

Editorial

I have almost been overwhelmed by your responses for articles this month which will mean that I have much less room than normal to impart my rambling thoughts to you.

Please don't think that I have an abundance of articles each month for your enjoyment - I don't - so please if you have anything interesting to write about, please put pen to paper or (preferably) fingers to keyboard and let us all in on the secret.

I must start by making a mention about those who are currently 'suffering'. Our Presidente is somewhat 'hors de combat' following what he considers to be his biggest ever 'get off' which took place at the Timber Woods Trial. Don't know whether he will be fit enough to come to club night - I guess it will depend on whether anyone can take the club wheelbarrow to bring him along.

I haven't been able to find out how Chris Mace is progressing but we wish him well in his recovery.

Our best wishes must go out to Roger Finch with the hope that the treatment that he is undergoing will prove to be successful.

During July I had another holiday at the NHS Broomfield Butlitz, this

time sort of planned, not one of these last minute jobs off the internet.

Arkwright has been 'doctored' in the same way that I was back in March and fortunately it would appear that they caught him early on as he was only given one dose of chemotherapy whilst I had to undergo seven!

Now onto more interesting things. The Sidcup club's Timber Woods long distance trial took place 'last weekend' and we were well supported by both riders and writers. In fact I have been able to include two reports on the event.

'Our Team - Eastern Plonkers' made up of Pompous Norman, Bob Drane and Joe Stollery would appear to have shown those 'furriners' from south of the river a thing or two as I gather they well and truly thrashed the opposition in winning the team award.

I won't comment too much on the trial as quite a bit has been written about it but suffice to say it would appear to have been a long, testing but very enjoyable day even though there would appear to have been a few injuries and a lot of 'bladder flashing'. Acting as back up to the 'terrific trio' were El P and Roger Gulliver. Roger had the job of being the 'lantern rouge' and carried the broom to sweep up all the bits and bodies.

Something that really amazes me about these events is that people put

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The August Plonkatound

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Saturday 14th August 2004

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Youths • Twin Shock sidecars

their faith in Pompous Norman to steer them in the right direction. Yes, the person who runs the Presidente a very close second for general navigational skills is appointed the 'leader of the pack'. The mind boggles! I gather that a superb road book, similar to that used on the Dakar Rallies was provided - perhaps it was a road book for a section of the Sahara desert that was used which ensured they found their way through 'darkest' Kent without any problems! And, Norman didn't have the GPS fitted!

Our quintet 'lost' the Presidente about three quarters of the way through the event, Ian having got well cross threaded in a rock solid rut, ending up viewing the 'nether regions' of the Sparrow. He finished but by the time he got to Braintree to do the last stage of the journey technicolor hues had appeared on parts of the Presidential limbs. On getting back to the Presidential residence he found that he couldn't extricate himself from the VW and had to call for help using the apparatus that isn't supposed to

be used whilst stationary. Her ladyship finally appeared, cursing him to open the doors of the garage himself but was soon made aware of his lack of mobility.

A visit to the local cottage hospital then ensued and they finally got home at about 4 am, thankfully with no broken bones but a hell of a lot of bruising. This wasn't helped by age and the regular intake of rat poison (Warfarin) which although essential to some of us old fogeys, does nothing for bruises!

Very lucky to have a photo of two of our sprinting stalwarts, John Ruth and Don Daly, on the line at London City Airport at the same time. I understand that Don is currently a bit out of sorts having to be lifted onto the machinery prior to his runs. Perhaps the EFA should invest in one of these cranes that they used to use in times past to install the knights on their chargers.

Best wishes,

Jim

Secretarys Scribblings

The Pre-65 Motocross Club organised another good meeting at Tye Farm earlier in July. Maybe the 26 race programme was a little bit ambitious but it certainly gave everyone their moneys worth.

Youth featured on the front cover of the programme with Mick and Sue Mead on their No. 99 outfit and Sam Appleton on his No. 84 solo.

Alan Farmer's luck was running true to form. After a good start, he was leading the Tye Farm Grand National Final only to be brought to a halt with a front wheel puncture. As the saying goes, if he didn't have bad luck, he wouldn't have any luck at all !

As far as I know the club have two meetings in August, one at Marks Tey on the 8th and one at Maylandsea on the 29th.

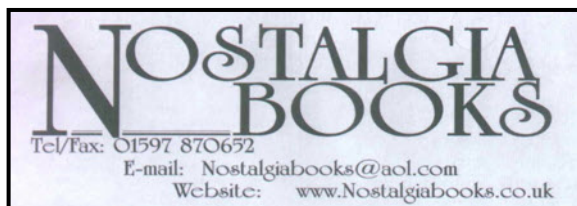
Had a great weekend at the Weeting Steam Engine Rally, even though I did get swept aside from my seat in the sidecar by a blonde, in an orange boilersuit, called Charlotte on the Sunday! This event covers such a large area you need to be there for two days to see it all. As it gets dark the place takes on a magical feel as the Showman Engines gather around the funfair and beer tent with all their lights twinkling. A bonus this year was a visit from the Wall of Death which fitted in well with the rest of the displays. Thanks to Chris Bater and family for looking after us so well once again.

Sounds as though the last Tim's Tour went off successfully and plans are afoot for the next one. No doubt details of this will appear elsewhere in the newsletter, courtesy of The Management.

If you haven't got anything planned for August Bank Holiday Monday why not try the 16th Fenman Classic Bike Show at Wimbotsham, near Downham. Market. It covers pre-1975 bikes, there's a jumblie, music, refreshments and it all kicks off at 11 am. Admission is only £2 with proceeds going to local charities. Needless to say they have a website - www.fenmanclassic.co.uk and more information can be found there.

Whatever you get up to, have a great time.

Heather



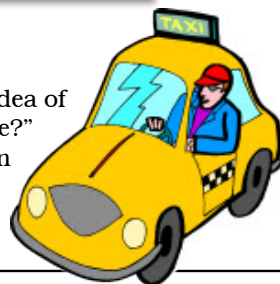
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ACCIDENT PROOF CAB

Two cab drivers met. "Hey," asked one, "what's the idea of painting one side of your cab red and the other side blue?"

"Well," the other responded, "when I get into an accident, you should see how all the witnesses contradict each other."



Please Note:

The closing date by which all articles and adverts to be included in the August issue of Trials & Tribulations should reach the editorial office is Monday 30th August.

Material for inclusion in the magazine may be supplied in the following forms:

handwritten • typed • computer hard copy • fax • email • floppy disc

If providing computer hard copy, a font size of 12pt minimum is preferred whilst articles supplied on floppy disc should be saved in text format.

Dear EFA Members,

Thank you once again for raising valuable funds for us, do realise that you guys and galls have raised in excess of £3500 for us over the last three years. This year the total is expected to exceed £1600 when the Rocking Horse Raffle takes place in early October and will be used to provide some new dining room furniture. I hope you all enjoyed the evening with the new and improved 'Spirit of the East' dance team. I understand that the comedian/compere almost behaved himself, my only regret is that I missed all the fun, never mind lets look forward to next year!

THANK YOU

Gill Sleightholm

Seven Rivers Manager

P.S. from Mick Brown

Looks as if I got away with it again! Thanks for all your help with the clearing up and thank you, Jim, for publishing that picture of Geoff Daw's grandson on the Bantam in last months T&T. Therein lies a story!

The residents of Seven Rivers are a varied and in the main happy bunch, making light of crippling complaints and accidents which have befallen them.

Take Phil for instance, an ex-biker, who keeps very cheerful despite being bedridden. Then there is Eric, who gets around in a wheelchair, a former gas worker who unfortunately was involved in an industrial accident. Eric was a great follower of motorcycle sport and we often chat about the greats like Brian Stonebridge and Dave Bickers. Then there is my heckler, Roy, bless him, another victim of an industrial injury and finally, David, who completed the London Marathon a few years ago and now suffers from epilepsy.

None of these lads are resident at Seven Rivers due to a motorcycle incident, but who knows?

What has all this got to do with young Carl Daw who rode his granddads Bantam with great confidence in his first trial at Seven Rivers?

Well, Carl's other Granddad, Dave, was a resident at Seven Rivers.

What a fitting tribute to his late granddad and how proud Dave would have been to see Carl at his first event.

TIME FOR A CRINGE

Why did the blonde nurse take a red magic marker to work?

In case she had to draw some blood.



SIDCUP CLUB TIMBER WOODS LONG DISTANCE TRIAL

SUNDAY 25TH JULY 2004

Five of us decided this would be a good event to ride - Bob Drane, little 125 Scorpa, Joe Stollery, big 600 Indian and Norman Blakemore, 200 Beta entered as 'The Eastern Plonkers Team' with. Ian Preedy, 225 Yamaha Sparrow and me, Roger Gulliver, 400 KTM (fastest bike ? slowest rider ?)

Starting place for the trial was the Sidcup Club land at Canada Heights, just south of the Dartford River Crossing. The route was approximately 100 miles along byways and small lanes with ten, non-inspection, sections thrown in along the way. We were early numbers and after completing one section at the Heights, set off down a byway adjacent to the entrance gate. The good folk manning the next section were handing out orange drinks which were gratefully accepted (even more essential when you lose your water bottle Norman !)

The first unexpected incident occurred when Norman caught his handlebars in some undergrowth (or should that be overgrowth ?) and made a quick departure from the intended route down a bank. After some repair work to a damaged throttle we were on our way again.

It should be explained that Norman was leading the way as he has the Route Card holder and I was bringing up the rear, trying to avoid being filled in by chalky white dust which was kicking up in places.

The next delay was when Ian sustained a rear wheel puncture. The members of the Eastern Plonkers

Team, forging on ahead, were blissfully unaware of this so I set off to bring them back, a new tube was quickly inserted and off we went again.

We didn't encounter many other people along the route, there were more horses than rambblers, and not many of them, luckily.

A deep water hole looked as though it could cause our next "incident". Fortunately it was possible to nip up the bank to avoid going through it - you could have drowned, never mind the bike! Just along from here there was another section and guess what - another puncture. This time in Joe's front wheel. With the bike perched on a convenient tree stump it was soon sorted and off we went to tackle the section. Everyone cleaned it except me, I almost made it but toppled off the KTM near the end, oh well, never mind.

There are some nice big hills in Kent with some great scenery. In fact one section was a dead engine downhill wiggle designed to avoid disturbing the people living at the farm near the end of that particular byway.

After another petrol stop we carried on along more byways. Unfortunately Ian came to grief along one of these, bouncing from one rut to another and ending up as a soft landing for the bike. After picking them both up and carrying out a bit of front wheel bashing to try and straighten things out we set off to catch the others up.

By now it was later than you think (good job we were early numbers!) and we still had to get back to Canada Heights for one more section plus the Special Test. Luckily no more "incidents" occurred and we got back to the section, covered by Marge Clarke (Timber Wood's daughter), the second she'd done that day, and also the Special Test.

We'd set off at 9.40 in the morning and returned at 6.45 in the afternoon, having covered 129 miles of the Kent countryside, definitely a good, full day out. A big Thank You to the Sidcup Club for making it all possible. Long may we continue to be able to use the byways. Thanks also to Norman for acting as our "guide" for the day.

Congratulations to the "Eastern Plonkers Team" who won the team

event on 10 marks lost (Bob - 5, Norman - 1 and Joe - 4). The next team were the Late Gang on 20 marks lost and Team Thames on 25 marks lost. Individually Norman came 7th and won a Second Class Award in his class, Joe came 15th and was best in his class and Bob came 20th, well done lads.

Speaking to Ian the following day we discovered he was more beaten up than originally thought, necessitating a trip to the Cottage Hospital. X-rays revealed nothing broken just a very, very painful, swollen, bruised leg. Thought you'd like to know, Ian, the next long distance trial is on 3rd October. Is that long enough for the body and the memory to recover ?

Backmarker

BONKERS BOOKS

I was fascinated by this article in the July publication of Trials & Tribulations. It rekindled an idea that has been rattling around in this strange brain box of mine. This idea was fuelled by a series of gags on BBC Essex some years ago, funny but fictitious book titles, like 'Hat Making for Beginners' by Sonia Head, or 'Practical Shoe Repairs' by Sonia Foot. I think Ivor Biggin got in there some where!

This is where the strange brain box took over, how about motorcycling titles I thought, like:

'The Large Headed Bullet' by Ivor Biggin!

Now lets set a little competition for EFA members and generate some copy for our hardworking Editor.

Get your brain box into gear! First is OK we don't want any high speed stuff and think up some amusing title and author combinations, they don't have to be bike orientated and here are a couple of examples to get you started.

'The Beginners Guide to Tiger Cub Training' by Claude Bottom

'The Storeman's Lament' by M. T. Binns.

Get the Idea! Send your contributions to Jim!



London City Airport *Sprint*

Club members messers, oh sorry, messrs Page, Daly and Ruth were to be seen clutch abusing and 'head banger' against the clock.

To the casual observer, pusher, sandwich eater and fountain of wisdom, the scene has much to offer in sights and sounds, noise even. The technical extremities that are visited and olde fashioned mechanical skills involved is mind blowing. This ranges from two 70 plus gents pushing a conglomeration of AMC bits with Norton bottom end up and down and panting "It isn't going to go" right up to Bernard Hepworth, a 5 foot high, 3 foot wide gent in shiny white leathers aboard a 2.5 litre Harley (eat your heart out Preedy!). This machine has been given the title of ARE Super Twin and is fed a diet of nitro and Red Thunder. After much attention by four minders huffing sprays into the intake, the electric starter plugged in and lots of noise and strange smells emanate from the beast. It is 'spun up' to the lights after first dousing the 8 inch rear slick with bleach. Green - GO - banshee wail, tyre smoke and its announced 6.3 seconds with 183 mph terminal. That run must have cost £2000 !!

Now back to the wannabees.

I recognised several names and machines from my spasmodic viewing of sprints across the decades.

Booth Ariel - these Ariels were raced by the Booth brothers initially in the early 1950s. I witnessed them at

the Boreham road races organised by Chelmsford and District Auto Club.

Trevor Rumsey, who many of you know is still getting faster on his B33 BSA.

Don Daly's newly built Manx needed the half round file on his carb slide - lovely bike though.



John Ruth & Don Daly

photo: Stuart Penfold

John Ruth's 'Battle of the Twins' 750 Norton didn't disgrace.

Sorry that I missed Steve Page's efforts - must have been on pushing duty!

A yellow Velo, rigid, with AMC alloy tank, went very well against modern machinery in one pairing.

Another piece of history - the Booth Matchless with sidecar was seen being pushed back to the pits - oh dear. This is a '50 alloy engined competition model - looks very standard but has got a good history.

The John Renwick Vincent sidecar is 'fab' both in looks and sound!

The time, effort and money that goes into this scene is really incredible. The technology is a credit to the innovators. I must be very lazy - 3 years to build a Triton.

Pedro E



The latest venture took place on 24th June. Those brave enough to attend were the following: Geoff Daw and grandson Carl, Mr Huxtable Junior, Tony (Chris's friend), Chairman Ted and his "Boss", Mike Meadows and yours truly.

We were blessed with magnificent weather as we departed from the Alma making our way towards Birch, crossing the bridges over the lake, reaching Layer Fox cross roads, turning right and taking in the scenery as we went over Abberton reservoir. Then through Gt Wigborough, Tolleshunt D'Arcy, Gt Totham, past the Gulliver residence, who were unable to participate as they were attending Scott Nichols Testimonial Speedway Meeting at Ipswich.

Meanwhile, back at the ranch, we continued to Braxted, Kelvedon, Rivenhall, Silver End, Cressing and reached the Braintree by pass at the McDonalds roundabout. Then onwards through High Garrett to Halstead and Greenstead Green. Here after the back and beyond to Earls Colne via the aerodrome and finally finishing in the middle of the village at the traditional destination.

Our next trip will take place on 11th September and will start at Bures, finishing at Hadleigh by the invitation of Geoff Daw and Doug King. Further details will appear in the September issue of Trials & Tribes.

See you there,

By Order Of The Management



Power of Persuasion

Bob, a 70 year old extremely wealthy widower, shows up at the Golf Club with a breathtakingly beautiful and very sexy 25 year-old blonde who knocks everyone's socks off with her youthful sex appeal and charm who hangs over Bob's arm and listens intently to his every word.

His pals at the club are all aghast. They corner him and ask, "Bob, how'd you get the trophy girlfriend?"

Bob replies, "Girlfriend? She's my wife!"

They're knocked over, but continue to ask. "So, how'd you persuade her to marry you?"

Bob says, "I lied about my age."

His friends respond, "What do you mean? Did you tell her you were 50?"

Bob smiles and says, "No. I told her I was 90."

Orange Juice & Punctures

At long last the 25th of July had arrived and the fifth 'Timber Woods Long Distance Trial' was Go! Go! Go! as the inimitable Murray Walker would have enthusiastically shouted.

Back to its roots full circle, starting and ending at good old 'Canada Heights'. It was a pleasure to have an entry in this popular and therefore over subscribed event.

This year for the first time ever I was leaving my 'Old Faithful' 1938 Ariel in the garage and giving my modern bike a shake down. The last time I rode this modern contraption was in Wiltshire six years ago where it spat me off dislocating my right knee! But it's only a game and all in the fun whilst trying to ride my much more technically advanced 1949 AJS.

The surprise section 1 at the 'Heights' surprised me when I turned left in the section instead of turning right. A painful and embarrassing 5! Never mind I mused, it could only get worse. It did! But first I must make mention of my 'Hero of the Day'. Alan Brook you are a star! No you are 5 star! Your section, with its two tables and soft white linen tablecloths, was sporting orange juice for every rider who came through. You kindly offered me a drink and as it was non-alcoholic I accepted. Many thanks mate, what a lovely gesture and in the true spirit of the good old days. You are a Gentleman Sir!

Section three gave me another 5, as tight as a Nuns knicker elastic it was, honestly! Do Nuns really wear knickers? Can a bishop out there write in and tell me please? But I digress, so back to the section where I

accidentally fell 'end over apex', instantly blaming it on Alan Brook. My theory was that he had laced the orange juice with a drug that quickly destroys your resistance. Mine had deserted me already. I have never felt so bruised early on in a trial. Never mind I thought it could only get worse. It does!

Refreshingly, the sophisticated outline of two lovely ladies on section 4 changed my misfortunes at last. I rode the narrow gully for just one dainty little dab where last year I had crashed and in the process firmly twisted my left leg into the lotus position! Many thanks nice ladies in the shape of Margie Clarke and Sue Blanchard. Did my good luck continue? Did it hell! Listen carefully for I say this only once. I had just left section 4 grinning like a Cheshire cat when I had a speed wobble on the rear wheel. A puncture! How strange, I hadn't had one of those since last year. I told my team members to carry on; I would fix the tube and then call out a skip lorry to get the remains of the bike home. I had to use the middle area of section 4 to practice changing my rear tube. Oh boy! What trouble that was because I was a spanner short of a wheel spindle and had to improvise in the best boy scout tradition.

After a slow tube transplant I decided to continue with the trial. Well I hadn't lost anything had I? 'Cos the air that was in the tube was free in the first place. Topped up with more free air I got a shift on thinking, no way could this get worse. Wrong! Anyhow things were looking better as I had caught up with some funny looking

bikes compared to mine at the first petrol stop in Snodland. It wasn't too long after that, that I had to stop to let a horse and rider out of a byway at Detling Hill. I got off the bike and beckoned her through. She smiled and I said to her. "What a lovely horse you have" (that always gets em, well it did last time). "Thank you very much" she said and trotted by leaving me wondering how on earth they get into those skin-tight breeches? (I know, I know, I've been here before). And don't the manufacturers make them a fantastic shape too!

Just as I was pulling away two old residents who looked like the hecklers from the muppet show, flagged me down to complain about the bikes. I completely sprang onto their side and agreed that some riders are too fast and they are spoiling it for us good boys. You should complain I said. "Go on; phone Peter Burrell he will scold them right enough." I played the hard done by trick and agreed with them on everything, then they both ended up apologising to me! They told me not to worry and just get on and enjoy myself and have a great day. One up to us grimy old trail/trial riders! Psychology rules, OK!

Well blow me down! I hadn't gone another 300 yards when I met another frightened horse. It was a real athlete it was, tall and handsome with jet-black fur. A bit like the Lindford Christie of the horse world, from the hindquarter view of course. This time the lady rider was accompanied by a young African stable boy who was even blacker than the Stallion! This was the perfect time to eat my Blue Parrot biscuits, (in the red wrapper). Whilst doing the psychological chatting bit with the young horse lovers I decided to offer the horse a blue parrot. "No! No! He doesn't eat biscuits," she said. "Oh he's in training is he". "No he doesn't like biscuits", she replied. Now how on earth do you get a horse to tell you he doesn't like blue parrots? Surely everyone does, don't they? Can a Bishop out there write in and tell me?

Anyhow I eventually, 'carried on regardless'. Even though the lack of rear suspension had shattered my spine and pummelled my bum. This was partly my fault for leaving my rear tyre hard to avoid further compression bursts. I hammered onwards; sometimes in the wrong

Arbuthnot Team News . . .

Two teams have been entered from the Eastern Centre, all of whom are EFA members I think as follows:-

'Eastern Promise' - Colonial Route
 Mick Brown 350 Royal Enfield
 Dick Hobart 350 Matchless
 Pete Sigourney 350 Ariel

'Spirit of the East' - Comp Route
 Keith Fitz-John 500 Norton
 Stuart Penfold 500 Norton
 Andrew Prill 480 Matchless

Mick Brown
Team Manager!

direction getting nowhere. Down one track I caught a hanging vine in my right handlebar, this was of the type that Tarzan always uses in his films. I was doing about 20mph and being unwillingly pulled to the right side of the track when the vine eventually snaps! This catapults me over hard left and into a run off area about 8 foot long. Left leg kicks hard at the ground to keep the bike upright and I swear profusely whilst collecting black and blue toes where they rammed the inside bottom of my boot. Oh! And I forgot to say that the vine pulled the front brake lever back cutting my middle right finger and made that turn blue as well. But it gets worse!

Still hammering on, I seem to be getting 'somewhere' when all of a sudden the front wheel gets into a speed wobble. Oh damn blast and confound it! It's a front tyre puncture now! I haven't had a puncture for at least two hours! How strange. But luck was at last with me because I had no sidecar fitted. So another punctured tyre to be was cleverly avoided, or so I reckoned! Young Alan Clarke stops to offer help. "No thanks mate I am expert at this, in fact I am thinking of taking it up full time you know" I said. He then made a comment on trials riders running tyre pressures far too low. Read on young Alan and find out what caused them! New tube in and just sling some more free air in the rear one for luck. Onwards and homewards I hammered when an almighty bang came from the rear. That's the rear bike frame. That's it! I've only gone and broke me frame haven't I? A lonely voice from the sixties speaks in my head. Ignore it man, just keep going with the aching back the aching arms, neck, wrists, ankles and toes. Not to mention the

nether regions. That bump was the last straw that broke my camel backpack. I knew something was awry and on further analysis I found that the solid iron three sixteenth rivet on the left seat frame had completely sheared through with the force that my bum had contacted it during what seemed like an earthquake to me. The rear mudguard has got a helluva crease in it now. You modern bike riders wouldn't have even felt that bump! But it cracked my backside in two. Clear for all to see at my next full moon! Now enoughts, enough mate! I was just too late to do section six. Tired, unable to even read a simple road book I begged Peter Burrell to direct me to the nearest tarmac because I wanted to go back to Sidcup for a rest.

At the bottom of Wrotham Hill a superbiker was laying in the road not looking too super. His two mates looked concerned as the ambulance men put him on the drip. That's three drips I counted. The ambulance was blocking my road and all I wanted was for them to get out of my way cos I was tired and I wanted to go to bed.

When I arrived at the Heights I finished the last section for a dab. I queued up for the special test which is really good at this event. I had let some of the excess air out of the rear tyre and blow me down with a feather, the valve core stuck part open and it went flat just before my turn. Pump out and quick as a flash that free air was back in again. Continued queuing pointing down a slope and blow me down again the petrol level was so low that it ran away from the petrol tap and of course the engine stopped! I finally made the special test start line. Go! Go! Go! The man shouted. I did whilst trying to kick my right footrest

down before the first turn. I must have looked a site hammering up the track waving my right leg about like a demented Saturday afternoon footballer with two defunct inner tubes loosely strapped onto the rear carrier. These were flapping in the breeze like two Octopuses who had just hitched a ride to hell!

As Colin Edwards the 'World Superbike Champion' would say, I had rode my butt off more than ever man and finished nowhere! Why do I do it? I dunno! But my mind and

back are bent towards a more modern bike in the near future.

So next year at the 'Timber Woods Trial' this young mans fancy will turn to thoughts of spring! That's rear ones of course!

I have one consolation and that is knowing that my two punctures were caused by thorns or maybe nails or barbed wire but it was pinholes to the uninitiated.

Dave Blanchard

CHARITY BARBECUE EXPOSED

Both the manager of Seven Rivers and myself in my PS forgot to apologise for the delay in serving the barbecue after our recent trial. I know most of you did not care much as you relaxed with a glass or two but one or two people had to get away and missed the cabaret. However this c**k up did have an amusing conclusion.

You will not believe this, but this year we all had an agreed running order for the day: Trial start prompt at 4pm, Barbecue served at 6.45pm etc. etc. Well at about 6pm I politely suggested to the Chef that he ought to be getting the barbecue going. 'Plenty of time' he says 'I have only got to cook off the meats'. No' worries, I think, he's got all the meats in the oven and he is just going to flash them on the barby for show. Oh no! at 6.45 he is still desperately fanning the barby into life and yours truly is getting very hot under the collar. Well, I've got six highly strung belly dancers to keep under control in the changing room (the pays not much, but there are a few perks!) Eventually we eat, and you who were there know the rest, dodgy comedian, again(!), stripper(!) and belly dancers.

What you don't know is that we at Seven Rivers have a digital camera and most weeks we have a caption competition for some snap taken at a function or just daily life at the home. Well the week after the trial the snap chosen was one of our chef stood scowling at the barbecue and brandishing a large fork.

We had several good entries, and desperate for inspiration, I wandered into the kitchen looking for ideas. Whilst chatting to the lady assistant chef I read the cooking instructions on a packet of sausages she was about to cook. "Eureka", I cried "that's the winner." Unfortunately my entry was disallowed, can't understand why, what's wrong with "PRICK WITH A FORK".

The winning entry was 'Gordon Ramsey, who the F is He', I thought mine was more polite!

Sorry !

Mick Brown

Rigidly Towards Rannoch

My Scottish Holiday 2004

by
Clive Dopson

Part 2



Saturday started a bit brighter than Friday and we set off to the start early to try to fix the problems. At the School House our scores were confirmed, Matthew was about 25th and I was about 60th, a fair way ahead of the next rigid. After some phone calls, Brian managed to find someone at the trial with the coil he needed and I bought a couple of new rear tubes. Coil and tube fitted, we were ready to start right in the middle of the entry to go to Pipeline first.

Pipeline was as difficult as Friday and I tried the same line and had a poor five, but even worse the right footrest was broken and bending. I told Matthew to carry on and I returned to the start to find a welder. The local police said the nearest garage was now in Ballachulish, so I continued to ask anyone in Kinlochleven if they could help. Finally the footrest fell off and I was resigned to the ride to Ballachulish and miss a few groups. Then I found a guy who thought a colleague of his in the fire brigade might have a welder, so I followed his car to

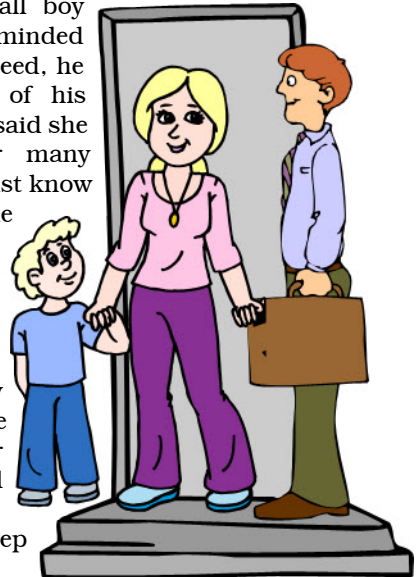
Vaseline

A researcher called at a house and his knock was answered by a young woman with a small boy running around her. He asked her if she minded replying to his questions, and when she agreed, he asked her if she recognised the name of his company, Cheeseborough Ponds. When she said she didn't, he mentioned that among their many products was Vaseline, and she certainly must know of that product. When asked if she used it, the answer was, "Yes."

He then asked how she used it, she said, "To assist during sexual intercourse."

The interviewer was amazed. He said, "I always ask that question because everyone uses our product, and they always say they use it for the child's bicycle chain, or the gate hinge; but I know that most of them use it for sex. Since you've been so frank, could you tell me exactly how you use it?"

"Yes, we put it on the doorknob to keep Little Johnny out."



EVIDENCE

Judge: Did you or did you not see the gun being fired?

Witness: I did not see it being fired. I only heard it.

Judge: Well, that's hearsay. It's inadmissible as evidence.

As the witness left the stand and walked back to his seat, his back was turned to the judge, at which point, he laughed out loud. Immediately the judge recalled him to the bench and was about to hold him in contempt of court.

Witness: Did you actually see me laugh?

Judge: No, but I heard you.

Witness: Isn't that the same kind of inadmissible evidence, Judge?

the fire station where he telephoned him, then I followed to his house in Kinlochleven. So I ended up in the garage of this bloke whilst he welded the footrest bracket as best he could. Finally, I rejoined an hour late and luckily when I got to the next section riders were still there.

A slack dab was given away, but in the third sub yet another rear puncture, so again drop from Cnoc A Linnhe down to the road and fit another tube. A road bike rider helped until the back marker, another friend of mine, and the two trail bike riders from Friday turned up. A guy with a Gold Wing said he had a compressor fitted but it did not work, so finally I headed off with 20 PSI in the rear tyre to catch the back markers waiting at the next group. The next few groups were lonely then back to Kinlochleven for refuelling with at worst being about 90 minutes late. The reasons for keeping going were twofold: firstly, I hate giving in and also the Best Rigid Award may still be possible.

Finally I got to Lower Mamore where my Mum and some others were still waiting after Matthew had gone through about an hour earlier. A steady ride here was good, currently 15 marks in the first 14 sub sections. I set off up Mamore Road knowing the footrest is bending again, riding defensively I drop a three at Mamore and then set off towards Callert Falls. Then disaster in the next section, it falls off again. Retiring was a possibility, but I carried on, as even if I retired I would still have to ride back. So I set off for a painful ride on one leg for about 15 miles and managed to foot all but one of the next nine sections without looking and catch back on time with Matthew. The worst bit was getting from



The Wit of Tommy Cooper R.I.P.

Tommy Cooperisms. to brighten up the day.

Apparently, 1 in 5 people in the world are Chinese.
There are 5 people in my family, so it must be one of them.
It's either my mum or my dad, or my older brother Colin, or
my younger brother Ho-Cha-Chu.
But I think it's Colin.

Callert Falls to the Mamore Road with 20 PSI in the rear tyre. The last three subs were rideable, so I rigged up a tyre lever as a footrest and even managed to clean the last section. On the way to Jacksons we met Ben Penny on the other Norton. We could not work out how he had got back in front, so we concluded he had missed Callert Falls, now it was too late to return the nearly 20 miles, so another rigid was having problems.

A steady ride back to the school gave about 10 minutes to spare, sign off, collect the footrest and head back to the hotel. After riding sitting down on a rigid for so long, when walking I looked like I had just got off a horse, but a long soak helped before dinner, with all of us eating together for once.

Matthew and I headed back to Kinlochleven for the Awards Presentation at the Community and Sports Centre, which was well attended. The overall winner was Neil Gaunt on a 500 Royal Enfield on 6 marks, one ahead of Mick Grant and Mick Andrews. It was good to see a big bike win. Matthew finished on 26 marks to finish 19th with a First Class Award. By keeping going, I finished on 58 marks for the day and a total of 84 marks and 83rd position.

This gave me the Best Rigid Award and, as far as I can work out, only four rigids finished out of the eight that started, the second appeared to be Ben Penny on 178 marks.

A quick look around the stalls on Sunday morning allowed a major restocking of compressed CO₂ bottles before heading for home about midday.

Before I finish, a few thoughts. The trial is definitely getting harder, as seen by the scores, the previous highest winning score was 4 marks lost over two days. I need to find a solution to the punctures, this years three punctures, all in sections, was again a record. Each day consists of 30 sub sections, but they are all being lengthened, where once was two subs, it is now being marked as a single sub section. I have ridden the Scottish Pre65 trial 16 times, firstly in 1985 on the Douglas, eight times on the Norton as a one-day trial, then seven times as a two-day trial. Looking at my results, as it gets harder, my position suffers, for example in 2000 I lost 25 marks over two days to finish 51st. The trend to make it harder will not encourage rigids, even though a rigid award was introduced in 2003. It was good to see Nick Draper and Paul Edwards ride a rigid in 2003, but I think they found it more difficult than expected. As I tell people, it is not the rocks that stop a rigid, but the gaps in between and now with some of the Saturday sections there is not a natural line. It is not possible to have multiple routes so the skills of the Clerk of the Course will be tested. I hope the organisers encourage big bikes, it is good to see a 500 win this year and I believe the huge support from spectators is to see a wide range of Pre 65 bikes and not all replicas. In a few years as riders, like everyone else, get older there will not be many young enough to ride the big bikes who can remember far enough back to have an interest.

So, finally, I look forward to next year and riding the best sections in the world again, perhaps this time with a mousse in the rear tyre.

End Thought . . .

My wife and I always compromise. I admit I'm wrong, and she agrees with me. .