

FULL CHAT



Issue 1
£1.00



The Official Journal of the Friends of the TT Riders Assoc.

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Job's Jottings

I am pleased and proud to present to you this our very first FOTTRA magazine. I would like to thank all our contributors namely Geoff Cannell, Steve Woodward, Malcolm Wheeler and David Wright. Photos are by Geoff Cannell and Bill Snelling. Bill has been a great help in supplying photos and has just completed a TT database for Manx National Heritage which gives every rider who started in every race, fully searchable. The address for this is:-

<http://www.gov.im/mnh/collections/tt/>

Anyone who feels they can make a contribution to *Full Chatt* on any subject - please do contact me on jenjobgrimshaw@manx.net or telephone 01624 897164.

Name that Bike!

Taken from a ROAD TEST M.C.T. - September 1972

The..... is that rarest of motorcycle gems, the supreme example of its type. Far more than a fine machine, or even an extremely successful racing bike, it is one of that exclusive class of motorcycle, which, at the time of writing, are in a position of unsurpassed excellence in their chosen area of activity.

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Front Cover: Roger Marshall (Honda) the shot is from White Gates, Ramsey in the 1986 Formula One

CHAIRMAN'S CHATT

Dear Friends,

Welcome to this, our first issue of "*Full Chatt*". The idea came from the success we have had following the introduction of a Newsletter for our local Vintage Motorcycle Club section. Many members were pleased to be a member of the Club, but without regular communication felt somewhat "adrift". I feel that FoTTRA is in a similar position, and hope that this small magazine, which will be sent to you twice a year, will go some way towards rectifying this problem.

It will contain pictures, "*Chatt*" from the Isle of Man and articles from volunteer contributors, as well as advertisements to help pay its way. This first copy will be sponsored by Pat and myself, hopefully those of you with spare funds will contribute to the next one. Sponsors will be mentioned in dispatches if they wish, and it is expected that each issue will cost about £250 to produce and post out.

Here in the Isle of Man we have just completed a very busy Manx Grand Prix, so things are now quieting down. In Kirk Michael we have opened up our Motorcycle Collection for TT and Manx this year, and have raised £2,500 in donations for FoTTRA. I am sure that many of you will be interested in some TT course changes that have taken place, Windy Corner was re-profiled earlier this year and Brandish is in the process of its re-profiling as we speak. The Government claim it is to do with safety, as the Manx drivers do seem to come to grief on a regular basis, however we feel it has more to do with getting a 130 mph lap for 2007!!

The plans for the 100 years TT Celebration have just been released to the press, although there are some interesting possibilities the critics are once again knocking it. [Seems to be a regular event in the press, would be nice to have some positive spin for a change]. However this time I can't but feel that the critics have a point, in that a wonderful opportunity to make this a four week celebration, has been missed. A week of Vintage Bike Events prior to practice week could have been staged and possibly a leg of the World Trials Championship and even the World Enduro Championship could have been embraced. Regrettably all these activities require considerable forward planning and none of the true enthusiasts, that have the expertise to run such events, have as far as I know been contacted. Hopefully the "100" years will be the biggest, best event the Island has ever staged, but get it wrong and the disappointment of the fans, travelling from all over the world, will be immense. Any of you coming over who still have not booked accommodation or travel arrangements, need to do so ASAP. We are told 40,000 have already booked and a further 40,000 are expected to do so.

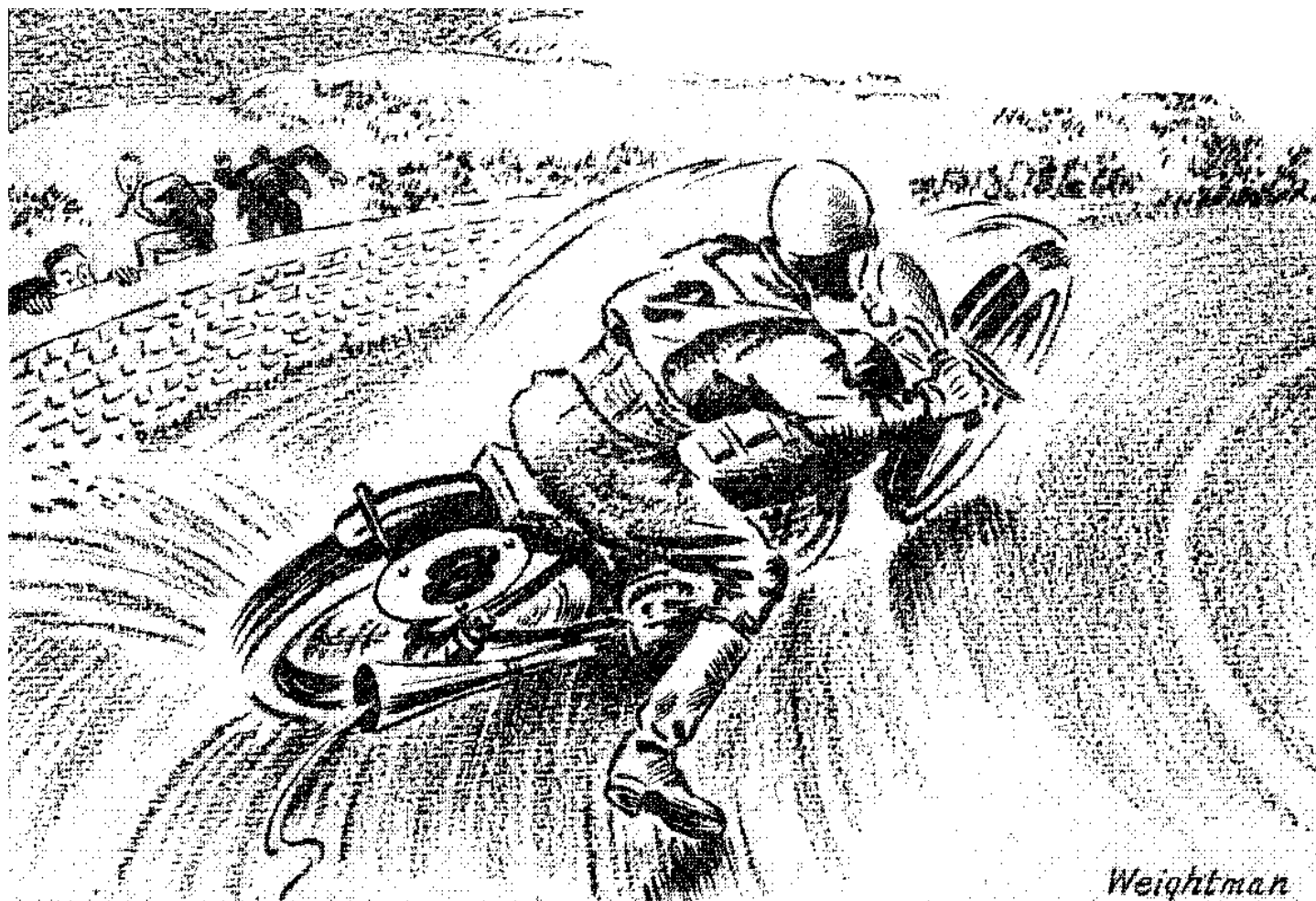
I do hope that you enjoy "*Full Chatt*", our Editor Job Grimshaw would love to hear your comments or contributions on 01624 897164. Don't forget the TTRA Lunch this year, being held at the National Motorcycle Museum Birmingham on Wednesday 25th October. Tickets available from Frances Thorpe tel: 01624 843695

Tony East (*Chairman, Friends of the T.T. Riders Association*)

MY LAST RACE - by Cyril Taft
(Re-printed from 1950 TT Special)

Cyril Taft is one of those individuals who takes any happening as the normal state of affairs. The fact of being the father of nine children is to him just normal, though he admits that the job of rearing them borders on the miraculous. He certainly relies on the fact that all things are directed and come out right in the end. The record he established in 1949 - when, aged 46 and the father of nine, he won a race in the I.O.M. At his first attempt – should stand for all time. His recent reply to a note from me is typical of his outlook on things. He wrote as follows:-
“Dear Geoff. Have been delayed doing the write-up. Tenth child arrived three weeks ago. Followed by 'flu all round. What a picnic! Cyril.” Editor.

Several things which had happened to me in the past contributed to that “little extra” that allowed me to win the Clubman’s Lightweight T.T. In 1949. After all, a slide is not so fearful a problem after six years professional speedway racing; further, being more interested in tuning than riding on the dirt, I had picked up a few clues that were useful when it came to tuning a 250 Excelsior: also, I had long since got past the nervous tension that is usual in a first T.T. race: and finally the T.T. Course had no bad psychological effect on me because a bend is a bend to me, whether in the I.O.M. or elsewhere. So I must admit that I felt quite confident when I faced the



starter. The last thing I expected was a win – that was the shock of all shocks. But read on, because I write as it comes to me.

I have always got a tremendous kick out to watching the T.T. races during the last 25 years, and have thought that perhaps, one day, I might get the chance to ride myself. The Clubman's series seemed to offer that chance even at this late stage of life – so over to the 1947 Clubmans to see how it was done. Yes, it could be done. Must get a try-out this season. My B.S.A. Twin was duly fitted with two carbs. (probably the first to be so), and entered for Scarborough. Got badly slated by the domestic department and had to drop it, but a few weeks later entered Dunholme and told no one. The B.S.A. Got me a fourth in the three lap race (40 starters) and I was lying about seventh in the 100 mile event when I went out with a leaking petrol tank at the 90th mile. But the try-out had said: "Yes. Have a Go!" Entered a Rapide in good time for the 1948 Clubman, but got slung out with the rest of the unfortunates. Domestic weather situation somewhat "unsettled"; decided to come down to a 250cc for 1949.

It took some time to buy a 1939 Excelsior Manxman that looked good. Reduced it to little bits before Christmas, but landed in hospital on 8th January for a nice quiet stay of three months. Sent off the entry while still laid out; caused a thought, so to speak, but seemed a normal thing to do.

Long and hard work in April and May, tuning, assembling and fitting my own idea of a spring frame. A grim determination to do all the work before getting to the island so that it would be a holiday, mainly. On arrival, paid Albert Moule & Co., a visit at their workshop where they were busy – working! Roared with laughter at the darned fools, mentioning something organisation and told them I had come for a holiday. Albert smiled one of his sweet smiles, and said little.

Went out on my first practice the following morning and did two laps. Finished with no brakes to speak of and discovered several snags in the rear springing device; but made the fastest time in my class.

At breakfast, Albert Moule, with a broad grin, enquired how the holiday was going – he had heard of the vast amount of work I had in hand. I replied: "Later". (And so it was later – the holiday came after I had finished the race!).

The engine blew up at the 13th milestone on the following practice period, causing me to miss the next time out. In all, I did five practice laps which, added to five touring laps the year before, constituted my total "lappery" of the T.T. course. Ninety-nine % hard work, ½% holiday – that's just how it was. But I got the model ready in time. It, and I, were on the line on race day.

My knowledge of the course was first acquired by hours of study of the detailed description of it in "The Story of the Manx" - this after a few laps touring in 1948. Finding that it was possible to get through certain sections at full bore, such as from Union Mills to Greeba Castle (three miles) Kirk Michael Corner to Ballaugh (three miles) and so on, simplified matters considerably. The major bends I did not bother about, simply shutting off very late, grabbing for everything and just

scrambling round. There were two places, however, that frightened me particularly – Bray Hill and Kates Cottage. One day I took them both absolutely full bore – and that was the end of any worry about them; make your mid up and do it, sort of style.

On the line at the start I felt good. The awful backache (hang over from the hospital do) from which I had been suffering, had gone after a few days “holiday”. I felt fit and ready to enjoy myself. Down went the flag, and I gave a nice swinging kick. Nothing happened; but Frank Cope, my companion on the line, shot off after one kick, leaving me still prodding away. The engine fired at last and I passed Frank before the bottom of Bray, catching four of the five early starters before Ballacraigne. From then onwards I had the road t myself until the second – and last – time round at Ramsey. I had had a “comfortable” run up to that point, except for a horrible two-wheel slide at Bedstead on Lap 1, so at Ramsey I said to myself; “This is precisely where one decides to get home”, and managed to remember this until I reached the Gooseneck.

Then I must have forgotten, for the father and mother of the wickedest slide occurred. Women screamed, etc., etc., but my speedway training helped me, and I managed to hold it. Well, oil was the answer to that one; the bike was floating in it. So with a firmer resolution to get home, I eased down on the major corners, but kept flat on the tank on the rest, as indeed I had been all the way.

Watching the revs go up over 8,000 towards Brandish, I thought: “My word, I’m whizzing in top”, and in a flash realised I was still in third! Dabbed for top - over 7,000 at that - and so on to the finish, with oil on the brain!

I look back with a great thrill on over 20 years of racing and on the climax of them, which was my little win in the Clubman’s 250, 1949. And so with a wife, ten children, and age of 47, they must remain, “Those were the Days”. Too bad; but of course, there is always the rising generation

Cyril Taft



IF IT STANDS STILLI'LL LETTER IT!



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CANNELL'S ARCHIVES

Two of the most enduring TT riders remain the firmest of friends. Their careers followed amazingly similar patterns.

Bill Lomas and **Cecil Sandford** both rode for a number of the world's leading manufacturers, became world champions and won two TTs apiece. Born within a month of each other in 1928, each came into the TT via the Manx Grand Prix, though one year apart. Bill was seventh on a Royal Enfield in the 1948 Lightweight then sixth in the 1949 Junior on a Velocette but retired the Hall Green model in that year's Senior. Cecil was fifth in the 1949 Junior on a Velo and was 42nd in that year's Senior after mechanical trouble. Both moved to the TT in



1950, where Bill retired his Velo in the Junior while Cecil coaxed his home in 43rd place in the same race won by Artie Bell (Norton). Cecil also rode in the Senior but retired. In 1951 Bill was fifth in the Junior but Cecil was again a retirement.

Things were very different in 1952, however. Both riders acquired works bikes and used them to very good effect. Bill finished fourth in the Junior and fifth in the Senior on factory AJSs, while Cecil went even better by winning the Ultra-Lightweight on a factory 125cc MV Agusta single. He finished ninth in the Junior on his Velocette but retired in the Senior on a BSA.

In 1954 the 125 was run on the Clype Course but the 250 stayed on the Mountain. Bill and Cecil tackled both courses, with Cecil faring the better in the 125 - finishing third to Rupert Hollaus (NSU) and MV team-mate Carlo Ubbiali. Bill had to pack up on his MV.

Neither rode the 250, where the NSUs led by Werner Haas swept the board. Bill did well to get the slow and unwieldy 350cc MV into seventh in the Junior but retired its larger brother in the controversial wet Senior, halted after four of its seven laps with Ray Amm (Norton) the winner.

Bill and Cecil were right to the fore again in 1955, with Bill achieving a feat which is unique in TT history. He won TTs on two separate courses within the one meeting. Firstly he took the Junior on a factory 350cc Moto Guzzi single on the

Mountain Course on the Monday. Two days later he was first over the line in the mass-start 250cc on an MV single on the Clypse. He was also fourth in the 125 and seventh in the Senior on MV and Guzzi singles respectively.

Cecil was second to Bill in the 250 and third behind Bill and Bob McIntyre (Potts Norton) in the Junior. At that point Bill had therefore won two TTs to Cecil's one.



*Bill Lomas [Moto Guzzi] rounds
Governors Bridge in the 1956 Senior TT*

The 1956 TT saw Bill again mounted on factory Guzzi singles. After leading most of the way, he retired the Junior model then concluded his TT career with seventh in the Senior in which victory went to John Surtees (his first TT win and MV's first Senior). Cecil was mounted on factory Mondials for the 125 and 250 but neither finished. He was a fighting fourth to Ken Kavanagh (Guzzi), Derek Ennett (AJS) and John Hartle (Norton) in the wet and

windy Junior riding a three-cylinder two-stroke DKW.

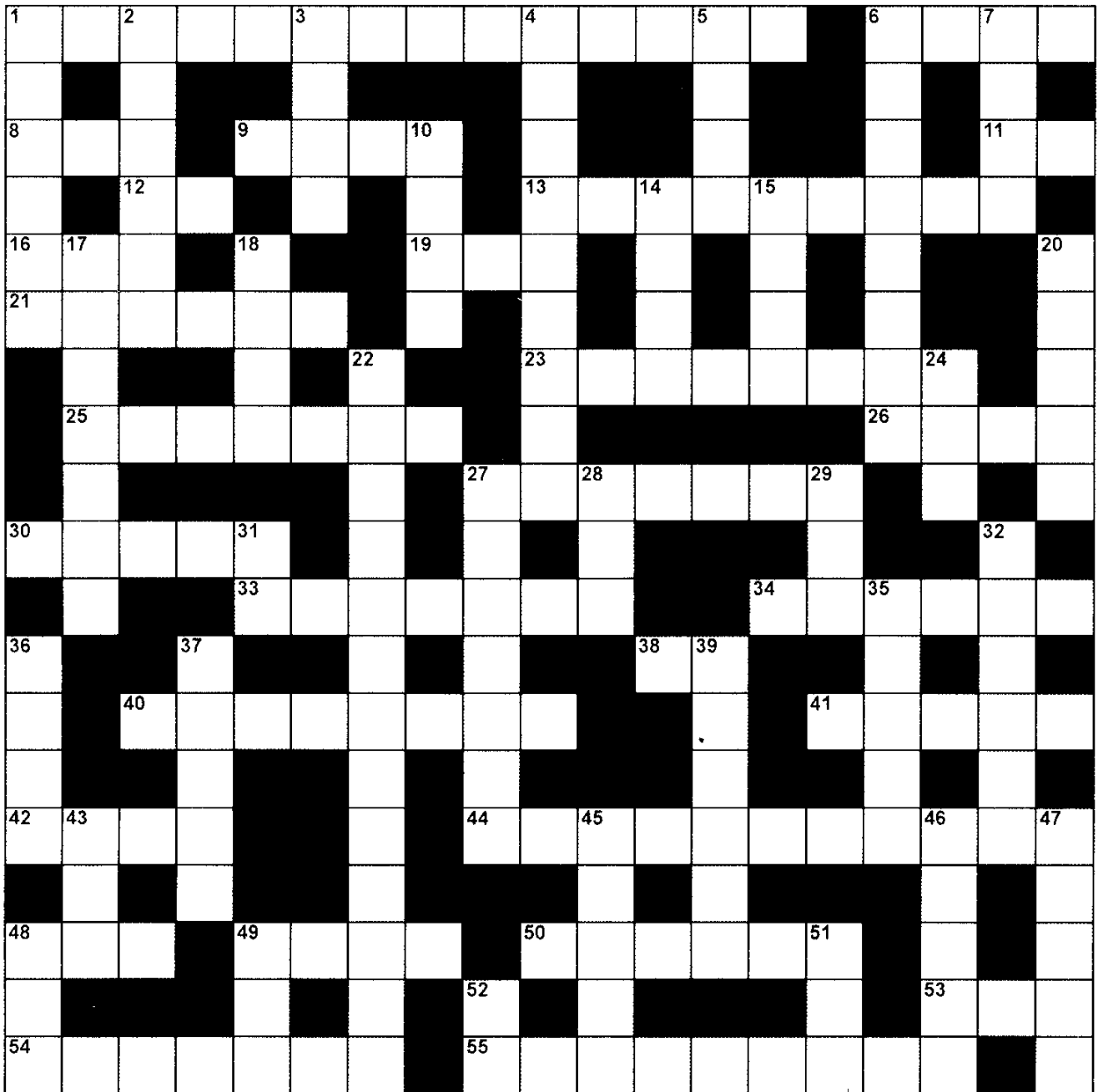
Bill had signed off the Island in 1956, but Cecil came one more year and covered himself in glory by winning the 250 on the Mondial. Admittedly it was after Sammy Miller had dropped his similar machine at the last corner while leading, but a win for Cecil it certainly became as he remained upright to the line. He finished his IOM career with fifth place in the 125cc race, again on a works Mondial, the race being won by team-mate Tarquinio Provini.

That was that - two TT wins apiece, two world championships apiece (Bill 1955 and 1956 350, Cecil 1952 125 and 1957 250). Each had won TTs on separate courses (the only other is Ubbiali) but only Bill can say his were on two courses within the same meeting!



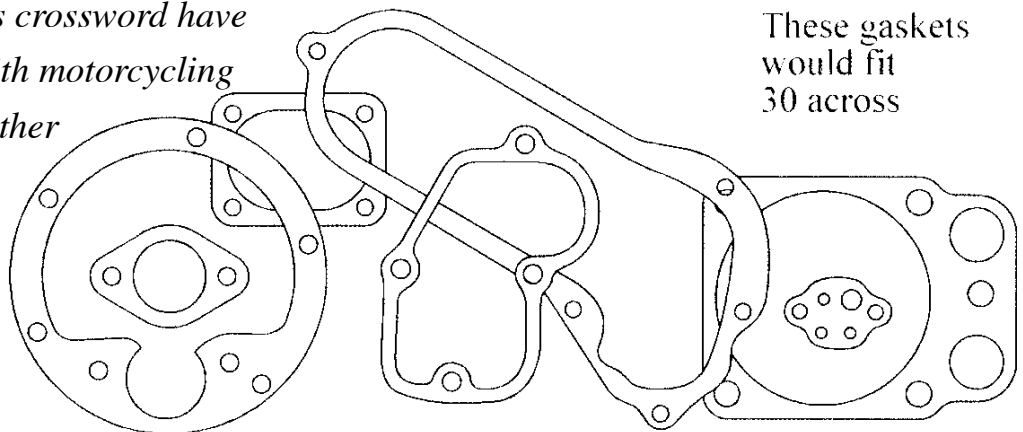
*Cecil Sandford [Moto Guzzi] preparing for practice
in Glencrutchery Rd during the 1955 TT*

Mental Mayhem



All the words in this crossword have some connection with motorcycling in some way or another

These gaskets would fit 30 across



Thanks to Liz and Nick May for this feature

Across

1. T.E. Lawrence's model was not inferior (6,8)
6. Crude bottom gasket (4)
8. A northern bike which needs a bolt (3)
9. Uncomparable bird of prey (4)
11. RAC rival (1,1)
12. Big Ears' companion rode one of these (1,1)
13. British bikes sometimes in this USA bike mag (9)
16. Leader of the pack (3)
19. Use no feeler gauge for this valve tolerance (3)
21. The Royal Enfield that fell to earth (6)
23. A bike in mint condition (8)
25. Ten dirt bikes made by triumph (7)
26. Early piston material (4)
27. Nortons greatest rival (7)
30. I am taken in by Shakespearian king (5)
33. Around the sun in 88 days on a Norton (7)
34. First name of Triumph's lathe man (6)
38. Very Beautiful in short and it's an Ariel (1,1)
40. Order nothing to complete this Norton (8)
41. Annular shape (5)
42. Encircles piston (4)
44. Urge red lust for this bike (5,6)
48. A bike fit for 10 down (3)
49. If it's missing you won't get far (4)
50. Old tires, jewel like (6)
53. You won't find one of these in a needle jet (3)
54. To get this bike disobey everything (4,3)
55. This Norton could be overbearing (9)

Down

1. This BSA was no spring chicken (6)
2. Escape through this port (6)
3. Over and above 6 across (4)
4. This bike was a mechanical marvel (9)
5. Gasket failure makes a bike....(4)
6. Designer of the Panthette (8)
7. This Empire belongs to BSA (4)
10. An old but regal make (4)
14. Wet or dry (4)
15. Rare mixture that isn't the front one (4)
17. You won't get this one in a hundred years (7)
18. Maker of small 2 stroke motorcycles - after the war (4)
20. Clarke's business partner who came before a fall (5)
22. Not an Ariel tin - it was manufactured by Norton (13)
24. 7:1 compression (3)
27. This bolt could go with a BSA lightning (7)
28. Bill is a climber (3)
29. Or is it a Vincent (1,1,1)
31. Castrol grease (1,1)
32. Vincent is next in line for throne (6)
35. Stan - 10 times TT winner (5)
36. One Co. made them square - Norton made them Big (4)
37. This bike took flying lessons in the WWII (5)
39. Part of a connecting rod (3,3)
43. In brief, Inlet Over Exhaust (1,1,1)
45. This Brough Superior was no nightmare (5)
46. A feline Triumph (5)
47. 7R for AJS boys (5)
48. The colour of Ariel's predator (3)
49. Ale rearranged by Chater (3)
51. Little Dorothy's motorbike (3)
52. Forces bike (1,1)

'A LOAD of BULL' (or 'It Couldn't Happen at Donington'!)

Until recently it was my lot as Flagman at the 11th Milestone to spend a fortnight at TT and MGP standing on a pile of pallets just inside a field that usually held about 40 cattle. Having to rebuild the knocked-over pallets for every practice and also having to discourage over-inquisitive beasts from coming too close was a regular part of the job until, eventually, the organisers arranged for the pallets to be fixed together and put a barbed wire fence around them.

In such seemingly secure surroundings I wasn't too concerned when I spotted a bull ambling over on the first night of 2004 practice. However, when he arrived at the pallets, put his head under the surrounding wire and began to scratch the back of his neck on it, I got a bit concerned at the way the fence was flexing - he was a very big bull in all departments! When he then put his head over my fence and used the top of a post to scratch his chin, I shuffled to the far edge of the pallet, managing to keep about three feet between me and his disconcertingly staring eyes. Thankfully, after about 10 minutes of scratching and fence testing he departed and left me to the relative peace of motorcycle racing.

At Wednesday evening's practice the bull was lying in the middle of the field for the first hour. Eventually he got up and began to walk towards the edge of the Course, making a loud roaring noise in his throat. I then saw and heard another bull in the field on the opposite side of the Course doing exactly the same thing, and the two bully-boys arrived at their relatively flimsy fences together. Then 'my' bull, standing less than 5 yards away, began butting the Course-side fence and pawing the ground, ripping up divots as he did so. As it all began to look a bit serious, both bulls put their heads over their fences and bellowed across the course at each other for several minutes on end. It was an unreal sensation. I was trying to concentrate on a stream of bikes passing between the bulls at 140 mph - that they totally ignored - whilst wondering what I was going to do if they broke through the fences. A waved yellow would hardly have been adequate to control riders or bulls in that situation, but I had very serious doubts about the wisdom of producing the red flag within sight of those two beefy fellows!

David Wright

Take 100 TT-related subjects, develop them with informative and humorous words, add a few facts and figures where appropriate, throw in lots of interesting pictures and you have the easy-reading

'TT Topics & Tales'

This is another softback book from David Wright and it has been well reviewed in the motorcycle press. Containing 224 pages and 350 illustrations, it is 260 x 196mm in size and priced at £14.95. Available at all bookshops by quoting **ISBN 1901508099** it can also be obtained from the author for £14.95 + £3 p&p, at 3 Mourne View, Peel, Isle of Man. IM5 1UJ.

Telephone: 01624 844256 or *e-mail*: davidwright@manx.net Credit card orders to Bookpost on 01624 677237

Editor's Note: If you order direct from David, please mention FOTTRA who will receive commission on the sale

THE PERFECT JOB

I suppose we have all dreamt of the perfect job. The bike mechanic who dreams of working on Rossi's Yamahas, the van driver who knows he could out-brake Schumacher, or the railway enthusiast desperate to drive a steam loco.

In the mid 80s I was quite content working as a civil engineer for a county council in the Midlands on road and bridge design. Since my teenage years I had been keen on motorcycling, and in the mid 70s I had started racing, in the very popular



Old Quarry Bends 1950 practice shot, showing Harold Daniell (Norton, 1) going round (or being passed by!) Dario Ambrosini (250 Benelli, 96)

vintage and classic classes. As well as racing myself, solo and sidecar, on the short circuits, we always made the annual pilgrimage to the Island to watch the TT. Wife, two sons and spares were packed into a 1951 Thunderbird outfit for the trip.

It must have been sometime in March 1986 when a colleague, reading our professional journal, shouted across the office 'Perfect job here for you Steve.... Design Engineer - Roads, Isle of Man Government'Anyway, to cut a long story short, by August that year I was stepping off the plane at Ronaldsway to start my new job. Family followed shortly with bikes in the removal van, and wife expertly manoeuvring the racing outfit onto one of the old side loader boats.

I did know something about the peculiarities of the TT course. No cats eyes, very good trench reinstatement standards, and lots of paint on the kerbs! What I did learn fairly quickly was that the white lining paint was a special mix to give extra grip, some of the traffic signs were removable for practice and racing, and we didn't do anything without considering the implications for racing. My boss at the time was the then Surveyor General, Stan Basnett. Stan was passionate about most things associated with the Isle of Man, but particularly the racing. He owned vintage bikes and modern ones and was proud to say that he inspected course preparation before every TT and Manx from the saddle of his 750 Honda.

What came as a very pleasant surprise was that we often went out with the video camera to record practice or racing at a particular location if we had improvement plans in that area. Imagine, being paid to watch and film TT racing. Paradise!!

Interestingly, my first job was at Quarterbridge where we needed to improve traffic flow through the two junctions. I designed a dual mini-roundabout junction which improved peak time flow by 20%...and importantly didn't affect racing. I wasn't very popular for chopping down a very beautiful flowing cherry tree, and some of my drinking chums in the Mitre at Kirk Michael christened me Zeberdee for some years after. The Magic Roundabout was still a popular TV programme!



Re-surfaced Quarry Bends 1991,

Phillip McCallen (Honda) in his only Ultra Lightweight TT

LATIN LOVELY

Italy and that countries talented motorcycle designers and builders have always had a close affinity with the challenges of the TT course. One of these was Giuseppe Pattoni, who designed and manufactured the beautiful green Paton race bikes in the sixties. And the passion continues to this day.

In fact only a few months ago a Paton race bike finished 2nd in the Isle of Man, over four decades after Giuseppe created his first 500cc twin cylinder race bike. But the connection with the past doesn't stop there. The creator of the bike ridden skilfully in the 2006 MGP by Steve Lindsell was no replica. It was a Paton lovingly created by Roberto Pattoni, the son of Giuseppe. But what makes this story especially worthy of a place on these pages is that both Roberto and the bikes owner Giovanni Cabassi are both members of The Friends of The TT Riders Association.

What follows is a small excerpt from a much longer feature that appeared in Classic Racer in 2005, and is intended to give you a small idea what it is like to ride the Paton around the closed roads of the TT Mountain Circuit.

The chance to test Roberto Pattoni's 500 Bicilindrica came about initially thanks to my pal John Biggs, who I spend a fair amount of time with on the European parading circuit. John had the foresight to order a Paton after hearing that Roberto planned to build a small batch to honour his late father Giuseppe. John introduced me to Roberto and the team and it was during a Christmas greeting e mail from my Italian friend Mauro Borella that he suggested that they might like me to ride the works development Paton in the TT Lap of Honour. It would have been rude not to accept.

It was only when I stood on the start line, and Roberto handed me the bike with the engine running, that I realised not only had I never ridden the Paton I hadn't even blipped the throttle. At that point it was too late to worry, or change my mind, the flag was down and I was away on the ultimate racer test, a lap of the TT Mountain circuit. One thing's for sure; with Bray Hill ahead you have no choice but to get to know your motorcycle pretty quickly.

On the dash down the hill my first, and one of the most lasting impressions, was the gearbox. Driving away from the start line so slick was the ultra short travel lever that for two stabs of the pedal I actually thought the box hadn't made the change. On my usual, ever so careful, cold tyre, first lap approach to Quarter Bridge Keith Heckles came scurrying past on his Beart Norton, which proved a blessing in disguise. Keith doesn't hang around and must have done as many Mountain Circuit laps as me, and he knows the Norton intimately. Now at least I had a target to aim at as I settled into the Paton, and I had another good classic 500 to compare with. It was clear on the blast down to Braddan that the Paton had a speed advantage over Keith's Manx, even using my 10,000 rev limit on the brand

new engine internals. Roberto is now seeing over 72bhp on the dyno and with a wet weight of just 126 kilo the Paton feels extremely lively, even at reduced revs.

The Paton has no steering damper fitted, the first race bike I have ridden around the Island without one, something I was very conscious of initially. But by Ballacraine, seven miles out, I had filed the fact to the back of my mind, at least for the time being. The right left sweep through the bottom of Union Mills hadn't even moved the bars, nor had the Greeba and AppleDean sections, and by then I was almost up to speed. In fact the Paton turns so quickly that a damper in these sections could have been counter productive. Anyway the real test of the handling would come later in the lap, on the run from Ginger Hall through to Ramsey, which is the last remaining few miles of 'real' TT bumps.



That Magnificent Malc - on his flying machine!

Running into Laurel Bank's tightening right I suspect Keith arrived a bit quicker than planned and as a result he lost his drive on the exit. By now I felt really comfortable, and not wishing to miss an opportunity I nipped by him into the challenging Black Dub. And with a clear road ahead I settled into my rhythm. Onto Cronk y Voddy straight, as far down behind the screen as the short seat allowed, and watch the revs rise in fifth and into sixth, for a short breather before the flat out

right past the chapel at the end. But within a few seconds in top, at the 10,000 limit imposed by Roberto, a cylinder cut. Before the off Giovanni had told me the motor was set on the rich side, and this was a sure fire symptom. With a quick roll of the throttle the missing cylinder chimed back in and we were away again.

Down through Kirk Michael, remembering to wave, out through the thirty limit, and into the fearsome Rhencullen. Even with the front wheel well light and pulling hard on the bars to make the fifth gear right, left, right on to Bishops Court there was not a hint of a wobble or weave. Accelerating away from Ginger Hall there was the familiar tricolour helmet of Giacomo Agostini in the distance. Ago was working the crowd, as only he can, and as it always does in these situations, it presented me with a dilemma. Somehow it doesn't seem quite right to pass such a great champion. By the time I had made the move, giving him a respectable amount of room and a friendly wave, I realised I had ridden the bumps at Glen Duff, and not missed that steering damper for one moment.

By Ramsey I had a new target ahead, in the form of Hugh Anderson having a run on the amazing Britten V twin. Hard on the brakes into Ramsey Hairpin had me on his back wheel but driving up the hill to Waterworks he shot away, despite admitting afterwards to only using part of the power available. Hugh was a treat to follow, he has lost none of his classic style, and he still had time for a long wave to the large crowd at the Gooseneck. Again I felt bound to follow his example. On through Guthrie's Memorial and the Mountain Mile, and with a fast run through the last bridge I tried to tuck into Hugh's slipstream. What seemed like a good idea proved the opposite, for by half way up the mile I was on the 10k limit and having to roll the throttle to stay on both cylinders. When Hugh hesitated into the Mountain Box I nipped by, feeling suitably disrespectful. But it wasn't to last, on the run down to the Creg he wafted by, even managing a cheery wave. If you've got it you never lose it. From Creg ny Baa down to the finish the crowds were amazing, and we both spent more time with one hand on the bars than two.

In the finishers enclosure Roberto was jubilant, apart from the over rich 40mm DelOrto's the bike had run like a dream and the outside of the motor was bone dry. A beaming Roberto was, in his words, 'very 'appy'. OK a lap somewhere in the region of 92mph wouldn't win many Senior Classic Manx races, but with the right jockey, less waving to the crowd, and a little bit of racing luck, I don't have any doubt that Roberto's masterpiece is a potential MGP winner. My sincere thanks go to Roberto for using me as his 'test pilot', to Giovanni for trusting me with his own machine and to Mauro, who acted as my agent in Milano.

Malc Wheeler

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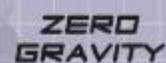
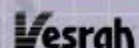
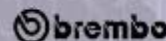
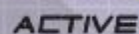
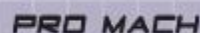
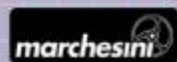
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