very first trials club that I joined about twelve years ago. As a slow learner it was the easy route that Alan Miles and his helpers used to set out that kept me in the sport until I could cope with tougher stuff. This 'Trials Club' holds many pleasant memories for me as well as one very unusual one in the form of 'wild garlic'. Yes! It was this pungent stuff that we used to crush as we rode over it at 'Mascals Pound Farm' in Paddock Wood. This caused our eyes to water profusely and you had to ride the sections with tears in your eyes! These were of course 'tears of pleasure'.

I saw many familiar faces on the day although all of us were looking a tad older now after many years. Some of these friendly faces were busy organising proceedings in the start area, or were observing on the excellent sections. Incidentally, the sections could not be inspected before riding them, which is just the way I like it. This is a great leveller as far as skills go and also reduces the advantage modern bikes have over the older ones. It's definitely a bit of a buzz to see the section unfold before you as you ride through. Snap decisions are needed to pick a way to the ends cards with little opportunity to change line. Slow thinking brings failure whilst the opposite gives just rewards.

There were five classes, which included several teams of three. The best team award went to 'Team Bexleyheath'. The successful riders were S. Fellows, R.Castleton and M.Cheese with a total loss of 27 marks.

Best overall performance went to A. Woods by the skin of his teeth with a loss of 5 marks and a 24.27 seconds special test, an excellent ride! He was pushed hard by R.Castleton who had lost the same amount of marks, but he was just 0.82 seconds slower in the grass tracking bit! But, 'Dick' Castleton on his Suzuki 200 was best in class, 'A' which was for up to 225cc. So Dick had two awards to come from his ride so far. But he wasn't finished yet as he had entered the over fifties as well. He won this also even though he didn't look a day over 49 and three quarters! So well done to him for a great days riding.

Class 'B' 226cc to 400cc gave Steve Austin a clear win on 6 lost with 28.87 seconds for his mad dash around the special test and over the two telegraph poles. He was one point clear of the next rival in his class.

The overall competition winner A.Woods took class 'C' for over 400cc machines. This shows just how well he rode on the day because those bigger bikes

are very heavy and not really suited to trials type sections. An outstanding performance indeed!

Class 'D' for British Bikes was won by yours truly on my old Ariel, but my only rival on the day was Bob Bartholomew (an old friend) on his BSA Metisse. He unfortunately retired with engine oil leaks early on, so my win was a little empty.

During the day I rode in company with my sons long-term friend Adrian Dicker. So my thanks to Adrian for the company and thanks also for the exercise (which I didn't need) when I helped him drag his fourstroke Suzuki out of the sticky mud on section one! What a way for an oldie like me to start a long distance trial. But Adrian did come in handy when helping me to mend a puncture in a narrow country lane soon after a bumpy section seven where I picked up a front tyre compression burst. When changing a tyre I have not pinched an inner tube for about 20 years but I damn well did this time! So off came the tyre for a second time and out came my 'only just fitted' new tube for a self-vulcanising patch repair. Many thanks to all those riders who stopped to offer help and the two back markers who did help a lot and also lead the way back to 'Deepdale' for the special test. Brilliant test! Especially the challenge of the two telegraph poles which the old bike flew over with me off the saddle. I was a little down on braking power and acceleration and had front wheel slide so could only manage 30.61 seconds. What I didn't realise until afterwards was that my front tyre had gone almost flat again due to a leaky valve core. When I pulled up behind my trailer straight after the special test my tyre had deflated completely! My tally of two punctures and a leaky valve is a record for me in one day.

Other weird things do happen on long distance trials and whilst waiting to go through one of the afternoon sections I got talking to another rider who's arms were covered top to bottom in nicotine patches! He had also just lit up another king size cigarette, so I politely asked him if he was having trouble giving up smoking? "Oh no" he said, "I have only taken up smoking to give up the patches"! Strange and almost true?

Many thanks to the 'Owls Club' for running their first 'Long Distance Trial'; I will be back next year for another bash and hopefully a few less punctures!

Dave Blanchard



The Wit of Tommy Cooper R.I.P.

Tommy Cooperisms. to brighten up the day.

"Doc I can't stop singing The Green, Green Grass of Home."

"That sounds like Tom Jones syndrome. "

"Is it common? "

"It's not unusual."



'A Rose Between Two Thorns'

My view of the E.F.A. team 'Eastern Promise' at the '03 Arbuthnot Trial.

There's Mick Brown on the ex-Roger Birch Model 'G', Mark Wilson on his 350 Bullet, and me on the old 500T Norton.

Mick arrived in the Salisbury district some days before for a short holiday accompanied by his delightful wife Ann.

Mark and I arrived at the Borford Inn Saturday night via the Netley Marsh Autojumble which in my somewhat jaundiced view is a waste of space and time, enlivened only by bumping into a motley crowd of E.F.A. men intent on collecting as much old rubbish as they could comfortably carry.

Sunday morning saw us unloaded, scrutinized, in good time for the approx 9.30 start.

The Chelmsford 'lot' arrived, viz Big Ted, Keith Fitz-John and Matt Littmoden - 2 Nortons and a G3L. Ted is a REAL hero, attempting this trial with a badly broken wrist -m still not mended, on a 16H side valve, girder rigid Norton - very heavy! He got 20 odd miles before he had to give it best.

As usual there were lots of Ariels, AMCs galore, 7 or 8 Nortons, the odd B.S.A., a rigid Bantam, plus some Villiers engined "things" -



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all rigid, and the local hero on a pre-war GTP Velo - strangely, not many Enfields - 2 or 3 at the most (eds comment: just shows what an odd lot the E.F.A. are doesn't it!). This collection of solos was followed up by several chariots crewed by masochists!

Mrs Venables flagged me off at 9.34 on to the first section which was up a grassy hollow barely 2 miles out.

Some of the sections were far too tight for my liking but I managed to clean a few, plus I did a reasonable time in the special test.

Why do organisers set such tight sections in such a big wide open place as Salisbury Plain? Was Peter Eaves on his hols helping them set out I wonder?

Arriving at Manwood after many hard miles I took one look and said 'Blow That', simply too tight for me and 3½ hundredweight of Norton, all this set out on the side of a very steep grass hill (small mountain by Essex standards).

Luckily the rest of the trial makes up for the odd hiccup like this.

Following Mick along some of the tracks I couldn't help thinking what a capable ride he was having, on road tyres, zero ground clearance et al.

The old 500T excels at this type of going - top gear all the way with Mark W doing his shepherding act at the rear continually telling me to get a move on!

The weather was brilliant, the views wonderful and all three team members finished in good time with no mechanical trouble at al.

Unfortunately I took a heavy fall at Shave Hill and it still hurts like hell! This of course will only encourage me to do better next year.

Flasbacks:

The scene at the start - Mrs Venables starting off so many wonderful big 4 strokes.

Nearly stopping in the middle of a 2 foot deep stream when the Norton sucked in a drop of H₂O - just got through.

A fellow competitor overtaking a bunch of riders along a rutted track. Five minutes later he fell off and we repassed him, laying on his back, laughing fit to bust.

The view from West Quay from where you could just make out the Isle of Wight in the distance.

The 500T slogging up a long chalky bumpy track uphill in top gear at just over walking pace, the back wheel scrabbling for grip.

Postscript:

Mark Wilson lost 23 marks and gained a 1st class award

Mick Brown riding the Colonial route lost 3 marks and gained a 1st class award

I lost 28 marks and didn't get an award

Marvellous day out.

Don Daley

End Thought . . .

The light at the end of the tunnel is an oncoming train.