



# TAIL LIGHT

JANUARY 2010

## Dates for your diary . . .

21 January – AGM, Onley Arms, Stisted, 7.45pm, ALL VERY WELCOME!

27 February – Awards Evening, Onley Arms, Stisted, 8pm, FREE BUFFET!

21 March – Foxborough Trial

30 May – Motocross, Stisted

5 June – Trial

10 July – Trial

7 August – Trial

12 September – Long Distance Trial, watch this space for more detail!

18 December – Turkey Trot Trial



**What's going on? Find out next month!**

# Who's who?

|  |   |
|--|---|
| John Yearley<br><i>Chairperson (Acting)</i>  |   |
| Chis Cook<br><i>Vice Chairperson</i><br><i>Eastern Centre Board Representative (res)</i> | 01376 328602<br>4 Kentish Cottages<br>Stisted<br>Braintree<br>CM7 8BX   |
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| Sam Cook   | 01376 328602  |
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### **Sad News**

It is with great regret we report the sad news of the passing of Jim Mason. Jim passed away on Sunday 6th December on his way home from the Jack Thompson Trial in Kent after gaining a fourth place on the harder route.

Jim was a Braintree club member for many years and won numerous awards a quiet unassuming man but always had time for a chat, if you asked Jim during a event how are getting on the reply would normally be not to good but when the results came through Jim would be up in the top three. Jim will be missed by all who knew him; our thoughts go out to Jim's family at this very sad time.

### **WANTED**

New Committee Members, please attend our AGM which is being held on Thursday 21 January at the Onley Arms, Stisted. Your membership will be free and you will play a vital role in the future of your club.

### **AWARDS EVENING**

Our awards evening is being held on Saturday 27 February at the Onley Arms, Stisted at 8pm. everyone is welcome to join in this social evening, with a free buffet.



### **LOCAL INSURANCE SPECIALISTS**

A local business specialises in trials & enduro insurance; they will insure your bike for on the road stages of competitive events! This is the perfect solution for being road legal at events such as the Phil King and our upcoming Long Distance Trial. Please see enclosed leaflet for more details or call 01279 870535 now!

### **The Motor Cycling Club Trials, Mark Wilson**

#### **Our on going effort!**

This is the fourth year of us contesting these long distance trials. Most people know about our first effort, when our failure to understand the 24 hour clock resulted in us missing the start by 24 hours.

During the first two years we campaigned a BMW R1007 with two different sidecars.

The first was a Watsonian Palma with a notorious Dalek front; this proved to be too wide, heavy and was fitted with a Mini wheel which caused too much drag. We did manage to get the outfit to the top of the final section of The Lands End trial. The Dalek was superseded by a home (shed) made sidecar, many hours, lengths of tube and a pipe bender later the new sidecar appeared. Narrower, lighter and complete with Wasp moto cross wheel and swinging arm.

This proved to be more suitable for the events, we achieved a Bronze Medal in the 2007 Lands End trial. Ultimately the BMW proved to be too heavy and lacked suspension travel, but in true BMW

style was reliable. We sold the BMW to an airline pilot, despite what he did for his living he did not have much mechanical sympathy (rather worrying if you fly Easyjet) he did break several parts including the “bomb proof” low ratio final drive!! We think he has now sold it on, to a good home!

The next purchase was a Yamaha XT600, after more hours, tubing, midnight oil and a pipe bender another sidecar emerged. This time with light weight plastic panels, a smaller seat to suit the small passenger, a sidecar wheel brake and “bread bin” for tools and tuck.

The new sidecar worked well straight from the shed as you would expect with this much practise. The soft long travel suspension works well on the rocky ruts but a little vague on the road.

The Yamaha’s first trial in anger was the 2008 Edinburgh Trial, we achieved a Silver medal, and this means we only had one fault throughout the 200 mile event.

Our next outing was the 2008 Exeter Trial, this is a very good event and includes the infamous hill “Simms” For the first time we romped to the top of Simms, and it seemed easy this time. The remainder of the trial wasn’t so successful so we did not receive a medal this time.

Three months later we entered the 2008 Lands End trial, we completed 150 miles of the 350, but were plagued with punctures which finally caused our retirement. This meant an early alarm call for our driver Dave Clark, dragging him from his hotel bed at 6.00 am and explaining our remote village location some 80 miles away and in the opposite direction to the finish, he collected us and then returned to Cornwall to a sunny bay near Perranporth, we were pleased to see Joe Stollery finish another trial with a gold medal.

We investigated our repeated punctures, to find the security bolt plate chaffing through the tubes, a modified bolt has solved the problem.

The next event is at the other end of the year in October, the 2008 Edinburgh Trial, this is held in Derbyshire in and around the Peak District. We managed to gain a silver medal, one foot away from a gold.

The start of the New Year brings the Exeter trial, in January. It was very very cold, we had freezing fog on our visors, we chose to wear a full face helmet which was a good decision. We were warned that there was ice on many of the minor roads and tracks – they were not exaggerating, it was an ice rink in places. How on earth Joe Stollery held his R.E. Constellation upright in those conditions to achieve another gold is amazing.

Despite the weather Simms was quite friendly this year, we flew up it without any problems. Looking at a You Tube clip, there appears to be dust flicking up from our tyre.

We managed another silver, still not achieved that elusive gold medal.

Back to Cornwall for another Lands End trial in January 2009. This is the longest of the three trials, we start on the edge of Bodmin Moor on the A30 beyond Launceston. There is a choice of start points all approx 100 miles from the start proper near Bridgewater. The route heads towards the coast at Minehead then the sections bring you inland to Exmoor then back to the coast, along the coast, then on to Bodmin Moor. Over the moor heading south west still further, the last two sections are on a cliff face of a disused tin mine, looking out to the Atlantic, this is a spectacular location

especially on good day. The first of the two sections is very short with a suspiciously wet area to make the steep turning exit more difficult, the second is a long steep headland track with a sharp turn at the top. These two sections attract several hundred spectators if the weather is kind.

To date the Yamaha hasn't made it this far, last year the punctures and this year we had complete electrical failure stopping us before we reached Bridgewater. Unfortunately Joe also suffered electrical problems, putting us all out before we had got started. So this time no sleep at all for Dave Clark just finished his cocoa then the dreaded phone rang.

Several months later, both bikes repaired and ready for more punishment, the 2009 Edinburgh trial. The trial starts at Tamworth motorway services on the edge of the M42.

We head north towards the Peak District, the problem is we need to ride slowly, if we arrive at the time check early it will be treated as a failed section. As we get near to the time check there are bikes and cars parked on verges and waiting in gateways. We arrive at the check point at our scheduled time.

The first section isn't too difficult, we clean it without problem, it is now 4:35 am we have all been up since Friday morning so are already missing a night's sleep and are fairly tired.

The second section has a restart which is not too common for the sidecar class and a route deviation. This is clearly explained by the start marshal, nearing the top of the hill we stop in the restart box then are flagged away by the marshal, we had no problem with the restart but "pilot error" caused us to miss the deviation. Not Good

The sections keep coming, we plug away keeping to the prescribed route along many narrow unmarked lanes and tracks.

We arrive at a bleak moorland section, the wind is blowing a gale across the track, we are not allowed to pre-view any sections. This appears rocky from what we can see!!

It was far rockier, rough and strewn with boulders than we could have imagined, it was also much longer than we initially realised so seemed to prolong the agony even longer. We fought our way to the top, almost stopping in an unavoidable hole. We reached the top clean with a smile, it reminds you why you are here.

Next is our compulsory one hour break at the highest pub in the Peak District,

The Bull i'th' Thorn circa 1472, in Hurdlow near Buxton. Garry and Joe partake in the cooked breakfast; I believe it is re-heated from 1472 ad. So I opt for a Mars bar from the "Bread Bin" The pub car park is like a motor show from a by-gone era, parked there is a beautifully prepared Morgan 4/4 with a driver that resembles Merlin, would you want to thrust this beauty up these rocky tracks with very little ground clearance? Unfortunately the camera to capture these moments is back on the dinning table in Black Notley.

After the break we set off for the second half, only 100 miles to the finish!

The wind has whipped up to gale force; no sensible motorcyclist would be out in this – only us and another 100 bikes.

The following section has been used by The MCC for in excess of 50 years, but this year it has been deemed a S.S.S.I. so we are required to "Drive By" to avoid damage to flora and fauna.

Section 7 is a spectator friendly section, but due to the weather conditions it doesn't seem to have attracted many – I wonder why!!

This is a good section to view and ride, it is a long, rough and difficult climb, pleased to say we cleaned another one.

The remaining six sections include three restarts and a special test. These do not present any real problems, well not compared to the previous rocky climbs.

The finish is back at The Bull i'th' Thorn, we hand in our numbers and get our time card signed off.

We finish two and a half hours late, Joe had a rear puncture at about 6:00am this took us about an hour to repair – not quite Formula 1 times but the Constellation weighs the same as an F1 car! We had opted to start with a late number to give us more daylight hours, but after the puncture we were mingling with the cars, interesting and sociable but stuck in a few queues.

We are about 12 miles from Mark's sister's country pile, we head back to the van that is parked their, we load up and enjoy a hearty (late/early) breakfast she has prepared for us all. Our regular driver Dave Clark takes the wheel and heads back to Braintree, Joe sleeps in the executive seat while Mark and Garry intermittently doze in the front.

Our thanks go to Dave for driving once again, and to Joe for the use of the van. The whole trip was a great experience made all the better by good results and very good company. Joe achieved Best In Class Gold award, we got our first "Gold" as the deviation we missed was poorly marked so missed by most, and was removed from the results. 200 Trial miles and 340 travelling but well worth it. A great event.

Roll on the Exeter Trial!



**Scorpa SY125F** a four stroke 125cc Yamaha engine trials bike, 2003. Front and rear disc brakes, hydraulic clutch, fat handlebars, it has had little use, now my son has a road bike, girlfriend and part time job it takes up space in my garage. It is in good condition for it's age, a few scratches.

Price £1,195 Contact Garry on 01245 400159 or 0789 408 1684



# FINAL POSITIONS FOR 2009 CLUB TRIALS CHAMPIONSHIP

|  |             |   |            |
|--|-------------|---|------------|
| <b>NOVICE</b>  | 5930        | <b>EXPERT "A"</b>                       | 4935       |
| 1 Chris Cook   | 4416        | 1 Graham Palmer                         | 4222       |
| 2 Eldon Jackson  | 5018        | 2 Wesley Butcher                        | 4241       |
| 3 Richard Wreathall  | 5217        | 3 Allen Collier                         | 4601       |
| 4 Quenton Ramsey   | 5618        | 4 James Yearley                         | 4757       |
| 5 Alan Peck  | 5621        |   |            |
| 6 Alan Gardner   | 5787        | <b>PRE-70 ALL CLASSES</b>               | 5685       |
| 7 Craig Fenner   | 5806        | 1 Allen Collier                         | 4812       |
| 8 Jeremy Maddox  | 5807        | 2 Phil Read                             | 5298       |
| 9 Chris Wicks  | 5822        |   |            |
|  |             |   |            |
|  |             | <b>TWINSHOCK</b>                        | 5815       |
|  |             | 1 Adrian Parker                         | 4954       |
|  |             | 2 Stephen Butcher                       | 5083       |
|  |             | 3 Wesley Butcher                        | 5163       |
|  |             | 4 David Simpson                         | 5219       |
|  |             | 5 Chris Cook                            | 5329       |
|  |             | 6 Graham Palmer                         | 5425       |
|  |             | 7 Allen Collier                         | 5626       |
| <b>INTERMEDIATE "A"</b>                                      | 5570        | 8 Dave Field                            | 5635       |
| 1 Roy Palmer   | 3528        | 9 Richard Penfold                       | 5641       |
| 2 Sam Cook   | 4185        |   |            |
| 3 Stephen Butcher  | 4525        |   |            |
| 4 Adrian Parker  | 5431        |   |            |
| 5 Nicky Read   | 5474        |   |            |
|  |             |   |            |
|  |             | <b>SIDECAR</b>                          | 2520       |
|  |             | 1 Alan Hornsby/Martin Ackers            | 2467       |
|  |             |   |            |
| <b>YOUTH A</b>   | 6170        | <b>YOUTH C</b>                          | 4510       |
| No Contenders  |             | No Contenders                           |            |
|  |             |   |            |
| <b>YOUTH B</b>   | 6170        | <b>YOUTH D</b>                          | 3920       |
| 1 Tim Rooney   | 5447        | No Contenders                           |            |
| 2 James Page   | 5816        |   |            |
|  |             |   |            |
| <b>Maximum possible marks are shown against class titles</b> |             |   |            |
| <b>ELIGIBLE EVENTS HAVE BEEN:</b>                            |             |   |            |
| 1 Southend   | 04 Jan 09   | 21 Braintree                            | 08 Aug 09  |
| 2 Chelmsford   | 08 Feb 09   | 22 N&S Junior                           | 30 Aug 09  |
| 3 Southend   | 22 Feb 09   | 23 Castle                               | 06 Sept 09 |
| 4 Lowestoft  | 01 Mar 09   | 24 Norwich                              | 13 Sept 09 |
| 5 Braintree  | 15 Mar 09   | 25 Wymondham                            | 20 Sept 09 |
| 6 Norwich  | 22 Mar 09   | 26 Braintree                            | 27 Sept 09 |
| 7 Ipswich  | 29 Mar 09   | 27 Ipswich                              | 04 Oct 09  |
| 8 Wymonham   | 05 April 09 | 28 Southend                             | 11 Oct 09  |
| 9 Woodbridge   | 10 April 09 | 29 E&S Border                           | 18 Oct 09  |
| 10 Norwich   | 12 April 09 | 30 Castle                               | 25 Oct 09  |
| 11 E&S Border  | 19 April 09 | 31 Woodbridge                           | 01 Nov 09  |
| 12 EFA   | 26 April 09 | 32 Chelmsford                           | 15 Nov 09  |
| 13 N&S Junior  | 26 April 09 | 33 Lowestoft                            | 29 Nov 09  |
| 14 Castle  | 10 May 09   | 34 Braintree                            | 20 Dec 09  |
| 15 Diss  | 16 May 09   | 35 _                                    | _          |
| 16 Braintree   | 06 June 09  | 36 _                                    | _          |
| 17 Southend  | 27 June 09  | 37 _                                    | _          |
| 18 Southend  | 28 June 09  | 38 _                                    | _          |
| 19 Braintree   | 11 July 09  | 39 _                                    | _          |
| 20 Norwich   | 02 Aug 09   | 40 _                                    | _          |
|  |             | <i>Richard Sillett 29 December 2009</i> |            |

## ARIEL MOTORBIKES

By John T Boyd

Back in the 1950s a friend of mine and I decided to buy an old bike and "do it up". We saw an advert for an old 600 Panther and went to see it. The seller told us that it had already been sold, but he would start it up to show us what a bargain we had just missed.

It started up first kick and chugged along nicely for a few seconds and then the timing chain broke and it stopped with an expensive clunk. We quietly left him with a sad expression on his countenance.

Then we went to see a fast-talking salesman with a twin exhaust 500 Ariel for sale. It was dark and he wanted to get back to his telly to watch "Quatermass". What is that? It was an early science fiction programme that predated "Dr Who"!

Anyway, we left it at that. The next morning my friend went and paid £10 for it. It was a mistake to do so as the rear brake plate was from a 250 Norton and of no use at all and other things were seriously well ahead of the early bodging standards of the day.

It started quite easily, as Ariels do, but the clutch was poor, the brakes uncooperative and the rattles were only slightly less noisy than the exhausts. My friend did some repairs and then washed his hands of it and handed it over to me. It, of course, had girder forks and worn tyres and megaphone exhausts. The chain cases were cracked and the exposed valves worn, but it had a separately sprung dual seat and a surprisingly powerful pulling power. The battery was useless, but the dynamo worked as long as it stayed connected. The pins were held in by broken match sticks!

I tried to grind the worn valves in a bit better and had a re-bore done at great expense. I tried some pathetic effort to improve the baffles. The handlebar was 1 inch in diameter, not 7/8, so I had some difficulty in obtaining a new twist grip. I found one, only to discover that it twisted the opposite way! What are the chances of that!

I rode it a few times and was stopped by the police once, who admired it and said they had not seen me riding it before. (I also owned a 350 WD/CO Royal Enfield.) I laid my gloves across the tank while we had a chat so that they did not see that the speedo, which was never connected at any time, was no longer where it should have been; that is, built into the top of the tank. It was useful at the time of the "Suez Crisis" when petrol was rationed and I could get a ration book for it. Many tatty vehicles were then worth owning in order to get those ration books. I forget how much the ration was, but I do remember that the petrol was dispensed by full gallons and not at all by any part of a gallon, so you needed to know how many gallons you could get in your tank! Life is a bit more luxurious these days when you can fill up to the nearest new penny.

In the end I got fed up with it and scrapped it; I should have kept it, but only Sammy Miller could have had the equipment to restore it.

## A 350 ARIEL SCRAMBLER

In 1959 I had joined the "Maldon Auto Club" with the intention of doing a bit of scrambling. I did not have a car licence at the time but I had bought an ex-AA 500sv BSA with a sidecar. I swapped the c/a body with a flat board to carry the 350 Ariel that I bought from Barry Greep who qualified himself for expert status on it the previous year (I have no idea how he did it!).

Then I ended up in Broomfield hospital with a collapsed lung, which did my fitness no good at all. The cause of that remains a mystery.

The first time I rode it was at Wakes Colne when the crankcases broke, being part of the frame. I got an old 500 Ariel engine and used the cases from that and assembled it with the 500 cams in it with the assistance of Dan De'Ath. I stripped the engine down to find that there were no circlips in the piston. The result of that was that there were four deep grooves inside the barrel. I spent money getting the barrel re-sleeved and cleaned all the mud out of the chain case.

The handle bars were the next to go as the single bolt clamp could not be relied upon to prevent the bars from twisting. I fitted a long, straight Velocette handlebar, which would not collapse when I hit a bump. The rear shocks were almost solid, but that did not matter!

I rode in a grass track at West Bergholt where the track was so bumpy that Alfie Hagon refused to ride. The rear spindle broke there! At Woodham Ferrers the lower fork bracket snapped in the first race so the teles did not telescope any more. I was lucky to get back to the pits. Dan's handlebars broke and Tom's Greeves seized up. It was not a good day for the Maldon A.C!

I replaced the forks with ex-army AMC ones, which needed extra springs and thicker damping oil.

The ignition failed at Shrublands Park and the footrest collapsed at Cockfield when I fell and crushed my foot. I then fell at a meeting near Peterborough and felt a Gold Star run up my back. Then at Wakes Colne (again) the engine shock absorber gave out being extremely worn and depriving me of drive. The crank cases broke again there. I repaired it and painted it and sold it without a guarantee to someone else. Then I got married and that was the end of scrambling.

It was more like "car banger racing" in those days. Some rode their bikes to meetings and took the lights and silencers off before getting to the start line. Then they rode home again and rode to work in the morning on the same machine. Some bikes had knobbly tyres and some did not.

Machine examiners checked the brakes, spokes and made sure that the twistgrip throttle snapped shut OK. We wore Cromwell helmets, but no body armour.

At some meetings they used a "Le Mans" type start where your mate held the bike with the engine running and you ran to it when the Union Jack was raised. Some meetings you kick-started the bike yourself when the flag was raised. More often you sat with the engine running and your left hand on your head. That suited Dicky Rix who was able to hold his clutch in with his foot on his Ariel!