



Eastern Fourstroke Association

Affiliated to the Eastern Centre ACU



Trials & Tribulations

Popular
**November
2010**

Issue 199

17th Year of Publication

The monthly Magazine for members and friends
of the Eastern Fourstroke Association.

Trade - prices on application (page, half page etc)

Editorial

Well, we're back again! This time we (or rather Tracey) drove down to Benidorm and spent a fortnight there, took about four days each way with a days break on both the outward and return journeys.

Now some very good news! Subject, I understand to further agreements with Ted and Dave our Treasurer, we will have a new newsletter editor from and including January. We must thank Chris Canham for stepping into the post. I am sure we will all do our best to make his editorship easier with copious articles!

This month we have articles from two new sources - John Daly and Steve Blanchard (Dave's lad). I hope you enjoy reading them, I certainly have. You may wonder in Steve's article about the references to his son, Jack. Well sad to say, Jack was the innocent party that a group of yobs beat up and left, I believe, for dead. This is the reason why both Steve and Dave have been quiet on the riding front for the last couple of years.

Another sad piece of news that I feel I must report. Roger Finch has been taken ill again, this time it is a problem with his kidneys I am told. He was taken to Addenbrookes where the problem was diagnosed. I understand he might be out of hospital and recuperating at home by the time you read this. Our thoughts

go out to both Roger and Di at this troubled time.

For some years now Bob Drane has been organising and shepherding a Thursday morning trail riding venture. It doesn't seem to matter



what the weather is like, there are always willing takers, most of whom are retired, some of them 'well' retired. The normal routine is a mornings ride of anything up to about 80 miles followed by lunch at Andrewsfield airfield where everybody, riders and 'hangers on'



like myself are made most welcome. The food, service and surroundings



Holiday Complaint received by Thomas Cook

"We booked an excursion to a water park but no-one told us we had to bring our swimming costumes and towels."

The Mid Anglia MCC
present
for your enjoyment



Plonkaround

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Saturday 13th November 2010

Gates will be open at noon.

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Youths/Juniors • Twin Shock sidecars

For further information contact:

Mike Harden 01473 310537

email: mikeharden@mypostoffice.co.uk

(including the company) are excellent. Well worth it to hear John Vallis's latest exploits!

The Braintree Long Distance trial took place on the same day as its long standing competition, the Arbuthnot. However, even allowing for the 'competition' for entries Braintree had, I believe, about 25 starters. I hope this isn't a once only venture but I understand that there are a few things which the Braintree club must take into account in future.

Two working parties have taken place at Brian Horrigan's Nature Reserve in Wivenhoe. The first one was more of a reconnoitre by Ted and Geoff Daw, the intention being to make a way through the gate from the

orchard onto the railway embankment. As might be expected it is well overgrown.

According to Ted, Geoff caused him to drop the key to the

gate. I haven't heard Geoff's take on it but suffice to say that Geoff had to come back later with his metal detector to find the key!

The 'public' working party at Wivenhoe was very poorly attended. The time will come when the 'faithful (and regular) few' say enough is enough. This would then mean no more trials for you to ride in. These events **DO NOT** organise or prepare themselves.

I understand the South Midland Classic Autumn Trial held at Colliers End, Herts was not only very well supported by EFA members but was excellent together with the course which was set in beautiful wooded parkland. It has been suggested that this event could well take the place of the Old Codgers which it would seem has 'gone to the wall'.

Just one more T&T to go from me - did I hear you shout 'Yippee!'

Best wishes,

Jim





The Irish Halfwit

A man owned a small farm in Ireland. The Irish Internal Revenue determined he was not paying proper wages to his staff and sent an investigator out to interview him.

"I need a list of your employees and how much you pay them", demanded the investigator.

"Well," replied the farmer, "there's my farm hand who's been with me for three years. I pay him £200 a week plus free room and board.

"The cook has been here for 18 months, and I pay her £150 per week plus free room and board."

"Then there's the halfwit. He works about 18 hours every day and does about 90% of all the work around here. He makes about £10 a week. He pays his own room and board, and I buy him a bottle of whiskey every Saturday night. He also sleeps with my wife occasionally."

"That's the guy I want to talk to...the halfwit!" said the agent.

"That would be me," replied the farmer.



The 2010 Arbuthnot Trial

As usual the eagerly awaited Arbuthnot Trial took place in Wiltshire on the 12th September 2010 and it had that same feeling of adventure that this event has always produced since its re-invention during the 1980s.



Roger Monk's 1954 TRW Triumph

We were pleased to see some newcomers to this fantastic trial this year and every one of them said they had enjoyed themselves immensely. The route directions were unfortunately made a little more difficult this time due to someone's little angel removing a blue marker and a couple of red ones. This made it more difficult for the newcomers to find their way around the Arbuthnot course. But Mike Rye the secretary is already discussing a system to try and prevent this in future.

Stratford Tony river crossing is normally shallower at the left hand side to the direction we travel. This year we had a shock! Initially it was deeper than I had ever experienced before, this was not due to heavy rain but possibly the four wheel drive boys compacting the underlying shingle as they climbed the river bank to exit the ford. Some riders waterlogged their bikes and had to push out, even an enduro bike rider stalled mid river! But most riders conquered this hazard comfortably with a big 'Arbuthnot Grin' on their face as they exited the far side!

Next year's Arbuthnot cannot come soon enough and hopefully some more newcomers will enter. It is a unique trial of pleasurable adventure which persuades all first timers to immediately fall in love with the event. This emotion compels them to return again and again! If a past regular competitor does eventually stop riding the Arbuthnot it is probably down to 'extreme' old age and the inability to handle an old bike on the rough as their various body



A Bantam and James park where they shouldn't.

parts cry enough. They still turn up to see us all off though and sometimes they will follow us around on a lighter and more modern machine. But! They never ever give up on the spiritual feeling the Arbuthnot has given them in the past and they can never keep away from that very special day.



Andy Glading still makes the finish even with a siezed Empire Star!

Come on all you motorcycle riders who have ever wondered what a really magical day is like, telephone Mike Rye on 01725 511131 and get on the mailing list for an adventure you will never forget!

Dave Blanchard

The Cadwell Flyer

Okay, not exactly an off-road reminiscence but old British bikes nevertheless, and I say old because during the 1970s and early 80s Velocettes and Nortons were all I knew.

There I'd be waiting outside the school gates at half past three on a Friday afternoon looking along the queue of other mums and dads cars to see if I could spot the current mode of transport for the racing weekend. We'd had a succession of different vehicles ranging from Austin A40s, 100Es. and Morris Minors, all with trailers carrying the 350 and 500. And all of my mates would be clambering around it oohing and ahing. "Where you off to Daly?" they'd say.

The pinnacle of all this though was the Cadwell Flyer, an old Thames 15cwt van, diesel, bought from Paul Flack, instantly installed with a 1700cc petrol engine and painted Woolworths green to match the 500 Velo (not one for toeing the line, my old man). Anyway, so in I would jump between Dad and fat uncle Richie on my seat on the engine cowling as it was known. Pre-M25 days meant driving through Ongar and picking up the A1 at Potters Bar, usually a good three and a half hour journey taking in our very own historical sites, the Caxton Gibbet, RAF Wittering with its 5 bladed prop Spitfire and Centurion tank, Tattershall castle then the infamous stop at the weewoods (always busting). Further still we reached Horncastle and of course fish n chips - the best fish and chips anywhere or maybe we were just starving!



Just before Cadwell there is a big hill with a couple of bends in it. We were revving up for the hill 3 miles back and always we would get halfway up and there would be Granny and Granddad poodling along on a nice Friday night drive. Oh! the expletives, that made the old Thames grunt!

So finally Cadwell Park itself. By this time, dark of course, torch light, car doors slamming, laughing, beer drinking - "Hello Don, haven't seen you for ages. You still got that old Velo?" "Yes, mate, its in the van."

Early next morning, woken up by the whistling kettle and the sound of raindrops - always raining at Cadwell. The back doors would fly open - "Scrutineering at eight o'clock, we will have a fry up and get cracking". Still bleary eyed, the



sounds and smells of Castrol 'R' would sweep through the van. Nortons, Velos, Ajays, Sunbeams, Ridges and JAPs all piloted around the paddock by Black Lewis Leathered speed freaks, oh and oil patches everywhere - no two-strokes here (except for Roger Moss's Scotty).

Cadwell's paddock is situated on top of a steep hill whilst the scrutineering and full size circuit is in a dip - very handy - a big hill and an old British bike - not for pushing I hasten to add!

My role in all this was to read the programme, keep an eye on the time, and most importantly paint on the race numbers - which would always be numbers 111 and 121 (that was handy). Other riders would be Don French, John Ruth, Graham Rhodes, Mervyn Stratford, Nick Payton and Steve Linsdale - Steve



cleaning up on a 700cc Bullet! Albert Dove was also riding then I believe.

Practice and racing was normally on the short circuit with the 'notorious' hairpin. This where most of the spectators would stand, on either side, on the banks looking down on the circuit. The start/finish was around the corner so the first you would hear was the roar of engines spluttering into life on the old PA system. Then, a few seconds later round would come in to view Mervyn Stratford on his 250 Rudge (I'm sure he used to pick that up and carry it!), followed by a gaggle of Triumphs, Nortons, Velos etc - a real mixture of twins, singles, girders and specials - the old man would be in the middle somewhere, the precautionary foot down as he rounded the hairpin and then nose on the tank, arse up as he took off up the hill.

Dad's Velos were girder rigids, both with Mark VIII engines, one with an ex-Stanley Woods works head and both in KSS frames. It wasn't until the 1980s that a genuine Mark VIII frame was found. So every bump was felt. Cornering was interesting and as for brakes - well put it this way - after a lap of Cadwell they were purely ornamental! Perhaps I didn't realise it at the time but all of these fellas were fiercely competitive. What they did to their bikes and how they tuned them was never amateurish but of sound engineering and thinking, imaginative, experimental, all in the name of more power!

Advice from an Irish Sex Therapist

Paddy is passing by Mick's hay shed one day when through a gap in the door he sees Mick doing a slow and sensual striptease of an old red Massey Ferguson.

Buttocks clenched he performs a slow pirouette and slides off first the right welly, followed by the left.

He then hunches his shoulders forward and in a striptease move lets his braces fall down from his shoulders to dangle by his hips over his corduroy trousers.

Grabbing both sides of his check shirt he rips it apart to reveal his tea stained vest underneath and with a final flourish he hurls his flat cap on to a pile of hay.

"What the feck are you doing Mick" says Paddy.

"Jeez Paddy, ye frightened the livin bejasus out of me," says an obviously embarrassed Mick: "but me and the Missus been having some trouble lately in the bedroom department, and the Therapist suggested I do something sexy to a tractor".



At 43 years old these schoolboy memories are both precious and sentimental but more than that they are inspiring. It's fantastic what these and today's garden shed engineers are capable of.

Having recently watched, along with my own daughter, Grandad reach a speed of 129mph on a homemade KTT shows not only sound engineering and tuning but years of tenacity and patience and perhaps this where I can cross back over to Pre 65 trials for the same is true of many bikes and riders who show the same skills to keep these bikes alive today.

John Daly
(foraging ahead!)

The Arbuthnot Trial . . . My Reaction:

It had been 3 years since I had ridden the majestic old gent. Whilst my life was in turmoil it had sat in my Dad's garage following a top end overhaul that we had started together but he had then been forced to finished off without me, whilst I tended to family matters. My outlook on life became tarnished following a mindless act of violence against my teenage son which left him fighting for his life and it seemed as if nothing would be normal again. But, the old Ajay sat patiently waiting to remind me that life would be good again one day. It had gained a patina of dust from various projects my parents had been working on indefatigably in those 3 years and oil had seeped slowly into the sump and chain case as if it to silently protest against my neglect of a hobby that brings me a joy that I can only describe as euphoric.

As the day of the Arbuthnot trial approached my Dad began to prepare my bike, as well as his own. This is what generally happens before any trial we enter together, not just because he is a veritable wizard with motorcycles, but because I would never do it for myself, instead hiding in my work and using it to shield myself from things in life which I cannot face. It's great to have a Dad like mine, but I know that one day I will have to take on these tasks myself and learn the art of preparing a British motorcycle for myself. Anyone who has ever worked on a British Motorcycle as well as European and Oriental models will know that despite their simplicity you cannot get away with being a simple spanner monkey. The tolerances aren't close and they were built on pre-war lathes (the Geneva convention did not favour the victors – did it) and often that which should run concentric runs eccentric, requiring adjustments which are precise, but may not be measured. An understanding of how these great machines were engineered is required to ensure they are properly maintained - mechanical excellence is not an accident and on a trial like the Arbuthnot you

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cannot afford to have a poorly prepared machine. Although my Ajay is not the prettiest example I have seen, having quite a few battle scars from previous heroic campaigns – I'd challenge anyone to find one better prepared mechanically.

By the weekend of the trial the bike had been straightened, the forks and engine fine tuned and an MoT acquired. A short road run had revealed a slightly heavy clutch due in part to the seeped oil and also a nylon inner cable I had fitted earlier that was a little too short and therefore tight on its curves causing the inner to occasionally pinch and slow the re-engagement of the clutch following a gear change - a minor problem which I was happy to live with. The top end overhaul had been to cure a sticking exhaust valve which occasionally resulted in the engine trying to run backwards and spit back, often resulting in me being spat off in an unceremonious heap on the floor in the middle of a section. Although it's fair to say the bike was still better than me despite this fault, I was glad that the usual sure and steady running had returned - perhaps now I could just concentrate on trying to stay on it.

The night before the trial I didn't manage to sleep for more than a couple of hours. In previous years for other events when using modern machinery that I'd prepared myself, this would have been due to my last minute mechanical experimentation. However, this time it was due partly to the excitement of riding again after such a long break and partly due to the trepidation...of riding again after such a long break.

An early start on Sunday morning was required to get down to Barford St. Martin for the start of the trial from the Barford Inn. Arriving at my parents house it was obvious that Mum and Dad had been up for some time, loading and preparing. Seeing my 18C tele-rigid on the trailer next to my Dad's Girder Rigid Red Hunter, instantly took me back to some happier times and I was already starting to feel better.

At the start of the trial there was the usual bustle and excitement as old friends and rivals greeted each other at the sign in and scrutineering. There weren't as many of the usual faces as I had hoped for - John Excel and Brian Humphries were two people I was really looking forward to seeing. John a real gentleman and excellent trials rider having had a knee operation only a short while ago did not want to risk injury and Brian AKA 'Lippy' a fine mental sparring opponent and all round nice guy, hadn't prepared his machine for the road in time. However, we soon bumped into Mick Brown of the EFA and his beautiful little Tiger 70, who was the third member of our team 'Un-sprung Heroes' and I started to settle a little. At sign on I met Clerk of the Course Mike Rye and he immediately asked how Jack was doing. I remembered a card of good wishes he'd sent from the club when he'd learned of what had happened -

Sayings...

Until I was thirteen, I thought my name was SHUT UP.

- Joe Namath

I had been so touched by the support the motorcycling family had shown during that dark time, rivalled only by the footballing family of which Jack was a part.



Dave, Mick and Steve at the start

The trial started at 09:00 and we left at 1 minute intervals. The course was a little over 80 miles of byways, lanes and back roads through the beautiful Salisbury countryside, punctuated by 9 sections, 2 of which were special tests designed to separate the chaff from the wheat. Everybody seemed to be in such a good mood, Spectators, locals, observers and officials were all so friendly and intent on ensuring that everyone enjoyed themselves. Some local high jinx resulted in a few of the route cards being removed. I like to think this was done for the entertainment of seeing trial participants going the wrong way rather than out of any malice against motorcyclists or the event, but one has to be realistic and the Salisbury MCC have vowed to up the observation of route cards next year...more volunteers needed! There was one saddening incident when one of the competitors was in head on collision with a trail rider (not with the event) that left the rider of the trail bike with a broken leg. It was reminiscent of the incident with Eddie Renham a few years earlier, but on that occasion it was Eddie that came off worse (back to your old self now though eh Eddie!). The incident left us needing a detour as the route was closed off. A local farmer who was kindly allowing us to use his land instructed us on how to bypass the incident and come out right back on the track but further down. Of course by the time we had got to the end of the lane, we'd inevitably forgotten what he'd said and were now off course. Fortunately for us, Ali Tanner who was acting as back marker, had a map and quickly steered us

back to where we needed to be (I can only think that the customary kiss he gets from my Mum somehow enhances his powers of direction).

All three members of 'Un-sprung Heroes' managed to go round clean all day, but if it had come down to the special test I may have let the team down with a slow ascent on a greasy hill caused by a poor gear change half way up (that clutch cable again)....sorry fellas! As it turned out, we got best team. Dad and I were winners of our respective classes and Mick Brown was runner up to my Dad, just pipped to the post on the special tests. As a consolation however, he got the highest combined age award (I'll spare you the exact number as that would give Mick's age away, the year of the bike apparently being the same as the year of his birth).

As I had glided across the countryside rolling the throttle on and off in response to the undulations in the land, the Ajay thumped away steadily, it's beautiful soft exhaust note whispering words of encouragement to me. I imagined the piston moving up and down rhythmically in the cylinder, the plume of misty fuel and air being drawn through the carburettor each time I opened the throttle and the thick green oil slipping over the top of the cams. I could feel every part of the bike beneath me and imagined the people that had built it - the extended family of the Plumstead factory who had taken so much pride in the building of these machines and thought how proud they would be to see it still performing and giving pleasure to its owner. As the land fell away beneath me the miles rolled away and my troubles with them. For the first time in 3 years I felt like myself again and had new hope for the future.....I was back!

Life has a habit of throwing you curved balls when you least expect it, but some things in life remain constant and steadfast always there to give you support, even if you aren't always aware of it. For me it is family, friends and motorcycles.... in that order. I couldn't have had a better cure for my state of mind just prior to the trial, made possible by my family and accentuated by my friends in the motorcycling world.

The Arbuthnot trial is generally run early to mid September by the Salisbury Motorcycle & Light Car Club. It has been running since the 1920's and is now open to several classes of machine (a change made recently due to falling numbers). The event is always excellently organised and you couldn't wish to meet a friendlier and more enthusiastic group of people. To keep such events going they need people to reciprocate the enthusiasm shown by the club and turn up to their events. So, why not compete, officiate or just spectate at next years Arbuthnot Trial. For more information, contact Mike Rye, 22 Moot Gardens, Downton, Salisbury, Wiltshire, SP5 3LF Tel: 01725 511131. Go on...meet some old friends or make some new ones. I guarantee you'll have a great time.

Steve Blanchard



Tim's Tour - Saturday 18th September



AMAZINGLY SIMPLE HOME REMEDIES

A mouse trap placed on top of your alarm clock will prevent you from rolling over and going back to sleep after you hit the snooze button.

Wrong Identity

Nelson Mandela is sitting at home watching TV and drinking a beer when he hears a knock at the door.

When he opens it, he is confronted by a little Japanese man, clutching a clip board and yelling: 'You Sign! You sign!'

Behind him is an enormous truck full of accelerator pedals.

Nelson is standing there in complete amazement, when the Japanese man starts to yell louder: 'You Sign! You sign!'

Nelson says to him, 'Look, you've obviously got the wrong man', and shuts the door in his face.

The next day he hears a knock at the door again.

When he opens it, the little Japanese man is back with a huge truck of brake pads.

He thrusts his clipboard under Nelson's nose again, yelling: 'You sign! You sign!'

Mr Mandela is getting a bit hacked off by now, so he pushes the little Japanese man back shouting: 'Look, go away! You've got the wrong man. I don't want them!' Then he slams the door in his face again.

The following day, Nelson is resting, and late in the afternoon, he hears a knock on the door again.

On opening the door, there is the same little Japanese man thrusting a clipboard under his nose, shouting: 'You sign! You sign!'

Behind him are TWO very large trucks full of car parts.

This time Nelson loses his temper completely, he picks up the little Man by his shirt front and yells at him: 'Look, I don't want these! Do you understand? You must have the wrong name! Who do you want to deliver these to?'

The little Japanese man looks very puzzled, consults his clipboard, and says:

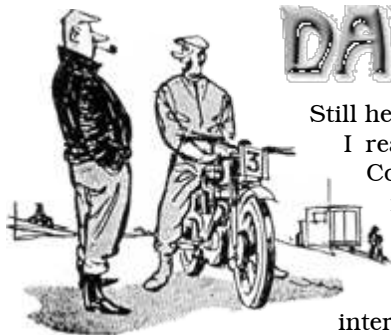
(It's a beauty)

(Get your best Japanese accent ready)



'You not Nissan Main Dealer?'

Volcano in Iceland . What next Earthquake in Asda?



DABBERS DIARY

Still here!

I really enjoyed the Classic Autumn Trial at Colliers End, a great venue and sure to be important date in the trials calendar. It was well worth going over the border to the South Midland centre, despite the road closure on the way which took us to some interesting rural parts of Hertfordshire and tested our navigational skills.

Well, time is running out to find a replacement for Editor Jim. I know Chairman Ted has been on a recruitment drive, and if he finds somebody, we must all support the new man and feed him as much information as we can.



Another area of club activity that needs a bit more support is the trial preparation department. Its been a bit dismal of late, just two people turned up to help prepare the last Wrabness trial and they were the organisers!

Recently, the working party to tame what has become a wilderness at Wivenhoe, swelled to six, three OAP's and three younger members, most of this gang were regular helpers. Surely a club of 150 plus members can do better than this? I am sure the committee does not expect members to help at every event, but if you could adopt an event near you and lend a hand it would be appreciated. Observers are often hard to recruit so if riders can, say, once a year or so, give up their ride and observe, that will make the organisers life a lot easier.

Right, rant over, looking forward now to the Thumpers, new secretary Karen reports a good trickle of entries coming in and there is a working party at Poplars Farm, Thorington on Sunday 14 November 9.30ish. There is still time to enter, with classes for every type of British Classic trials machines and classes for all riding abilities. If you are not riding, Ted will be pleased to hear from you, as he is always on the look-out for observers.

Dabber



At last a picture of him!

We've all talked to this guy. . .
At Last A Picture of Him.

Mujibar was trying to get a job in India .

The Personnel Manager said,
'Mujibar, you have passed all the tests, except one. Unless you pass it, you cannot qualify for this job.'
Mujibar said, 'I am ready.'

The manager said, 'Make a sentence using the words Yellow, Pink, and Green . '

Mujibar said, 'The telephone goes green, green, And I pink it up, and say, Yellow, this is Mujibar.'

Mujibar now works at a call centre.

No doubt you have spoken to him.
I know I have.

End Thought . . .

A man needs a mistress just to break the monogamy.

Wots on this month Ted?

IMPORTANT:

You will be required to show your ACU licence/ trials registration at all EFA trials.

November

7	P65MX	Scramble	Marks Tey
20	Ringwood	Trial	SMP Perce Simon Trial
21	Dabbers	Trial	Braham Farm, Little Thetford, Ely
21	North Berks	Trial	SMP Downland Trial
28	EFA	Trial	Thumpers at Thorrington

December

5	Sidcup	Trial	Jack Thompson, Canada Heights
7	EFA	Clubnite at The Alma	
			<i>Be there or be . . .</i>
12	ACT	Trial	Boxford Bash
28	Woodbridge	Trial	Tunstall?

30th Eastern Thumpers National Trial

Sunday 28th November 2010

There will be more choices at this year's Eastern Thumpers Trial.

The event at Poplars Chase Farm, Thorrington, Essex, provides some of the best trials terrain to be found in this part of East Anglia, ideal for pre65 machines. The course will provide routes for all types of machines and riders capabilities, the hard route for experts and riders wishing to gain points in the Eastern Centre Pre70 Championship, an easy or 'Gentlemen's route and a sidecar route. The choices don't stop there, girder-rigid competitors will ride the sidecar sections, tele-rigid will ride the gentlemen's sections and any rider over 65 years of age may opt to ride 2 only laps of the gentlemen's route, on a no award basis. The event will be managed by Clerk of the Course, Chris Mace, who took over from long standing club chairman, Ted Smith, last year. He will be backed up by new event secretary Karen Mace, I am sure everybody wishes them the best of luck.

Regs are available from:-

Karen Mace, 23 Rosabelle Avenue, Wivenhoe, Essex, CO7 9NX.

Tel: 01206 827611 or efa.thumpers@yahoo.co.uk

Please Note:

These event details have been supplied in good faith but neither the Editor nor the Eastern Fourstroke Association can be held responsible for errors, omissions or the cancellation of any event.

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