Editorial

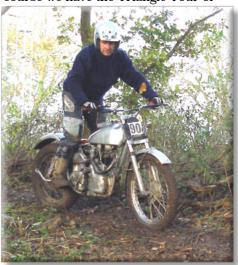
Well, Thumpers time has been and gone and I think it was one to go down in the record books - not perhaps as the best ever but it has to be up amongst them. Just about everything went like clockwork. We are sorry for any discrepancies you might have noticed with your scores but we MUST put the score recorded by the observer into the results (see the ACU rule book). We shall have to see if we can prevent this problem occurring in future years.

You may well remember that earlier in the year we had problems with the Eastern Centre ACU over date allocations. Well this set some of our membership on a course of setting up an AMCA affiliated club to ensure that vou do not go without vour full annual dose of events. To this end we welcome a new club, the Anglia Classic Trials Club into our circle of friends. Mick Brown, the brains behind the venture has written an introductory piece which can be found on page 8. We earnestly hope that we, the EFA, and the ACT, together, will be able to provide an annual series of trials to satisfy your needs.

The first event to be put on by the ACT will be the Boxford Bash which will be held on 9th December.

Mike Harden and his merry men are also holding another feast of motorcycling during December. Plonkers at Raydon on Saturday 8th and then on the Friday of Christmas week there is a Plonkers Clubmans Trial at Snaque Pit.

A big thankyou to the people who have provided me with copy for future issues of Trials & Tribs. In the next few months you are going to be entertained by a series of articles of "Bikes I have known" (the author doesn't want his name published but those of us who can remember back to the 60s and 70s will I am sure be able to put a name to the text) and then of course we have the Triangle Tour of



Alan Farmer

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The December Plonkaround

Raydon Pit, Wades Lane, Raydon, Suffolk (Grid Ref TM043389)
Saturday 8th December 2007
Gates will be open at noon.
Trials practise for:
Pre 65 solos • Pre 65 sidecars • Twin Shocks
Youths/Juniors • Twin Shock sidecars

the United States which has kindly been given me by Eddie Hood

We are still looking for a person to undertake the very important role of Secretary of the club. Heather has



Graham Steward

provided a job description which I have printed on page 16. We shall need someone to take over at the AGM in March as Heather has stated that she will relinquish the post then.

I had a phone call from Mike Harden whilst I was putting this issue of Trials & Tribs together and he informed me that the AMCA now requires helmets to be worn in Classic Trials. The regs for the Plonkers Clubman Trial had already been printed but the regs for the Boxford Bash have been modified to include the requirement for helmet wearing

I shall finish 2007 by wishing you all a very happy Christmas and a 'five free' new year on behalf of the Revolutionary Council and remind you that the first club night of 2008 will be on the **SECOND** Tuesday of January, the 8th.

Best wishes,

Jim

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Secretarys Scribblings

Didn't we have a cracking day for the Thumpers. Everyone seemed to enjoy the event. It was a good day for observing, not too cold, but the riders didn't hang about and we were all packed up and heading home before it got dark. The sidecar contingent from south of the river did us proud. Think the severity of the sections was just about right, they certainly produced some close results, Thanks to everyone who helped out, especially our observers.

Congratulations to Mick Brown for winning the Levis Cup Road Trial, one of the oldest events in the vintage club calendar. It's held in the Autumn around the lanes of Shropshire and Worcestershire and this year attracted 72 entries so winning the Premier Award was quite an achievement.

Hope you've got Sunday 9th December in your diary and will be coming to Boxford. As usual it's enter on the day, entry, form is in this newsletter. See you there.

Didn't go unnoticed that Dave Kent is now upgraded to expert status, well according to his van he is!

Would like to say the 'phone hasn't stopped ringing with folk volunteering to be club Secretary, sadly nothing could be further from the truth. However, we have had one spark of interest but as yet no definite offer. Think Jim has published a separate advert elsewhere. The club needs a volunteer to take over in March next year so please give the idea some serious consideration.

Couple of events to help keep you occupied over the Christmas break, Snaque Pit on the 28th and Tunstall Forest on the 30th.

Christmas Cracker time - A lady was found guilty of stealing a tin of peaches from her local, supermarket. The Judge sentenced her to six days in prison - one for every peach that was in the tin. Suddenly there was a cry from the lady's husband who was seated in the public gallery. "Your Honour, I'd like to mention she stole a tin of peas as well!"

Heather

Quotes Taken from Performance Evaluations:

"This young lady has delusions of adequacy."



Plonkers Elubmans Trial

Friday 28th December 2007

Snaque Pit, Belchamp, Sudbury (Grid Ref TL826422)

Start at 1100 hrs • Enter on the day

A Trial for:
Pre 65 solos • Pre 65 sidecars • Twin Shocks
Youths/Juniors • Twin Shock sidecars

Please Note:

The closing date by which all articles and adverts to be included in the next issue of Trials & Tribulations should reach the editorial office is normally the 25th of the month preceding publication.

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First impressions of a Norton Dominator 650ss Part 2

Some things on the bike were great. For instance it has rebuilt carburettors with the brass slides. The magneto looks like it has been overhauled, with all new screws etc. in the inaccessible places. The engine in general is in very good condition and I suspect this too has had some worthwhile treatment. The clutch is in excellent repair. It is just unfortunate that the rest of it was thrown together, possibly just to sell it on by a previous owner, but this wasn't the person I bought the bike from as he had done very little to it other than minor jobs and polishing. The engine is an easy starter but needed the carbs balancing which I have now done. With everything up and running a lot better and safer than when I had bought the bike, the need for a new MOT was getting closer.

The first ride and road test for me was now imminent. Petrol in the tank and armed with mobile telephone toolkit (just in case) I took the bike out on a suck it and see 'short' road test. It was very loud due to pattern silencers. It was aggressive, quick and responsive, but that was to be expected because a similar machine had won the 'Thruxton 500 miler' in 1962, 1963 and 1964.

I tried some roundabouts to test the proverbial featherbed handling. Yes! It was rock steady and stayed on line even when I purposely ran the front wheel across bumpy bits. It was a strange feeling because I was getting little feed back from the frame etc. I was used to a bike flexing a little here and there, as it portrays its messages back to the rider. This was totally lacking because the frame was so taught and stiff. I reserve judgement on whether I really like this desirable road holding or not. Yes! Its got me a little confused at the moment. Mind you the flat handlebars had been chopped very short which definitely reduced leverage at lower speeds. Handlebar leverage is something I am used to as I ride Pre-65 trials on an old Ariel and as everyone knows all trials machines need wide bars. Two more road test runs were completed and some readjusting of the controls were carried out once more.

Now it was time for the real truth of the pudding. Would it be suitable for two up riding with luggage etc? Also would it take those very minor country lanes comfortably, as well as cruise near seventy if we ever had to stray onto dual carriageways, or even the dreaded motorways?

Starting on 'B' roads, progressing to single track 'A' roads seemed fine, with wife Sue stating that the pillion seat was far more comfortable than the one on my Velocette Viper Clubman. But arguably! Every seat ever made in the whole wide world is more comfortable than a Velo Clubman offering! At the next opportunity I turned into some really tiny local country lanes and came down a few ratios to poodle along between 5 and 20mph. It was ok but the sports engine felt a bit unhappy as was to be expected. I reckoned I could live with it, even more so if I re-tuned the carburettor internals for slightly weaker performance. Yes, more individual tuning and setting up would be required to make this an ideal all rounder. What was disappointing though was the way

the steering wanted to drop onto the lock stops when manoeuvring at very low town/traffic speeds, possibly exacerbated by the shortened handlebars. But this trait would have to be sacrificed in exchange for the legendary 'straight-line stability'. Steering geometry is a very complicated affair and a matter of 'compromise', as most people already know. You can't have your cake and eat it can you? I was looking forward to a bit of dual carriageway riding and headed for the local bypass. Coming down the slip road and accelerating hard in third before snicking into top gear was effortless due to all those 49 horses that the 650ss chucks out. I watched the speedo needle creep over 70 mph and realised that Sue was moving her feet around on the pillion footrests. It was so obvious that the proverbial parallel twin vibrations were getting to her part of the bike far more than mine. Slowing down to 55mph we were able to communicate and confirm that the vibrations were a problem to her comfort because her feet were dancing around on the thick rubber footpegs. I tried varying speeds from 55 to 75; this was in the region of what we would need to travel at to do much longer mileage's on club runs. But unfortunately we found this 650ss too energetic and too vibratory for our needs. On reflection I should have held out until a good standard 99 came along or maybe the Dominator 88 would not have tingled so much at the touring speeds we required?

So! The Norton will be sold on now, complete with its matching serial numbers, nice registration number and old buff log book, with a little history thrown in for good measure. I will continue to ride my (de-tuned) Velocette Viper Clubman as I have done since the early seventies. Sue will carry on riding her Speed Twin with the left-hand gear change! Well she was brought up on Oriental bikes you see, so the Triumph had to go Oriental as well, solely for safety purposes of course, it has not a jot to do with fashion!

On reflection if I had owned this Norton Dominator 650ss when I was a seventeen-year-old café-racing enthusiast, it would probably have suited me perfectly. Only just a few months ago I almost bought a DBD34 Gold Star Clubman, but I am now very glad I didn't, because my riding-style and needs have drastically changed over the years.

The BSA DBD34 as well as the pre-unit Triumph Bonneville were always my 'unattainable' boyhood dreams.

But there again, I am not a boy any more!

© Dave Blanchard 2007

Council Complaints

The following is an extract from a complaint letter received by the council from a tenant

I am a single woman living downstairs. Would you do something about the noise made by the man on top of me every night.

27th Eastern Thumpers Trial - 25th November 2007

Well, what did you think of the Thumpers. I thought everything went very well. In fact I have reason to believe that all the organisers felt everything just flowed. Certainly, as far as Jim and I were concerned, we were away by 3:30pm and home by 4:10pm. Unfortunately I'd had a very bad night the previous night so I proved to be a waste of time helping Jim with the results. Nevertheless, he had them done by about 7:30pm. We then had a break for a meal and by 9:15pm I had the results on the internet albeit in draft form. Yes, as far as we were concerned everything went very well, it couldn't have gone any better.

So what of the event itself. Before we left we had several riders' compliment us (the club) saying how much they'd enjoyed themselves. Not perhaps as many compliments as had in the past but very welcome nonetheless. A very notable ride by Alan Wright but I'm afraid that is really as much one can say about it. Since he entered well after the closing date, he agreed to enter on a no-award basis as did Julian Wigg. Sad to say therefore, he will not receive any award to mark his achievement. This is always something that should be borne in mind by those wishing to ride for an award, i.e. get your entries in by the closing date otherwise that condition will be placed on your entry.

Another notable ride came from the Eastern Centre's Matthew Neale who beat Mick Grant by five marks. I know not a lot about Mick Grant except that he is a master of his art. Whether his score means he had a bad day or Matthew had a good day I don't really know. Nevertheless, Mick was a welcome face at the Thumpers. Roger Finch also had a very good day coming in on only one measly mark lost well ahead of Stan Metcalf on 20.

I would like to congratulate all those who won their classes and wish them continued success in 2008. In all it was an event worthy of remembering Jeff Fincham and I wish Debbie all the best for the future and hope she gets over Jeff's passing soon whilst retaining the many very good and pleasant memories I'm sure she has of him. All the best Debbie,

Now to next year. I am seriously considering asking the club to add a pound to the entry fee to cover envelopes and postage. Why you may well ask. As Secretary of the Meeting I get all sorts of envelopes sent with entries - most of which have adhesive which will stick. However, there are several others that stick for a short while but gradually come open again. Other entrants send in old envelopes with dried out adhesive which has to be sealed with selotape and others send me envelopes which are barely big enough for the program - and sometimes I'm expected to put two programs into them! Yet others send me only one envelope - or even none at all!

To finish let me thank you all for supporting the Thumpers yet again but let's not forget all the observers and organisers who put a lot of work into the event and certainly not least, thanks also go to Mr Sawyer for allowing us the use of his land. Next year's Thumpers will be on 23rd November and as usual regs will be sent out around the end of September to those that have entered in the two previous years, i.e. 2007 and 2006.

Murphy's Lesser Known Laws

- Light travels faster than sound. This is why some people appear bright until you hear them speak.
- Change is inevitable, except from a vending machine.
- Those who live by the sword get shot by those who don't.
- Nothing is foolproof to a sufficiently talented fool.
- The 50-50-90 rule: Anytime you have a 50-50 chance of getting something right, there's a 90% probability you'll get it wrong.
- If you lined up all the cars in the world end to end, someone would be stupid enough to try to pass them, five or six at a time, on a hill, in the fog.
- The things that come to those who wait will be the scraggly junk left by those who got there first.
- The shin bone is a device for finding furniture in a dark room.
- A fine is a tax for doing wrong. A tax is a fine for doing well.
- When you go into court, you are putting yourself into the hands of 12 people who weren't smart enough to get out of jury duty.

ANGLIA CLASSIC TRIALS CLUB

Affiliated to the Amateur Motor Cycle Association

An introduction to this new club, that hopes to fill the gaps in the competition calendar. We hope to run three or four events in the first year following a format that you are all familiar with. For example the Charity BBQ trial at Seven Rivers and for our first event the Boxford Bash at the Scout HQ. We also hope to run a completely new event at a new venue. Watch this space!

A very small committee has been formed to run the club and will be even more laid back than the 'Revolutionary Council' if this is indeed possible!

The cost of running an event will be cheaper for us and this is good news for everybody, especially when we are raising funds for charity.

The events will be open by invitation, so you do not have to join another club and the events will be run under an AMCA Authorisation Number (similar to an ACU Permit). Competitors and officials are insured through a scheme operated by the AMCA and they deal with any claims direct with the insurance brokers, this attracts a reduced rate from the insurance company.

That's about it, let's hope we can enjoy many days of great motor cycling sport and we look forward to seeing you all at Boxford.

Mick Brown

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Rigid • Pre-unit • Unit • 2 stroke • Twin Shock • Youths • Sidecars

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BSA B40 Trials

Excellent condition • All Mods £1500

Brand new rear IRC tyre £50

Bantam Hub £20

Loads of spares

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The Organist

Miss Beatrice, the church organist, was in her eighties and had never been married. She was admired for her sweetness and kindness to all. One afternoon the priest came to call on her and she showed him into her quaint sitting room. She invited him to have a seat while she prepared tea. As he sat facing her old Hammond organ, the young Father noticed a cut-glass bowl sitting on top of it. The bowl was filled with water, and in the water floated, of all things, a condom!

When she returned with tea and scones, they began to chat. The priest tried to stifle his curiosity about the bowl of water and its strange floater, but soon it got the better of him and he could no longer resist.

"Miss Beatrice", he said, "I wonder if you would tell me about this?" pointing to the bowl.

"Oh, yes,"she replied, "Isn't it wonderful? I was walking through the Park a few months ago and I found this little package on the ground. The directions said to place it on the organ, keep it wet and that it would prevent the spread of disease. Do you know I haven't had the flu all winter."



On Sunday the 30th September this annual trial as usual, was held in the grounds of the Headley Park Hotel near Bordon. This is situated in the peaceful and leafy green county of Hampshire.

Three laps of fourteen superb sections were available for the trial rider's delight. I am always impressed by the COCs abilities at this event, because despite there being only two routes available to choose to ride, it manages to suitably encompass all bikes from twin shocks down to girder fork heavyweights. Not an easy task for anyone to organise, but it works very well indeed.

We had a river crossing as one of the sections this year and this is how I found out that my new trials boots leak. Yes! I know all boots leak but the left one took much longer to let in the water than the right one. Perhaps I should have bought two left hand boots and walked the section very quickly?



Sue Blanchard and 'Our' Joan Westbrook

BUMPER STICKERS

Lead me not into temptation, I can find it myself

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There were some outstanding rides on the day, with Len Hutty (riding his latest Matchless short stroke) and Colin Mote Ariel 500 HT, losing a measly dab each. Len lost his point very early on in the first lap, at section 2. Colin, also on his first lap, took until section 11 to give one point up to an observant observer. But Len as usual is an ace at the special test and took the win in class C for pre unit fourstroke British bikes.

Class D for British unit construction four strokes was won by the famous Peter Gaunt. He rode a Royal Enfield 250. He lost only 4 points.

Dave Shave of trials shop fame, was riding a little two stroke James. He comfortably beat his nearest rival and only lost 6 marks to boot. He therefore wins class E for British two strokes.

The pre 1980 twinshock class F was won on just 2 points lost. Young Scott Dark was having his first on dad's (Chris Dark) old SWM 350. I thought it was a superb effort and a really great performance. Well done that man.

On the less severe white route for telescopic rigid British bikes, it was Chris Guppy piloting a Norton 500T who emerged the winner. He also had a one dab ride, chucking that single point away on his third lap at section seven. A great ride on an ancient and heavy machine.

At the end of the days riding one thing is so clearly evident, nobody wants to go home! It seems that people just stand around in little groups, talking and discussing the day's events until quite late. This shows what a good trial it is. Also the surroundings of the hotel grounds with its lake and large trees gives everyone a relaxed and satisfying feel about the whole event. As I said, nobody wants to go home!

Many thanks to all involved.

© Dave Blanchard 2007

English signs in foreign countries

In a Nairobi restaurant:

CUSTOMERS WHO FIND OUR WATTRESSES RUDE OUGHT TO SEE THE MANAGER

Snaque Pik Trial 21xt October 2007

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DABBERS DIARY

Firstly, I must correct what I told you about the 'Levis Cup' trial last month, it was in fact first run in 1913 and not in 1933 as I stated.

I overheard a lot of technical talk at the 'Thumpers' working party, especially about the new revolutionary timing arrangements now fitted to 'Little Eric'.

It seems that the original BSA set-up was a bit agricultural, like a Harley, maybe? The new system, it seems, required a lot of precision with clock-making accuracy. However, to work positively and correctly it necessitated the device to 'clunk' into position, and this required a handlebar control lever.



A 'Clunk Control', surely a first in the art of special building!

I am worried about the mind blowing development of the humble little BSA C10, 'Little Eric' has grown to 270cc and Bernard Rodemark's model has grown to a mind boggling 290cc. Let's hope the machine examiners, at the 'Thumpers', don't push them into Class 7- Specials, I shall be interested to see what class Mick Grant's Ariel and Len Hutty's Matchless end up in!

(Well you can probably guess, I wrote this before the Thumpers, in fact, none of that happened, Bernard didn't turn up, Len's bike packed up early on and nobody ended up in the Specials Class!)

A big thank you must go to the organisers of the 'Snaque Pit' trial in

Glyn Hill

USEFUL CONVERSIONS . . .

For those who thought the hardest part of Physics was the constant conversion from feet and inches to the metric system, including all its Newtons, Joules, and Watts, here is an example of another useful conversion:

Shortest distance between two jokes

- A straight line

October, I thought the big bike route was successful and I must encourage all owners of big bikes to support this class. The next chance for you to wheel out that Big Banger will be at Boxford on the 9th December.

Please support this class and event as it will be the first event to be run by the 'Anglia Classic Trials Club',

There will be classes for Rigid, Pre-Unit, 2 Stroke, Twin Shocks, Youths (over 10) and Sidecar. There will be three routes

See more about this elsewhere in the magazine.

Leonard Cheshire Update. Just to let you know that fund raising is still going on for Seven Rivers. After the rather wet event in June we were left with a large collection of unsold bike jumble items. So, Pete Signournay and I took a stall at the Marconi Club, Chelmsford Bike Jumble recently. We raised over a

£100 for the charity and sold some other bits and pieces on a commission basis.



Roy Rush & Graham Hornsby

At the end of the day the jumble organiser offered us a free stall at the next event on February 3rd. Peter has agreed to help again and we would welcome anybody else who would like to give us a hand.

We would like more jumble, you can donate it for us to sell for the charity or we will try and sell any items for you on a commission basis. You name your price, a bit like a reserve at an auction, and if we get it we will charge you 10% commission. If we exceed your reserve we keep the difference and you pocket your full reserve price. For more details contact Mick Brown on 01206 250462.

Dabber

By now you should be aware that the Club is looking for a Secretary to replace Heather who has held the post for about 15 years.

Please contact Ted if you feel that you can assist this, YOUR, club in filling this important post

JOB DESCRIPTION FOR CLUB SECRETARY

- Deal with phone calls and correspondence
- Forward ACU Centre Board paperwork to Club delegate
- Sort out and submit event dates to Eastern Centre ACU when form received from them
- Order fixture lists when dates finalised
- Ensure ACU Affiliation payment made to Eastern Centre ACU when form received from ACU at Rugby
- Order supply of ACU Trials Registration Forms for current year for new members
- Obtain permits for some Closed to Club events
- Attend approx. 6 committee meetings at The Alma during Winter months
- Order trials numbers and Observer Cards from Stacys in Chelmsford as and when required
- Arrange return of club shields and trophies and get them engraved for presentation at AGM in March
- Sign and stamp Trials Registration Forms for club members
- Secretary of Meeting for some Closed to Club events (optional)
- Chief Observer at Thumpers (optional)
- Secretary's Scribblings in Newsletter (optional)

End Thought . . .

If at first you don't succeed, destroy all evidence that you tried.

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