

USA Set Sights on World Cup

There is growing speculation that the United States will contest the 2003 World Cup and World Championships in Manchester.

The Americans declared their intentions at a glitzy press conference in North Carolina earlier this month. The surprise announcement follows prolonged negotiations between British Cycling and the Edenton cycle speedway club.

"We are really excited about the prospect of riding you guys" said Edenton President Brian White. "We are trying to raise funds to send teams to the World championships in Europe in two years time. Your cycle speedway differs somewhat from ours but we are ok with that. Now we are working hard with our sponsors to raise the money for the trip to England in 2003."

Unlike the sport in Europe which has its roots in motorised speedway, cycle speedway US style is based on the popular stocks racing. Tracks are flat but considerably bigger than their UK counterparts and races are not limited to four riders. As many as ten can compete in a typical US race.

Bikes too are different. US cycles are styled mainly on mountain bikes and have brakes and multiple gears. But Edenton club president Brian White sees no problems with the Americans adapting to traditional machinery.

"We are hoping to import a couple of bikes from England," he said. "Racing bikes with no gears and brakes will be a new experience for our guys but we are looking forward to the challenge."



Typical action from cycle speedway USA style

Racing at Edenton usually takes place on Saturday evenings under floodlights. Races are graded according to riders' ages and abilities. Ages range from 6 to 18. Virtually every meet is sponsored. The club's commercial backers include international soft drinks giant, Coca Cola.

"This is great news" said British Cycling's international competitions co-ordinator Geoff Gamage. "Although there is a difference in styles, the Americans are keen to adapt to the World code. Their inclusion in the World Cup will be a great fillip for the sport in this country. We have exchanged videos and promotional literature and they are very determined to make the trip to Europe for the 2003 World championships."

See Cycle Speedway USA, pages 6 & 7

Hemsley to Act as International Ambassdor

World cycle speedway champion David Hemsley is set to become the first British rider to take part in cycle speedway in the United States. The 32-year-old triple champion from Leicester has accepted an invitation to compete in the opening event of the season. He will race under lights at Edenton on 20th April and is thrilled at the prospect.

"I am really looking forward to making the trip to America" he told Spokesman. "I am sure that I speak on behalf of all cycle speedway riders, not only in the UK but

around the World, of the excitement it brings to welcome another country into the growing international racing arena. That this country is the USA makes this all the more special.

"Seeing the growth of the sport in recent years in Poland, and knowing their limited resources but overwhelming enthusiasm, I believe the opportunity to create something very special in the USA is immense" said Hemsley.

Hemsley is expected to be accompanied on his trip by Leicester rider Rob Jones.

A FORCE TO BE RECKONED WITH

British Cycling Commissioner Geoff Gamage predicts that the United States will quickly establish themselves as a major force on the international cycle speedway scene. While the newcomers may struggle to impress at the highest

level, Gamage is confident the American youngsters will make an immediate impact in Junior World Championships in Poland.

"From what we understand, the American youngsters have extraordinary

bike handling skills. While they may struggle at full senior level, I think they will do extremely well in the age category events in Poland. One rider in particular, Chad White, is reported to be something special. The 14 year old has won 51 consecutive races and has been club champion on five occasions. He must be a major threat in the Junior Worlds."

HEMSLEY'S SWORD

World, European and British cycle speedway champion Dave Hemsley has added another prestigious award to his trophy cabinet.

Hemsley, who had been invited to present awards at the annual British Cycling gala dinner in Manchester, was himself on the receiving end when he was presented with the coveted Wilkinson Sword Award for outstanding contribution to the sport. "This came as a complete surprise" said the 32 year old triple champion from Leicester. "I am delighted to have won what I have always considered to be one of the biggest accolades in the sport." Hemsley re-wrote the record books last year. Not only did he become the first rider to simultaneously hold the World, European and British championships but he also won the national individual title for a record-breaking fifth time.



Dave Hemsley receiving his award from Radio Five Live's Simon Brotherton

Race is on for Premier Title

With only days to go before the tapes go up on another season, the race is already on for the Premier League title. The close season has seen an unprecedented number of transfers as clubs gear up for the season-long challenge and take advantage of new rules on secondary registrations.

While Wednesfield will be hoping to retain the title they won in 2001, the name that is on everyone's lips is Great Blakenham. The Suffolk side have sensationally signed on three of the country's top riders including a former national champion. Phil Howells, Leon Yelland and Darren Slater will all be joining East Anglia's number one team.

"We did well in our first season in the Premier League" said club chairman Terry Ashford. "but racing at this level is literally in a different league. People now see us as a club with potential and that's why they want to ride for us. We haven't poached these riders. They have joined of their own accord. We have been keen to ensure that they are not leaving their existing clubs for the wrong reasons."

Great Blakenham could benefit more than most from the new secondary registration regulations that permit Premier League clubs to sign on two "guest" riders. It is widely expected that Blakenham will take advantage of this rule change to bring in Richard Williamson from neighbouring Somersham.

Competition for places in the team will be fierce with the likes of Jason Ashford, Chris Askew, Paul Brinkhoff, David Solomon and Mick Skinner in the squad. Great Blakenham's campaign begins with a home match against Leicester on Sunday 14 April and they are expecting a bumper crowd to see their new signings in action.

Meanwhile, while Great Blakenham were taking the wraps off their new signings, Horspath have also been busy on the transfer market. The Oxford side have secured the services of British indoor champion Steve Harris and Danny Harper from Swindon. Not content to stand still, they have also captured the signatures of top Poles, Karol Szymanski and Lucasz

Nowacki. Both are quality riders who reached the European Riders Championship final at Rawicz in 2000. At the other end of the spectrum talented Neil Clinkard has retired from cycle speedway to concentrate on rugby.

Defending champions Wednesfield may have lost the services of Leon Yelland but they expect to add the Gregory brothers, Chris and Rick Gregory from Horspath, to their membership list. Despite rumours to the contrary, Shaun Ellis, Lee Aris and Mike Morgans will all be in their line-up.

Another club who have entered the transfer scene in a big way are Stoke. Back in the Premier League after a season of regional racing, the Potteries team have snapped up the services of Terry Norman. The former Tameside star, who is rated at number eleven in the national rankings, has been enjoying the close season racing in Australia and is expected to sign on the dotted line when he returns later this month.

Meanwhile Stoke continue their policy of developing their own riders. "We hope all the work we have put into youth development over the past two or three years, will start to pay dividends" said hard working club secretary Avon Alcock. "We have recently received a £1,500 grant from the Dudson Foundation, a local regeneration charity, to spend on bikes and equipment for youngsters."

Down on the South Coast, Poole and Southampton expect to be little changed. The Dorset side are likely to complete the transfer of Robin Spicer from Exeter and there has been growing speculation that Allan Busby will join Southampton from Norwich.

But as Spokesman goes to press, the biggest uncertainty centres on World champion David Hemsley. There is mounting speculation that the sport's number one personality may go back to Slater Street where he remains as Leicester's club coach. If that becomes a reality it will certainly dent Wednesfield's title aspirations - and throw the Premier League wide open.

It promises to be a year to savour!

ENTER TEAM GREAT BRITAIN

A new method of selecting the Great Britain international team has been unveiled. Traditionally the job of picking GB squads has rested with the Cycle Speedway Commission. Now this responsibility will switch to a selection committee comprising the Great Britain team boss and four international team managers. A Commission member, most

likely the international competitions portfolio holder, will head the selection board.

The changes come following growing concerns that GB's status as the leading cycle speedway nation is increasingly under threat, especially from the Australians and Poles.

Over the past decade, international

tours especially to Australia, have had to be self-financing. This has meant that many of our more talented youngsters have been unable to make the trip because they cannot fund the £1,000 plus travel and accommodation costs.

To ease the burden, British Cycling has invested £4,000 in a special Australia 2005 fund.

It also reflects the greater emphasis that British Cycling is placing on the national team.

ELITE DARREN

One of cycle speedway's brightest prospects had taken another step towards achieving his ambition of being a professional cyclist.

British indoor under-16 champion Darren Slater is one of 40,000 youngsters tested as potential future champions through British Cycling's World Class Start Programme.

After an initial assessment at Bury last August, 15-year old Slater has undergone further testing at Manchester Velodrome, Loughborough University and Mansfield. After a rigorous programme of strength, stamina and speed testing, Slater is one of only 20 elite riders selected for further development. The progress of another 40 riders will be monitored.

Slater will now be required to attend a

number of weekend assessment sessions throughout the year where his potential will be further examined. Inevitably this will curtail his cycle speedway activities this season.

Slater was excited at the prospect of broadening his cycling experience.

"I would love to go at track cycling. I will be going up to Manchester Velodrome later in the year for further trials" he told Spokesman.

If Slater fulfils his dream, he could find himself following in the footsteps of Australian cycle speedway star Brett Aitken. The popular Aussie made the successful transition from shale to velodrome and was part of Australia's 4000 metres pursuit team that won gold at the 1994 Commonwealth Games at Victoria, Canada.



GRANT AID

Help is at hand for those clubs who want to submit grant aid applications but are not sure how to go about it or are put off by the maze of paperwork.

Newly elected Cycle Speedway Commissioner Paul Bodley has considerable experience in this field and is happy to assist any clubs making grant applications.

"Sport England's Awards for All programme is ideally suited to cycle speedway clubs" he told Spokesman. "The programme provides small grants of up to £5,000 to support all manner of projects. Traditionally most cycle speedway clubs have raised their own funds to meet activities both on and off the track but spiralling fees, competition and travelling costs have meant that many clubs are finding it difficult to manage their budgets.

"Over the past two years the Wednesfield club has received two substantial grants. In 2000 the club received £4,550 towards the cost of several projects including the provision of a box trailer to carry equipment and racing bikes, a computer system to help the club secretary, two racing bikes for beginners and finance towards training two members to become British Cycling level two coaches.

Last year the club received a further grant of £4,750 towards a photocopier, travelling expenses to away fixtures, finance to help celebrate the club's 40th anniversary, two more bikes and finance for training two more coaches.

Other clubs have benefited from these grants but so many are missing out. Most club secretaries send for details but are put off by the application pack and their submission goes no further.

The Commission is now able to help with advice on projects, making out application forms and general help. The money is there for our clubs to use, so why not make your enquiry straight away to Paul Bodley, 3 Chesterton, Stirchley, Telford, Shropshire, TF3 1XT.

TRACK PLAN LAUNCHED

British Cycling is currently working with Sport England to produce a Technical Guide for the construction of cycling facilities, including cycle speedway tracks.

The input for the cycle speedway material has come from architects Isherwood McCann, who, advised by World Champion Dave Hemsley, have produced a comprehensive standard specification for track construction. Practical advice was also received from Elmy Landscapes of Ipswich, the contractors responsible for the

new track at Colchester.

"The specification will assist greatly in our negotiations with local authorities for new facilities" said Commission vice-chairman Paul Bodley. "Isherwood McCann have done an excellent job in drawing up the detailed specification" he added.

The guide is due to be published in the summer and will be available to local authorities and other organisations interested in providing facilities for cycling competition.

RULES CLAMPDOWN

British Cycling is encouraging cycle speedway clubs, riders and administrators to adhere more strictly to the sport's rules and regulations.

"Over the past couple of years, there has been a gradual deterioration in maintaining the rules" said John Whiting. "The Commission is being advised by British Cycling to ensure compliance on such things as shirt advertising, health and safety and competition entries. There will also be a general tightening up of cycle speedway racing rules and regulations."

The new initiative reflects calls made by clubs at the annual cycle speedway conference to tighten up the rules.

CASH BOOST FOR YOUNGSTERS

Several of cycle speedway's most promising talents have received Sports Aid grants to assist their personal development.

Jack Hibberd, Chris Jewkes, Nick Myhill, Darren Slater and Shaun Woodhouse have each received the first instalment of their £500 national grants, that will go towards equipment and training expenses. A further two riders between the ages of 12 and 18 have been referred to Sports Aid regional offices, and should receive smaller awards up to £250.

Cycle Speedway Commission chairman Rod Witham was delighted with the news.

"This will make an enormous difference" he told Spokesman. "We need to continue to develop our youngsters, especially when there is growing international competition in all age categories."

Sports Aid is a charitable foundation which issues grants from its own trust fund as well as co-ordinating the disbursement of funds from a variety of other trust sources.

CYCLE SPEEDWAY ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Recent years at the British Cycle Speedway Commission (formerly "Council") annual general meetings have shown a more mellow approach to those hell-fire and damnation days of the Seventies and Eighties *writes Martin Gamble*.

It is not without some regret that the passing of those feisty times has knocked the stuffing out of the members who used to be relied upon to add some spice to the animated debates and "yee-hah" politicking of those halcyon days. Most of the 2001 meeting went by without so much of a murmur of dissent or outrage.

Perhaps the mellowing of the meet reflects a more relaxed attitude towards events. I would prefer to think that the unnerving quiet demonstrates an overall contentment with affairs and a feeling that perhaps we are actually now doing most things right.

It's a post-Christmas sobering thought realising that the only contentious point of debate at the meeting concerned the fate of riders who upset referees and enjoy a subsequent match ban. At this point of the meeting, the debate warmed - but all of the hot air tended to drift in one direction with the members, as a whole, agreed by the thought of more punishment of the sports more severe transgressors.

Even the heinous crime - the perceived daylight robbery of doubling a club's annual outgoings for affiliation and insurance - was well played by Brian Furness in presenting an explanation that the fall-out from the September 11 atrocities would have a huge impact on British Cycling funding for the foreseeable future. The meeting all but adopted the silence of consent and all clubs present were sympathetic over British Cycling's predicament and not too displeased by showing their reserved

agreement.

Surely, the members were obviously saving their angst and preparing to aim their anger at the cause of this substantial increase in expense, Mr Osama bin Laden. A few smiled wryly, but uncomfortably, and shuffled on their seats longing for the day when the world's most wanted man lined up on grid one alongside them on the starting gate. Perhaps this might be the only mitigating circumstance when match bans might be avoided!

The Contented then contently strolled along Contented Avenue and cast approving and contented nods at the officers - past and present - who wished only to tinker at the edges, to fine-tune the sweet-running machine.

Rod Witham, chairing the meeting, only once threatened to use the equivalent of a presiding officer's tactical nuclear device - his gavel - only for the hum to give way and order to be restored.

Yes, these are happy times and, despite the teething troubles, cycle speedway is suddenly aware of the potential offered by being part of this British Cycling beast and British Cycling would to appear to realise that, in cycle speedway - as with BMX - they have a Golden Goose which they can use as part of the Greater Plan.

A point not missed by the reformed Coventry club who were keen to express thanks to all who have helped them during the past year. One of those accolades was aimed well and truly at the Wednesfield club who made no small input into their nearby rival's resurrection. An unthinkable effort from many other clubs only two decades ago.

A new air of trust emerged at management level and an acceptance that we have all grown up and have a good

product to offer. The overall unity displayed to all that we live together in this not-so mythical and magical place called "the Real World".

Even the chattering classes aside in the corridor in the briefest of lunchtime breaks offered nothing but support for the BCF and the Cycle Speedway Commission. The trust is now absolute and Cycle Speedway has now grown up and got the key to the door. It was almost surreal to be at a Cycle Speedway AGM which, despite the odd flutter of concern and tone of suspicion towards the BCF during the previous two years, suddenly realised which side its bread was buttered on.

This has to good for Cycle Speedway.

The content of the meeting itself tended to comprise the tidying up of the various rules and regulations which have created ambiguity over the past season or two. No problems there, either.

I might suggest that next year we might have to stir things up by introducing the WWF as the interval attraction. That's the former World Wildlife Fund and not the World Wrestling Federation - the latter would be far too harsh and over-the-top to disturb the decorum!

Outline bullet points decided by the meeting:-

- Current referees' classifications to be retained
- Minimum First Aid qualification for cycling is the HSE Appointed Persons certificate
- Additional insurance levy of fifty pounds per cycle speedway club per annum
- Black shoes not mandatory for competition
- Match ban now comprises the remainder of the match in which the ban is imposed and the next match in the same competition
- Only British nationals who are members of the BCF can compete in the British Championships
- Closing date for all British Championships to be one month before competition date
- Introduction of Over-50's "Grand Veterans'" Championship
- Clubs in the British Team Championship must be affiliated before 31st March
- Riders transferred after 31st March are not permitted to compete for their new club in the British Team Championship
- Secondary registrations still permitted with conditions
- Combination racing is a condition of Premier League membership

HUNTING JOINS COMMISSION



Ipswich-based official Dave Hunting has been elected to serve on British Cycling's Cycle Speedway Commission.

The 60 year old company director from Ipswich was unanimously elected following nomination by Sandwell and Tameside CSCs. Hunting has been involved in the sport for over 40 years and is widely respected as one of the country's leading referees.

The selection of Richard Browes-Walker and Paul Bodley was re-affirmed following their co-option to the committee earlier in the year.

Wednesfield Tops in Midlands & North

Before the season started most pundits would have predicted that Leicester, Stoke and Wednesfield would contest the Division One title race. And so it proved, writes Mike Hack.

Wednesfield recorded two important home wins early on, 93-83 over Leicester and then 107-70 over Stoke. However, Wednesfield suffered a surprise 91-87 defeat at Tameside in June. Leicester kept up the pressure with two vital home wins in August, 101-77 over Stoke and then 88-87 over Wednesfield.

It was now apparent that the title chase was going to the wire, with Leicester now in the driving seat. However, they lost at Stoke

late on in the season, whilst Wednesfield's win at Stoke saw them draw level on match points. Stoke lost only three times throughout the campaign, but that was enough to keep them out of the top two places. Wednesfield and Leicester each lost twice, and so the title had to be decided by a play-off at Sandwell. Surprisingly, for such a closely contested season, Wednesfield convincingly disposed of Leicester, 99-79 to win the title, to add to their Premier League title.

The Midlands/North Combination League was also a three horse race. Leicester's three defeats ensured that they finished no higher than third. Bury and Stoke both tied at

the top of the table, having lost two matches each. With neither side having conceded any penalty points, the title was decided on points difference, in favour of Bury.

The Division Two title was also closely contested, again with a tie break situation to decide the title, for the second year running. Sandwell and Sheffield both lost once each, with the West Midlanders retaining their title with a comfortable play-off win at Leicester.

Wednesfield won the Midlands Alliance League outright, finishing two points ahead of Leicester, whilst Tameside's late season win over Bury was enough for them to clinch the Northern Alliance League title, ahead of Bury.

MAJOR SURPRISE IN SOUTH-EAST AS NORWICH DROP A DIVISION

The South-East regional meeting brought most of the clubs to gather at Great Blakenham village hall to thrash out any problems from last year's racing and to agree any changes for the forthcoming season *writes Glenn Grange*.

The meeting welcomed cycle speedway's newest club, Terrington St John from West Norfolk who declared their intentions to compete in a series of challenge matches in 2002 in readiness for their elevation to league racing in 2003.

One major change next year will be that the home club will supply referees and that all refs must be British Cycling members. Both teams will agree match start times in future, but it is expected that the majority of matches will start either at 11am or 3pm. There was also debate about secondary registrations.

The Norwich club put forward a proposal to introduce some sort of rider control but for the second successive year member clubs rejected the idea. A further Norwich proposal requiring every rider to have a minimum of three races also failed to attract any support.

The coming season will see Norwich drop into South-East Division Two so they can regroup and rebuild after several senior riders are unable to commit themselves to a full season of Division One racing. Suffolk club Somersham caused a surprise when they announced that they would not be fielding a team in the second division this season.

The 2002 league line-ups will be:-

South-East Division One

East London, Eaton, Great Blakenham, Hawbush, Hethersett, Somersham

South-East Division Two

Colchester, East London B, Great Blakenham B, Great Wakering, Hawbush B, Hethersett B, Kesgrave, Norwich

There will be inter-county matches between Norfolk and Suffolk at under-13 and under-16 level. These matches will be held at the South-East regional centre at

Great Blakenham after the East Anglian age-category championship on Sunday 12 May. The senior and under-19 East Anglian championships will be held at Hethersett on Sunday 20 July. Colchester have been offered the East Anglian Fours on Sunday 13 October.

MAJOR CHANGES IN SOUTH-WEST

The South-West has introduced sweeping changes to safeguard the regional league's future and provide meaningful competitions for all its clubs. In a major shake-up, the league will bring in strict rider control and introduce a new 18-heat race formula that should allow teams more flexibility in the number of riders they use.

Under the new arrangements, the traditional eight-rider race programme will be replaced by an 18-heat six-rider formula with optional reserves. Riders will be classified into A and B grades and teams will only be allowed to field three A class riders in any match.

"The new formula should cater for the needs of all clubs" regional official Geoff Gamage told Spokesman. "Hopefully it will help the lesser teams compete at league level and at the same time provide a platform to bring their younger riders on. Exeter, Newport and Swindon are all likely to be tracking quite young teams with the odd senior here and there, whereas the likes of Southampton and Horspath will have to juggle their squads around."

"As well as rider control, the ten-point deficit rule for claiming grids and tactical substitutions has been retained. Certainly this flexibility has enabled the likes of Hellingly to compete over the past couple of seasons" said Gamage. "There will be no doubling up of fixtures which means Poole, Southampton and Horspath get to race each other in both South West and Premier Leagues, but under vastly different rules and formulas."

Combination matches move to an eight-heat formula with scheduled four riders and reserves. Newport will only race in Division One as most of their juniors will be well served by British Youth and Junior League competitions.

The South West Junior Grand Prix will now carry a £1 on the day entry fee for each round. The funds generated will ensure that all riders who qualify for a final will receive a medal.

A new 42 heat four-rider plus reserve Gold Cup finals day will be held at Swindon in October with the Rosebowl going to the highest placed non-Premier team. October will also see the Junior Grand Prix finals day being hosted by Poole.

The South West Individual Riders Championship is to have a new perpetual trophy named after long serving League Recorder Steve Galloway as the league memorial to him for his many years service. He refereed the previous four finals up to his untimely death last February.



CYCLE

SPOTLIGHT ON EDENTON

Cycle speedway in the State of North Carolina dates back to 1990 when the Edenton club was formed. Like cycle speedway in the UK, half a century previously, it started from a humble background - in a kid's front yard!

Local stock car enthusiast, Brian White, attended his first race meet at Elizabeth City. Being too young to race cars he made the bold decision to start a bicycle raceway. Brian remembers fondly those early days.

"All the local kids had bikes, so it seemed the natural thing to do" Brian told Spokesman. "I was only 13 at the time. We started racing in my Mom's front yard but cycle speedway became so popular that we soon carved out a big circle in the ground. Mom was not pleased! So we began holding races in the less busy streets of Cape Colony.

"It was good basic fun. We had no track, no sponsors, no rules but we did have great fun. We continued to do that for a couple of years but we really needed a place of our own."

By the mid-Nineties the cycle speedway was outgrowing its own success. Brian White realised he needed help to handle the growth of the track. Johnnie Hughes was introduced in 1995 and John Turner came on board in 1996. Together the trio elevated cycle speedway to unimaginable heights. But still the club had no home.

In 1997 speedway officials wanted to get off the road and into a semi-permanent property. They thought their long search for land had come to an end when they moved to Cape Colony Park. But racing came to an abrupt halt after just one meeting.

"Insurance problems did not allow us to race at the park" said John Turner, Senior Vice President of Cycle Speedway. "But we still had options in other areas".

The major breakthrough came in 1997. While attending a Cape Colony Association meeting, Cycle Speedway officials met a guy by the name of Tim Spittler who agreed to let



the Speedway use land he owned on White Oak Drive.

On a memorable day, 10 May 1997, club President and CEO Brian White welcomed everyone to the new home of Cycle Speedway.

"Once we had our own track, interest in Cycle Speedway truly exploded" recalls White. "Spectator attendances brought crowds of over a hundred to most meets and we had to double our race day staff to handle the crowds. At that time over 80% of officers and staff members were under the age of 18. But we had tremendous support from parents and friends. We were really turning heads!

"The Cycle Speedway has grown like topsy over the past three years. We have learned from previous mistakes and we are now running a professional, non-profit organization. Cycle Speedway began marketing in north-eastern North Carolina reaching sponsors from as far away as Elizabeth City and Williamston."

Today the Cycle Speedway is more successful than ever, attracting racers and spectators to enjoy this unique sport. Cycle Speedway continues fund-raisers such as barbeques, dinners, donut sales.

"We do anything we can to raise funds for the kids" said Andy Jones, Marketing and Public Relations Director. "Being a Cycle Speedway officer involves non-stop work. You eat and breathe racing. It's non-stop seven days a week, 52 weeks a year."

"We are often work in the track office until the early hours of the morning. Once the season ends, we immediately start on planning the next year's activities" said Matthew Vaughan, Vice President and Chief of Security.

TOUR GUIDE

Edenton is a small town in North Carolina on the East Coast of America. It is served by an international airport at Norfolk, which is situated an hour and a half drive north of Edenton.

RESTRICTED GEARS

Edenton CSC is primarily bike racing for kids aged 6 to 18.

"Kids are allowed to use any kind of bike they want" explained Brian White "Speed bikes must be put on certain gears. The track is 'D' shaped, 140 yards long and made of purely dirt and has no hills or jumps. Racing is over 20 Laps and the fastest current lap record is 12.22 seconds.

RISING STARS



Edenton have some fine young prospects who aim to make their mark on the World stage. One of their best riders is Andy James (18) who is the current club champion. Top woman is Anna Ray (16), above, who is the club's number one girl racer. But the most outstanding rider in age-category championships is 14-year-old Chad White who has won 51 consecutive races and has been club champion in his age group for the past five years.

Final word rests with Brian White himself. "Cycle Speedway is a family fun sport, something for everyone. There are no benchmarks as there are in some sports. Although Cycle Speedway is a bicycle racetrack for kids between the ages of 6 to 18, everyone and anyone can race. And yes there are adults racing most weeks too".

SPEEDWAY USA

END OF SEASON CELEBRATION

Edenton's 2001 season ended in grand fashion at the sixth Annual Awards Banquet held at the American Legion Post building.

Over 200 people enjoyed the awards ceremony with great entertainment from local singers and DJ Steve Hassell. Club members Shirley Kephart, Julie Keeter, Joy Owens, Julie Bell, and Carrie Schwartz sang different songs, all doing a great job. John Turner enlightened the crowd with his latest poem, "What is Cycle Speedway?" Various speakers informed every one of the year's accomplishments. The September 11th terrorist attack against America was a centerpiece of remembrance during the ceremony.

Over 250 awards were given out to various sponsors, community leaders, and racers. Door prizes from Coca-Cola and the Edenton-Chowan Sheriff's Department were given throughout the night. The great dinner was provided by Leon and Beverly White, Pat Terry, Pizza Hut, Momasita's, and Emily Krider.

The 2001 racers were awarded in various categories, such as Best Sportsmanship, Best Looking Bike, Fastest Racer, Funniest Racer, and many more. Andy Jones was named 2001 Most Popular Racer. Other surprises were the inductees in the Hall of Fame. 2001 Champion and retiring racer, Andy Jones was inducted, while five-time champion, 61-time winner (all time leader) Chad White was also inducted. Highlight of the evening was Hall of Fame induction to Brain White who formed the club in 1990.

The 2001 champions enjoyed their celebration at the champions' table, with their large trophies. Anna Ray earned the Track Championship, a feat that no female has ever accomplished previously. Michael Ray and Andy Jones also won their division championships. All the racers enjoyed their night, as they were able to see pictures on the jumbo screen thanks to Ofelia Baxter, banquet decorations director. Dean Baxter was the banquet sponsors director. A big thank you goes out to the entire banquet committee members and banquet speakers, singers, volunteers, and sponsors for a truly wonderful evening.



INTRODUCING JOHN TURNER

One of the key people running cycle speedway in the United States is Edenton's Senior Vice President and Chief Financial Officer John Turner.



John is a 1992 graduate from John A Holmes High School in Edenton and earned a BS degree in Accounting at Elizabeth City State University in 1996. At 28 he is the second longest running active officer of Cycle Speedway.

At the track on race nights his role is increased to the high-pressured Chief Scorer, a top job that is very critical to the success of the speedway. Working well with others, caring, responsible, friendly, dedication to the speedway along family and friends describes him very well. Running a racetrack or any other big venture takes total teamwork. Many may underestimate John Turner's duties within Cycle Speedway, but in reality they shouldn't.

John took over those duties back in 1996 and still holds them today. John is a top executive that spends many hours a week all year long working on the Speedway and helps lead the speedway to the success it has had in recent years. John is not only involved within Cycle Speedway but is also great at writing poetry as many of his poems are published in a national poetry book. John is also a member of the Cape Colony Church of Christ located just south of Edenton. John credits his success to God, which is top priority in his life.

CLUB PREPARES FOR NEW SEASON

Cycle speedway officials at the Edenton club in America are preparing for the start of the 2002 race season that begins in April. The track is being reconfigured before the April 20th season opener and will now be banked in all four turns. The backstretch is being extended in length and the track will be slightly larger but will host exciting racing on the high-banked wide speedway.

Racers can expect two to three defined racing grooves, which will give the fans a great show each and every Saturday night. For the first time the club will construct a victory lane which will allow race winners to

have an actual victory lane to go to after the races.

Besides the major news of the track reconfiguration, officials have announced a new Vice President and Marketing and Public Relations Director, Johnnie Hughes. Hughes, a former Vice President, is excited about working to make Cycle Speedway the best experience for everyone involved.

"Everyone can expect 2002 to be the best season ever. The track will look the best it ever has and we will be working hard for everyone to have a great time" said Hughes.

Joe Jones has taken over as the raceway Engineer and Maintenance Director.

Charlene Spruill is the Administrative Director. John Turner, 28, is back on board for the seventh straight year as the Senior Vice President and Chief Financial Officer. Matthew Vaughan is again Chief of Security.

Edenton Motors has renewed as the series sponsor for 2002. Hampton Inn will continue to sponsor the Ablazing Stock and Junior Stock. Pontiac will sponsor the Pro Am Stock in 2002. Coca-Cola will sponsor pole qualifying before each Saturday night's races.

GALLOWAY MEMORIAL WEEKEND

Horspath plan to hold a series of matches over Easter as part of the Steve Galloway Memorial Festival. Events start on Good Friday with a special challenge match between Horspath and a South-West representative side. Veteran Colin Wheeler, one of Steve's closest friends, has been asked to pick the South-West team, reports Geoff Gamage.

Saturday is individuals day, something that was always arranged by Steve himself over the years. The Colin Moores Memorial Trophy for top juniors starts at 1pm followed at 3pm by the annual E P Litt Trophy where a very strong field has been invited. Then at 5.30pm the Steve Galloway Memorial Trophy brings together a special field relevant to Steve himself including many of his favourite riders. On Sunday a special four-a-side tournament is planned, details for this are awaiting confirmation at the time of going to press.

14 Year Old Wins Newport Championship

Newport Stars staged their annual club championships at Spytty Leisure Centre under floodlights. 14-year-old Nicky Evans was a deserved winner picking up his third major title this year, having already won the British Youth and Junior League under-14 grand prix and southwest championship.

The fast grippy surface lent itself to some fast entertaining racing. Ryan Hughes and Dave Carmichael showed up well in the early heats as did diminutive Chris Davies. But as the meeting progressed evergreen Colin Simmons and rapidly improving James Turner led the field. Hughes suffered a nasty fall that ruined his chances of getting to the A final, as did a hand injury to Ryan James.

The riders lined up for the A final with Simmons favourite but an uncharacteristic sluggish start saw him left at the tapes with Turner, Evans and Davies well ahead. Turner tried really hard to win his first title and on this showing should do so soon but the strong Nicky Evans passed him going into the pits bend and Simmons followed through in second place. Surprise packet Chris Davies finished a fine fourth.

All in all another excellent meeting and a great end to another successful season for Newport's young riders.

Newport Club Championship 2001

1st Nicky Evans, 2nd Colin Simmons, 3rd James Turner, 4th Chris Davies

Norfolk Celebrations

Two Norfolk clubs held their annual presentation awards recently. A big turnout gathered at Hethersett social club to hear club secretary Mel Perkins thank David Venness, John Cossey and John Nelson whose work for the club go unnoticed behind the scene. Plans for major track improvements were announced including a new pavilion, car park, lighting and storage facilities. Awards went to Phil Howells as the club's top points scorer and Mike Kiddell as the most improved junior rider.

At the Spixworth Hotel, Norwich club members heard that the club had enjoyed another good season. Daniel Butler won the most improved junior rider award and Mick Bolger won the corresponding senior award. Chris Cullum was voted Rider of the Year and the junior award went to Shaun Brown. Club secretary Glen Norton gave special thanks to fund raisers Derek and Joan Butler and club referee Tommy Lawton who sadly was unable to attend the celebration evening.

Pirates Reunion

One of the greatest cycle speedway teams ever formed in Norwich is getting together for a grand reunion. If you ever wore the unforgettable face of Captain Pugwash on your chest, here is your invitation to join the pirates at a swashbuckling party.

'We want to see as many of the old pirates as possible' say the organisers of the knees-up, former riders Mick Craske and "fast" Eddie Paternoster.

After the Second World War hundreds of boys with time on their hands and little to do, turned into skid kids and formed teams across the country. All the teams had crazy names and soon they became local heroes attracting big crowds to their matches.

And one of the most famous teams was the legendary Galley Pirates. Over the years they made a name for themselves all over the country. They were the first side to have electric starting gates, designed by top rider Barry Woodcock. In the mid-Sixties they were the Man Utd of Norfolk cycle speedway brushing aside most of the local teams and twice reaching the semi-finals of the national championships. They folded in 1979.

The party is at the Whiffler, Boundary Road, Norwich on 3rd April. More details from Mick Craske (01603) 407455 or Eddie Paternoster (01603) 788636.

2001 was the year Coventry zoomed back into cycle speedway. After 14 years in the wilderness, the sport boomed in the City of the Three Spires. A superb racing track, excellent presentation and large crowds made for a year to remember. Spokesman goes behind the scenes and unmask the riders and officials of the new Coventry-Devilins Newsagents club.

By late August 2001, Coventry had posted no fewer than 36 signed-on BCF riders.

Amongst the first was Ian Batley. The 1980 English League champion has played a key role in Coventry's rebirth, including the launch of the club's website

(www.coventrycsc.co.uk). Mick Docker was another who signed on early. He has played a superb role as club secretary and has been a mainstay of the first team. Mick's calm demeanour and excellent diplomacy marks him as a credit to the sport and the club. He was also responsible for securing a £4,000 National Lottery Grant. The third of Coventry's three-man committee is Jez Hughes, who acts as Treasurer. The ex Whitley man has seen his racing commitments curtailed by a new high powered job. He has also been kept busy by the club's high-income levels from commercial activities and buoyant takings from home meetings.

Turning to junior members, Coventry started off the 2001 season with just three. Matt Lawrence, Joe Holecroft and Ben Davies all rode in the club's debut meeting at first team level in East London. They had never even seen a cycle speedway track before!

Lawrence has the makings of a real star. At only 14, he shows exciting flair from the back. Davies has really blossomed in mid-season, showing a jet propelled starting ability, rare for someone at just 12 years old. Holecroft's interest seemed to wane around June, but by August he was back in action, showing real improvement by winning his first ever race at Leicester.

Coventry's top juniors are Ashley Pointer and Myke Grimes. Ashley saw his first meeting on the opening night of the Hearsall Common track - and was hooked. Just three weeks later, Pointer gave a masterful display to win the Coventry Junior Final with a 20-point maximum. Only a pre-booked holiday prevented the 16 year old starlet from making a strong challenge in the British junior final at Bury. A real bonus for Coventry is that Ashley's parents, Gary and Lorraine, are now real cycle speedway fanatics, providing great help in running the club.

Myke Grimes finished second in the Coventry junior final. Like Pointer, Grimes has already won races in the first team! Myke is the son of the former Seventies star, Les Grimes. Les is another keen parent and helps out refereeing and organising the club's practice sessions.

The opening match against Wednesfield

COVENTRY REVIVAL CONTINUES



produced a tidal wave of media coverage for cycle speedway in Coventry. This was reflected by the huge influx of juniors to the club following the opening match. Amongst the keenest of these juniors are identical twins Tobius and Luke Gaunt. Both have missed just one match. They have shown steady improvement. Tobius, nick named, "Ollie", top scored in his first team debut at Birmingham.

Crash, bang, wallop! Those are the words to describe 15 year old Sean McGuire. He inter-mingles often brilliant rides with an almost customary crash. However, by the tail end of the season, Sean had developed a more steady style aided by being mounted on his own machine. Sean is the son of Rob McGuire, a former Irish international. Sean has made several first team appearances but his come back was halted by a nasty injury in the home league match against Wednesfield.

The dashing Karl Lerigo is another mad keen cycle speedway first year rider. Karl is just nuts about the sport and is always the first to take to the track at practice sessions. His keenness was reflected in three successive maximums in junior racing in July. Karl's father Les is a skilled sidecar speedway exponent and Les is another welcome addition to Coventry's backroom team.

Wayward starlet Toby Smith, school friend of Tobius and Luke Gaunt, has proved a somewhat firebrand addition to Coventry's junior ranks. However, Toby has begun to instil real discipline into his racing - as a superb British League Division Two maximum at Birmingham testifies.

Another trio of first year riders are Martin Shaw, Simon McCartney and Danny Green. All have impressed in the many midweek junior clashes against local rivals Birmingham, Leicester, Sandwell and Wednesfield. However, for no reason of their own, they all have problems with transport to Hearsall Common track and to away matches. This has tended to slow down their expected progress.

David Lawman did not join the team until mid season but showed top form in away junior encounters at Sandwell and Wednesfield. Super keen youngsters Jim



Smith and Tom McDade have enjoyed several outings in the third team but a broken wrist at Horspath (Oxford) hampered Tom's progress.

The last three whizz-kids to join Coventry have been Adam Gaff, together with brothers Paul and Chris Coombes. All three made their third team debuts at Leicester. Coventry's third team captain is the ever smiling and popular Sam Hardie. Sam is always in the thick of the action and is the son of former Earlsdon star Rob Hardie.

Returning to the senior ranks, one of the sport's top clubmen must be Tim Metcalfe. Tim travels all the way from his home in Newbury to race. The on-track highlight of Tim's comeback year was a stunning heat win in the Lawnworks International Fours meeting at Hearsall Common before a packed crowd. Tim is also responsible for Coventry's excellent match day programme.

Another comeback man is Mark Giles, who returned after a break of 14 years. Company Director Mark, known as 'eFarmer', is one of the team's most popular riders and has proved to be a most prolific points scorer for the senior side all season.

Colin Sutton was just a 13 year old junior when Coventry withdrew from racing in 1987. Colin is another who has made a return to action, but work commitments have prevented him from being a first team regular.

A great friend of cycle speedway in Coventry since the 1960's has been Dave Foster. Genial Dave has been overjoyed to see the sport return to Coventry. Although registered for racing, Dave has been happy to see the club's abundance of junior talent take priority for track action. Dave has become the club's regular matchday 'émic man' and his vast knowledge of the sport is always in full effect whenever he announces.

Uniquely in cycle speedway, Coventry has also attracted four new first year, older riders, in their comeback year.

Forty-year-old cyclo-cross rider and promoter Martin Eadon has made three first team appearances. Martin is very well known in all cycling disciplines and immensely enjoyed his cycle speedway outings. A qualified cycling coach, Coventry hope to

make more of his obvious coaching and fitness skills in 2002.

Work mates Chris Knapp (aged 43) and Karl Gaff (30) both made their debuts at Birmingham. They are regular attendees at the Wednesday practice nights at Hearsall Common. Another older debutante is nice-guy Quin Bartlett, with only an overseas summer job restricting his involvement.

Former rider Mike Allen resisted the urge to return to the saddle but instead has become the club's regular referee for home first team fixtures, gaining a just reputation for his firm but fair handling of the all-action thrills and spills of cycle speedway.

Experienced and respected former Whitley team manager Steve Bromwich has enjoyed a hectic year as Coventry team boss. Bromwich was forced to turn out at Sandwell in the British Team Championship, when, before the massive influx of riders, the team were one short. His single point was decisive at Sandwell - Coventry emerging 90-89 winners! Steve's biggest problem has been how to keep all of his new found talent happy with regular and meaningful racing. He has managed this brilliantly. His even-handed approach has been respected by all of his (many) riders.

England Cycle Speedway team manager Roger Ellis, on his third visit to the splendidly restored Hearsall Common track, asked "how do you draw such a crowd?" as over 500 people gathered to watch the Lawnworks International Fours meeting - the first ever international meeting in Coventry. The answer is Joe McLaughlin. At his own request, Joe is not on the club committee but his marketing and promotional skills have seen Coventry become the sport's glamour club. Joe has also pulled in close on £2,000 in commercial sponsorship and advertising, using his vast experience of sports, concert and nightclub promotions. It is his ambition to promote the British final at Coventry, returning the finals weekend to its former glory in so doing and presenting the actual racing final in a glitzy, razz-ma-tazz, snappy and modern style that would set a new standard for others to follow.

Last but not least is Coventry's number one, Ray Oliver. The 1988 World champion, Oliver is the only currently competing Coventry World sports champion - of any sport! His quiet style, some would say arrogance, belies a steely inner confidence of his immense skills. A former bad boy of the sport (he was once fined for non-attendance at a Home International), Ray has more than played his part in ensuring Coventry's successful re-emergence. He fulfilled all his engagements and is 'hero worshipped' by all of the juniors. His "ex World Champion" label plays well with the local media, resulting in obvious benefits in terms of exposure and resultant commercial interest.

For further information on Coventry Cycle Speedway, telephone 024 76 619608 or log on to www.coventrycsc.co.uk

Dutch Treat

Despite two other clubs pulling out of the trip, East London and Hellingly still made the traditional end-of-season visit to Holland amidst excellent hot sunny weather (24 degrees centigrade) and competitive close racing at the superb Almere racing venue, writes Steve Harvie.

The host team had not had many opportunities to race this season so the reduced entry meant a shortened programme. On the Saturday a three-team tournament was eventually won by East London from Almere and Hellingly. Unfortunately the South-East England Select versus Europe Select challenge had to revert to a mixed seven-a-side team match. Still the event was closely contested until the final heat when favourites Lee Benton and Kevin Smith were denied victory by Dave Gott and 60-year-old John Miles in a last lap change of positions. To round off a good day, the Hilversum hosts laid on the usual and excellent après race buffet.

Sunday's racing in slightly cooler conditions and a faster swept track saw a very close finish in the 'graded' pairs event. Hellingly's Hollebons (Martyn and Neil) won the event from local hero Martin Ijkema and Kevin Smith whilst prerace favorites Steve Harvie and Steve Woodroof and Jon Koudijs & Dave Gott messed up their final races denying certain victories.

Finally East London's Steve Woodroof won the last meeting, the prestige Almere Dutch Open individual, after a run off from former winner Ijkema. The racing in this event was top class. The crunch race came in heat 15 that saw Woodroof gate from grid two after a restarted first bend pile up containing the other title contestants

Koudijs, Martyn Hollebon and Ijkema.

Other notable performances on the track over the weekend came from first time visitors Dave Gott and Lee Benton (whose form deserted him at the crucial moment probably due to over socialising!), Zac Parsons overcoming former Almere champion Martyn Hollebon in the third place run off. No one managed to overtake evergreen Donald Reiche if he was at the front after a good gate. Cody Vogel rode his usual quietly efficient tactical races which make him one of the best team men in the sport while newly married table tennis superstar Sonja (Koudijs no more!) managed a win after a slow start to Sunday's proceedings.

Keenest participants were the ever improving Neil Hollebon and fellow Sussex youngster Andrew Long who between them must have covered most of Holland on their cycle speedway bikes. Local youngster Justin Kelder made his debut while former rider Ronald Ijkema spectated and indicated a comeback soon.

East London's regular Dutch visitors and track rivals Smith and scribe Harvie renewed hostilities with Kevin victorious this time despite a couple of heavy falls in earlier races. "Haggis" improved as the meeting drew to a close with a win over Benton and a hard pressed second to Martyn Hollebon in the weekend's last race after leading for two and a half laps.

Freddie Van Den Dolder and George Hollebon refereed two matches each while Johan and two of the Hellingly old boys (Killick and Long) did all the other official tasks. Jon and Sonja's mum Sandra presented the prizes of little coloured windmills, fittingly caught on camera by

cycle speedway's official photographer Roger Nicholson who had been on holiday in Poland with his wife and called in on the Sunday.

Socially the stories of what the East London party got up to in Amsterdam would take another couple of pages to tell and would have to be censored for public decency. Suffice to say no hotels were trashed, no one was misled and no cars clamped. All arrived home safely with Kev's work mate Garry the only casualty having been run over by a cyclist in the city.

Another good weekend at Almere for all and many thanks to Johan for organising it all. It is only a pity that more clubs from the UK do not get over there to increase competition and local interest for the Dutch club.

Results

Almere Three-Team Tournament

East London 42 (Lee Benton 15, Steve Woodroof 15, Dave Gott 6, Kevin Smith 6, Steve Harvie dnr) Almere 41 (Jon Koudijs 11, Donald Reiche 11, Martin Ijkema 10, Cody Vogel 9) Hellingly 37 Zac Parsons 15, Martyn Hollebon 14, Neil Hollebon 4, Andrew Long 3, John Miles 1

Referee: Mr Freddie van den Dolder (Hilversum)

Euro Challenge

Euro Select 62 (Steve Woodroof 14, Dave Gott 12, Martyn Hollebon 12, Jon Koudijs 11, Donald Reiche 5, John Miles 4, Neil Hollebon 4 Euro All Stars 58 (Zac Parsons 14, Lee Benton 12, Cody Vogel 10, Martin Ijkema 9, Steve Harvie 6, Kevin Smith 4, Andrew Long 3

Referee: Mr George Hollebon (East Sussex)

Almere Best Pairs

Martin Hollebon & Neil Hollebon 33, Martin Ijkema & Kevin Smith 32, Jon Koudijs & Dave Gott 31, Steve Woodroof & Steve Harvie 31, Cody Vogel, Donald Reiche and Johan Koudijs 30, Lee Benton & Andrew Long 29, Zac Parsons & Sonja Koudijs 24

Referee: Mr George Hollebon (East Sussex)

Dutch Open Individual Championship at Almere

Steve Woodroof (East London) 19, Martin Ijkema (Almere) 19, Zac Parsons (Hellingly) 17, Martyn Hollebon (Hellingly) 17, Lee Benton (East London) 16, Jon Koudijs (Almere) 16, Donald Reiche (Almere) 14, Cody Vogel (Almere) 13, Steve Harvie (East London) 11, Dave Gott (East London) 10, Neil Hollebon (Hellingly) 10, Andrew Long (Hellingly) 9, Sonja Koudijs (Almere) 8, Kevin Smith (East London) 8, John Miles (Hellingly) 5, Justin Kelder (Almere) 5

Referee: Mr Freddie van den Dolder (Hilversum)

WEDNESFIELD CELEBRATE 40TH ANNIVERSARY

Over 200 people gathered at the Connaught Hotel in Wolverhampton to celebrate Wednesfield's 40th anniversary. Highlight of a memorable evening of nostalgia was the award of club life membership to three unsuspecting recipients. Club secretary Dave Jewkes, visibly moved, was the first to receive a framed certificate and decanter from club chairman Paul Bodley. Other awards went to Alan Guest, described as 'the best rider never to win the national championship' and club stalwart and leading referee Mick Pedley.

Many ex-riders from Wednesfield's glorious past attended the function but

Roger Lawcock was singled out for special praise. The 1975 English League junior champion travelled from his home in Toronto, Canada especially for the occasion.

School friends Paul Bodley and David Parry formed the Wednesfield club in 1962. In the ensuing 40 years, the Aces have constantly rewritten the sport's history with year on year unparalleled success. Unfortunately business commitments prevented Parry from attending the reunion celebrations. The impressive guest list included some of the sport's best known personalities including Pete Blackwell, who finished third in the

1958 World final in Holland and former World champion Phil Pilbrow. Also in attendance was former BCSC chairman Bill Gill.

Wednesfield's attention will now switch to the promotion of the British individual championship at Ashmore Park in August. The last time the club staged the event in 1983, it attracted an enormous crowd. Club chairman Paul Bodley is hopeful that the 2002 final will attract another bumper audience.

'Bury did a wonderful job last year' said Bodley. 'We want to build on that success and get the championship back to the level it enjoyed in the mid-Eighties.'

LEAGUE TABLES 2001

Premier League

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Wednesfield	12	10	0	2	1158.5	952.5	20
Southampton	12	10	0	2	1171	947	20
Leicester	12	8	0	4	1084	1037	16
Gt Blakenham	12	5	0	7	1092.5	1036.5	10
Swindon	12	5	0	7	1027	1113	10
Horspath	12	2	0	10	980	1142	4
Poole	12	2	0	10	923	1208	4

Wednesfield beat Southampton 90 - 87 in play-off at Newport to take title

Premier Combination

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Leicester	12	9	0	3	915	810	18
Southampton	12	9	0	3	772	684	18
Gt Blakenham	12	6	1	5	779	719	13
Horspath	12	6	0	6	827	778	12
Wednesfield	12	6	0	6	622	691	12
Swindon	12	3	0	9	872	1029	6
Poole	12	2	1	9	967	1043	5

Leicester win title with less penalty points conceded - Leicester 96 pts
Southampton 162 pts

South East League Division 1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Gt. Blakenham	12	12	0	0	1259	868	24
Norwich	12	7	0	5	1047	1073	14
Hawbush	11	7	0	4	1036	923	*12
East London	12	7	0	5	1093	1038	*12
Eaton	11	5	0	6	956	1004	10
Hethersett	12	2	0	10	975	1154	4
Somersham	12	1	0	11	922	1228	2

*2 penalty points for late postponement of fixture

South East League Division 2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Gt Blakenham B	12	11	0	1	1126	851	22
Kesgrave	12	9	0	3	1026	938	18
Hawbush B	12	7	0	5	1084	971	14
Hethersett B	12	6	1	5	1130	1032	13
East London B	12	5	1	6	1036	1052	*9
Colchester	12	3	0	9	990	1229	6
Gt Waking	12	0	0	12	846	1289	*-2

* 2 penalty points for late postponement of fixture

Essex & London League

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Hawbush	6	6	0	0	559	427	12
East London	6	4	0	2	549	431	8
Colchester	6	2	0	4	477	595	4
Gt Waking	6	0	0	6	465	597	0

Midland and North Regional League

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Wednesfield	14	12	0	2	1443	1044	24
Leicester	14	12	0	2	1257	1051	24
Stoke	14	11	0	3	1370	921	22
Tameside	14	7	0	7	1152	1314	14
Bury	14	6	0	8	1220	1257	12
Scotia	14	4	0	9	1094	1218	8
Birmingham	14	2	0	12	1001	1303	4
Heckmondwike	14	1	0	13	1006	1435	2

Wednesfield beat Leicester 99 - 77 in a play-off at Sandwell to take the title

Midland and North Combination

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Bury	14	12	0	2	990	734	24
Stoke	14	12	0	2	832	661	24
Leicester	14	11	0	3	867	692	22
Tameside	14	8	1	5	725	696	17
Scotia	14	5	0	9	771	785	10
Wednesfield	14	4	0	10	764	792	8
Heckmondwike	14	2	0	12	422	648	4
Birmingham	14	0	1	13	594	957	1

As neither side conceded any penalty points, title goes to Bury on points difference

Midland and North Division 2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sandwell	6	5	0	1	504	386	10
Sheffield	6	5	0	1	483	410	10
Hull	6	1	0	5	414	472	2
Astley & Tyldesley	6	1	0	5	380	513	2

Sandwell beat Sheffield in play off at Leicester

Midland Alliance League

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Wednesfield	10	9	0	1	1035	739	18
Leicester	10	8	0	2	893	708	16
Stoke	10	7	0	3	943	659	14
Birmingham	10	4	0	6	706	895	8
Coventry	10	1	0	9	692	912	2
Sandwell	10	1	0	9	715	1071	2

Midland Alliance Combination

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Stoke	10	9	0	1	671	467	18
Leicester	10	9	0	1	673	507	18
Wednesfield	10	5	0	5	581	505	10
Coventry	10	2	0	8	385	450	4
Birmingham	10	2	0	8	533	712	4
Sandwell	10	2	0	8	442	644	4

As neither side conceded any penalty points, title goes to Stoke on points difference

Northern Alliance League

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Tameside	6	5	0	1	555	500	10
Bury	6	4	0	2	569	480	8
Scotia	6	3	0	3	544	520	6
Heckmondwike	6	0	0	6	435	603	0

Northern Alliance Combination

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Bury	6	6	0	0	446	292	12
Tameside	6	4	0	2	322	263	8
Scotia	6	2	0	4	338	362	4
Heckmondwike	6	0	0	6	202	391	0

South West Regional League

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Southampton	8	8	0	0	N/A	N/A	16
Swindon	8	5	0	3	N/A	N/A	10
Poole	8	3	0	5	N/A	N/A	6
Horspath	8	3	0	5	N/A	N/A	6
Exeter*	8	1	0	11	N/A	N/A	2

*Exeter withdrew in July; teams awarded matches

South West Alliance

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Southampton	12	12	0	0	N/A	N/A	24
Swindon	12	8	0	4	N/A	N/A	16
Horspath	12	7	0	5	N/A	N/A	14
Hellingly	12	6	0	6	N/A	N/A	12
Poole	12	6	0	6	N/A	N/A	12
Newport	12	2	0	10	N/A	N/A	4
Exeter*	12	1	0	11	N/A	N/A	2

*Exeter withdrew in July; teams awarded matches

BIRMINGHAM WITHDRAW

Birmingham cycle speedway club has withdrawn from the Midland and North regional league on the eve of the new season. Although Birmingham have been going through difficult times, the shock announcement took clubs in the region by surprise.

After emergency talks, the club decided it could not commit itself to a full season of regional racing.

"We are suffering an acute rider shortage" club secretary Mark Winwood told Spokesman. "Unfortunately club stalwart Andrew Woolley has been forced to retire through injury. We have relied heavily on Andrew in the past to provide transport so his departure comes as a double blow."

The 31-year-old Walsall -based rider has been forced to hang up his wheels after a persistent neck and upper spine injury that

severely damaged his nerves.

Thankfully Birmingham will continue to race but at a lower level.

"There is a lot of travelling in the Midlands and North League" said Winwood. "We simply could not commit to matches in the north and Scotland. We felt it better to pull out now rather than half way through the season."

Woolley confirmed that Birmingham would still compete in the Midlands Alliance League and will be putting all their efforts into recruiting more riders.

"We have targeted local schools and plan to have an Open Day before the start of the new season. We are determined to survive this hiccup. The club will not die" he added.

Birmingham are one of the country's oldest cycle speedway clubs. They were founded in 1947 as Kingstanding Monarchs and have continued to race every year since.

Double Award for Glover

One of cycle speedway's most dedicated officials has been doubly recognised for his contribution to the sport.

Former national chairman Harry Glover, was invited to attend a special reception at Leicester City Hall where it was intended that the Lord Mayor should present him with a special award to mark his contribution to sport in the city.

Unfortunately Harry, who recently underwent major heart surgery, was not well enough to attend but club members Alan and Linda Jones were on hand to receive a handsome carriage clock on his behalf. It was later announced that Leicester CSC would receive a £1,000 grant from the Lord Mayor's office to fund the purchase of new bikes for youngsters.

Thankfully Harry was in better health and was able to attend De Montfort Hall as a guest at the annual Leicester Mercury Sports Persons of the Year dinner. In front of several hundred diners, a surprised Glover was summoned to receive a special runners-up award in the Services to Sport section. The premier award went to FA Cup Final referee Peter Jones.

Leicester Links

Two of the top bike clubs in the East Midlands are joining forces to encourage more youngsters to take up cycling. Leicester cycle speedway and Leicester off-road mountain biking clubs will link up to provide opportunities for local youngsters to try each sport. The event will be promoted as part of British Cycling's Start programme.

Les Westwood Dies

Just as Spokesman was going to print, we heard of the sudden death of one of cycle speedway's all-time greats, Les Westwood. The former World Champion was found dead at his home in Edmonton, North London. He had suffered circulatory problems for several years and died of a heart attack. Les was 66. Les will always be remembered as a hard and tough competitor, exceptionally fast from the gate and powerful around the bends. He shot to international prominence when he won the 1960 World championship at Garratt Park, South London in front of a crowd of 2,000 spectators.

Off track Les enjoyed a love of music and headed his own skiffle group called Les Westwood and the Scorpions, a reference to his birth sign. But he will always be remembered for his exploits on the tracks over 40 years ago. Les Westwood's place in cycle speedway history is assured.

spokesman

Spokesman No 90

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Joint Editors

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Contributors

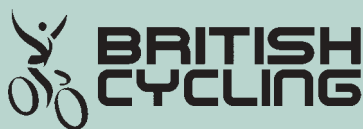
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British Cycling is the Governing Body for Cycle Sport in the UK as recognised by the Sports Councils.

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Tourists Matched Down Under

Four of Britain's leading riders headed down under in February to form a UK Tourist team for a series of fixtures at the Findon and Salisbury tracks in South Australia.

Dennis Hubble and Robin Spicer joined Paul White and Terry Norman, with the occasional heat appearance from former Poole rider Jessica Lamb, to take on teams from the two host clubs and a South Australia select side. The encounters produced some close racing, and the Australian Team Managers used the opportunity to shuffle the pack and introduce some younger riders.

Results: 16th Feb. at Findon: South Australia 40, Findon 40, UK Tourists 38 (S.A. won run-off); 19th Feb. at Salisbury: South Australia 42, Findon 42, UK Tourists 42, Salisbury 28 (S.A. won run-off); 23rd Feb. at Salisbury: Salisbury 42, UK Tourists 41, South Australia 40, Findon 32; 24th Feb. at Findon: South Australia 45, UK Tourists 44, Salisbury 39, Findon 31.

Colchester Opening

Cycle speedway's newest track is due to open in a blaze of publicity on Easter Monday. The tapes go up on Colchester Stars' shale raceway at Shrub End Sports Centre at 12.30 pm. Among the guests will be Bob Russell MP, the Mayor and Mayoress of Colchester Mike Hogg and Helen Chau as well as civic dignitaries from Colchester Borough Council and contractors Elmy Landscapes

To mark the occasion the club will be staging a prestigious individual event with riders coming from as far afield as Stoke, Coventry, Sandwell and Leicester to compete.

"Hopefully we'll have a good day weather-wise" said club secretary Janet Spurgeon. "We really can't believe its true. So much hard work has gone into providing this facility you wouldn't believe."