

**DAILY
Mirror**



John Player Motorcycling

JOHN PLAYER INTERNATIONAL GOLD CUP MEETING

Official programme £1
For conditions of admission see inside



Organised by
Pathfinders & Derby
Motor Club

Saturday/Sunday, April 11/12, 1981

Black a Winner!



John Player Special King Size

JPS53 DRM

The tar yield of this brand is designed to be **MIDDLE TAR** Manufacturer's estimate, January 1980, of group as defined in H.M. Government Tables

**DANGER: H.M. Government Health Departments' WARNING:
CIGARETTES CAN SERIOUSLY DAMAGE YOUR HEALTH**



JOHN PLAYER INTERNATIONAL GOLD CUP MEETING

Saturday/Sunday, April 11/12, 1981



Organised by the Pathfinders & Derby Motor Club Ltd. Affiliated to the Auto Cycle Union through the East Midland Centre. Held under the Sporting Code of the Federation Internationale Motorcycliste, the General Competition Rules of the Auto Cycle Union and the Supplementary Regulations and Final Instructions issued by the Club.
Permit No. ACU 160 FIM No. 07/06 Permanent Course Licence No. 16

TIMETABLE

SATURDAY, APRIL 11

Practice

09.00 - 09.15	ITV World of Sport Superbike, untimed
09.20 - 09.35	350cc Riders Challenge, untimed
09.40 - 09.55	Classic Bike, untimed
10.00 - 10.20	ITV World of Sport Superbike, timed
10.25 - 10.45	350cc Riders Challenge Heat 1, timed
10.50 - 11.10	350cc Riders Challenge Heat 2, timed
11.15 - 11.30	Yamaha RD350 ProAm Series, untimed
11.35 - 11.50	TT Formula 1 Championship, untimed
11.55 - 12.15	Yamaha RD350 ProAm Series, timed
12.20 - 12.35	Streetbike Challenge, untimed
13.30 - 13.45	500cc Gold Cup, untimed

Races

13.50	Race 1 National Classic Bike Magazine Race	8 laps	15.67 miles
14.15	Race 2 350cc Riders Co-operative Challenge, Heat 1	8 laps	15.67 miles
14.40	Race 3 350cc Riders Co-operative Challenge, Heat 2	8 laps	15.67 miles
15.15	Race 4 ITV World of Sport Superbike Challenge	18 laps	35.23 miles
16.00	Race 5 Yamaha RD350 ProAm Series	10 laps	19.57 miles

Practice

16.30 - 16.50	TT National Formula 1 Championship, timed
16.55 - 17.15	500cc Gold Cup, timed

SUNDAY, APRIL 12

Practice

09.00 - 09.15	Sidecars, untimed
09.20 - 09.35	250cc, untimed
09.40 - 09.55	Motor Cycle News Superbike Challenge, untimed
10.00 - 10.20	Sidecars, timed
10.25 - 10.45	Streetbike Challenge, timed
10.50 - 11.10	Motor Cycle News Superbike Challenge, timed
11.15 - 11.35	250cc, timed
11.40 - 12.30	Pit-lane walkabout

Races

13.00	Race 6 Motor Cycle News Superbike Challenge, first leg	15 laps	29.36 miles
	Race 7 Daily Mirror International 250cc Race	12 laps	23.49 miles
	Race 8 Forward Trust/Motor Cycle Weekly TT Formula 1 Championship	15 laps	29.36 miles
	Race 9 JOHN PLAYER INTERNATIONAL 500cc GOLD CUP	30 laps	58.72 miles
	Race 10 International Sidecar 1000cc Race	12 laps	23.49 miles
	Race 11 Motor Cycle News Superbike Challenge, second leg	15 laps	29.36 miles
	Race 12 350cc Riders Co-operative Challenge, Final	12 laps	23.49 miles
	Race 13 Motor Cycle News/Shell Super Oil Streetbike Series	12 laps	23.49 miles

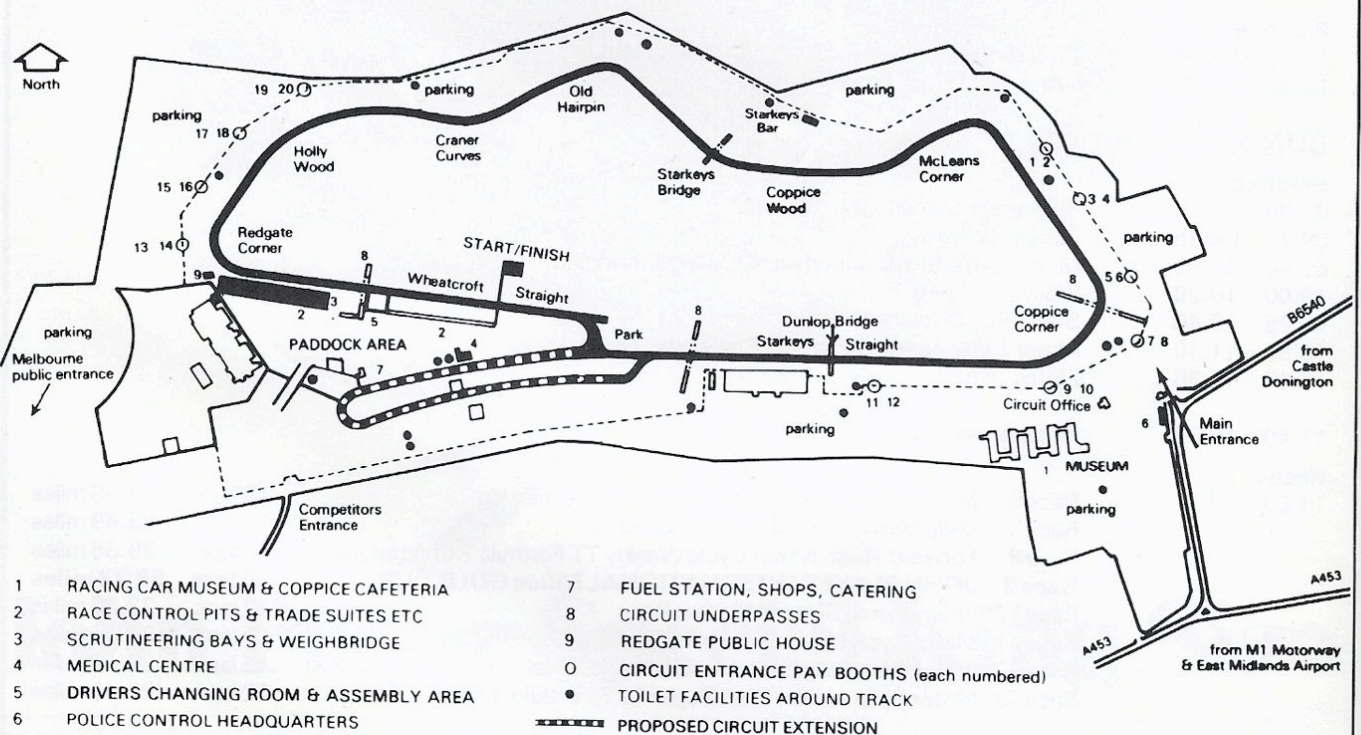
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Donington Race Circuit

Lap Distance: 1.957 miles 3.149 kilometres



Paddock Transfer: Saturday, £1.50; Sunday, £2.50.

Holders of Paddock Tickets are able to take a close-up view of the competitors, and have access to a special viewing area opposite the pits. Access to the trackside banking facility opposite the paddock is only via the underpass in the Paddock 2 (adjacent to the Scrutineering Bay).

Promoters of the Meeting

DONINGTON PARK RACING LTD

Chairman: Tom Wheatcroft
 Managing Director: Robert Fearnall
 General Manager: Bryan Feltham
 Marketing Consultant: Michael Sheppard
 Castle Donington, Derby DE7 5RP. Telephone: Derby (0332) 810048. Telex: 377793.



Officials of the Meeting

STEWARDS: (International Jury)

Appointed by the ACU
 W. G. Boddice Esq (President)
 Appointed by the
 East Midland Centre, ACU
 G. H. Padley Esq
 Appointed by the Club
 Messrs A. Towle, MSc and
 R. Turner Morris

TIMEKEEPERS:

R. C. Allcock
 D. Barker
 R. Corfe
 A. F. Faulkner
 Mrs B. Gladders
 R. Summerfield
 J. Ward

RACE RECORDER:

Miss L. Shepherd

COMMENTATORS:

F. Clarke
 E. Dow

MEASURER:

R. C. Allcock

SCRUTINEERS:

A. G. Briggs
 J. Painter
 K. Riley

DRIVERS' LIAISON OFFICER:

J. H. Cooper

PRESS OFFICERS:

D. Fern
 G. Taylor
 C. Carter

COMPETITORS' STEWARD:

Miss J. Broom

SAFETY OFFICER:

A. Beardmore

Paddock Announcers:

D. Collins
 N. Suthers

CHIEF MARSHAL:

J. MacDonald

MARSHALS:

Members of East Midland Centre Clubs

NOISE METER OPERATOR:

G. Abloft

TRAVELLING MARSHALS:

D. Heath
 J. Styles

STARTERS:

J. Andrews
 J. Brown

RACE CONTROL:

L. Tuxford
 C. Ross
 Mrs B. Heath
 Mrs D. MacDonald
 Mrs P. Rodgers

CLERK OF THE COURSE:

A. Taylor

ASSISTANT CLERK OF THE COURSE

AND HON SECRETARY

OF THE MEETING:

B. Tuxford
 26 Hoylake Drive
 Mickleover, Derby

MEDICAL OFFICERS:

Dr H. Trivedi (Chief),
 Dr L. Rodgers and Dr S. Vlatchis,
 assisted by the
 Derbyshire Royal Infirmary
 and St John Ambulance Brigade
 under the direction of
 Area Superintendent
 M. Mardon

COURSE CARS:

Triumph TR7 and Austin Princess
 kindly loaned by Leyland Cars

BREAKDOWN VEHICLES:

Supplied by Bob Minion Ltd and
 Barrie Rodgers, both of
 London Road, Derby, and
 Hailwood & Gould, Birmingham

COURSE MOTOR-CYCLES:

Bob Minion Ltd

CIRCUIT VEHICLES:

Reliant Scimitar GTC Incident
 Control Vehicle supplied by
 The Reliant Motor Co. Ltd.
 Rover Fire Rescue vehicle
 supplied by Leyland Cars
 Honda Acty Van supplied by
 Honda UK Ltd.
 Two fire tender Land Rovers
 donated by Leyland
 Two Peugeot 504 ambulances
 donated by Pilkington Motors,
 Chesterfield and Derby.
 Toyota Hi-ace rescue vehicle
 supplied by Farmer & Carlisle,
 Toyota dealers for Loughborough.
 (Tools on Rescue vehicle donated by
 John Shoebridge, 63 Steam Mill Lane,
 Ripley, Derby.
 (Tel: Ripley 44638)

Catering facilities

The Coppice Cafeteria, situated within the Museum complex adjacent to the main entrance car park, offers full catering facilities (including restaurant) from 10 am. The new cafeteria complex in the paddock, adjacent to the BP filling station, includes breakfast room and wine/steak bar.

Donington's public house, the Redgate Lodge, is situated on the outside of Redgate Corner. Buffet meals are available here. Another permanent bar facility is situated at Starkey's Bridge, adjacent to the popular Old Hairpin spectator banking area, and this also offers snack food. Temporary bars/catering points are situated at the Craner Curves and at Coppice Corner, and there is also a cafeteria marquee at Coppice Corner.

The tobacconists kiosks situated in the Paddock, The Old Hairpin, McLeans Corner and at Coppice Corner, sell programmes, newspapers and magazines, in addition to confectionery.

Fred Craner Challenge Trophy

This trophy came into being in 1949 after the untimely death of Fred Craner, a prominent figure of motor cycling in pre-war days. Fred was the Secretary of the Derby and District Motor Club, a member of the RAC and ACU Competitions Committees, and the organiser of the pre-war Donington car and motor cycle races.

His great friend, Cyril Topping, then East Midland Centre Secretary, launched a fund and two magnificent trophies were purchased. The motor car trophy is awarded to the best British driver of a British car in the British Grand Prix.

The motor cycle trophy, second only in size to the Mellano Trophy has been won by every prominent competitor from Geoff Duke to Barry Sheene.

It was awarded annually for the best British (including Commonwealth) driver of a British machine in every round of the World Championship series. The restriction on the country of manufacture was lifted later.

Now the winner of the trophy is the competitor putting up the best performance in the International Motor Cycle Events held on the road race circuits of the East Midland Centre.

The circuit owners have all agreed to donate £100 each, so that the winner will receive an additional cash award of £300 with the trophy.

1980 winner: Jock Taylor

Additional Awards

The winner of the John Player International Gold Cup Race will receive a Gold Cup presented by John Player & Sons.

To the Rider of the Day, selected by an independent panel of judges, comprising journalists and commentators, John Player & Son present an award of £100.

To each overall winner, Donington Park Racing Ltd. present a race winners hat, race winners dish and race winners tankard.

Conditions of Admission

MOTOR RACING IS DANGEROUS AND ALL PERSONS ATTENDING THIS MEETING DO SO ENTIRELY AT THEIR OWN RISK

It is a condition of admission that all persons having any connection with the promotion and/or organisation and/or conduct of the meeting, including the owners of the land and the drivers and owners of the vehicles, are absolved from all liability arising out of accidents howsoever caused whether by negligence or otherwise resulting in damage to property and/or personal injury to spectators, and pass and ticket holders.

ANIMALS ARE NOT PERMITTED INTO THE CIRCUIT

Postponement of the Meeting

The Club reserves the right to postpone or cancel all or any part of the Meeting.

Programme Copyright

All literary matter in this programme, including the list of competitors and their racing numbers, is Copyright, and any person found making illegal use thereof will be prosecuted. The Club accepts entries and driver's nominations in good faith. Every effort is made to adhere to the printed programme, but the promoters cannot accept any liability for the failure of any driver or machine to appear.

Car Park Conditions

Vehicles are taken into the car park on condition that the Club and Circuit company shall not be liable for loss or damage to the vehicle, or to any part or accessory thereof, or to any animal or thing left in or about or with any vehicle, in whatever way or by whatever means such loss or damage may be caused.

Track Signals

GREEN LIGHT — Starting signal; **RED LIGHT/FLAG** — Stop; **WHITE FLAG** — Ambulance or Course car on circuit; **YELLOW FLAG (waved)** — Great danger, be prepared to stop; **YELLOW FLAG (motionless)** — Take care, danger; **GREEN FLAG** — Course clear; **YELLOW/RED STRIPES FLAG** — Oil on course (slippery track surface); **BLACK/WHITE CHEQUERED FLAG** — Finish; **BLACK FLAG WITH DRIVER'S NUMBER** — That competitor to stop.

Autographs

Today's Competitors

Solos

No	Name	Town/Country	No	Name	Town/Country	No	Name	Town/Country
1	KENNY ROBERTS	USA	55	LENNART BACKSTROM	Sweden	109	FRANK RUTTER	Wirral
2	RON HASLAM	Langley Mill	56	KEVIN ROBB	Newark	110	TREVOR WISE	Uppingham
3	RANDY MAMOLA	USA	57	STEPHEN CLARKE	Heanor	111	ROY JEFFREYS	High Wycombe
4	GRAEME CROSBY	Australia	58	DEREK HUXLEY	Ellesmere Port	112	DAVID KITCHENER	Chatham
5	JOHN NEWBOLD	South Normanton	59	JOHN WEEDON	Ibstock	113	ROBIN DRURY	Haywards Heath
6	STEVE PARRISH	Royston	60	DONNY ROBINSON	N Ireland	114	BILLY HILL	Saltfleetby
7	BARRY SHEENE	Charlwood	61	TREVOR STEELE	N Ireland	115	PETER TAYLOR	London
8	KORK BALLINGTON	South Africa	62	CHRISTER ELIASSON	Sweden	116	MAX NOTHIGER	Switzerland
9	ALEX GEORGE	Isle of Man	63	CHRIS FISHER	Denmark	117	MICHAEL HUNT	Aylesbury
10	MICK GRANT	Huddersfield	64	PETER AMMONN	Germany	118	COLIN ALDRIDGE	London
11	ROGER MARSHALL	Wragby	65	STEVE THOMPSON	Burton on Trent	119	TIM ANTHILL	Workshop
12	BARRY DITCHBURN	Sevenoaks	66	DESMOND BARRY	Melton Mowbray	120	HARTLEY KERNER	London
13	CHRIS GUY	Kingsbridge	67	ANDY BOND	Lowestoft	121	ALEX BEDFORD	Burton on Trent
14	JEFF SAYLE	Australia	68	CHARLIE HUGHES	Warrington	122	GRAHAM BROWN	Stevenage
15	STEVE MANSHIP	Leicester	69	STEVE MACKIN	Crowthorne	123	KEITH SANDERSON	Leicester
16	KEITH HUEWEN	Wollaston	70	JOHN HESELMWOOD	Heywood	124	GORDON RUSSELL	Hingham
17	GRAEME MCGREGOR	Australia	71	DOUGLAS TAYLOR	Earlston	125	MICHAEL JAMES	Downham Market
18	GRAHAM WOOD	Scunthorpe	72	PHIL RILEY	Preston	126	CARL RICHARDSON	Rochdale
19	FRANCO UNCINI	Italy	73	LES BURGAN	Rugby	127	GEOFF JOHNSON	Richmond
20	STAN WOODS	Chester	74	NEIL TUXWORTH	Louth	128	GREG PAGE	Swaffham
21	CLIVE HORTON	Derby	75	ADRIAN MARSH	Scunthorpe	129	IVOR MORGAN	Ramsgate
22	STEVE TONKIN	Carnforth	76	ALEX TAYLOR	Abingdon	130	CONOR MCGINN	Stillorgan
23	STEVE WRIGHT	Barnsley	77	PAUL HARRIS	Grays	131	BOB JACKSON	Kendal
24	ALAN STEWART	Guiseborough	78	GRAHAM ATHA	Doncaster	132	TREVOR NATION	Stockbridge
25	CHARLIE WILLIAMS	Alvanley	79	MARTIN BARR	Ballymena	133	ALAN COULDWELL	Harrogate
26	TONY RUTTER	Brierley Hill	80	SIMON BUCKMASTER	Potters Bar	134	BERT HARTLEY	Alcester
27	STEVE HENSHAW	Jacksdale	81	KEVIN CLEMENTSON	Romford	135	JOHN KNOWLES	Penkridge
28	STEVE WARD	Wigan	82	RICHARD PEERS JONES	New Malden	136	DAVE ARNOLD	Sleaford
29	DAVE DEAN	Wigan	83	JOHN DAVIDSON	Perth	137	CHRISTOPHER WALTON	London
30	WAYNE GARDNER	Australia	84	PETER HOWARTH	Derby	138	DAVID BEDLINGTON	Beverley
31	DAVID HISCOCK	New Zealand	85	CONOR BRENNAN	London	139	BARRY LAWTON	Southampton
32	GRAHAM YOUNG	Belfast	86	PHIL NICHOLS	Chorley	140	ERIC ANDERSON	Potters Bar
33	JOEY DUNLOP	N Ireland	87	MICHAEL PRESTON	Rugby	141	ALAN CATHCART	London
34	GARY PADGETT	Batley	88	NEVILLE BUSSON	Bury St Edmunds	142	PETER HUTCHINSON	Darlington
35	HIROYUKI KAWASAKI	Japan	89	RAYMOND CAMPBELL	Ballymena	143	RONALD ROEBURY	Worcester
36	PHIL HENDERSON	Wakefield	90	RON BRITTON	Co Londonderry	144	SIMON BLEASE	Burton on the Wolds
37	ROD SCIVYER	Banbury	91	RON STOREY	Lincoln	145	WILLIAM WAUGH	Newcastle on Tyne
38	PETER LABUSCHAGNE	South Africa	92	CLIVE OFFER	Coulsdon	146	ROBERT GRIFFITHS	Derby
39	PHIL MELLOR	Shelley	93	BRIAN PETERS	Liverpool	147	TOM ROBINSON	Cambridge
40	DENNIS IRELAND	New Zealand	94	STEVE WILLIAMS	Llantwit Major	148	JOHN SILVERMAN	Heanor
41	JOHN WOODLEY	Oxford	95	MARTIN TAYLOR	Coventry	149	ROBERT PEABODY	Atherstone
42	BOB SMITH	St Helens	96	GARY LINGHAM	London	150	ROGER WILSON	Lancaster
43	STEVE CULL	Bangor	97	RAY KNIGHT	Lingfield	151	BILL CREW	Kidderminster
44	BILL INGHAM	Leyland	98	DAVID RAILTON	Huntingdon	152	NIGEL CORBY	Leatherhead
45	TOM DRURY	Chesterfield	99	TIM O'KENNEDY	Ireland	153	JOHN HAMMOND	Swindon
46	TONY HEAD	Coventry	100	KEITH BUCKLEY	Welling	154	ANDY MCGLADDERY	Darlington
47	KEVIN WRETTOM	Luton	101	JAMES WELLS	London	155	WILLIAM HAWTHORNE	Middlesbrough
48	KLAUS KLEIN	Germany	102	COLIN MARSHALL	Caister on Sea	156	CLIVE WATTS	Llantwit Major
49	BARRY WOODLAND	Northwood	103	ASA MOYCE	Waltham Cross	157	JOHN NORRIS	Bexley Heath
50	PETE WILD	Chesterfield	104	STEVE CARBUTT	Castleford	158	JEFF WEBBER	Cardiff
51	PETER HUBBARD	Lincoln	105	RAYMOND JUDGE	Northampton	159	ROBERT NEWBY	Rugby
52	DEREK CHATTERTON	Boston	106	PETER DAVIES	Birmingham	160	PETER LOOIJESTEIJN	Holland
53	BUTCH HOBBS	Tonbridge	107	JIM DAVIDSON	Carlisle	161	KLAAS HERNAMDT	Holland
54	PETER SKÖLD	Sweden	108	BRIAN GRIFFITHS	Colchester	162	ROB MCLENEA	Cadney



John Coley photograph

Sidecars

No	Name	Town/Country	No	Name	Town/Country
1	JOCK TAYLOR/BENGA JOHANSSON	Haddington	15	WALTER OHMANN/HORST KOWALSKI	Germany
2	DICK GREASLEY/STEWART ATKINSON	Stoke on Trent	16	NIGEL ROLLASON/DAVE HOMER	Sothill
3	MICK BODDICE/CHAS BIRKS	Kidderminster	17	FRANK ILLINGWORTH/GUY MILLER	Ossett
4	TREVOR IRESON/CLIVE POLLINGTON	Swindon	18	GORDON NOTTINGHAM/STEVE JOHNSON	Scunthorpe
5	DEREK JONES/BRIAN AYRES	Perivale	19	TERRY HASLAM/JOHN GAINES	Langley Mill
6	CLIVE STIRRAT/ROGER KINGSMILL	Worthing	20	ROY HANKS/VINCE BIGGS	Erdington
7	KEITH GALTRESS/NEIL SHELTON	Buckley	21	MICHEL VANNESTE/PERGEVANNESTE	Belgium
8	BRUCE FORD-DUNN/ALISTAIR PIRIE	Steyning	22	BRIAN OFFEN/IAN WATSON	Claygate
9	PETER CAMPBELL/to be advised	Australia	23	BRIAN GRAY/ROBERT HOLDEN	High Wycombe
10	STEVE ABBOTT/SHAUN SMITH	Riddings	24	STEWART PEARSON/GRAHAM ROSE	Lower Cumberworth
11	STEVE SINNOTT/to be advised	Peterborough	25	ALAN MAY/MICKY GRAY	Chadwell
12	TOM WHITE/JOHN WHITE	Doncaster	26	DAVE SAVILLE/SIMON BIRCHALL	Torworth
14	ROGER DIXON/PAUL APPEBY	Derby	27	DENNIS BINGHAM/JULIA BINGHAM	Tuxford
			28	LES CROSS/DAVID CROSS	Belper
			29	DEREK BAYLEY/ROBERT BRYSON	Folkstone
			30	DICK HAWES/BILL BOLDISON	Purfleet

Return of the black and gold

by Laurie Caddell



John Player & Sons, the giant tobacco group from down the road in Nottingham, are back in motorcycle racing sponsorship in a big way, and that is great news for Donington Park, the riders and you, the spectators.

In a time of economic depression, the injection of money and enthusiasm from Players with their exclusive deal at Donington means that some national events this year have more prize money than last year's internationals, while entrance fees for spectators are to be pegged at last year's prices with free entry to accompanied under-fifteens. And, with special discounts to the thousands of John Player employees, crowds should be bigger than ever.

In what is almost certainly the biggest deal in bike circuit history, Players have taken the unusual step of sponsoring a track rather than individual events or teams, but doing the unusual is nothing new for the Nottingham company. In 1968, they shook up the world of Grand Prix car racing when the works Lotus cars appeared in Gold Leaf colours and, entered as Gold Leaf Team Lotuses, Graham Hill took their colours to World Championship honours that year. An even bigger coup came four years later when the same team dropped the Lotus name and replaced it with the legend 'John Player Special' emblazoned on the now famous black and gold cars. Incidentally, Emerson Fittipaldi produced another World Championship for them that year and made the king-size ciggies from Nottingham famous the world over.

The company's involvement in the two-wheeled world also stretches back to 1968 when, under the brand name of Player's No 6, they sponsored the British Road

Racing Championships at Cadwell Park and their own motocross events. In 1971 came the Player's No 10 challenge at Silverstone and their International Motor Cycle Road Race which carried on for two years before evolving into the John Player Grand Prix in 1974.

Highlights

In the meantime another British racing institution was formed and Player's took over backing of the Transatlantic Trophy from 1972 when teams of Americans crossed 'The Pond' to do battle with teams of Brits. Of course, that event has gone from strength to strength and become one of the highlights of the racing calendar. That year, too, saw the beginning of a three-year relationship with the John Player Norton racing team competing with their 750cc twins most notably in the hands of Peter Williams and Dave Croxford.

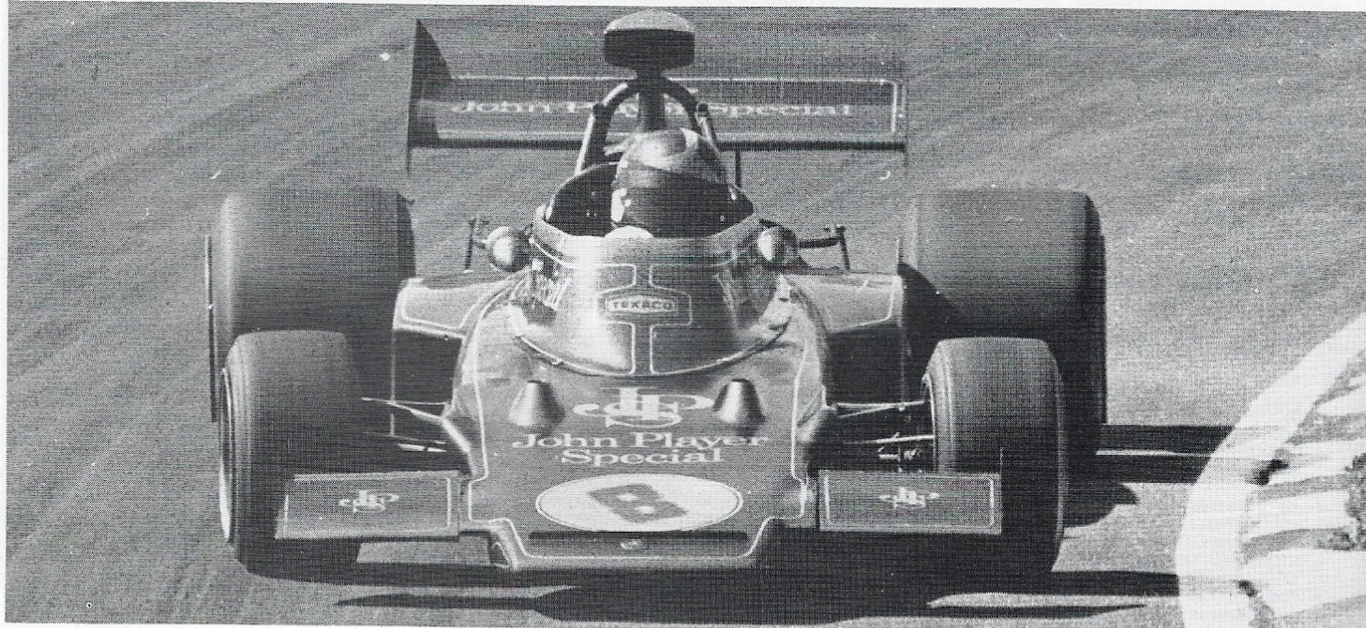
Unfortunately, after 1978 when they

had finished their third year of big bike events, the Transatlantic, the Grand Prix and the Mallory Park Race of the Year, John Player had to pull out. As Special Events Executive Jan Searle says: "In spite of what many people believe, John Player only has a finite budget and the plugs had to be pulled on several top events, most notably our car, bike and tennis sponsorship."

So, how did the association with Donington Park and the return to motorcycling come about? Ian Searle: "Donington is our local circuit and we always have someone there in attendance and the whole idea just came about. We had been planning to come back into motorcycle racing and it just seemed what Donington offered was right up our street; it was as simple as that."

It appears that the Player/Donington tie-up is just the start of the company's reinvolved with the sport, as Ian explained. "We sponsored Lotus over a period of ten years, as well as our bike, tennis and show-jumping activities, so we are obviously not thinking in terms of this year alone. It all depends on how 1981 goes, of course, but the indications are that it is working very well. Our first national event in March had around twice as many spectators as the corresponding event the year before, so naturally we are very pleased." So, this year is an important one for circuit and sponsor alike and could be the start of a long relationship.

Emerson Fittipaldi won the World Championship in a black and gold John Player Special in 1972.



Autosport photograph

Circuit owner Tom Wheatcroft says: "This is the largest sponsorship contract in the circuit's history. It is a massive step forward for Donington and will help greatly in our overall plans to hold the biggest and best motorcycling events in Britain." During the coming events, look out for special John Player Motorcycling leisure wear which the company hope to market at the circuit soon.

After this weekend's event, which is highlighted by the works Yamaha confrontation between Barry Sheene and arch rival Kenny Roberts, not to mention the added spice of Randy Mamola's Suzuki in the fray, the coming John Player attractions deserve their share of publicity, too. June 20/21 sees the John Player North versus South challenge with Mick Grant and Barry Sheene heading the respective teams. No doubt there will be some strong friendly rivalry and it will be interesting to see which side London-based Yorkshireman Dave Potter decides to ride for!

Grand Prix Style

A round of the new FIM European Road Race Championship takes place on the weekend of July 11/12, with riders from both sides of the Atlantic already applying to take part in these Grand Prix style (distance and money!) type events. There will of course be events for 125, 250, 500cc and sidecar categories.

A special event takes place on the weekend of August 29/30 when Donington celebrates its 50th anniversary as a motorcycling venue. It seems strange that one of the world's most modern circuits which reopened in 1977 has a history of international bike races stretching back to Whit Monday 1931. A special international invitation race heads the day's activities, while there will be a parade of stars and bikes from the last 50 years of the sport. Three national events complete John Player Trophy on May 17, the Grand National Trophy on August 9 and the Nationals (including the ACU finals) on October 4.

A £1500 Rider of the Year will be chosen from all eight races, so that means the clubmen will have just as much of a chance as the superstars, with points being awarded to the top ten finishers in each race and bonus points to the Rider of the Day at each meeting who also collects £100. Also, a John Player Grand National Challenge will take place at four meetings with a prize to the winner at the end of the season of £1500. The races are for Superbikes of between 401 and 1300cc, with prize money at each round of £1000.

It all adds up to a full and interesting package, which will benefit riders of all classes, race organisers and spectators alike. John Player are investing a six-figure sum in our sport and we know that the racers as always will give their money's worth. It is now up to you, the spectators, to make sure that John Player come back for more with your backing of the season. But with events like those lined up, you can't really refuse, can you?



The John Player deal was announced in February at Donington's Redgate Lodge. From left, Ian Searle and Ritchie Harrison of John Player, Robert Fearnall and Tom Wheatcroft of Donington Park and David Way of John Player.

JOHN PLAYER DONINGTON RIDER OF THE YEAR

John Player are to present a cash prize of £1500 to the rider who achieves the best overall performance from the eight John Player-sponsored Donington meetings in 1981.

The award is supported by a John Player Rider of the Day prize, an award of £100 to the rider elected to have established the best performance at each meeting. The rider will be selected by an independent panel of judges, comprising journalists and commentators.

The John Player Rider of the Year Award will be decided on the final results of every race — excluding heats — for Solo and Sidecar machines at both national and international meetings.

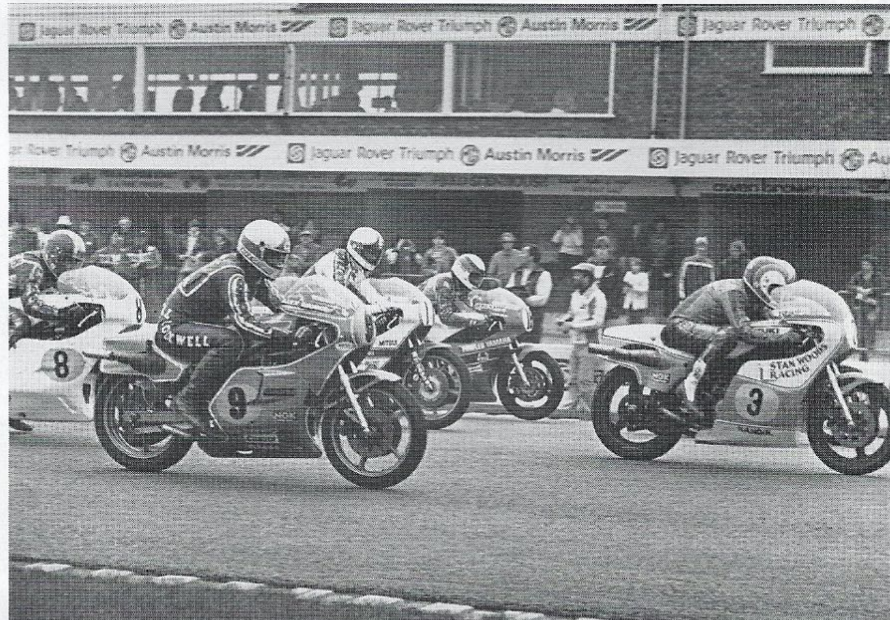
Points will be awarded on a 15-12-10-8-6-5-4-3-2-1 basis to the first ten finishers in each race and five bonus points will be allocated to the Rider of the Day at each meeting. Ties will be decided by (a) the greatest number of first, second, third etc. placings and (b) the greatest number of points won at any one meeting.

The Champion will receive £1500. The second placed rider will receive £750 and the third placed rider £500. The highest placed Sidecar riders will win £350.

JOHN PLAYER DONINGTON RIDER OF THE YEAR

- | | | |
|---|-------------------------|--------|
| 1 | Graham Wood | 25 pts |
| | Steve Wright | 25 pts |
| 3 | Steve Henshaw | 18 pts |
| 4 | Phil Mellor | 17 pts |
| | Tony Head | 17 pts |
| 6 | Ron Haslam | 15 pts |
| | Clive Horton | 15 pts |
| | Trevor Ireson (sidecar) | 15 pts |

The start of the Daily Mirror 500cc Senior Race at the first John Player sponsored meeting at Donington, the nationals in March.



John Colley photograph

Mike Hailwood

by Ted Macauley, *Daily Mirror* Grand Prix race writer

The heartbreaking reminders I have of Mike Hailwood are everywhere and while it is impossible to accept that he has gone forever they serve to underline his ever-presence not only in my mind's eye but under my direct gaze.

There's his famous autograph scrawled tipsily across the ceiling of my bar, sashes and garlands from Grand Prix glories pinned to my walls, photographs of us together across years and continents and hard-won silverware scattered in a random glitter all over my house.

But more importantly I hold a heartfelt of memories of his marvellous sense of fun and mischief; his kindness, his courage and his endearing ability to deflate the pompous and take the mickey out of himself with such startling modesty.

To spend any time at all with Mike was a pleasure afforded only a few: his self-effacement would not let him dwell with people he thought he might bore! And when you felt the full force of his loyalty, a fiercely developed trait, you knew you

had an extra special friend and neither distance nor deed was ever too much for him.

Hindsight in the wake of the awful circumstances of his death and Michelle's — his lovely little daughter — has no place in my mind. And if these rather personal feelings can possibly show the depth of our friendship then they go a long way towards explaining just what a magnificent man Hailwood was.

But I feel that no words of mine, nor anybody else's, could adequately describe what made the man tick or, indeed, what it was about him that made him so widely loved.

It could not have been only his skill . . . nor his swashbuckling dash . . . not his courage. Neither could it have been the manner in which he accepted all the adulation and hero-worship that was his right and due.

No . . . it was the absolutely unique combination of all those qualities; and how many boastful men do we know who do not aspire to one iota of his achievements and modesty who never fail to let us know, and

keep reminding us, just how remarkable they are?

Mike, I know, would be dreadfully embarrassed at all the fuss and all the nice things being said about him; he would hate us to be maudling and want us only to remember the good times. That's because he would not be able to fully appreciate the sadness his going has caused us all . . . he wouldn't allow himself to believe that people would care that much.

He would have been here at Donington Park today; we had made a date to celebrate what would have been his 41st birthday on April 2.

We had been in Daytona together for ten days . . . a trip so hilarious I dare not go into it . . . and in one of those incredibly serious conversations that two men can have, and that must seem so funny to outsiders listening in, when a drink or two has been taken, we had taken a bet on who could get fattest by Christmas.

Mike said then: "Racing's all over for me now; I'm going to get fat and happy. I'm not going to try and squeeze into trousers that are a size too small for me. I'm not going to torture myself to stay in a shirt that makes my stomach like a roll of bacon.

"I'm going to accept as I go along that I'll have to move up a size in all my clothes — so I'll bet you I can get fatter than you by Christmas. Then we'll come back to Daytona and wallow like a couple of old porpoises by the pool . . . and try to get even fatter!"

We shared hotel rooms and hangovers and when the annual Pump House Gang . . . Paul Butler from Yamaha, Barry Coleman, Gavin Trippe, Chris Lowe, Ian McKay and Glyn Harris from Los Angeles via Wales, and me and Mike met for a dinner in Daytona that left the restaurant bereft of California red wine, we could not have realised that it was to be our last get-together.

Mike first tested before his comeback here at Donington.



Brian Kelly photograph

And after Mike died I had a call I'll always treasure in my memory from Gavin Trippe in California and he summed up succinctly what we all *needed* to feel: "It was such a bloody fantastic party we had that night, the last one for Mike, that we can all be happy that he went on his way with so many good memories of us and that he had so much fun and laughter to look back on."

I had known Mike for more than 20 years and counted myself lucky to have been a friend of his all the way through; it's history now that we went back to the TT in 1978 and 1979 and left so many millions of people with so many stirring

memories that only added to the legend . . .

What is not known generally is that after Mallory Park, following the great 1979 TT, Mike 'phoned me to say: "That's it, I've quit. I'm not doing more . . ."

I offered the view that it would be unfair for him to say he *had* quit rather than he was *going* to quit and that the Donington Park international in July would give everybody a fair chance to see him for the final flourish of a fairy-tale career.

Then I went off on holiday to Italy with the promise: Okay, I'll do it . . . but only because you've asked me," ringing in my ears.

His promised 'phone call to me in Tuscany from Donington Park never arrived: naturally I wanted to know how he had got on. So I called him at home and it was only at the end of the chat that he revealed he had fallen off and broken his collar bone . . .

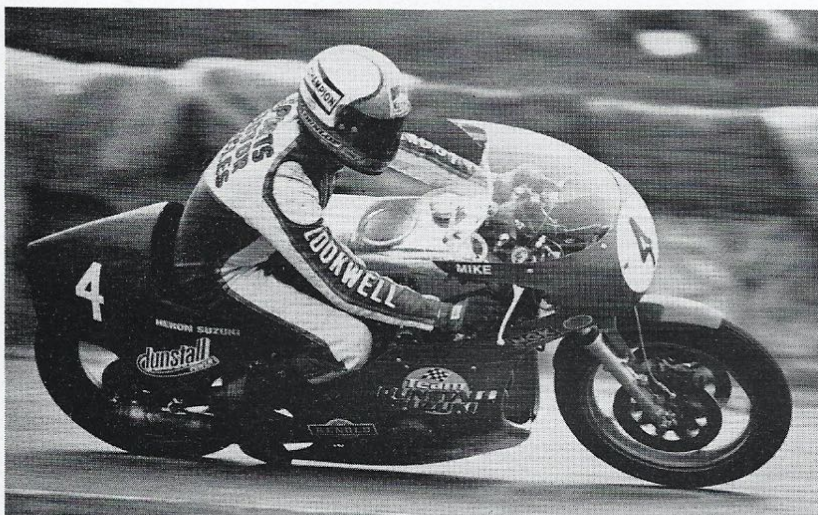
"I didn't want to 'phone you because I knew you'd give me a bollickin' . . . and it might've spoiled your holiday," he said, "anyway, it didn't hurt for long. But at least I know I'm not the great bloody ace I might have thought I was and, just like anybody else, I can get hurt."

"It did me a favour in some ways. If I'd had any lingering doubts about keeping on racing they all went wallop with that crash."

It was typical that his thoughts were not for himself when he refused to 'phone me with the news; but then I cannot remember the time when selfishness ever clouded his genuine feelings for others.

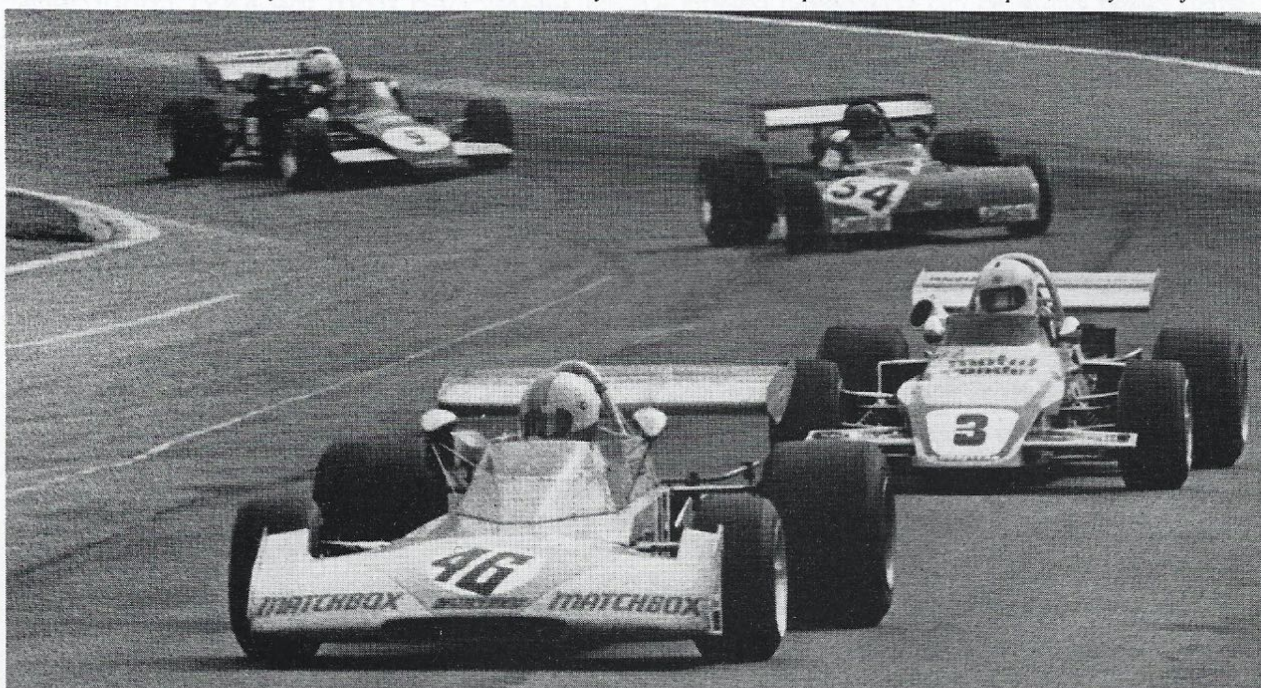
On our return flight from Florida after Daytona, when he had been asked for his autograph as often as he was in Europe — a point that puzzled him and overjoyed him at the same time — he had said to me; "That was great of all those people . . . but, you know, nobody is forever . . ."

He was quite wrong. He is . . .



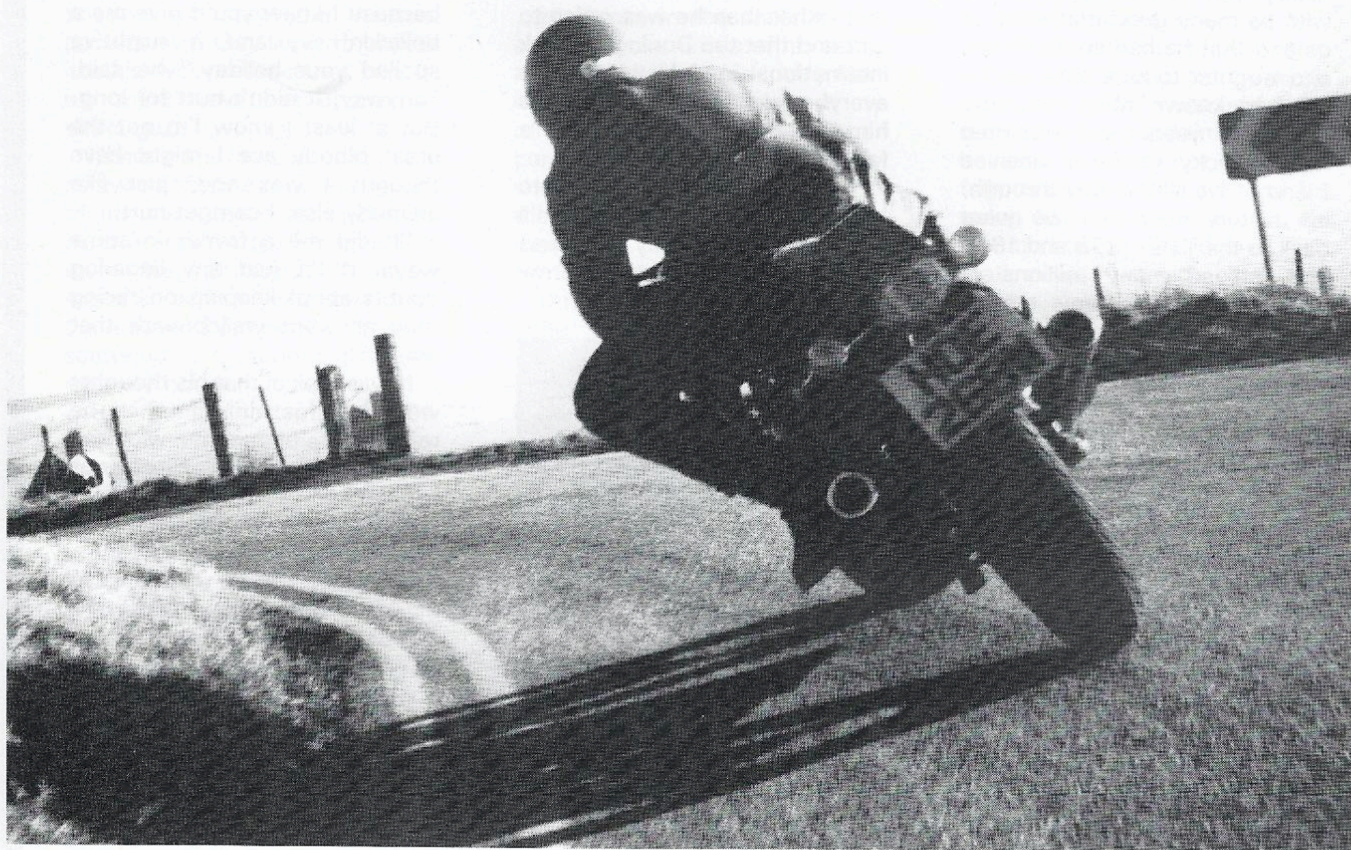
Brian Kelly photograph

A winner on two wheels and four. Above: the Post TT at Mallory in 1979. Below: European Formula 2 Champion seven years before.



Autosport photograph

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K181, K91 Red Arrow, K98 Rain Cheetah.

George O'Dell

George O'Dell was a hard man, both on and off the track. A dedicated racer, the Hemel Hempstead man was prepared to sacrifice anything and everything in pursuit of success.

The world title he won in 1977 was considered by a few people to be a hollow crown, because he did not win a single Grand Prix on the way to collecting the award.

But, measured against the effort, dedication and toil put in to scoring those points, George O'Dell was a worthy winner.

The price George had to pay for the title, which was largely responsible for restoring Britain's image in the sidecar racing world, was high.

Even greater was the cost that George had to pay for staying in the racing game.

Soon after clinching his crown at a wet and soggy British Grand Prix at Silverstone, George was offered a trip to the United States to demonstrate sidecar racing to American fans.

He and a handful of other Europeans went over to Laguna Seca but, in the demonstration race, George crashed and badly broke his leg.

He came back to racing, and then broke his other leg in a crash during practice at the Isle of Man TT.

Undaunted, he returned again to racing, but then came a season of absolute mechanical disaster. Meeting after meeting his motor blew and it was only due to the generosity, understanding and faith of sponsor Eric May, and Shell, that George was able to continue.

George refused to quit and in 1980, despite another high speed accident at Oulton Park, he began to show his old form. He finished eighth in the sidecar World Championship, linking up for a while with former world champion Kenny Williams, and began to plan for the '81 season.

In the middle of 1980, however, doctors had warned him of a serious liver complaint and then medical experts advised him to rest for a season after



Brian Kelly photograph

tests had revealed that loss of feeling in his fingers was caused by a trapped nerve in his neck.

George died in tragic circumstances in a house fire in Hemel Hempstead last month. He had domestic problems on top of his business, racing and health worries.

Sidecar racing in particular, and the sport in general, is the poorer for him going.

He will be remembered as the man who gave Britain her first sidecar world champion since 1953; the competitor who helped push the sport into the eighties, and as the rider who first broke the ton, during practice, at the TT, and later set the first ever 100mph plus average speed.

C J C

An end to uncertainty

The Motor Cycle News Superbike Championship has gone through continual change during the last few years. Now that the format seems to have been settled, what's in store for the spectators in 1981?

by Mat Oxley, *The Biker*

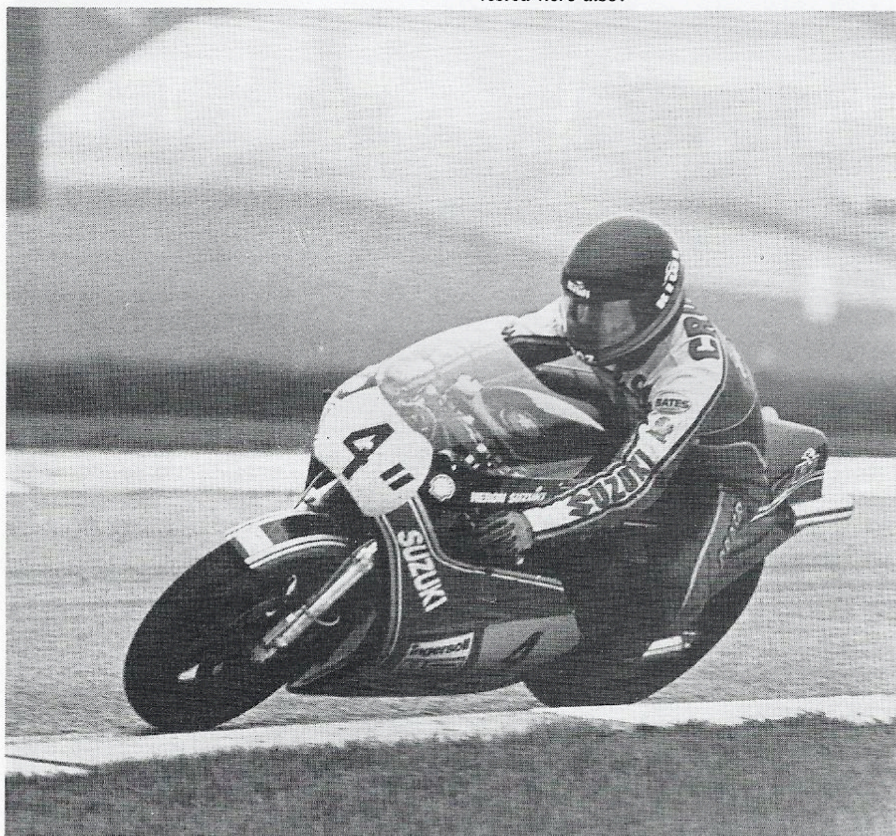
Over the last ten years the *Motor Cycle News* Superbike Championship has established itself as the most prestigious title on Britain's crowded road racing calendar. The fact that the future of the series has been in doubt since late 1978 has done nothing to diminish its attraction to the crowds who flock to the circuits every year to see the world's top stars battle it out on high-powered machinery.

It was the FIM's decision to drop the short-lived 750 world title that put the future of MCN's series in jeopardy. Without a world crown to chase, it was obvious that the Japanese factories could not justify the expense of developing and producing 750s — and without 750s the Superbike series would not survive.

The answer to the problem was simple: change the format to allow different capacity machines to join the title hunt. MCN did so and, in 1979, the capacity limit was lowered from 501cc to 351cc thus allowing the ubiquitous RG500 Suzuki to compete for Superbike honours. Any doubts that the RGs would be able to take on the all-conquering TZs were swiftly dispelled by Mick Grant's fighting third place in the opening round at Cadwell Park.



Above: one of the favourites for today's Superbike race, Barry Sheene visited Donington a fortnight ago. Below: Kiwi ace Graeme Crosby tested here also.



The originators of the series did not stop here in their efforts to safeguard the position of the Superbikes. The re-emergence of the four stroke as a major force in British racing had not gone unnoticed and, for 1980, the upper capacity limit was raised to 1300cc in the hope that the extra cubes would encourage four strokes to do battle.

Honda's attempt at entering evergreen Phil Reed on a vaguely modified endurance machine during 1978 had gone disastrously wrong, but four stroke development has come a long, long way since then. With Freddie Spencer leading Daytona before his Honda blew, it is now widely believed that the big fours have the power, if not the staying power, to challenge the superiority of the two strokes.

That's the recent history of the Superbike series. But what of 1981?

Many people will gamble on Yorkshireman **Dave Potter** making it three in a row on his Ted Broad TZ750. It certainly looks as if the big Yamahas will once again form the backbone of the series, but they will by no means have things all their own way. Fiery Scotsman **Alex George** experimented with a bored-out version of a TZ early in 1979. The boost to 850cc produced terrific power, but the problems in setting up the unusual machine proved to be too great and George dropped the idea in favour of his standard Yamaha.

Unrideable

A lot of critics have claimed over recent years that the big bikes are simply getting to be too powerful, even unrideable. This claim is certainly borne out by **Kenny Roberts**. During 1979, Kenny tried out a set of revamped cylinders on his already superfast 750. The barrels had been worked on by ace tuner Kel Carruthers and produced a considerable power increase.

Roberts, however, soon found the excess power too much to cope with. Here at Donington he was lapping a second faster with the less powerful engine. Engine technology has leapt forward at such an incredible rate that tyres and frames are struggling to keep up with such enormous power outputs. Roberts has now discarded his 750 in favour of the triple crown-winning 500. The 750 is only wheeled out once a year at Daytona where top speed is the all important factor. Elsewhere Kenny finds the 500 a more manageable and — judging by his results — better machine. The TZ750s will be hard to beat during the Superbike series, but the big threat from the 500s cannot be discounted.

Throughout 1980 **Randy Mamola** proved that the capacity deficiency of his

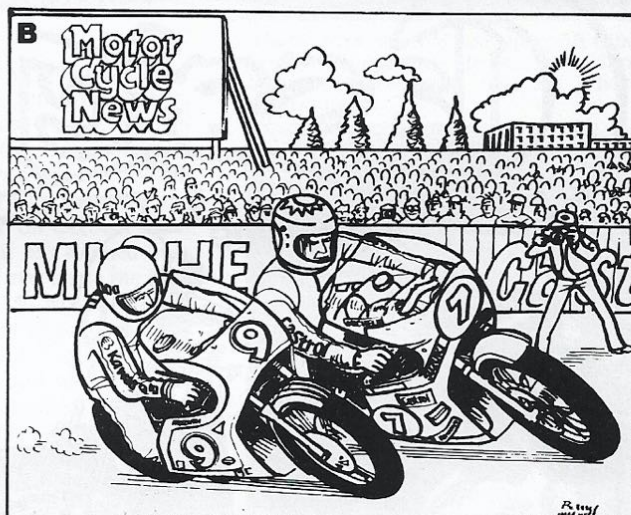
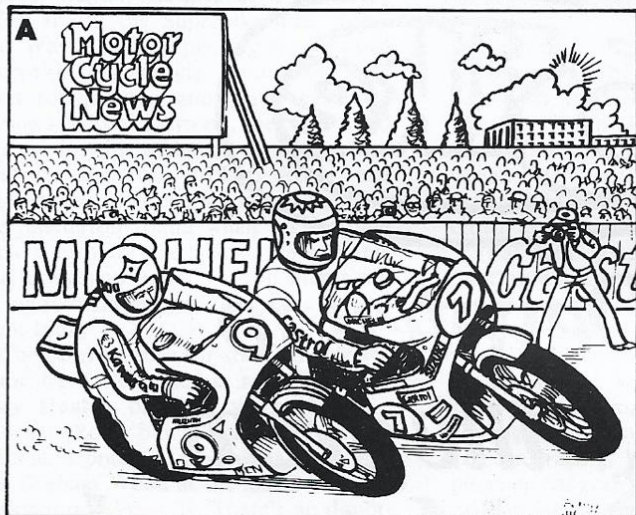
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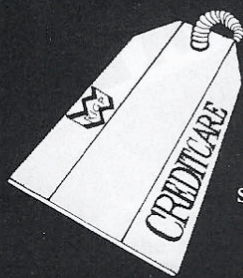


All entries for this competition will be retained by Motor Cycle News and on 25th October at Brands Hatch a draw will be made for the winner of the Terrific Yamaha DT175 Trail Bike.

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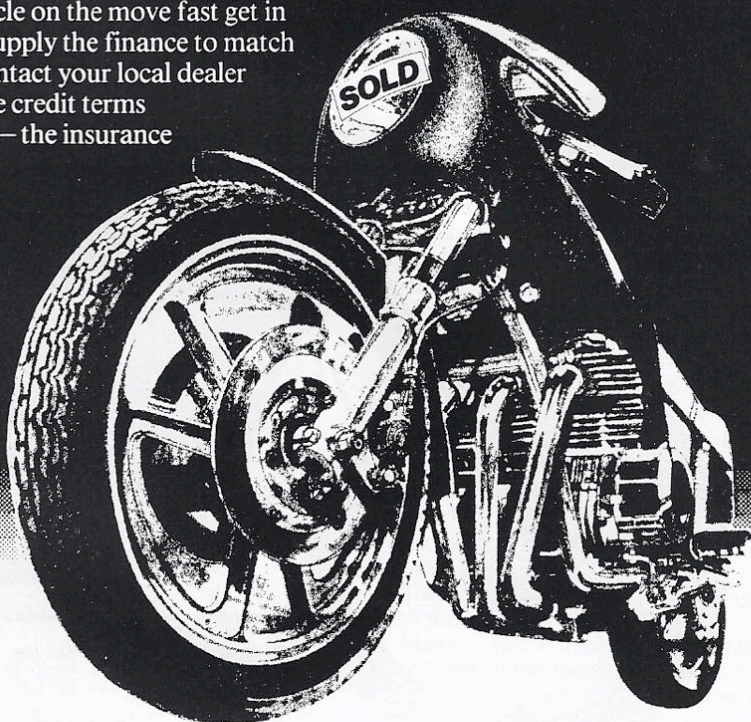
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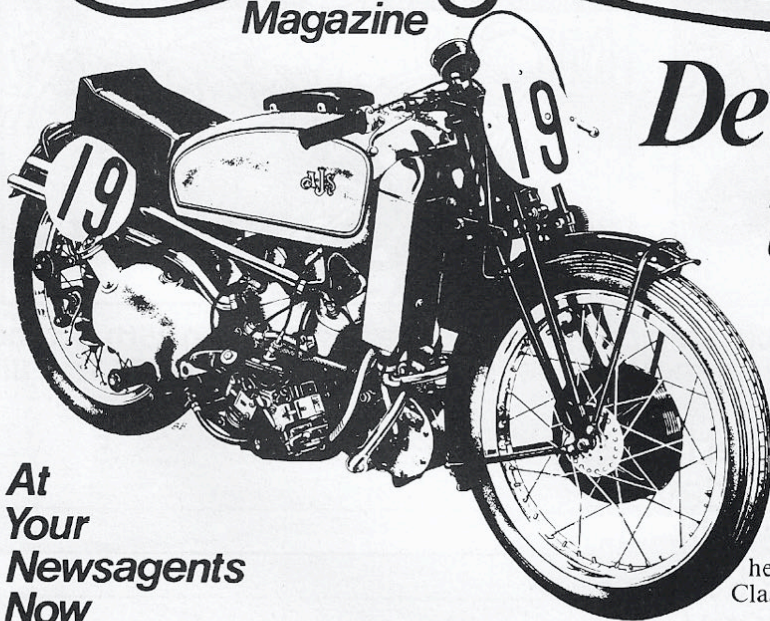
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End to uncertainty

continued

works RG500 was no hindrance to winning Superbike races. Randy won three of the eight rounds and finished fifth in the overall championship rankings. It had never been Suzuki's intention to win the series — they were too busy chasing the world 500 and F1 titles — and yet Mamola dominated all but one of the rounds that he contested. The young Californian will testify to the speed of the RG. Power was never a problem and Randy used his superb skills to give the established Superbike stars quite a shaking. With this sort of showing and all the signs that 500s will be even quicker this year, it could well be that the Superbike title will be won for the first time by a 500.

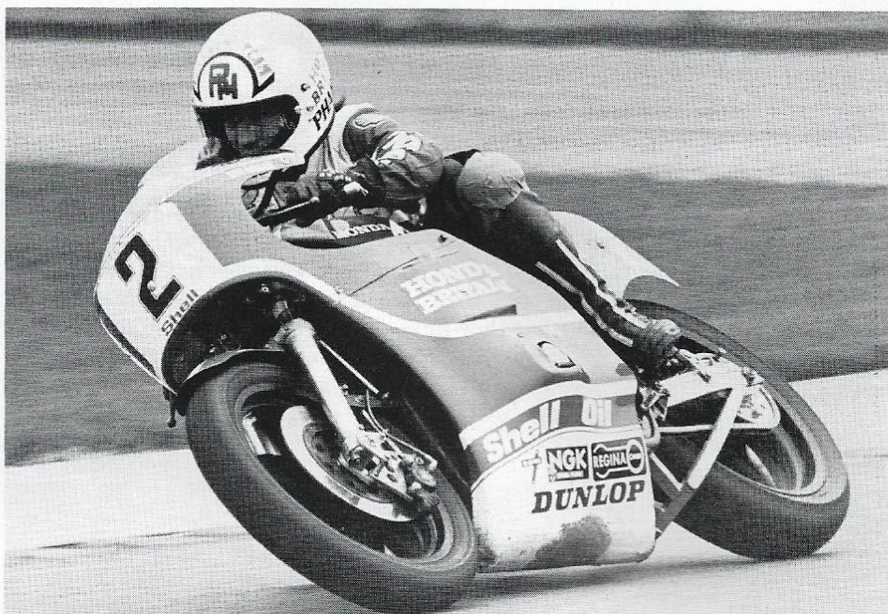
Competitive display

Apart from Mamola's amazing riding, 1980 will be remembered for bringing the first competitive display from a four stroke in recent years. Kiwi ace **Graeme Crosby** opted for his World Championship-winning F1 machine for the last round of the series. It proved to be the right decision. Second place behind Mamola was anything but a disappointment. Crosby had proved that four strokes are within an ace of the strokers on speed and 1981 might just be the year for four strokes to reassert themselves as the machines for big bike racing.

Moriwaki certainly think so. After taking British racing by storm in 1979 with Croz at the bars, the Japanese tuning concern are fielding **Roger Marshall** and Aussie **Wayne Gardner** in a concerted effort to lift the Superbike title. Roger and Wayne will be piloting steel-framed Moriwaki Kawasakis throughout the seven-round series and, with their promising results at Daytona, the team could well be in with a chance of putting one over on the two strokes. Roger was leading the 1980 championship up until the Snetterton round when his fortunes took a turn for the worse. He certainly had his eyes on Potter's crown and he will be out to make amends for his disappointment today.

The other major four-stroke threat will come from **Ron Haslam** and Ulsterman **Joey Dunlop** on their works Hondas. 'Rocket Ron' has already proved his machine's potential by beating Superbike ace **Graham Wood** at the last Donington national on March 29. There's no doubting that Honda have the power and rider ability to succeed in their Superbike bid. The biggest worry is reliability. Will the machines last the distance?

With such a variety of machinery on the grid for the 1981 series, we are going to be treated to a fast and furious festival of speed. Ever since the birth of the championship, British fans have thrived on the sight of top riders fighting to control the awesome power of big bore machinery. The English have never shared the European's affection for 50s or 125s. And the Superbike series caters for our love of big



'Rocket Ron' Haslam won here at the first Donington national meeting two weeks ago.



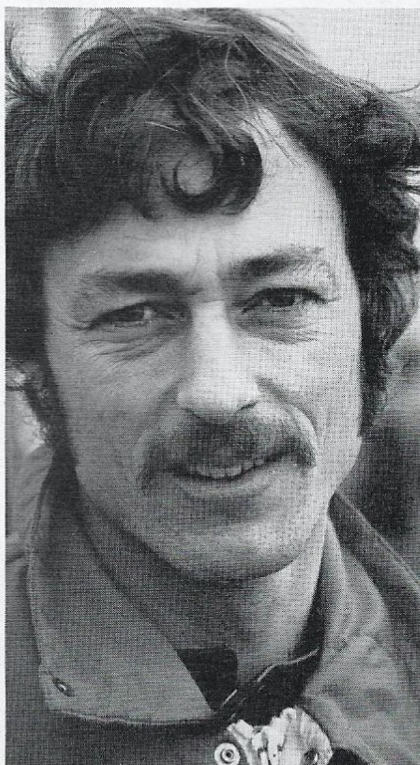
bike racing.

The outcome of the title quest has never been easy to predict. But with Potter, Marshall, **Keith Huewen**, Wood, Haslam and a host of other top liners on such varied machinery, only a wise or foolish man would gamble on who will wear the crown at Brands Hatch on October 24.

That dark cloud that has loomed over the future of the series ever since the FIM decided on axing the 750 world title has surely disappeared. The championship is no longer reliant upon the supply of 750 machines from Japan and now with the series format finally decided upon the coming season looks like producing some excellent racing. With a bigger than ever purse up for grabs now that the minimum prize money system has come into effect, riders will be out to take a share of the cash and publicity afforded by Britain's top road racing series.

The titanic battle at the final 1980 round between Mamola on the works RG, Crosby on his F1 mount and **Graham Wood** riding his Fowler TZ750 might just set the trend for 1981. But which machine and which rider will be on top by the end of the season? Your guess is as good as mine. But whatever the outcome we are assured of some hard and fast racing, both today and throughout the rest of the series.

Above: John Newbold rides alongside Graeme Crosby in Ingersoll Heron Team Suzuki. Below: Steve Manship rides his privately-entered Suzuki.



Brian Kelly photograph

John Colley photograph

Brian Kelly photograph

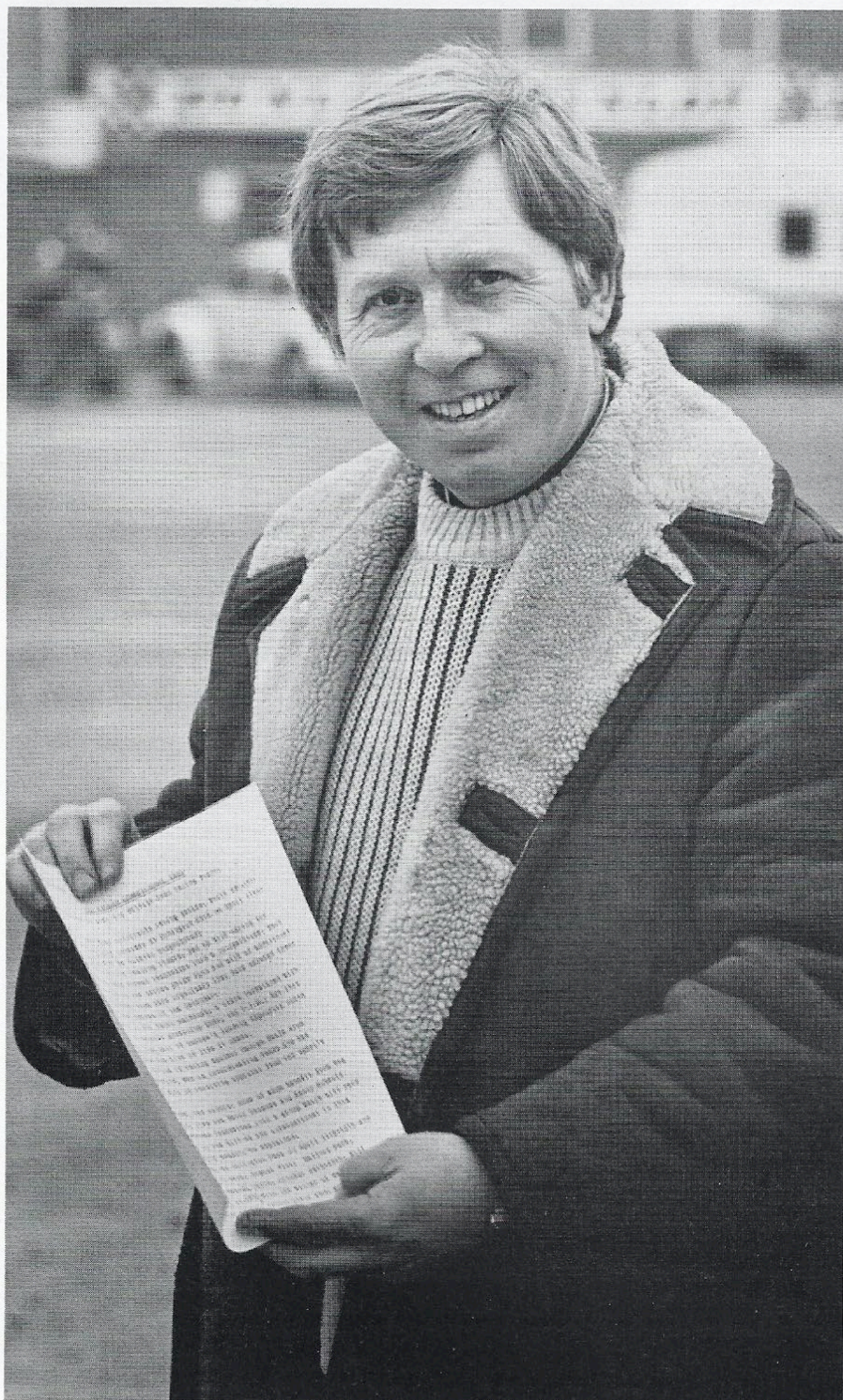
The key to the future?

by Andrew McKinnon, Sports Editor, Motor Cycle News

Donington Park this weekend plays host to the first ever riders' co-operative race. The 350 Riders Championship event represents a unique display of unity from the riders, rarely witnessed in this sport ... as previous episodes have illustrated.

So fed up with racing for poor rewards are the majority of the riders in this £40,000 350cc championship, that they have each contributed £500 towards the massive prize fund and it's here at Donington this weekend that the battle begins in which they will each relieve each other of their money.

Racing sponsor George Beale — pictured below — is the man who masterminded the plan to give everybody an equal opportunity of going home with a fair reward.



Until this season, when the ACU's £20,000 minimum prize fund legislation was introduced, the means of distributing the wealth within the sport, it could be argued, had been somewhat unfair. Start money had become like a cancer, syphoning off the available money to only a few riders, whereas prize money (payment for results) had stood still.

A clear example of this was the prize schedule for the supporting 350cc at the Race of the Year in 1974. First prize was £100 ... in 1980 first prize for the corresponding race was £100!

The lesser lights were banging their heads against a brick wall and the only means open to them to improve their lot was to help themselves!

Enter George Beale, who sowed the seed among the riders. Naturally, there were many cynics in the sport who suggested that getting £500 from hard-up riders would be more difficult than getting blood out of a stone. But that was far from being the case.

Within two weeks of finalising the series, George had 55 cheques for £500. The series goes ahead without a sponsor, such is the strength of the prize fund!

The F.I.M. is trying to get rid of the 350cc class at world championship level — or at least the majority of its delegates are, but with a show like this the end of the road could be a long way off yet.

The 55 men you'll see battling it out for grid positions are desperate to keep their class alive. With trade support dwindling and everyone having to buy his own tyres, the running of twin-cylinder machines is becoming more and more practical.

Experimental year

This is very much an experimental year for this type of co-operative event. If this season proves a success, then in 1982 George promises bigger and better things for his loyal supporters.

Due to the uniqueness of the series, several prospective sponsors fought shy of any involvement with it. They, too, perhaps felt that collecting £500 from over 50 riders was a tall order but George, a chemist from Ibstock, six miles from Donington Park, has spent hour upon hour putting this championship together and now should take credit for one of the most historic chapters in modern day racing.

The scheme gives the riders independence from the race organiser. Whereas normally he would have to spend hours on the telephone trying to get a start money deal with the promoter; he simply has to turn up now and race for the £8000 at stake for each of the five rounds.

Outside Grand Prix racing the rewards for this 350cc championship are unrivalled anywhere in the world.

Brian Kelly photograph

Originally it had been intended to run 10 rounds, but because of the delays in the rubber stamping of the ACU legislation on prize schedules, the series had to be tightened up and put on paper very quickly after the February decision at ACU headquarters.

It was also felt by some sectors of the sport that, had it been a season-long series, it could have created a closed shop and prevented new talent from breaking into international racing in one of the most accessible classes.

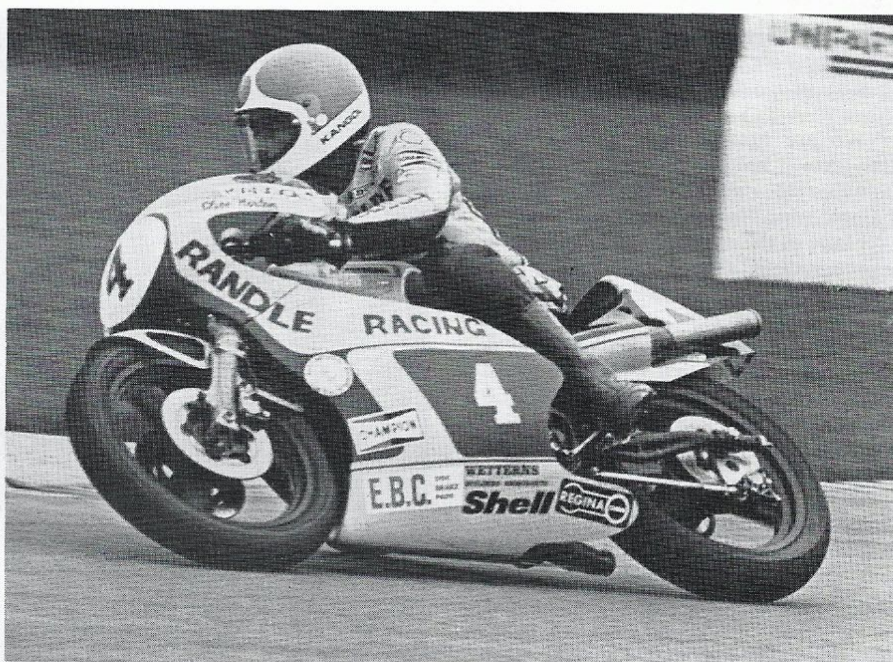
So, by creating a compromise, it was decided to go for five races, still leaving half a dozen international 350cc events completely open but obviously for much less rewards.

The prize fund for the series, £40,000, which is the biggest in Britain this season, comprises a £25,000 contribution from the riders plus £15,000 from those promoters who have agreed to stage a race.

At each round, there will be £8000 to divide between the 55 riders and nobody goes home empty handed. Winner of each race scoops £1200, only £300 less than the Race of the Year which boasts that it is the richest race in Britain each season. Second place carries £900 and third £800 and so on down the very impressive prize schedule.

If a rider fails to qualify for all of the five races he still claims back over half of his original stake.

Not one top 350 rider in this country has failed to grasp this opportunity. Mick Grant, who hasn't ridden 350 machines since his Kawasaki days has decided to go back to this class recognising its lucrativeness. He makes his comeback on a 350 Yamaha at this weekend's meeting and it should be interesting to see how he shapes up against Grand Prix stars Jeff Sayle and Graeme McGregor, along with Charlie Williams, Steve Tonkin, Clive Horton and the rest of Britain's highly competitive 350cc set.



Brian Kelly photograph

Clive Horton is one of Britain's leading 350cc riders.

The series is not restricted to British riders, for here at today's meeting are several Europeans who have jumped at George Beale's opportunity to make big money.

Klaas Hernamdt, Dutch Grand Prix racer is in the line-up along with Peter Looyesteijn, Frenchmen Herve Guilluex, fourth in the 250cc race in Argentina, Pierre Bolle, brother of French star Jacques Bolle and his fellow countryman Frederick Duval.

It's going to be the most competitive series in Britain without a doubt for the simple fact that each rider has a financial stake in each race means he's going to be racing harder than usual and there are 55 competitors going for 36 grid positions here at Donington Park.

Grid sizes will depend on individual circuits. At Mallory Park, for instance, for

the event on the race of the Year bill, only 28 riders can take part in the final and, with almost double that number in the qualifying heats, the heats could well be better than the final itself.

George explained the reason for putting his idea into action: "I wanted to try and wipe out the vast differences in rewards for riders at international race meetings. It's common knowledge that 350 racers were never smiled upon and the mere fact that the class didn't benefit from a season long sponsor made it easier to decide which class to adopt.

"They're trying to ban 350cc racing at World Championship level, but tell me, if 55 riders in this country were prepared to put their money where their mouth is, what is the feeling over Europe as a whole?"



The last time Kenny Roberts (left) and Kork Ballington raced together at Donington was 1978. Here they share the spoils of victory.

Key to the future?

continued

"We are hoping that our show of strength will help save the class which is undoubtedly one of the best world championship classes in existence.

"Many of the men in the 350 field have never benefitted from big start money, if indeed they got any start money at all. But, with this system, they can have a really big pay-day if they turn in a good performance and that's what racing should be all about!

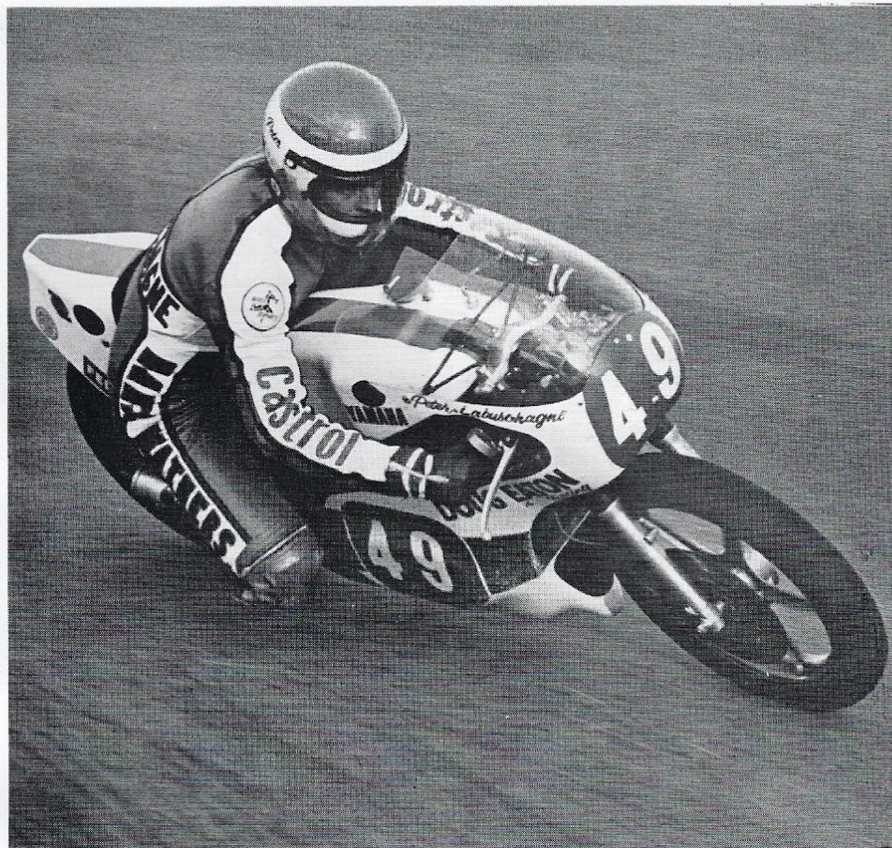
More attractive

"With the ACU's new £20,000 minimum prize fund system, every rider must realise that start money payments must drop, therefore you have to make the payment by results system more attractive and our series will be the richest in this country for just that reason.

"Another big factor in adopting this class is that big bike racing is becoming less and less practical with trade support diminishing. Tyres now for a 750 Yamaha cost £200 per weekend and there are no free tyres this year in the way that contracts with Dunlop have allowed in the past. To blow up a four cylinder engine can cost up to £2000.

"It just makes sense for riders to race in a lucrative class, with twin cylinder machines, which cost half as much to put right if anything goes wrong.

"Many riders seem to be overlooking this. They think there is an endless supply



Brian Kelly photograph

South Africa's Peter Labuschagne is entered for today's first Riders Co-operative Race.

of money from British sponsors, but that is not the case. Superbikes can only be run by riders with hefty backing and more and more sponsors are realising the virtues of twin cylinder racing.

"In drawing up our proposals, we've tried to make the series as attractive a proposition as possible to the rider, not simply parting with £500 without the hope of a return. As our prize list illustrates, even if a rider is so incompetent that he cannot qualify for any of the races, he will recoup at least two-thirds of his initial stake with A.I.R. in expense money!

"At the end of the season we have a guarantee from Mitsui that they will select one of their 1982 team members from the top six finishers in our series and there is also a new 350 Yamaha for the overall winner of the championship.

"The fact that we are now over-subscribed — our initial target was 50 riders — means that we have more money in the kitty than we anticipated. We'll use £25,000 for the round by round fund and save the remainder for an end of season pay-out."

It's a brilliant concept and one which could be adopted by other classes in the years ahead. Riders will have to realise that, as the economy in this country becomes tighter and tighter, they may well have to help themselves in some way to create bigger incentives.

The way in which the 350 riders have got down to generating more cash for themselves is a good example of what can be done without much difficulty. Their racing this season will mean more than in any recent year and it's all down to their own efforts, along with the supervision of George Beale.

It's a crucial test but, if it proves successful, it could well show the way towards big money racing of the future.

Donington Park Racing Association Club

Souvenir Golden Jubilee First Day Cover

1981 marks the 50th Anniversary of the Donington Park Circuit and to commemorate the occasion, the Donington Park Racing Association Club (the independent Supporter's Club) has produced an attractive first day cover, which will be a fitting souvenir of Golden Jubilee year. The specially designed envelope features the 1931 Raleigh and 1981 Suzuki racing machines and the stamps are cancelled by a special pictorial hand-stamp depicting Randy Mamola. Priced at £1.25 each, these covers are on sale today from the DPRAC caravan at McLean's Corner and our mobile caravan in the Paddock. Supplies are strictly limited — so get your cover **today** to avoid disappointment!

Become a Donington supporter!

The Donington Park Racing Association Club (the circuit's independent Supporter's Club) gives active support to this circuit and, in turn, is able to provide a host of benefits for its members for the annual £5 subscription. Joint membership for husband/wife is £8.00 per annum and Junior membership (14 to 18 years) is available at £2.00 per annum. We are now able to accept a limited number of new members for 1981 and would be pleased to give you further details of membership. Simply call in at our Caravan at McLean's Corner or write to our Membership Secretary, Jim Armet, at Hilltop Farm, Castle Donington, Derby.



Brian Kelly photograph

Franco Uncini

by John Brown, Editor, Motorcycle Racing

Undoubtedly good enough to be a works rider but without a contract yet again because there is simply not enough factory raceware around, Italian Franco Uncini is left as the world's top 500cc privateer.

At his first attempt in the 500cc World Championship in 1979, the uncharacteristically quiet Italian finished in fifth place behind the works Yamaha of Kenny Roberts and the factory Suzukis of Virginio Ferrari, Barry Sheene and Wil Hartog.

And last year 25-year-old Franco went one better with his private RG, when he took fourth place to Roberts's Yamaha and the Suzukis of Randy Mamola and Marco Lucchinelli.

Although forced to sit in the wings once again, the man who was only nine points behind third-placed Lucchinelli, and 21 ahead of fifth positioned Graziano Rossi, is not unduly perturbed.

"I have good financial sponsorship for my private effort; it is not as though I am racing at world level without sufficient money," he explained.

This year, too, he has the assurance that, if any special parts do become available from the Suzuki factory during the year, he will be one of two riders to get them. "Both Phillippe Coulon and I have this assurance," he added.

Sponsor Roberto Gallina, the man behind the Italian Suzuki team effort, tried hard to get factory support for Franco this year and although he failed to finalise a contract, he did clear the way for Franco to get a Mark 6 RG.

"Of course, I would be delighted to have the chance for a works ride but, as things stand, I consider I have a very good deal," said Franco, whose team Suzuki Jen will again be run by his father Ennio Uncini.

Consistency has always played a big part in Franco's success, and a lot of credit for this goes to his mechanics Mario Ciauberlini and Alberto Guzoini.

"I certainly owed a lot to them for my fifth place in 1979," said Franco. "I scored points in eight of the 12 rounds in the championship."

Grand Prix debut

Franco's entry into the 500cc class came after a highly successful introduction to Grand Prix racing in the 250 and 350cc classes. After starting racing as a junior with a Laverda in 1974, Franco was soon in Grand Prix action making his debut at the Austrian GP in 1976.

"That was a real eye opener," he recalls. "Until then I did not realise just how hard Grand Prix riders have to race."

That first year with private 250 and 350cc Yamahas was impressive enough to attract the attention of Harley Davidson. He also impressed Harley works rider Walter Villa and, with his backing, found himself in the team for 1977.

The year with the Harley team did a lot to establish the self confidence that is now very evident in Franco, but ironically his performance as a team member proved to be *too* successful, and he was back in the private ranks again in 1978.

"I was supposed to have finished behind Walter but, in the end, I was in front of him in the 250cc championship that he was out to retain," he said.

"Actually, I was not too concerned because I already knew that the Harley team was to be disbanded and a 1978 contract would have been of little value."

Franco's 1978 season started back on 250 and 350cc Yamahas provided by Venemoto boss, Venezuelan Andreas Ipolito but, a mediocre season, this partnership came to an end before the season was out and Franco moved up to

Franco Uncini

continued

the 500cc class with a Suzuki supplied by Belgian Serge Zago.

This partnership was to have gone forward for a full season in 1979 but a disagreement between Franco and Zerge soon developed.

"Zerge wanted the bikes to work on them in Belgium, but I wanted to have them in Italy," he explained.

It was then that his father stepped in and they decided to form their own team. "That possibly was the best move I made," said Franco.

He certainly could be right because in that first year he took third place in the Yugoslavian and fourth in the French GPs and, thanks to mechanic Mario, was about the only Suzuki rider not to be plagued with broken crankshafts.

Last season, the set-up remained and the smooth, fast-riding Franco continued to improve.

Second place before his home crowd at Misano in the Italian GP was the highlight of the season that also included third places in the Dutch TT and Finnish GP.

"I was well pleased," said Franco. "It really is a tough job to beat the works machines, even with the best private bike. It certainly was great to be second to Roberts on my home ground, it would be the happiest day of my life if I could take the number one place on the winners rostrum in front of a home crowd."

Certainly, when you look at the

strength of the works competition in this year's 500cc World Championship, it seems that Franco is going to be hard pushed to equal the fine final placings of the past two years.

But, with the backing of the influential Roberto Gallina, there could be the chance of one or two outings on factory Suzukis.

"There is no doubt that Franco is the number one to take over a works bike if one is available," said Roberto. "He is fine rider and I wish I could have had him as well as Lucchinelli in Team Suzuki Olio Fiat this year."

Rare visitor

Franco is a rare visitor to England, as he does not seem to have attracted the attention of our organisers.

With the exception of the British GP at Silverstone, Franco has raced only once before at a British International.

That was here at Donington Park back in September 1979, when he was a member of the Italian team contesting the AGV Nations Cup event.

"That was not a happy time for me," smiles Franco. "The bikes for Rossi, Lucchinelli and I did not arrive and we had to race Yamahas borrowed from Bill Smith. I was not used to the machine, and my results were disappointing. I certainly hope to make amends this time."

Franco's GP visits have been impressive if not sensational.

He first raced at Silverstone in 1977 when, as a member of the Harley team, he ignored his instructions and finished

ahead of Villa in the 250cc race.

In fact, the eight points he collected for fourth place promoted him to second in the championship, two points ahead of Villa, who could only manage ninth place and two points on that occasion.

He came back to Silverstone in 1979, when he took his private Suzuki to a hard fought seventh place, and last August when, despite a crash in practice, he took sixth place again on his private RG, of course.

Although there is no motor cycle racing history attached to the Uncini family, Franco has been a natural on two wheels since he took his first careful ride at the age of 14. He progressed to the big road bikes quickly, and it is the big bikes that he still likes the best. "I was getting a bit quick on the roads and went racing when my now mechanic Mario told me it was dangerous for me to be a road rider," he smiled.

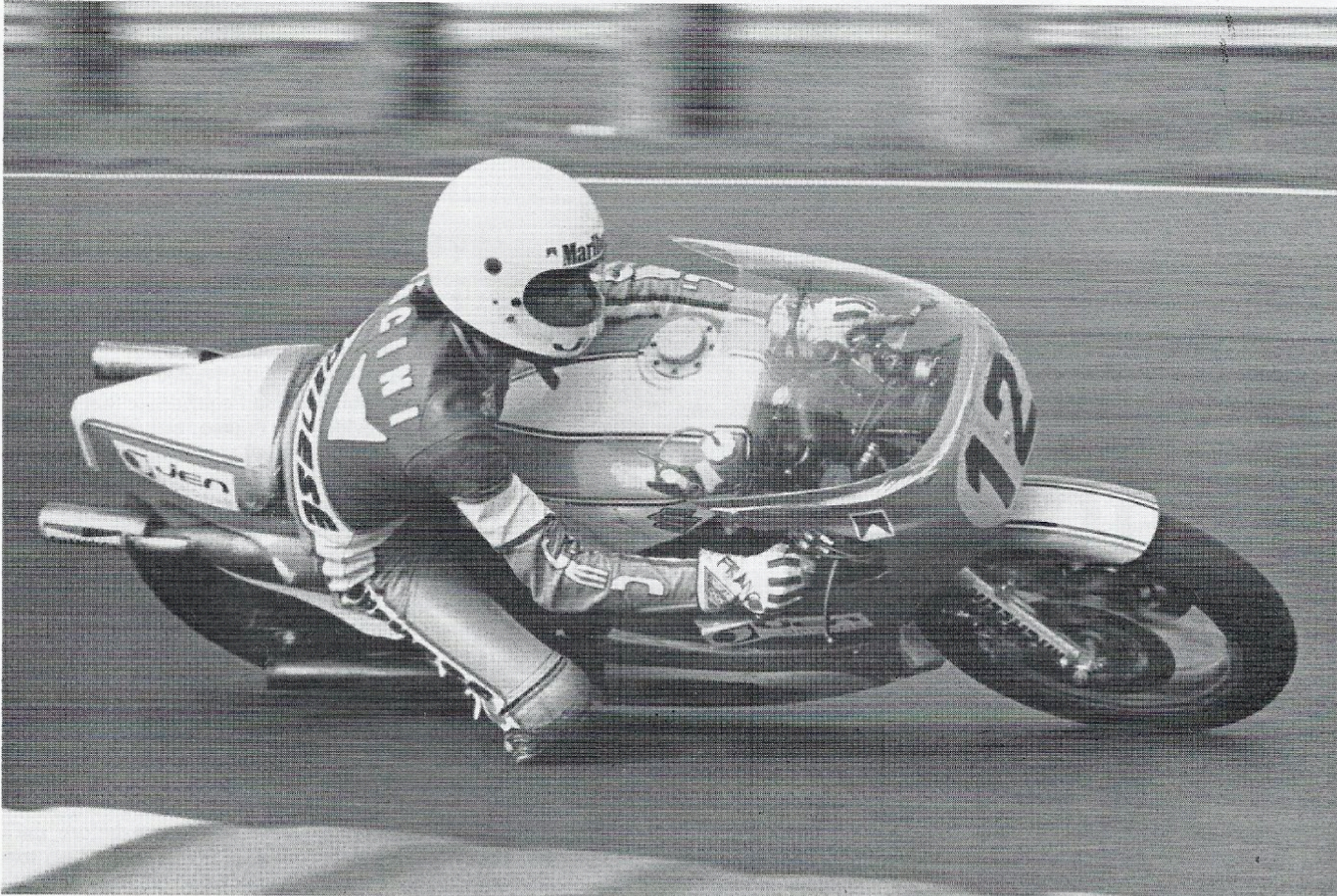
On the track, Franco does not have a single rider he considers to be his main opposition.

"Any rider with a factory bike must obviously be a threat," he said. "But there is no one I fear the most. Mamola is a really fast, hard rider and of course Roberts and Sheene are very skilful."

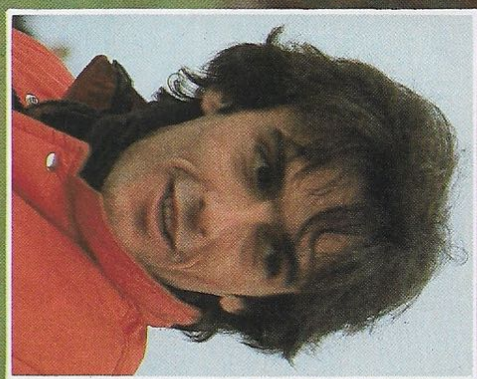
Franco Uncini, an Italian of the non-hand-waving over excitable variety, takes every race as a new challenge.

"I am looking forward to racing here at Donington very much in an ordinary international," he said. "It will give me the chance to race against British riders I have never met before."

Uncini — also pictured in colour opposite — took his private Suzuki to seventh place in the 1979 Silverstone Grand Prix.

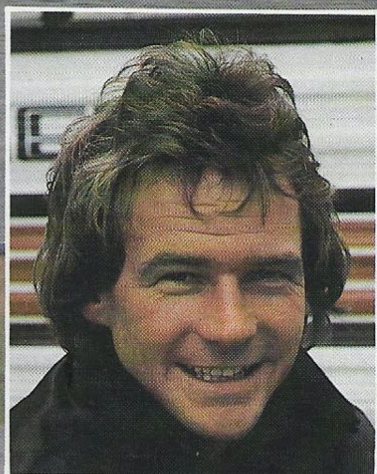


Brian Kelly photograph

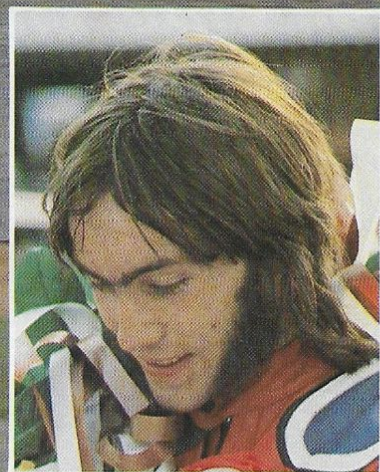


Jock Taylor and
Benga Johansson





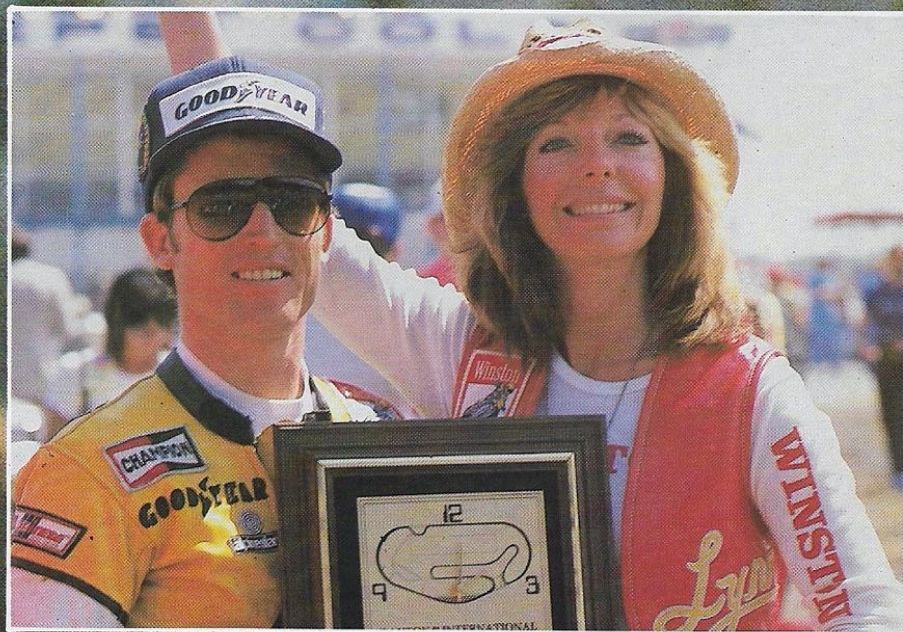
Barry Sheene



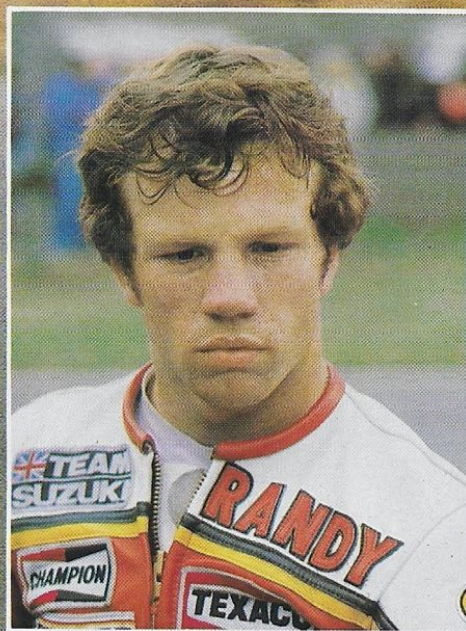
Ron Haslam



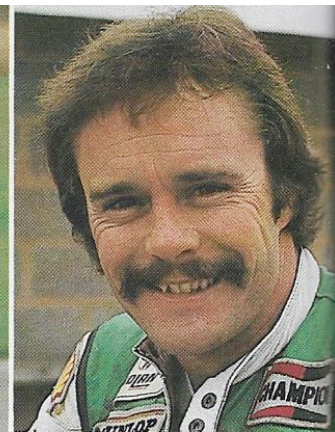




Kenny Roberts and Miss Winston



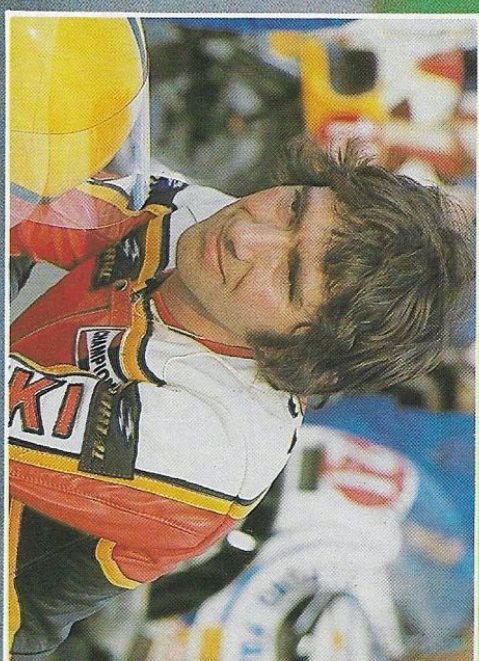
Randy Mamola



Kork Ballington

Graeme Crosby





Joey Dunlop



PROFILE 2: TREVOR IRESON & CLIVE POLLINGTON

In the second of our profiles, Andrew McKinnon focuses on sidecar pair, Trevor Ireson and Clive Pollington, pictured above in action.

There are those personalities within the sport who cause a sensation by hitting the headlines at a very early age and there are those who elect to take the longer route to the top. Two such names are Trevor Ireson and passenger Clive Pollington.

Last year was their first serious attempt at world championship racing, and they didn't come into the reckoning until round four at Zolder in Belgium.

From then on they were consistent points scorers, finishing 10th overall in a series in which they only had three points-scoring outings to count towards the final classification.

After their encouraging start in Belgium, they travelled to Czechoslovakia and finished seventh and then contested the final round at the Nürburgring, crossing the line fourth, with plenty to look forward to in 1981.

At 35, Trevor is no spring chicken and Clive Pollington, more than 10 years his driver's senior, is also long in the tooth by any standards in the racing game. But it is perhaps ironic that this year they share as much potential as virtually every other British representative in three-wheeler world championship racing!

Ireson, a renowned sidecar chassis constructor, and his partner, a fire safety instructor at Stanstead Airport in Essex desperately want to do well during the coming year's Grand Prix season, continuing a growing trend among British crews abroad.

Joe Henderson, a cattle dealer from Didcot, backs them to the hilt with a sponsorship programme, which peaks each year in the Isle of Man, where Trevor will return for the 12th time this year, trying to add to his impressive list of successes.

But this year, the World Championship scene will occupy a larger chunk of their programme than usual. They have been and surveyed the talent and know they can do well.

Already they have tasted success on the domestic scene, with national victories here at Donington two weeks ago and at Mallory Park — the first meeting of the year.

This weekend, Ireson must rank as one of world champion Jock Taylor's strongest rivals with a hefty involvement in the early season action.

His Swindon workshops have been a hive of industry during the winter months preparing sidecar chassis for many of his track rivals — in addition to his own — and his own rolling stock is not restricted to just one outfit, as is the case with the majority of the other names on the grid at this weekend's meeting.

So carefully planned and serious is his Isle of Man challenge each year that he builds a machine specifically for that event. A little more weight and stability must be incorporated in the TT design to ensure the necessary handling qualities for the 37¾-mile course.

Then there is the short circuit outfit with which he has dominated the early nationals. Ireson is a shy member of the paddock

community — not as outgoing and chatty as his veteran passenger. He prefers simply to get on with the job in hand and get those winner's laurels around his neck.

But his reticence at the race track does not mean he does not enjoy respect and popularity among his fellow competitors. The very nature of his day to day business providing rivals with tackle means that drivers come and go at Swindon all the time.

During 1981, he played host to those two amazing Australasian characters Peter Campbell and Dick Goodwin for long periods when they were not on the road, providing welding facilities whenever Peter needed to graft another section of his metal crutches to his frame!

Ireson's first real taste of world cham-

pionship racing came his way almost by chance.

It wasn't until the rest of the British contingent at Zolder had got themselves established in the paddock that they realised that any sidecar pair who cared to practice would be considered for the grid.

So a speedy telephone call to Swindon soon had Trevor and Clive on the Channel ferry and looking forward to those three points which were to give them that vital foot in the door.

The Isle of Man TT and a high place in the World Championship are the priorities for 1981, but more immediately they want to finish ahead of Jock Taylor here at Donington, so keep your eyes on that ever-maturing partnership!



Brian Kelly photograph

Paddock chatter

Donington Park has been living up to its reputation as the heart of British motor sport. A week ago the circuit was the venue for a host of major events.

First, **Chas Mortimer Racing School** ran a highly successful session catering for the general public and the press, and hard on the heels of that busy programme came a lengthy session to run in the 25 machines to be used in the Yamaha Pro Am series which starts today.

In between the Pro Am competitors and friends riding the bikes round at a sedate rate, **Barry Sheene** and **Steve Parrish**, part of Team Mitsui seized the opportunity for some serious practice.

Next day, members of the Suzuki GB squad were out on the circuit, including **Randy Mamola** and **Graeme Crosby**.

A day later, Suzuki GB were back with all their racing squad for a full scale press conference in Red Gate Lodge, followed by a practice session.

Finally, the **Granby Motors** and **George Beales** had an informal get together for trade and press to unveil their teams for '81.

No wonder characters like Champion Spark Plug's **Vince French** were asking if Redgate would like to quote him for bed and breakfast!

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

The recent **CB Rally** at Donington was an unqualified success. An estimated crowd of 15,000 turned up for the day's entertainment and a second one is planned for August.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

John Newbold returns to Donington this weekend, once again a fully fledged member of the Suzuki GB Racing Team. John, from Jackdale, Notts was of course with Suzuki earlier in his career riding both 500 and 750cc two strokes. But how many fans realize that was as long ago as 1976?

This time John will be giving the four stroke Suzukis an outing.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Paul Harris, the cheerful young Grays, Essex, racer was so impressed with his running-in session with the RD LC 350cc Yamaha at Donington in preparation for the Pro Am series starting this Saturday that he is seriously thinking of buying one for the road.

A former 'Star of Tomorrow' at Brands Hatch, Paul's weektime work is motor cycle messenger and he wants to swap his present RD400 for the new 350.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Converted buses are now fairly commonplace in the paddocks around the world, but journalist **Peter Clifford** has taken the idea a stage further.

He and his girl friend **Hazel** have moved out of their home at Epsom to live and travel in their bus. Peter, who is technical editor with *Motor Cycle Weekly*, also edits *Motocourse*.

Peter will be seen in racing action this weekend when he makes a guest journalist appearance in the Pro Am race.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

The **Racing 50** club, one of Britain's busiest race organisers will break new ground on Monday May 4 when they stage their Concord Trophy club meeting here at Donington.

If any spectators have yet to watch a club road race meeting, then the Racing 50 club's event is highly recommended. Great racing and slick organisation combine to make it a great day out.



A welcome visitor to the John Player National meeting on March 29 was actor **Martin Shaw** — pictured above with attractive companion — who plays the part of Doyle in the hit ITV programme 'The Professionals'.

Martin, who is likely to be a regular visitor to Donington this season, is a road racing enthusiast, and a motor cyclist. He will be taking delivery shortly of a new Honda, to replace his present BMW.

John Colley photograph

Maurice Knight, the Suzuki GB director who has been in charge of their Racing Team since it began 11 years ago is currently reducing his work load, and journeys to Beddington Lane just three days a week.

Unconfirmed rumours suggest that **John Norman**, the former Kawasaki UK racing boss, now in charge of Suzukis car division could be the man to replace Mr Knight, if and when he steps down.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

August will be quite a month for British road racing enthusiasts. As well as the **50th Anniversary John Player Donington International**, with its star studded line-up, there will be a major photo exhibition for both professional and amateurs here at Donington. Watch the press for details.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

If you fancy a chance to ride round Donington Park, then drop a line to **Chas Mortimer** who

will be running his new Racing School here over the coming season.

Bikes, leathers, helmet, boots and gloves all provided in the cost, and in addition to Chas other top class names like **Clive Horton**, **Keith Huewen** and **Mick Grant** will be providing tuition.

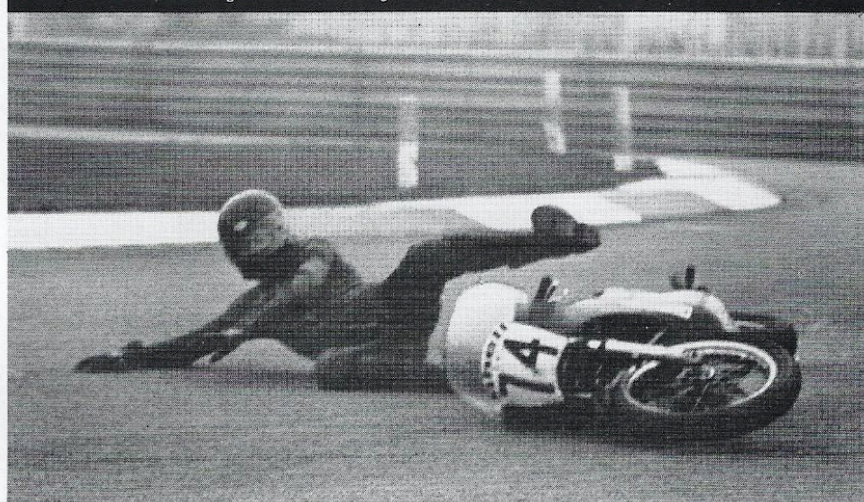
Chas intends to keep each class to workable limits, so if you want to have a go, write now, before the School is full. Details from Chas at Kingston Lodge, Whilton Locks, near Daventry, Northants.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Donington Park will stage the **John Player European Championship** round in July. This new competition is designed to help Grand Prix hopefuls from around Europe break into the big time.

The British round of the five meeting series is certain to produce some new stars, and the meeting will also include a big name Superbike event.

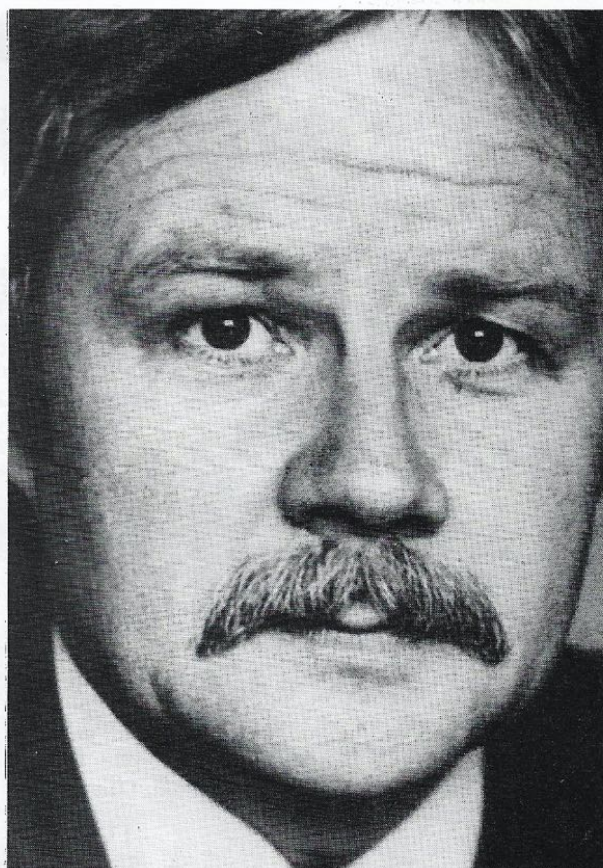
Accident of the week corner! This hapless fellow is **Richard Peers-Jones**, who came unattached from Yamaha during the first meeting of the season, the John Player Nationals in March.



John Colley photograph

DAILY Mirror

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**BRITAIN'S BEST INFORMED
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Racing with a difference

Britain's brightest, newest and potentially most absorbing 'race series with a difference' is launched at Donington Park this weekend.

It's the Yamaha RD LC Pro-Am Series, which brings together twenty of Britain's most promising youngsters in an eight-round championship. They will ride twenty bikes, identical to the ones that you and I can buy at any Yamaha dealer.

But this is more than just another one-make championship.

The bikes are all the new, water

cooled RD LC 350s. But instead of being prepared and modified by riders or dealers, the machines will be maintained, transported and supervised throughout by Mitsui.

Before each round, the competitors will draw number ignition keys to see which bike they will ride that day, to make doubly sure that no single rider has a better than average bike.

The riders are all talented youngsters aged 24 or under. All have been invited to ride in the series and, with more than £1000 prize money in

every race, and a first prize per meeting of £500 the invitations have been gratefully accepted.

With no machinery to buy, no running costs involved and at least £25 expenses to every rider at every meeting, it's a big bonus for the very men the sport is looking to for the future.

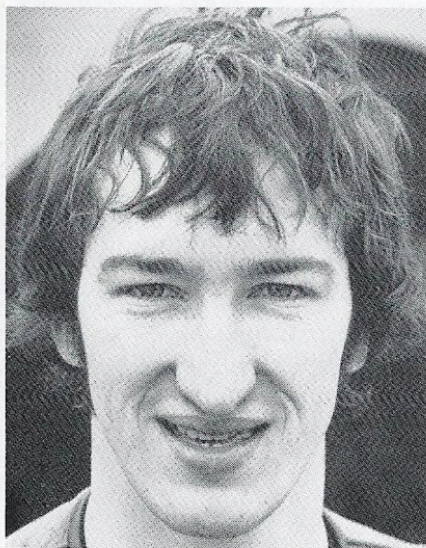
The riders are split into two groups. The Pros, experienced competitors with proven international experience, and the Ams, newcomers to the big league, but all highly successful in their club racing careers.

The Line up

The Ams

0

Kevin Clementson (21), Romford
Winner of the 1980 250cc Marlboro Clubmans Championship.



Brian Kelly photograph

1

Martin Taylor (22), Coventry (above)
First in the 1980 1000cc Marlboro Clubmans Championship, and winner of last year's Mallory Park 1000cc title.

2

Gary Padget (20), Batley
Winner of the 500cc Marlboro Clubmans Championship, and the 250cc Newcomers Manx Grand Prix. 1980 Pinhard Prize winner.

3

Nigel Corby (24), Leatherhead
350cc BMCRC Champion in 1980, and BEMSEE 500cc Production title holder in 1979.

4

Kevin Mitchell (20), Preston
Runner-up in 250cc Marlboro Clubmans Championship in 1979 and '80. Fourth in the Avon/Bike Championship in '79.

5

Kim Barker (18), Lincoln
Second in the 125cc Marlboro Clubmans Championship and Cadwell Park Newcomer award winner.

6

Simon Beaumont (23), Mirfield
Marlboro Clubmans 350cc Champion in 1980.

7

Tom Drury (21), Chesterfield
Marlboro Clubmans 'Man of the Series'. Winner of 99 races in 1980.

8

Nichol Robb (21), Stockport
Winner of the Kawasaki 400 Series last season.

9

Douglas Taylor (21), Edinburgh
Started racing in vintage events before switching to TZ Yamaha. Finished joint first in 350cc Scottish Championship last year.

The Pros

10

Simon Buckmaster (20), Brookmans Park, Herts
BMCRC 1300cc Production champion in 1980, and winner of 21 races last season. Followed in father Ken's footsteps by racing Triumphs in his early days, now promising rider in 250 and 350cc international events. Started racing in '77.

11

Steve Mackin (23), Crowthorne, Berks
Won Novice of the Year award in the 1977 125cc Yamaha championship, and a year later won the Southern 67 250cc title. Raced internationally last season.

12

Gary Lingham (23), London
Star pupil at Brands Racing School in '78, was third in the Bel-Ray Motocourse championship the following season. Travelled the GP trail in '80, after taking 3rd in controversial 500cc race at Belgian GP in '79.

13

Chris Guy (22), Kingsbridge, Devon
Member of British team in last year's Transatlantic Trophy Match Races. Outright lap record holder at Cadwell Park and Snetterton. Started racing in 1978.

14

Alex Bedford (20), Burton-on-Trent
Started racing in '77, but then had to stop after 3 races after breaking leg in street accident. With compensation bought Honda. Successful season last year on Honda till a crash at British GP at Silverstone.

15

Graham Atha (23), Armthorpe, Yorks
Eboracum Club Champion in 75, 76 and 77. Emerged as one of Britain's up-and-comers at the end of '79, has had international success at Brands and Mallory.

16

Peter Wild (21), Chesterfield, Derbys
ACU 125cc Clubmans champion in '78, and third in both 250 and 350cc ACU Star last year. Started racing in '77 and made promising international debut last season.

17

Paul Harris (22), Grays, Essex
Newmarket 250cc championship and runner up BMCRC 250 series in 1979. Winner of 'Stars of Tomorrow' meeting at Brands same year. International debut in '80.

18

Dave Dean (22), Wigan, Lancs
Marlboro Man of the Series in '79, and Mitsui backed rider in past season. Stylish and safe Dave has still to reach the limit of his potential.

19

Phil Henderson (24), Royston, Yorkshire
Started racing career on Production machines, but since those early days has quickly established himself as one of Britain's brightest prospects on all sizes of machines.

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Denny Hulme's McLaren M7A · Jack Brabham's Repco Brabhams & Cooper-Climax T51
Jim Clark's Lotus 25 & Lotus 33 · Dan Gurney's Porsche 804 & Eagle T2G · Stirling Moss' Lotus 18 & Ferguson P99
Peter Collins' works Maserati 250F · Alberto Ascari's Ferrari 500 · Tazio Nuvolari's Maserati 8CM
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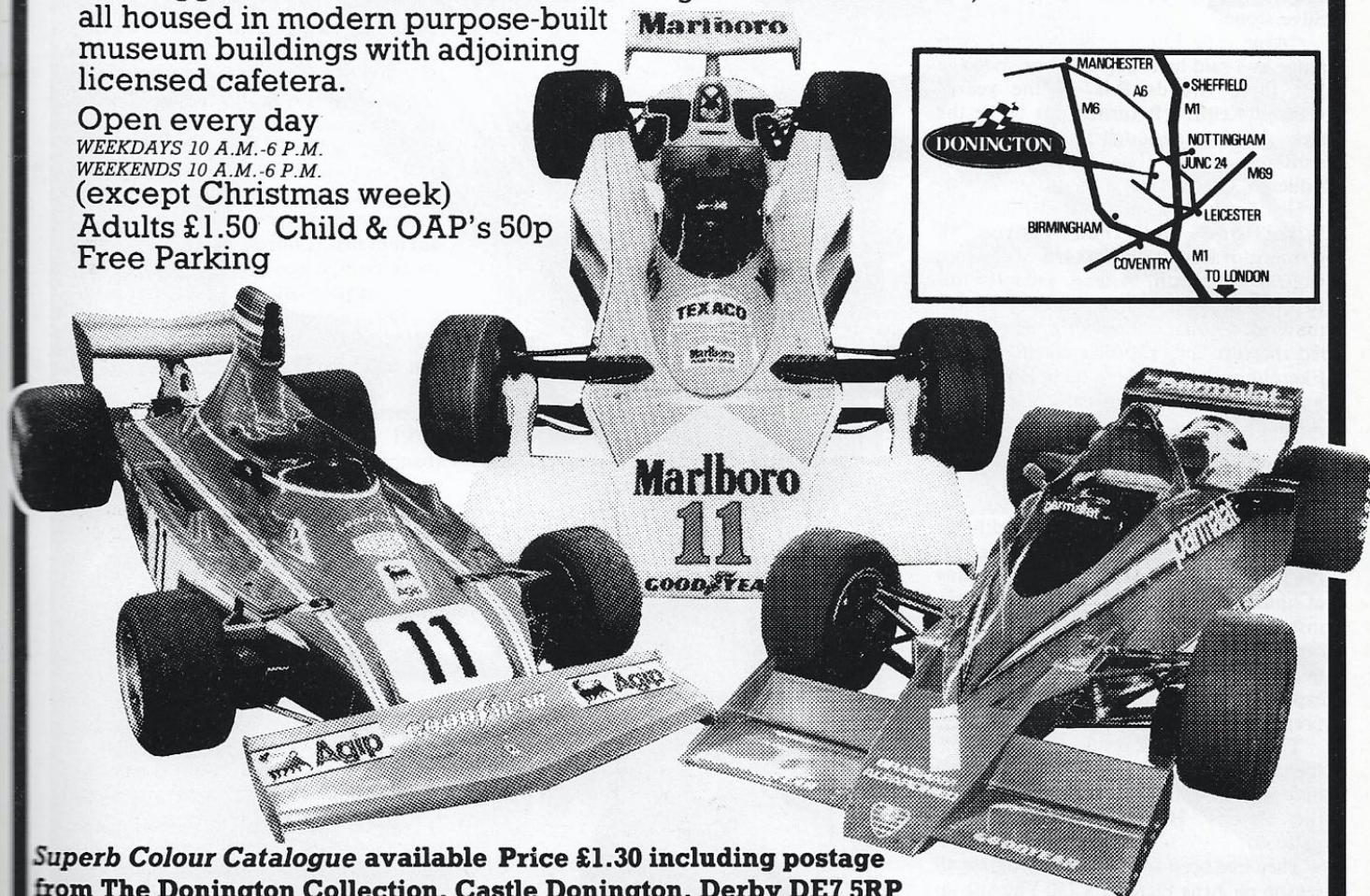
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Keith Huewen

by Nick Harris, Sports Editor, Motor Cycle Weekly

Keith Huewen comes to the line this afternoon, walking the perilous tightrope between a ride in a full Grand Prix works team and a privateer's role in British international racing.

The 24-year-old professional rider from Wellingborough in Northamptonshire, has been given a 1981 RG 500 Production machine by Suzuki to race this season. If he produces the goods, a full works ride in 1982 must be on the cards for the former British Champion.

If he does not get the results, he knows better than anybody else that his big chance to break into the big time will have probably disappeared for ever. So a demanding season is ahead for the rider, who many experts feel could adjust to the rigours of Grand Prix racing after only a short but spectacular five-year career in Britain.

So far, with careful planning and thoughtful guidance by his sponsor Arne Fletcher, Keith's career has progressed smoothly step by step, and there seems no reason at all why he will not be able to conquer that biggest and most demanding step into a full Grand Prix racer during the next 12 months.

He sampled the delights of Grand Prix racing towards the end of last year, when the ever forward-looking Arne Fletcher decided it was time for the next step in his career and bought him a 350 Yamaha just a week before the British Grand Prix at Silverstone.

"Arne rang just a week before Silverstone and said he thought I should do the last three Grands Prix of the year," recalled Keith. "It turned out to be the right decision, although I stammered and stuttered at the time because I'd not ridden a 350 for such a long time."

He finished a magnificent sixth at Silverstone and then retired in Czechoslovakia on the last lap of the race while lying eighth. A week later, on his first trip to the infamous Nürburgring for the West German Grand Prix, he actually led the race into the first corner — Jon Ekerold and Toni Mang included — and was happy to settle for tenth place at the finish.

Tough arena

He returned home delighted with his performances, and carrying a message for the many British riders who prefer to stay at home to pick up some lucrative money instead of changing their arm in the tough arena of Grand Prix racing: "You have got to get organised and keep calm," he explained. "Too many of them aren't prepared to give 100 per cent."

Those Grand Prix results were probably the nudge Suzuki required to offer Keith a bike for the final meeting of the season, the Brands Hatch Powerbike International.

They had been following his progress all season on Arne Fletcher's 750 Yamaha on which he finished Britain's highest scorer in the Transatlantic Trophy series and won the 750 race on his first appearance at the North West 200 race in Ireland. Also

he was third in the Duckhams Superbike Championship behind Dave Potter and Roger Marshall.

Suzuki, keen to appreciate the value of a British rider in their squad, which contained American Randy Mamola and New Zealander Graeme Crosby, offered him a one-off ride on the ex-Barry Sheene RG500 1979 machine.

Typically, Keith, who gave up his own automatic transmission business to become a full time rider after winning the 1979 British Championship, did not let it go to his head and rode sensibly and safety although he was brought down by another rider's mistake.

He finished fifth in the Duckhams Superbike race, won his heat in the Shell Oil 500 and was fifth in the final. In the main event, the Gauloises Powerbike International, he was dicing for second place when he was brought down by a crashed rider.

"I was happy with my performances at Brands," he recalled. "I would have been a lot happier if I'd not been brought down by Kevin Wretton in the Gauloises Powerbike race because I think I could have finished second."

"I tried my best, but I was determined not to throw the bike through the hedge, especially as I'd only had 20 laps of wet practice just three days before the race."

Suzuki were also pleased with his performance and wanted to offer him a deal. However, they had sponsorship problems of their own and kept him on waiting. He even tested one of their Formula 1 machines, although he was not too keen



Brian Kelly photograph

to ride one in just British Internationals with his sights set firmly on the Grand Prix scene.

In the end, they came up with the 1981 RG500 which he will use in addition to his 350 Yamaha in Grands Prix and British Internationals. His Suzuki ride will mean his career has almost turned full circle, because he started racing five years ago on a Suzuki 500 Production twin.

"Just add a couple of cylinders and you have got the RG500 I will be racing this year," joked Keith.

"I just started for a laugh with a crowd of lads, but I gave up at the end of the year and went back to road riding ... and into the red with my bank balance."

He was soon back, however, perhaps with a bank balance in the black, and returned to the fray half way through 1977 on a TDA 350 Yamaha.

"I remember finishing last in my first national at Snetterton, but I was beginning to enjoy it," he recalled. "At the end of the year I went to Arne Fletcher of Len Manchester Motorcycles and bought a brand new Yamaha."

Five championships

By the end of the 1978 season, he'd clinched five club championships on the machine, and was keen to break into national and international racing. The canny Arne Fletcher had also been keeping a close eye on him since selling the bike.

"Just before the Race of Aces at Snetterton, Arne, who is pretty sharp and had been watching me all season, lent me his three-cylinder 500 Yamaha, but with the warning it was for one race only."

He was lying seventh when the engine seized, but Arne was suitably impressed and, despite his dire warning, lent him the bike for the Bill Ivy Trophy meeting at Cadwell, where he finished fourth.

The new partnership was born and he finished the year by coming third in his first ride on Arne's 750 Yamaha at the Croft Christmas meeting.

The scene was set for a serious attempt at the British Championship in 1979. Things did not work out as planned, however, and Keith was confronted with what he regards as the biggest test of his short career.

"I crashed at the King of Brands meeting and was taken to hospital for the first time in my life," he recalled.

"I suffered chest injuries and had internal bleeding, which might not sound too serious, but I did not like hospitals and felt allergic to them. How I reacted and came out of it was definitely the biggest crisis of my career."

As soon as he was released he was back in action and rode at a National meeting at Snetterton. He was over his big test. I'd got through it alright. If anything, when I've fallen off since, I've gone even better the next time I've ridden."

He finished the season by clinching the British Championship at the final round at Carnaby and riding for the British team in the AGV Nations Cup.

Even at that early stage of his career, Suzuki were interested in giving him a machine but, on reflection, Keith realises that he was not ready for a works ride although he did talk to them at the end of the season.

"Suzuki spoke to me at the end of 1979 with a view to my competing in British Internationals for them", he revealed. I would have liked to have thought I was ready but, on hindsight, I was not and my career could have been wrecked.

"Now I'm much more prepared to ride with my head instead of my right hand. It's not my style to win hairy races."

Obviously, it was worth waiting a year because today he sits astride a works Suzuki. He could not have asked for a better foretaste of the battles that lie ahead as he lines up with World

Champion Kenny Roberts and Barry Sheene on the works Yamahas, team-mate Randy Mamola on the 1981 RG 500 Suzuki, Kork Ballington riding the factory Kawasaki and Italian Franco Uncini on the best non-works 500 Suzuki in the world. He also races his 350 Yamaha in the new George Beale-inspired Rider's Championship, but it's up against the works 500 machines that Keith will be gaining the experience he hopes will eventually take him right to the top.*

If he shows the same progress he has displayed in these opening five years there is no reason why he can't get there. This afternoon should be a real pointer to which way he is going to walk on that perilous tightrope. To Grand Prix fame or simply to be just one of the many stars in British International racing?

Keith Huewen recently tested his new Suzuki at Donington.



Brian Kelly photograph

Factory confrontation

by Brendan Quirk, *Motor Cycle Weekly*

This year, as was the case last year, the Formula 1 class looks like providing a platform for some of the most exciting racing in the 1981 calendar, especially here at Donington.

Last year, it came down to a battle for the Forward Trust/*Motor Cycle Weekly* British Championship, between two factories, Honda and Suzuki. this year a third 'factory' has entered the fray, 'Moriwaki Kawasaki.

Mick Grant, riding a Honda for the Japanese factory took the title last year, with very good early season form. His form — and machinery troubles in the Suzuki camp — allowed Mick to take the title despite a last minute devastating rampage by Graeme Crosby on his Formula 1 Suzuki.

Towards the end of last year, Crosby won the last five races in the series but Grant's early season form allowed the Honda camp to retain the title by the slimmest of margins, 3 points.

Possible thorn in the side of Honda and Suzuki could be Chris Guy on a Kawasaki.



Looking back on last year, it is hard to imagine that Crosby could start this Donington round as anything but the favourite. His Suzuki was slightly more powerful than the Hondas by the end of last year, once his mechanics got their troubles sorted out, and with that base to build on his 1981 bike should be super competitive.

On the other hand Honda, the world's largest manufacturer of motor cycles, are not ones to let the grass grow under their feet. They had ample warnings towards the end of last year that the flying Crosby would give their riders a hard time in 1981 and they knew then that better bikes were crucial to their attempts to retain their title.

So it is here, at Donington, that the first real comparison can be made between the Hondas and the Suzukis. Although this is the second round, the first round was held on a much tighter and slower circuit where the Formula 1 bikes never really get into their stride. Here at Donington, with the long straights and fast corners, both the machines and riders will be tested to the full.

On works Suzukis we will see **Graeme Crosby**, the New Zealander who started racing life on Kawasaki streetbikes in both New Zealand and Australia. He is arguably the best big four-stroke rider in the world today and there is a good chance his natural talent will shine here.

Joining Crosby on the F1 bikes will be **John Newbold**, rejoining the Suzuki team. John previously raced 750 and 500 two strokes for Suzuki GB but decided he had a better future racing for himself.

Front runners

However Suzuki's latest approach has lured him back into the team and he will be Graeme Crosby's back up man. But don't be surprised if he is right up there with the front runners.

John rode an F1 Suzuki last year sponsored by Appleby Glade and fitted with a David Dixon Racing supplied Yoshimura Suzuki engine so he is no stranger to either Formula 1 — he finished eighth in the series last year — or Suzuki powered bikes.

Mainstay of the Honda attack this year will be '**Rocket**' **Ron Haslam**. Despite winning the title last year, Mick Grant was dropped from the Honda team, along with, initially, Alex George.

This left Haslam, a member last year, and new signing Irishman, **Joey Dunlop**, to try and head off Crosby on the big four strokes.

Ron Haslam is another seasoned rider, no stranger to the 1000 cc four cylinder machines. Because he was riding to team orders last year he did not do as well as he

Brian Kelly photograph

could have. By giving as much support as he did to Mick Grant, ahead on points, Ron had to take minor placings and finished the year fourth of the championship points ladder.

But, as he has already proved here at Donington, he is in fine form this year. The Honda works bikes you see here today have only recently arrived from the Japanese factory and Ron's first outing at Donington was on modified 1980 bikes. Last year's machinery proved not to be a handicap and by choosing the right tyres and riding hard, Ron won the John Player Grand National Challenge race, the first in a series promoted by John Player and Donington.

Dunlop will be Haslam's back up man, although he was hired principally for his proven ability on road circuits. Despite winning the British championship, Honda could not manage to take the coveted World Formula 1 championship, run over the Isle of Man TT course and the Dunrod road circuit in Ulster.

But, on both those circuits, Dunlop has already proved he is an ace. So if Honda plans go according to schedule it should be Dunlop with wins on the road circuits and Haslam with wins on the short circuits.

There are two things, however, which may well upset both Suzuki and Honda plans: a pair of Moriwaki Kawasakis.

Seasoned British rider, **Roger Marshall**, former British Champion, will be on one of the new bikes. Last year he rode a Granby Motors F1 Honda into third place in the championship, the highest placed

privateer. In fact he won the first round, got two seconds, a third and a few minor placings.

The new Moriwakis are based on the new Kawasaki Z1000J road bike which in a recent *Motor Cycle Weekly* road test turned in a standing quarter time of 11.74s and a top speed of 138 mph, one of the fastest 1000 cc road bikes on the road.

Last year, several private riders campaigned Kawasaki F1 machines but they were all based on the elderly Z1 or Z900 engine, and were considerably down on power. This year could be the Kawasaki turning point in F1 racing.

Thorn in the side

On the second Moriwaki will be Australian Castrol Six Hour ace, **Wayne Gardner**. As well as his production racing exploits 'Down Under' Gardner had a tremendous ride in his first ever 200 mile race at Daytona. In his first attempt at mixing it with the 'Big Boys' he finished a creditable tenth, proving he will be among those up front in this race.

And another possible thorn in the side of Honda and Suzuki could well be young **Chris Guy** on a Gordon Pantall Kawasaki. He rode a Geoff Brett F1 Honda last year with some success though some bad luck meant he finished only eleventh.

This year, concentrating only on the four stroke Kawasakis, Guy could well get his act together early in the season. Watch out for the 21-year-old racer in the white leathers.

Other riders who could well upset the best laid plans include **Trevor Nation** on his Suzuki. His form in the early season races has been good and he will be looking to better his ninth in last year's championship.

Asa Moyce, 13th last year on the Oxford Fairings F1 Kawasaki, is in two minds which bike he will ride this year. He could well appear on last year's machine or he may ride the P.I.P. Cobra Martin Kawasaki though he was having trouble getting accustomed to the very wide frame on the two or three occasions he rode the new bike earlier this year.

Doubt hangs over the appearance of some of last year's high finishers. **Graeme McGregor** finished sixth on another Granby Motors Honda though whether he will be riding one this year is doubtful. The same applies to **Alex George** who will ride a 1981 works Honda on some circuits this year but apparently not all.

All in all this year's Forward Trust/*Motor Cycle Weekly* Formula 1 championship should be just as exciting as last year's.

For up to date points in Motor Cycle News Superbike, Motor Cycle News Shell Super Oil and Forward Trust Motor Cycle Weekly TT Formula 1 Championship, see insert.



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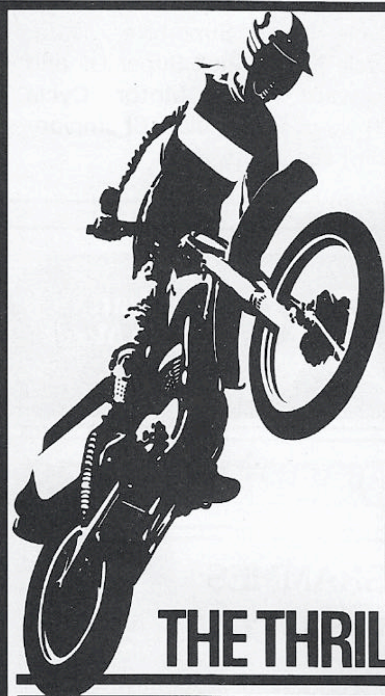
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PROFILE 3: PHIL HENDERSON

In the third of our profiles, Andrew McKinnon focuses on Yorkshire's Phil Henderson.

If you are looking for a dark horse for this weekend's 500cc Grand Prix warm-up, you could do a lot worse than to circle the name Phil Henderson in your programme.

I'm not saying he's a winner in such esteemed company, but the 25-year-old Yorkshireman is one of those 'good value' riders no meeting should be without.

If we analyse the British talent in the 500cc category, Phil's name is one we cannot overlook, as three very impressive performances last year reminded us.

Twice at Cadwell Park he finished second to British hero Barry Sheene, after giving the Yamaha star a run for his money and then at Mallory Park's Race of the Year meeting he finished second to California's heir to the 500cc world title, Randy Mamola!

And looking at current form, Henderson is right up there. His season got off to an unfortunate start at the Mallory Park curtain-raiser, when he crashed in practice on the exit from Gerrards. He had to give that meeting a miss because of machine damage and a bad shaking but, since then, he's never looked back in the early nationals.

Only two weeks ago here at Donington, he was elected John Player Man of the Meeting — after finishing second to Ron Haslam in the unlimited race — and he stole victory from Rob Smith at Cadwell in the Lincolnshire circuit's British Championship opener.

Phil won the 1977 350cc Clubman's championship and was runner-up in the 250 class that same year. The following year he suffered a massive setback when he fell from an articulated trailer at the headquarters of his family's successful haulage business and

spent three days on a life support machine with serious head injuries and internal bleeding.

For most that would have spelled the end of a promising career ... but not Phil! He was advised by doctors not to race again for three years but he was back in action just as soon as it was physically possible.

Now that Phil has fully recovered from that nasty fall he is brimming with ambition as well as talent.

His intentions this season include a crack at all the 500cc World Championship races, although he realises that there will be frustrations along the way.

He knows that he will have to travel to Grand Prix venues and hassle organisers for a start. That's the way every top star has had to start the difficult route to the top.

His strategy is to try for starts at the Italian, Swedish and Finnish Grands Prix, because he feels it will be easiest to get onto the grid at these meetings, and then just hope that his performances there will stand him in good stead for the rest of the year.

Phil's ambition is backed up in the strongest possible way by his family. His father, Jim, sold his Rolls-Royce during the winter in order to provide him with the financial support so necessary for such an ambitious programme.

As Phil said, he will end up in much worse condition than he was following his 1978 accident if he does not justify his father's swap from a "Roller" to a Cortina!

Then there is brother Peter, who helps with bike preparation and is by Phil's side at each meeting.

The broad-speaking Havercroft rider began

the 1981 season with his Mk 5 500cc Suzuki but should by now have taken delivery of a Mk 6 machine, with which to further his career. The machine is supplied by his devoted father in the knowledge that nothing short of the best tackle available will enable his son to reach his goal.

Phil is one of few British hopes in the 500cc class in Britain at the moment. He enjoys the two most important ingredients for success — skill and drive, much of which he admits emanates from his father's enthusiasm for the sport!

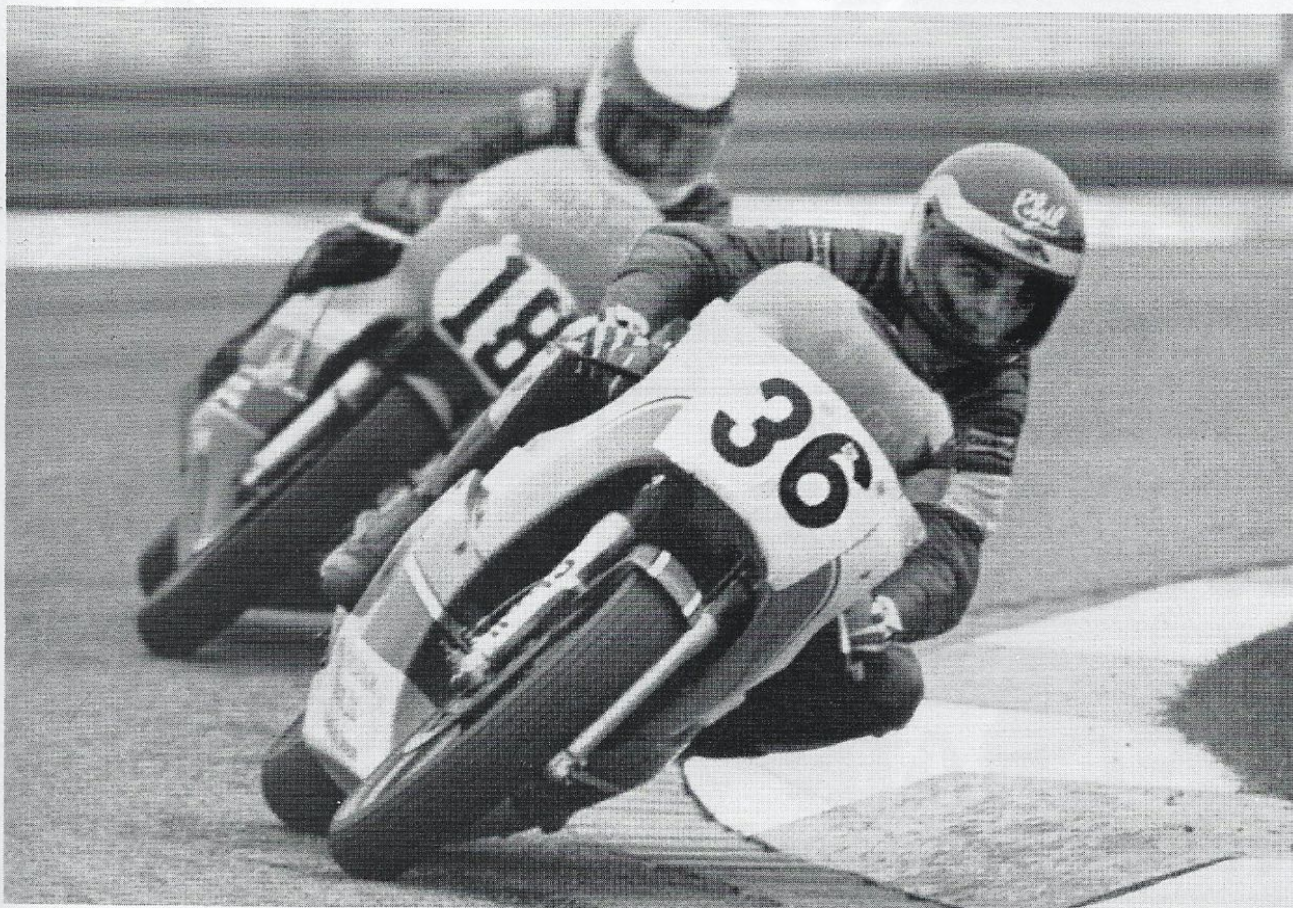
He also displays an impressive attitude towards the sport which many others in his position would not admit as readily.

Whenever he has been with the stars at the front of the field, he has gained invaluable knowledge in his climb through the ranks.

After his two epic dices with Barry Sheene at Cadwell last year he was bubbling with praise for Britain's leading ambassador in the paddock afterwards. He explained that riding in close company with such a class rider taught him plenty, which he has since been able to put into practice.

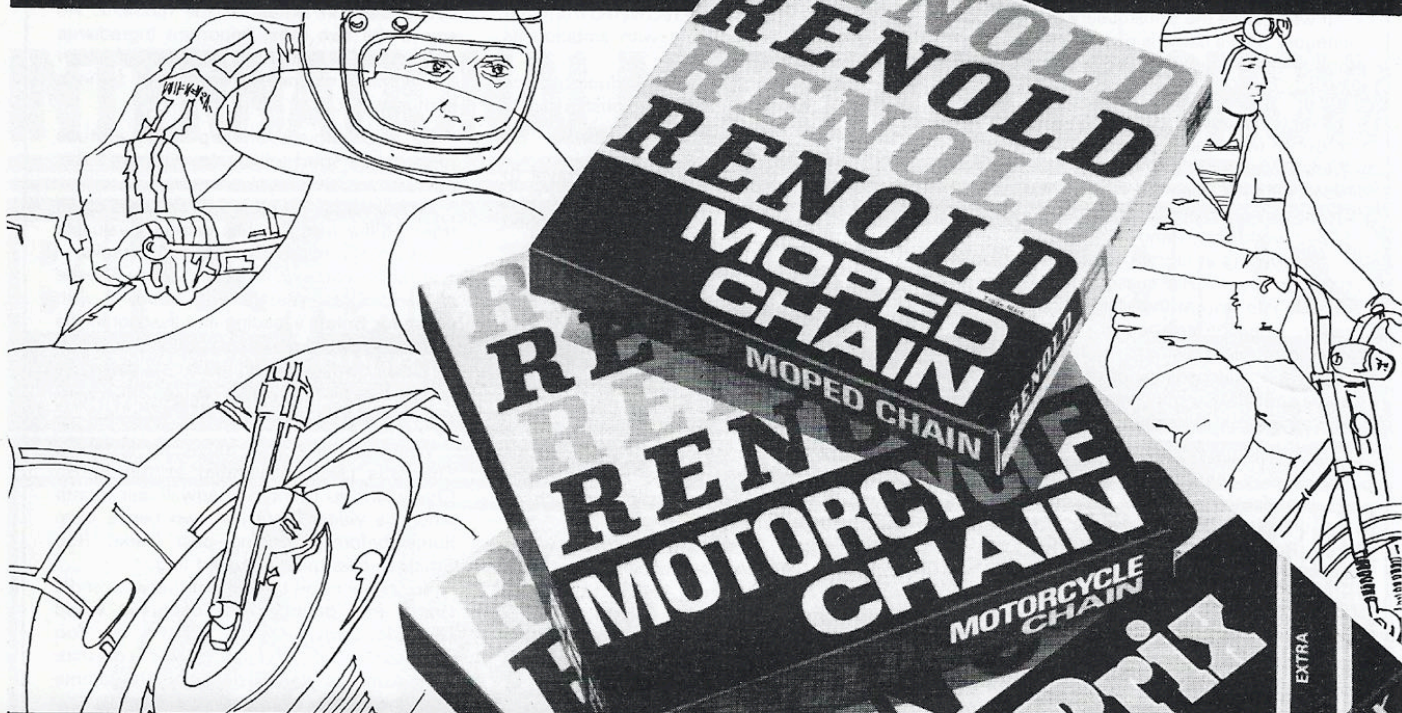
When to make your move, for instance. This was clearly illustrated at the British Championship round at Cadwell last month when he waited until just two bends from home before swooping past leader Rob Smith to take the chequered flag.

So, as we await the start of this weekend's Grand Prix prelude, run over full world championship distance, don't be too surprised to be jotting down the Yorkshire lad's name as you fill out your programme from the tannoy results service!



Brian Kelly photograph

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Blueprint for a tyre war

by Peter Howdle, Associate Editor, Motor Cycle News

Tyres will play a key rôle in the new *Motor Cycle News*/Shell Super Oil Streetbike championship in which international stars must race otherwise bog standard production sports machines.

Apart from the removal of hazardous items, like parking stands, mirrors, number plates and luggage racks, the only permissible departure from catalogue specification is the brand of treaded tyres. Slicks and endurance tyres are out.

Leading race shops may well adopt the blueprint technique, a costly method perfected by astute car manufacturers to assemble production cars with carefully selected standard parts, but no other tuning is allowed.

The Pirelli importers have such confidence in the adhesion of their Phantom and Gordon tyres that they have put up an extra £250 prize for winning the series on their products and the Streekbike battle will almost certainly develop into a tyre war.

One intriguing aspect is for sure. Irrespective of treads and compounds, the motor cycle manufacturer who wins this upmarket proddie series will be able to advertise the successful machine as the world's fastest race-proven production roadster, a claim no factory has had the audacity to make for a long time.

Will it be Honda, Kawasaki, Suzuki or Yamaha? Or will a BMW, Laverda or a Ducati blow off the Japanese giants? Most of these makes are represented in a glittering line-up of street bikes identical to those many race fans rode to Donington today for the second round of the MCN-inspired series.

A mixture of superstars and less well known specialists will sprint across the track for a Le Mans style start. The bikes will be lined up in order of practice times and the most athletic runners will be the first to leap aboard, press the starter, and away.

Cornering technique

'Rocket Ron' Haslam, who races a Honda CB1100R like that of TT lap record holder Joey Dunlop, learned a lot about proddie cornering technique during his winter tour of Australia and South Africa. Mick Grant, last year's British F1

champion on a Honda, is equally aware of the vast difference between riding an out-and-out racer and coaxing a streetbike round a race track. During preparations for the series, Mick has tried Dunlops and Pirellis on his Suzuki GSX1100.

Chris Guy, riding a Kawasaki GP1100 for Gordon Pantall, and endurance veteran Jim Wells, on a similar machine sponsored by Sun Oil, look forward to dicing with the big names of the works teams on machines identifiable with those of the buying public.

Peter Davies, who races at Donington for the first time today, has been Britain's top proddie racer for many years. Winner of the now discontinued Avon Roadrunner championship three times in four years (1976, 1977 and 1979 after finishing second in 1978), he ran away with the 1980 Centurion Helmet Championship, last year's only major production series in which he scored twice as many points as the next man.

Holder of most production lap and race records at home circuits, Davies (38) is general manager of an industrial cleaning company in the Midlands. He is jointly sponsored by Slater Brothers, the Laverda importers, Brembo brakes, and Cropredy Motor Cycles, near Banbury, who uncrated his new 1000cc Jota the week before last week's opening Streetbike championship race at Cadwell Park.

Now in his 18th racing season, Davis favours Pirelli tyres on his Italian road burner but he goes quicker on Gordons than the best selling Phantoms, and reckons to get 200 racing miles out of the back tyre of his Jota. He has a Laverda in a Pinfold frame for the F1 British and World championships.

Wayne Gardner, a newcomer to British

The start of a round of the Swann proddie series, with Wayne Gardner (number 6) to the fore.



Forsyth photograph



Wayne Gardner entertains the crowd at Amaroo Park.

Blueprint for tyre war

continued

racing after sharing the victorious Honda with Andrew Johnson in Australia's prestigious Castrol Six-Hour Race at Amaroo Park, is definitely a man to watch. The event was only his second production race, after winning the 750 class of the 1979 Castrol classic with John Pace as his partner on a 650 Kawasaki which finished sixth overall. Their class record still stands.

Now teamed up with **Roger Marshall**, Wayne is only 21 years of age. He's a former diesel engine fitter from Wollongong, near Sydney. He won the Castrol marathon by two laps. And he followed it up with two impressive performances at Daytona where he was fourth in the Superbike class and first four-stroke home with tenth spot in the American 200 miler.

A dirt racer at 16, Wayne started road racing four years ago with a Yamaha TZ250D. Despite a few crashes, he quickly graduated to the upper crust of the Australian scene and is now a fully-fledged professional rider.

Wayne likes both two-strokes and four-strokes. He faces the Streetbike series with an open mind and speaks very highly of the train-like torque and speed of the Kawasaki GP1100 he ran-in between London and Roger's home in Grimsby.

Controllable slides

Along with Roger, he plans to concentrate on F1 championships with a Moriwaki-Kawasaki but he has no qualms about proddie racing on treaded tyres. Wayne expresses a preference for a Pirelli on the front wheel and a Metzeler on the back and says the combination produces the most controllable slides.

Dave Hiscock is another upcoming star from 'down-under' who could do well in the series. Although not in today's line-up, because of Easter commitments for a pre-European shake down, the New Zealander who won virtually every big production race in Australasia last season could later make his mark in the championship following a deal between Rod Coleman, boss of South Pacific Suzuki, and Maurice Knight, of Suzuki GB. Anxious to concentrate on four-stroke racing, in the F1 and Streetbike series, Hiscock could turn out to be another Graeme Crosby who has already tipped Wayne Gardner for the top.

While race fans eagerly await Hiscock's arrival, the participation of **Mick Hunt** on a Yamaha XS1100 from the Granby Motors stable will undoubtedly enliven arguments about the virtues of chain or shaft drive. Tyres may be important but riding skill and horse power at the back wheel will still decide who gets the chequered flag. Scrutineering standards will be high. Let's hope the championship can be decided without protests!

Forsyth photograph



The overall winner of the Motor Cycle News/Shell Super Oil Streetbike Series, can walk away with £250 cash if he uses Pirelli tyres throughout the season. The latest major company to show an interest in the series, Pirelli feel that they have two outstanding tyres for this particular type of event in the Gordon and Phantom ranges.

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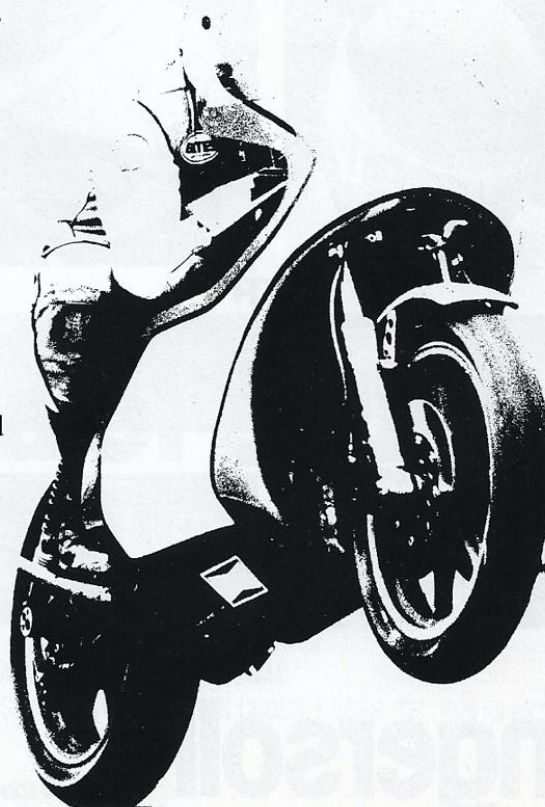
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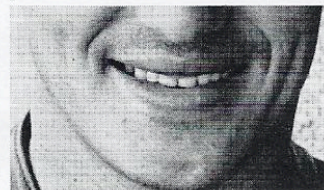
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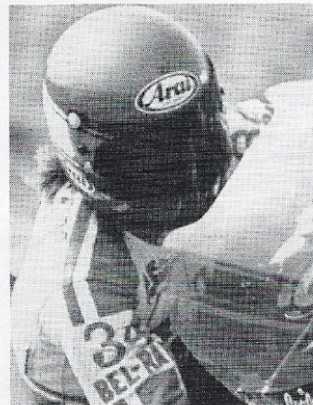
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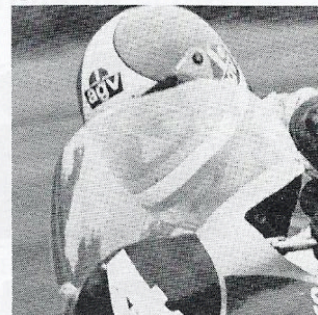
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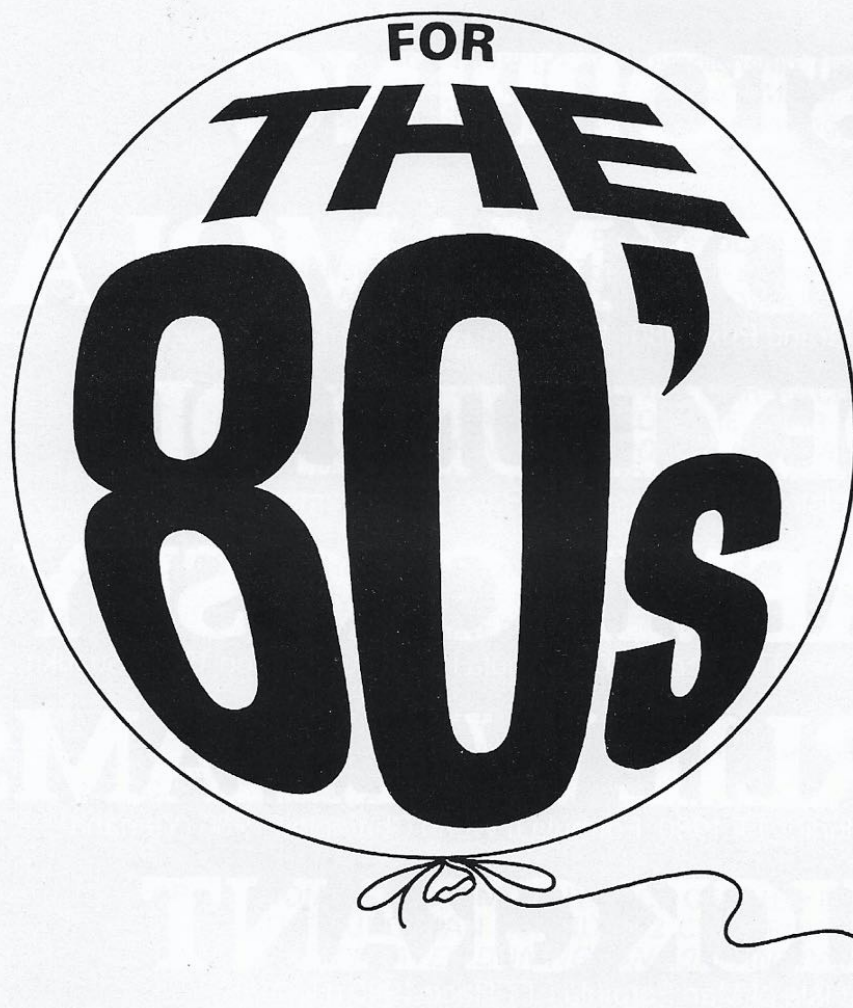


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Forthcoming meetings

Motor Cycle meetings in ITALIC
Car and other events in ROMAN

Sun April 19	Easter National Open Championship Car Races
Sun April 26	Marlboro-Yamaha Express Clubmans Championship
Sun May 3	British Grand Touring Car Championship Trophy Meeting
Mon May 4	Racing 50 MC's Concord Clubmen's Motor Cycle races
Sun May 10	Shuttleworth Trophy Vintage Motor Racing & Autojumble
SUN MAY 17	JOHN PLAYER TROPHY MOTOR CYCLE MEETING (featuring British Sidecar Championship)
Sat May 23	Qualifying for May 24 International
SUN MAY 24	THE DONINGTON 500: Britain's round in
SUN MAY 31	International European Touring Car Endurance Championship
Sat June 6	50th ANNIVERSARY VETERAN, EDWARDIAN & VINTAGE
SUN JUNE 7	MOTORING FESTIVAL
Sat June 20	Qualifying for June 7 International
SUN JUNE 21	EUROSERIES INTERNATIONAL CAR RACES & HISTORIC
Sat/Sun June 27/28	GRAND PRIX CARS RACE OF THE YEAR
Sat July 4	JOHN PLAYER NORTH v SOUTH MOTOR CYCLE CHALLENGE
SUN JULY 5	qualifying (including ITV WORLD OF SPORT
Sat July 11	SUPERBIKE CHALLENGE)
SUN JULY 12	JOHN PLAYER NORTH v SOUTH MOTOR CYCLE CHALLENGE
Sat/Sun July 25/26	The Honda Festival '81
Sun August 9	Qualifying for July 5 International
Sat August 15	THE 5000 GUINEAS:
SUN AUGUST 16	International Formula Atlantic Challenge Cup Meeting
Sat August 29	JOHN PLAYER EUROPEAN CUP qualifying
SUN AUGUST 30	JOHN PLAYER EUROPEAN CUP:
Sat/Sun Sept 19/20	Britain's rounds in International European Motor Cycle
Sat Sept 26	Championship
SUN SEPT 27	Classic Car Weekend of Historic Motor Racing
Sun October 4	John Player Grand National Trophy Motor Cycle Meeting
Sat October 17	Qualifying for August 16 International
SUN OCTOBER 18	DONINGTON'S MOTOR RACE OF THE YEAR:
SAT OCTOBER 24	THE EUROPEAN FORMULA 2 CHAMPIONSHIP FINAL
	JOHN PLAYER DONINGTON 50th ANNIVERSARY
	qualifying (including ITV WORLD OF SPORT
	SUPERBIKE CHALLENGE)
	JOHN PLAYER DONINGTON 50th ANNIVERSARY
	INTERNATIONAL MOTOR CYCLE MEETING
	The Second National Motor Racing Festival
	Qualifying for September 27 International
	THE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP GRAND PRIX OF
	ENDURANCE FOR MOTOR CYCLES
	John Player British Motor Cycle Championship Finals Meeting
	Qualifying for October 18 International
	THE GERMAN GROUP 5 SUPERCAR
	INTERNATIONAL EUROSERIES MEETING
	INTERNATIONAL TV RALLYSPRINT

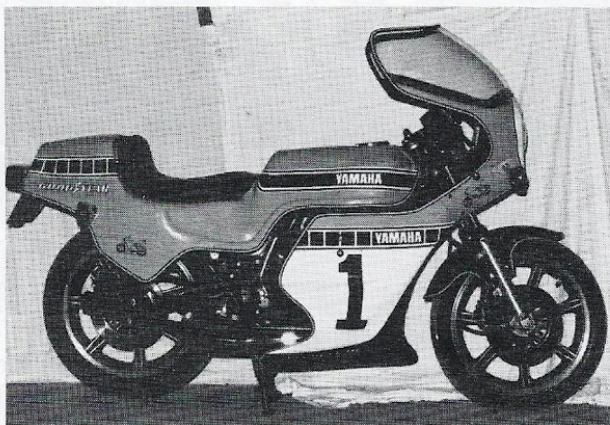
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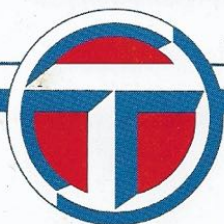
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*Motor Magazine Road Test Figures.
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