

BARHAM MOTORCYCLE CLUB

NEWSLETTER OCTOBER 2011

When I wrote the last newsletter our man Ben Wibberley was giving his all on the Isle of Man as a serious contender in the Manx 2 Day Trial. He upheld the honour of the Barham Club by finishing an excellent 5th in the Solo National Class and bringing the Manx MCC Challenge Trophy down to Kent. There were 160 solo finishers in this famous and prestigious trial. Ben's class was won by Dan Thorpe, a Yorkshireman (but don't hold that against him) who can almost nip across to the Island for a weekend from where he lives. Ben dropped only 36 marks on the varied and tricky Manx terrain.

So, while Ben was performing off road the road racers were at it on the tarmac. A road racer finding himself off the tarmac will not generally be over chuffed but happily the majority did stay safely on the black stuff.

Tragically there were three riders who didn't come back this year. It was particularly poignant that the winner of the Newcomers A race, Wayne Hamilton, a young Irish rider, lost his life in the Junior Race 2 days later. When we heard this news our thoughts turned to our good friend Richard Bartlett of the Gravesend Eagles who lost his life on the Island in 2009. Richards enthusiasm for motorcycles is commemorated in an eponymous memorial trial held in March. Ride on in peace Richard.

Still, it was all head down and arse up for the racing in generally good weather conditions. Ryan Farquhar had 3 victories in the Classic classes. The Manx GP is for amateur racers eh?? Perhaps not these days. Rumours are rife in the paddock about how much Farquhar, Dunlop, Martin et al are paid to ride at the Manx. Its possible that these professional and semi professional riders choose to ride a classic bike round arguably the most dangerous circuit in the world just because they enjoy it, but when they're paid to ride everywhere else, including meetings run by the Classic Racing Club it does make you wonder. Anyway, a true amateur, our friend Stu Hall returned home from the Manx with 2 replicas from his finishing position in the Newcomers A and The Senior. He was really well chuffed and wants a bash at the TT now. Meanwhile I reckon an award for commitment and effort should go to Maria Costello MBE. Her T20 Suzuki conked out at Govenors Bridge on the final lap of the 250/350 Classic Junior race. She pushed it about 500 meters to cross the line in 3rd place in the 250 Class. Go on that woman!!

The Kent rider, (now living on the Island) Chris "Wingnut" McGahan failed to finish on a 750 Triumph Triple which was disappointing for him and anyone who enjoys the howl of a triple exhaust at full throttle over the mountain. (That would be me actually).

Right, sit up straight and pay attention cos heres more Barham MCC history. We're an old club. Be proud! We had Tom Arter, all round sporting motorcyclist, riding his AJS to a very credible 14th place finish in the 1938 Junior. According to the TT/Manx GP archives this was the only excursion Tom had as a rider on the Island so to finish 14th was a very fine effort indeed. I wonder, if the racing hadn't been interrupted by the small matter of a world war, whether Tom would have returned again to the Island and year on year moved up the finishers board. Would Stanley Woods have cast his eye over him as one to watch? The Arters certainly didn't lose interest in the Island or campaigning AJS/ Matchless machinery on the Mountain. The Arter Matchless & AJS were campaigned on the Island for many years.

Moving on apace to the 1955 MGP when a certain Mr Derek Minter took a BSA to finish 35th in Senior. He was an emerging talent then and it was his only ride in the amateur MGP. In 1957 he began his TT career. Dave Hughes had a rather shaky start to his Island race record. I think he must have had a massive overdose of bad luck because he was a DNF in the 1969, 70 & 71 Junior MGPs on an AJS. The MGP database doesn't say it was an Arter machine, but that doesn't mean it wasn't. The database can be a bit scant on the details I want to know. In 1972 finally it all came right and Dave took the flag in the Senior on the Arter G50 Matchless. He won the 6 lap race in a time of 2-25.010, a speed of 93.66. In the Junior he was a more than acceptable 4th place on an AJS, finishing the race in 2-30.312 at a speed of 90.23. Dave rode at the TT from 1973 to 1986 but returned in 1998 as an elder statesman of Island racing to ride bikes from a previous era at the Classic MGP.

Dave and the 496cc Arter Matchless took 18th place in the Classic Senior at a speed of 94.08. In 1999 he finished 11th, again on the Arter Matchless, moving up to a 10th place in 2000 when he piloted Tony Dunnells 500 Norton round at a speed of 97.42. The MGP in 2001 was cancelled because of the outbreak of Foot & Mouth. Astonishingly, against all the predictions, the Isle of Man Steam Packet (or is that Racket?) Company refunded ferry fares when the cancellation was announced. I'm still in shock. Anyway Dave returned to

compete successfully in 2002 finishing 12th in the Junior on a 350Norton. In 2004 he was 15th on the 500 Norton in the Senior. In 2005, continuing to show he'd still got great ability; Dave piloted a 350 Manx to a 9th position in the Classic Junior. In the Senior he was obviously in the groove because he moved further up the top ten to finish 6th on a 500 Manx. He did have a glitch because he was a DNF on a 600 Suzuki in the modern Junior. Dave, Tony and the Manx's were back on the Island in 2006 when Dave finished 20th on the 350 in the Junior and rode the 500 to another top ten finish, in at 7th in the Senior. Dave won a prestigious 100mph medal as he rode The Senior at a speed of 100.415 Daves last outing in the MGP was in 2008, again on the Dunnell Manx Nortons with a 22nd place finish in the Junior and a 16th place finish in the Senior. Dave is retired from racing now but he has a first class racing history.

Actually, at the Manx the Newcomers are usually sent out in practice with the Classic lads. This is because even though the novice may be a 20 year old on a CBR-RR a rider of Daves calibre and experience on a well set up "banger" can still show them the lines and disappear into the distance on the tricky bits. As they say "youth is no match for age and experience". (this is only said by old duffers though)

Back to current news and Brands Hatch will be hosting the final round of the BSB Championship on Oct 7/8&9th. Hopper Hopkins is leading the championship by only 8 points so it could be tense! Tommy Hill is in second place and he would definitely like to take the title. In third is Josh Brookes who is definitely not this housewives favourite after he nurfed Michael Rutter at Cadwell. I reckon Mr Brookes needs more bromide in his tea (or Fosters) to calm him down. Shaky is in 4th. Shaky knows Brands very well so he'll be looking for the flag. I'd like to go on the Friday for the practices and the Classic race, seen as how its "local".

World Superbikes is at Magny-Cour this weekend, but its not, in my opinion, a patch on BSB. Anyway Carlos (careless) Checa is leading Melandri and Biaggi is in 3rd. The Kent racer, Leon Camier is in 6th place, which is a very good effort in only his 2nd season on the world stage. (Think how long the top 3 have been about, Biaggi almost predates pasta as an Italian institution). I'd have liked to see Camier stay in BSB after he took the championship in 2009. Mind you, Philip Island and Monza or Knockhill and Cadwell? Maybe it wasn't a difficult decision for an ambitious young racer.

Also this weekend will be the final round of the British Trial Championship. Now the riders are going to have to be on their guard because they're entering the ungodly territory of Lancashire, Rochdale no less. Trials Central says the venue will present a "fantastic array of hazards". It doesn't stress that one of the main hazards is simply being in Lancashire. Still Gracie Fields hailed from Rochdale but notoriously bugged off to Capri as soon as she'd made 10 bob which must be a clue to the areas delights. I'm told that the best place to eat out in Rochdale is the Birch Service Station on the M62. Disregarding slagging off Rochdale (as a Yorkshireman I'm duty bound) James Dabill should clinch his third British Championship title, probably Michael Brown will be runner up and third place will be between Ross Danby and Sam Haslem. Ben Wibbs team-mate in the Inter Centre Trial, James Fry, is going well in the Expert A class.

Toni Bou took his 5th world outdoor championship title at the beginning of September. Mind you he is quite good. Raga is runner up. The British interest is Michael Brown in 6th, Dabill in 8th with Jack Challoner coming in 9th.

The Spanish Team of Bou, Raga, Cabestany and Fajardo took its 8th straight win in FIM Trial Des Nations. The Spaniards lost 38 marks in the heavy rain at Tolmezzo, Italy. Britain was second. Our lads, Brown, Dabill, Challoner and Dougie Lampkin (is he a granddad yet?) lost 117 marks.

Speaking of Lampkins various & assorted, 'im I married, Barry, had occasion to risk a phone call to the Shylocks of Silsden about carb jets. He should've know better but apparently they cheered up no end when he told them he'd married a woman from Keighley (that's me and its just down t'road from Silsden) and carted me off down south. The Lampkin view is that he'd done them a favour reducing the number of Keighley women by one cos "they're all over t'place oop 'ere." He didn't get a discount though.

Nick, our website fettler was going on the MAG run on Sept 25th to protest against yet more crap coming from Brussels aimed at removing motorcycles from the road, and then from off road as well no doubt. In future you may not be able to modify a bike from factory spec in any way. Bloody hell!! That means I'll have to put back the Miller 6v electrics on the Velo, and where the chuff am I going to buy tyres as hard as liquorice which were supplied on it in 1935? They haven't thought it through have they? And why won't the same modification rules apply to cars? Bikers are being singled out again.

I'll shut up now because I'm starting to have opinions.

Don't forget The Barham Trial on Oct 9th and the **Mutton Lancer** is coming up in November so start flexing them biceps ready.

Trials Section by Mark Ridge

The **Folkestone Chunnel non expert trial** was held at Stowting Woods on 4th September. Clerk of the course Keith Mason set out ten challenging sections on the loose clay and chalk banks, the sections normally get easier when they have been scrubbed in but with rain forecast for lunch time nobody wanted to hang back, the conditions did not bother the Pre riders with Colin Mote losing just 2 marks on his 500 Ariel, and Dean Latter on his Sprite was clean showing all the Modern Machines how it should be done. Unfortunately I did not finish as my clutch was making a horrible noise, this turned out to be all the swarf from what remained of first gear!

Results :- Inters Chris Anderson 20ml; Novice David Fagg 48ml;

Pre67a Colin Mote 2ml 500 Ariel; Pre67b Dean Latter 250 Sprite 0ml

Sittingbourne extra Combine on 11 September at Frinstead

Mark couldn't attend owing to aforementioned gear box bother. When we met up at the meeting on Sept 21st the repairs were under way and Mark had his fingers crossed that he'd be up and running again in time for the trial on 9th October. Anyway the trial was held on a very nice, sunny day and the sections were spread out over quite an area. About 30 riders turned out.

Our man "Jimmy" Mason was in second place on the O/40 Novices 23ml and he looked to be enjoying himself. His good lady wife, Pat, was working hard observing on a particularly steep, wooded section.

Dazza Godden and Vince Gooding entered as novices on the day. Dazza was on a recruitment drive for the Barham Trial but between talking and riding he completed the trial with 37ml. Young Vince (he's 14) rode very well and lost 19 marks. We were well pleased with the day until after the trial when Vin came rushing across the field, slid on the damp grass and "T" boned the van. Oh brill! Another dent in ye olde rusty, trusty VW .

Results:- Expert M Strank 19; Inter D Strank 21; O/40 Inter D mills 146;(Dave wasn't at all well on the day. He was really struggling and was riding well below par)

Novice K Damper 18ml; O/40 Novice D Kemp 9ml;

On September 4th there was a **Kent Youth Trial at Sturry**.

Barham member Vince won the red clubman route on 8ml. Scott Kennett won the blue intermediate route and the following weekend Scott was in Wales with Ben riding in the Saturday youth trial for the Inter Centre Team Trial.

My exploits

On the weekend of the 10th/11th September I travelled to Wales for the Inter Centre team trial. This for me is one of the biggest trials in the year. This is because all the yorkies live and breath trials, have the best practice ground and have some of the best trials riders in the country today. They hate the fact of possibly being beaten, especially by the Southerners and that they have been beaten 6 times since 2000 by riders that only have mud, mud, mud and a bit more mud to ride on.

Even with the limited ground down in our area the South East have produced some brilliant riders likes Mika Vesterinen who became world junior champion, and Graham Jarvis who got to world number 4!! This year our team was also not short of talent with Sam Connor, James Fry, Ben Morphett, Chris Short and myself, and we went there with only 1 position on our mind, 1st!!! So the Sunday morning was upon us and despite some rain on the saturday night we were still up for it. It was very windy and this helped to dry out the sections. We were 9th team away with the East Yorks directly behind us and Yorkshire setting off as 15th team away. The trial is set about the same difficulty as Elite in our centre so we all knew that this would be a low scoring trial. The ground was fantastic, with the course set over 5 miles there were 20 sections to be ridden twice. Being in Wales I expected lots of rocky slippery streams but in fact it was all very dry steep sections with rocky outcrops on the hillside and not a drop of water in sight. The South East by far has the best support team as well and this has been what has won the trial for us before, with about 12 people helping us through each section. Geoff Williams also made the journey down there to observe although you werent supposed to give me that dab I had Geoff!! Haha.

The 1st lap ended with the South East on 7 marks, Yorkshire were on 4 and East Yorks were on 15 but at the time we didnt know this and knew the pressure was on.

Lap 2 began and group of minders, mechanics and water carriers had to split up to different sections. (Think they should of run a 2nd lap of 5 miles to be honest haha). The time limit was 5 and a half hours for the trial but we were well within time as each section had to be ridden in 60 seconds, so no hangin around like centre trials!!! The lap was going brilliantly with only 2 marks being dropped in the entire team untill section 17, and then my worst nightmare happened. I had a 5 on an easy section!! Oh s**t just didnt quite cover it.

Anyway the final results came in and the yorkies won it by 7 marks from us and East Yorks were 3rd, 5 marks furthur adrift. Yorkshires team was on paper unbeatable and this year they proved it with James Dabill, Jack Challoner, Jonohan richardson, Richard Sadler and Dan Thorpe. (2 out of the 5 ride professionally). But 2nd place out of 20 centres still isnt too shabby and we WILL be back next year to reclaim our title!!!

Cheers Ben Wibbs

Notes from the The club meeting Sept 21st

Our Treasurer Tom Arter advised the meeting that the costs of getting our accounts audited and submitted seemed set to ensure we would definitely remain a non profit making organisation by charging us a considerable wad for their services. The only course of action is to shop around and ask other clubs which accountants they use.

We then moved onto the trial on the 9th October. Dazza was very excited to have had an on-line entrant. Barhams first! To date Dazza had received 10 entries and was well pleased with how it was going. As its Daz's first trial as trial secretary he is keen to get everything spot on and to ensure there are no glitches or gremlins. As it happened there was a lot of trial running experience sat around the table so the forthcoming trial was discussed in detail. The "meaty" question of food provision for the observers caused a lot of comment as the cost had to be weighed against wanting to treat the observers well for giving up their time and standing for hours in possibly horrible weather; Phoning for a pizza delivery to belt round the sections on a moped was not taken as a serious suggestion (I wonder why). Geoff told us tales of burgers and soup, 2 fingers of Twix and pies (with a wistful expression on his face) which made the prospect of a Panda Pop and a packet of crisps look really rubbish. We settled on freshly filled baguettes, at cost via Arters petrol & snack emporium.

The committee are looking into buying a gazebo to keep the signing on paperwork and helpers dry and sheltered. For the 9th of October we may be able to borrow Dave Mears snazzy gazebo as used at grasstrack meetings.

Nick came along, again on his bike, to give an update on the website, hence the online entry forms, getting results posted on the site and so on. We discussed the possibility of a members forum and appointing a moderator to stop any abuse of the facility.

It was a good meeting, Geoff and Ben had tales to tell and Barhams forthcoming trials are something to look forward to.

Anyway if you wish to enter the trial on Oct 9th or the Mutton Lancer on Nov 27th please contact Dazza on entries@barhammotorcycleclub.co.uk or phone him on 07860268727 (sensible times please). We're also taking entries on the day if anyone gets a sudden urge to ride if the Indian summer lasts that long.

I've got a new e-mail, editor@barhammotorcycleclub.co.uk if anyone would like to put anything or announce or advertise anything (weddings, funerals, bar-mitzvahs, whatever). I've had a request to write about Bill Ivy which I will do when I have space, but these letters are getting longer and I've run out of room for some photos Mark sent me (sorry)

The date of the next club meeting is Wednesday 19th October, venue The Plough in Bridge. Come along, have a swift half and a chat.

Never forget you can always tell a Yorkshireman... but you cant tell em much!!