

TRIALS & TRIBULATIONS

June 2020
Vol.2 Issue 113



You can't beat a nice little kip I'll just close my eyes for a bit
I've finished me tea And I don't wanna read
I'll just stay put and sit... So many things need doing
The place will go to rack 'n' ruin But they'll have to wait
Cause I've got a date The back of my eyelids need viewing.
Two hours have passed Like sand in a glass
I've dreamed of afar Flew up to the stars
Kissed a fair maiden My troubles unladen
Batteries recharged I'll start a new task
With vigour and vim Topped up to the brim...

John Daly

**THE EASTERN FOURSTROKE ASSOCIATION &
THE ANGLIA CLASSIC TRIALS CLUB
MONTHLY MAGAZINE**



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**El President
Vice President
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**Ian Preedy
Chris Kearney
Ted Smith**

Tel: 01206 841519

E-mail: chairman@eastern-fourstroke-association.co.uk

Club Secretary

Richard Challis

Mobile: 07989 344932

E-mail: secretary@eastern-fourstroke-association.co.uk

Treasurer

Craig Crowfoot

E-mail: treasurer@eastern-fourstroke-association.co.uk

Committee

**Brian Fletcher, Bob Drane, Chris Mace
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Championship Recorder

Colin Taverner

**Trials & Tribulations Editor
& Website Administrator**

Chris Canham
10 The Close, Waldingfield Road,
Sudbury, Suffolk, CO10 2QA

Tel: 01787 374399 **Mobile:** 07963 467922

E-mail: editor@eastern-fourstroke-association.co.uk

Membership Secretary

Kevin Plummer

E-mail: membership@eastern-fourstroke-association.co.uk

Mobile: 07774 277144

ACTC Secretary

Kevin Davie

Mobile: 07801 138769

E-mail: secretary@anglia-classic-trials-club.co.uk

**Please could articles for inclusion in the T&T to be with the Editor
by first post the Tuesday before club night. Thank you.**

www.eastern-fourstroke-association.co.uk

Visit the Eastern Fourstroke Associations website and [Facebook Page](#)
for a wealth of club information,
results, pictures and videos of club trials.
(Submissions gratefully received)

Disclaimer - The articles and comments published herein do not necessarily represent the views
of the Eastern Fourstroke Association, they are the opinions of individual contributors and are
published with a view that free expression promotes discussion and interest.

EDITORIAL

As I write this I've just had an email from the ACU (as I dare say many of you might have) setting out the planned approach to starting competitive trials again, I suspect the AMCA will be a similar approach. It is quite a long and detailed email which I'll not repeat as it'll get posted on various web and social media sites for you to read but at the bottom are a summary of key dates from when licence's can be applied for and when events can start from:-

Summary of dates:

<u>Activity.</u>	<u>Permit Application Date.</u>	<u>Event Date.</u>
Coaching/Training	27th May 2020	1st June 2020
Practice Events	1st June 2020	8th June 2020
Competition Events	15th June 2020	4th July 2020

This months T&T is '*shit or bust*' as nothing has been held back for next month (although there could be an entry form taking up a page or so?) Even the front cover has been used for John's poem, the photo has already appeared once before within this tomb back in September 2018 taken at the Langford Museum of Power bike show, which, now Weeting has been cancelled, maybe the first show the EFA will get to attend this year.

Thank you for all your articles this month making the June's T&T probably one of the best reads since..... last month? For those hovering the pen above the paper I encourage you to let the words flow, a couple more articles for next month would be fantastic and appreciated by everyone.

Keep yer feet up,



A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN'S IPAD

Hi Chris I wonder if you could put a note in the T&T regarding some VHS videos which have gone missing over the years. This all came up after a conversation with Kevin P.

The ones that are missing are going back many years, the EFA fancy dress trial at Cliff Ps and one of Friday Woods.

It was observed by a couple who videoed the whole of the trial at one section for 2 laps.

I know this is a long shot but it may jog someone's memory.

I used to lend them out but forgot who had them.

Regards, Ted.

Anyone out there have these videos stashed away waiting for VHS to make a comeback? If you do or know who might please let Ted know.

TOWARDS “SECTION ENDS”

PART FOUR

The Francis Barnett “Falcon” of 197cc, was the first proper trials machine I had purchased. Very basic by today’s standards it had the Villiers 8E engine with a four-speed gearbox. Slender and undamped front forks and a rigid rear-end. It did have proper trials tyres but they were quite worn, clearly with road use. I purchased it from GBR motors in Colchester, second hand and a non-runner. At £26:00, it cleaned me out financially and in order to get it home - some thirteen miles or so - my friend Roy, towed me with his Lambretta scooter. This is worth a few words in itself, as I am not sure if towing with two-wheelers is even legal these days. A vanished art perhaps, modern motorcycles seldom break down, and I could not imagine two 1000cc superbikes connected by a bit of rope - though it does occur to me that members of the EFA - with their comradeship and love of the old bikes - may need at some time, to pull a colleague home, bike-to-bike. The first requirement is a towing medium and I would always favour rope over wire or chain. Crucially, the length between the bikes must not be too long - or too short. Old trials veterans may remember that two Barbour suit belts could be used in an emergency and therefore the length should amount to around 7 to 8 feet. The rope on the towed machine should be secured nearest

to the middle of the steering yoke as is possible as any offset will pull the steering off centre and then requires a constant effort to hold it straight. Once under way, the towed rider must keep alert, as when having to slow or stop, it is he who should use his brakes and thereby keep the rope taut - avoiding jerks which could be disastrous. Suffice to say, Roy and his Lambretta brought me home safe and sound.

The unexpected arrival of the decidedly sporty looking bike at my home was something of a shock to my parents. They were rather unsure - to say the least - about my getting into motorcycles at all. My uncle had been a road and grass track racer and having sustained his share of injuries, my parents were naturally rather alarmed at my interest. Indeed, my Dad offered to buy me a car and pay for dancing lessons, no doubt hoping that some young lady might lure me away from the wretched motorbikes. Even today, I am not at all certain which direction would have been the most hazardous. I might add that nowadays, had I been a parent, I think I might have taken much the same view as theirs - most particularly when it comes to riding on modern roads.

To my great delight, the reason the little “Fanny-B” was a non-runner proved to be only a broken primary chain. This was soon sort-

ed and with a little more work, the bike was ready for its first trial. It had an unusual number plate – just two letters:- “PZ” - which I recall, represented County Antrim in Northern Ireland and from that, I surmised the bike had perhaps once been owned by a squad-die bar-racked at the Colchester Garrison.

Club nights at the Clacton and District motorcycle club were now more sociable and “trials talk” was the main topic. Trevor Cooper, who had the more

modern, green coloured Francis Barnett “Plover” trials machine – using, the AMC two stroke engine – offered again to take all of us in his large van, our longest distance yet, to a West Essex meeting, the start being from the “Silver Wings” cafe

at North Weald. This event was a classic and from then on, I always associated the West Essex club with running some of the best trials in the Centre. I did not do very



well but my newly acquired mount went admirably and in the deep mud did not clog up – which several other bikes did. At this event, both Pete Redpath and Roy, won second class awards and later, we saw with great satisfaction that our club was within the top ten of the club trials championship. It

was all good fun – and when I got home, even Mum and Dad were interested in hearing how the day went...

Sidge

FINDING MY INNER THUMPER

PART TWO

With the Enfield arriving on the Saturday before Christmas there wasn't going to be much fettling action for a while. It took up quite a lot of garage space (the Sprite had to spend the holiday out in the back garden) and while it didn't actually growl at me it did seem like a beast from another country. And to be honest I didn't really have a much of clue where to start. After a couple of days I worked up the courage to give it a kick and, like 'John' had prophesied, it actually started. I even rode it around the flower beds a couple of times. I can't say it was love at first ride, but I began to feel a sense of relief that I hadn't been totally ripped off. And the steady beat was calming, the weight even reassuring. It had that stand-up-straight riding position that I remembered from a quick ride on Mike' Norton 500 at Raydon a few years back, and the steering was similarly tiller-like.

The engine didn't appear to leak and fasteners seemed well-cared for. The clutch was light and the gears were all there. And yes, first was notably slow: the trials box statement appeared to have been justified. A quick peek inside the cover of the magneto (Lucas SR1) failed to reveal evidence of any electronics however, just bog standard points and condenser. Wishful thinking on the part of the vendor, apparently. But not to worry, and indeed I was quietly warm-

ing to the steed. Though not to its weight. Without a decent grab handle at the back it was almost impossible to manoeuvre in the garage.

The plan was to get rid of the plastic mudguards right away and fit classic alloys. I also needed to fit a lifting handle as I foresaw a lot of tugging and hauling to get the bike out of the sort of tight sections the EFA loves nowadays. One thing that niggled me was that the tall engine seemed to lean a few degrees backwards, probably because of the large front wheel. I resolved to install a set of Norman's marvelous extending rear shocks to correct that – and to add a little ground clearance and tighten the steering into the bargain. Win, win, win.

The plan pretty much worked, I'm pleased to say. Thanks, Norman, for your bespoke fitting service and thanks too to MCS Engineering for sorting out the mudguards and lifting points, all completed in time for the January practice at Raydon. With new rubber on the back the bike was looking pretty pleased with itself.

Raydon was my first shake-down ride and I was able to tell my wife (who feared only bad news) afterwards that it went better than expected. And it did, for a number of reasons. First, the bike started when asked and ran without complaint, especially up hills, where a satisfying bark emanated from the rear. Second, I began to experience

the joys of a heavy flywheel (and it is heavy), the bike demonstrating an ox-like desire to plough on, up or round obstacles in a satisfying plonking way. And third, the consensus of the car park was that I had got a 'good'n' The frame had been narrowed at the back at some point to improve rideability, an essential modification apparently. The forks may or may not have been breathed on, but those who know more than me thought they worked pretty well. They had also been modified to take removable oil seals, another Enfield 'thing' The

full width front brake was from a Continental, again signs of TLC (though the open air scoops caused a certain puzzlement) and at the rear was an Ariel brake hub, a good thing hopefully.

Somewhat puffed up by all of this reassurance I entered the damp February Raydon Trial in good spirits – Pre-Unit Easy Route, and was rewarded with a score of 63. Onwards and upwards!

Hugo Rose



“Someone said ‘have a go’ so I did”
Chairman Ted many moons ago doing a bit of ‘bicycle ballet.’
Or more likely trying to bunny hop or pulling a wheelie and
coming a cropper!

MY INTRO' TO OUR GREAT SPORT

About now I should have been unpacking the caravan having travelled back home from the long journey up to Fort William and back. However, as the SSDT has been cancelled I have decided to use some of my spare time to contribute to this fantastic magazine.

My Trials story began when I moved to Somerset from London and did my apprenticeship at Waverns Motorcycles in 1972. I didn't know anything about Trials but had messed about with mates, riding old scramble bikes.

I'll never forget the Police coming round to our house and telling me off for riding my uncle's old NSU-Quickly up and down the road. I also happened to have a black eye and must have looked like a right Herbert and one of the officers couldn't help smiling.

My foreman, Mike Clarke, was a good Trials rider who even owned the famous Ariel "GOV 132" for a while (see photo →) I started watching this strange sport where riders were standing up and riding slowly over objects and soon got hooked and decided this was the sport for me.

Mike told me to let him know once I had saved up £200 and we'd go to Sammy Miller's together.

I saved every penny and when I had about £180 we went to buy my first Bultaco, a 1969 250. We managed to get the price down from £165 to £140 and I still remember how excited I was as a 16-year-old to have my first bike. I still have the price tag, receipt and the original Sammy Miller parts catalogue.

I started to ride in events and on my 2nd one the throttle jammed open and I badly cut my knee after a big crash. My friends, who had taken me, liked to ride the harder Devon events where just riding between sections was tough enough and I remember many times where



I was stuck and rescued by the



another Bultaco, this time a 1978 175. Shortly afterwards I bought a C15 that I am restoring and hope to ride after the lockdown and my son Andrew bought his SWM and has really enjoyed twin shock trials.

I am very grateful to Trials for allowing me to meet so many great people over the years and I'd like to say a big thank you to

likes of Martin Strong, Geoff Parkin, Johnny Luckett and Brian Higgins.

the EFA, its members and especially to Kevin for all his help.

Moving to Essex, I started practice riding mostly at Poles Wood and my four children all started riding at young ages and still enjoy it today when they can. My son Andrew used to love stealing his little sibling's TY80, much to their annoyance but it was a great day out.

When I moved a couple of years ago to just outside Sudbury, Poles Wood became a bit too far to go just for some practise on the Gas Gas, so I was delighted to discover that the Eastern Fourstroke Association ran so many local Trials.

I decided to go full circle and get

Paul Bilbow



EL PRESIDENTI & THE LEAPING MIDGET ON THREE WHEELS IN WALES

Cast your mind back to 1980 and the formative days of the E.F.A. Ian Preedy and I were both active on the sidecar trials scene at that time, Ian being a Colchester club member on a Triumph twin outfit and me a Chelmsford and D.A.C. one on a Honda 305 four-stroke (ex Jack Lee.) The newly formed E.F.A being not much more than a twinkle in Ted and Ian's eye at that time.

Ian had acquired the ex Tony Girling Norton wasp outfit for another go at the Welsh two day trial after a few years lay off and I had just become a member of the E.F.A. and as the Welsh two day trial date did not clash with my road racing commitments it was agreed that I would jump in the chair for a ride around the Welsh countryside, which appealed to me as I had not competed in the Welsh two day at that time. So after two months of getting myself fit we found ourselves beside the lake at Landrindod Wells signing on and handing the Norton outfit over for an overnight stay in the open before the following days activity's.

Next morning we presented ourselves at the start bright and early for an enjoyable two days out in the Welsh countryside, where in spite of Ian's fears of the beast not starting after a cold night in the

parc-ferme, I was feeling confident and looking forward to the coming two days and ready to roll. What could possibly go wrong!!

When it came to our turn (the seventh sidecar away) Ian turned the fuel on, tickled the twin carbs then kicked ounce, kicked twice then a few more times all to no avail, until when all seemed lost the Commando engine finally fired up and we were away, blasting around the lakeside with Ian looking very red in the face but glad to be on our way.

The first sign of what I was in for while trying to make up time manifested itself when we managed to collide with a very surprised local woman in a car coming the other way round a blind right hand bend. I ended up sitting on the bonnet, with Ian clouting his right kneecap on her front wing, but no real harm done and after extricating the wasp outfit from the front of her car we waved her a swift goodbye and blasted off merrily on our way to the first check point with out losing anymore time.

We managed to arrive at the first timed checkpoint in time without any further mishaps but Ian was having a job holding the chair down on left hand cambers as I was a mere 10 stone 4 then and

Ian had been used to his long time passenger Bruce, who was built more on the lines of a "brick built outhouse." So it looked like the event was turning out to be more of a character building experience for both of us than we had first envisaged!! We carried on with more blasting along muddy tracks in the wild welsh countryside before reaching a further two checkpoints to meet our support crew headed by "The General!! An army friend of the team called Sergeant Roy Hall who ruled over our two man team with a rod of iron and kept us on our toes.

We continued to press on getting stuck a couple of times in the soft bottomless bogs that prevail in that part of mid Wales but still just managing to keep moving generally in a forward direction.

Ian seemed to be enjoying himself, winding on the big Norton with gay abandon until, pressing on through some farm buildings, a stone wall or gatepost or something equally as solid jumped out and grabbed the handlebars sending me into rotation over the handhold like a parrot rotating on its perch, before rolling to a dead stop some way up the track! (Ian said he could hear my helmet bouncing along the ground for some while!!) On finding that we were both still in the land of the living we quickly remounted and pressed on again to the next check point.

The other half of our team Tony Girling and Paul Thomas were having a much easier time of it however, being at that time front runners in the British sidecar cross

championship so they were both race fit and finding the going much more to their liking and soon caught us up. Being consecutive numbers 7 and 8 we saw quite a lot of each other, with both Tony and Paul shouting instructions to us at regular intervals such as hang on tight to me and "get in the chair more Preedy" as we carried on to the next checkpoint at an increasingly furious pace trying to stay on time.

It was just after midday, when leaving the next check point that we had, what can only be described as, a "coming together" with a fellow sidecar competitor of welsh origin called Gerald Evens, who it turned out to be the local character!! from the host town of Landrindod Wells and who had fitted an "all singing all dancing" 750 Honda 4 engine into his steed which was making a lot of noise out of its 4 megaphone exhausts much to the delight of his local following of welsh boyo's who followed his every move.

We were travelling at a good rate of knots across a wide expanse of moor when we caught up Gerald and although there was nothing else around for miles we went for a pass on his right only for our sidecar wheel to hook up under his swinging arm which tipped poor old Gerald and his passenger into a barrel roll. We were remarkably unscathed from this incident but Ian thought it best to turn round and offer assistance, so this we did. The whole thing looked like a battle scene with the Honda outfit upside down revving away merrily till the

fuel ran out of its carbs, only to chime in again when more fuel found its way back into the four float chambers. We both offered an apology but our Gerry was having non of it, he was not a happy bunny and basically, translated into English said "OF ALL THE PLACES TO PASS IN THE WHOLE OF WALES WHY DID WE PICK THIS PARTICULAR SPOT!?" Mean while I discreetly inquired, with the remains our two outfits between me and the passenger, if he was OK, as he lay curled up steaming in a heap on the ground. His agonized reply was mainly in the negative! before telling me to "F" off! Which, given the circumstances, Ian and I thought was the safest option. So quickly leaving the scene of the crime we pressed merrily on our way again, onwards and upwards, to the next challenge awaiting us both as the day progressed.

By this time it was becoming apparent that the Norton Commando engine was pumping oil out more and more and although we kept refilling it at each opportunity it was increasingly becoming a problem but we soldered on never the less.

We still carried on, getting stuck a few times in the various bogs but managing to keep going by changing around with Ian lifting and pushing the sidecar while I ran beside the bike giving it liberal amounts of throttle and clutch along the way.

I have vivid memory's of a gentleman at one spectator area in a very smart suite giving us a push

up a muddy gully and us pebble dashing him with mud from head to toe with good old welsh bog!! I bet he had some explaining to do when he got home!

After about three quarters of the day had gone when the Norton got slower and slower and hotter and hotter before finally grinding to a halt on a fire break road somewhere in the middle of Wales. I can still feel that sinking feeling in my stomach as we sat there not able to go any further, which was only equalled a few years later by blowing up five grands worth of matchless G50 engine on the mountain mile on the first lap of practice for the Manx Grand Prix in 1989 (luckily we had a spare engine that time.)

So it was the end of the welsh two day for us that year and to rub salt into the wounds our welsh friend Gerald and his passenger came motoring by a little later and on seeing us let fly with even more welsh '*banter*' to make our day complete.

The more successful half of our team, Tony And Paul, went on to finish in the awards and we still had a great time nun the more for that.

There was talk of doing it all again in 1981 but I think Ian, no great lover of the Norton twin engine after that, thought he had done enough and the outfit was sold.

I have ran into both our welsh friends a few times since and the same old story is retold, with slight variations each time. In fact, purely by chance I got talking to a chap

on a big Honda in 2014 at a motorway service area near Bristol and would you believe it it was the very same man who was passenger for Gerald Evans in 1980, the only year he did the welsh as well. And he tells me Gerald is still reliving the story now with a different ending each time.

Happy days indeed and what our great sport is all about.

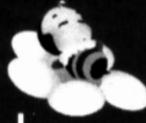
John R.

*Next month:
El Presidenti and the 305 Honda.
And how I became known as 'The
Leaping Midget. No pressure John!
Ed.*



Young Ryan celebrating V.E. Day, the 75th anniversary on Granddad Rays faux W.D. Francis Barnett.
Photo sent in by Mark Gibb.

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June 2020

KEEPING TRACK!

Fixture list of Classic Events in East Anglia & some further afield

FORTHCOMING SHOWS BEING ATTENDED BY THE E.F.A.

~~Weeting Country Show July 17th 18th & 19th~~

CANCELLED

Langford Bike Meet. August 2nd
Contact Don Daly 01787 477045

~~Copdock Bike Show, October 4th~~

CANCELLED

Kempton Park Bike Show & Auto Jumble. December 5th
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