



AUSTRALIAN SPEEDWAY RIDERS ASSOCIATION INC

NEWSLETTER Q2/2025



VIC HUXLEY : THE ORIGINAL BROADSIDER
THE FUTURE OF AUSSIE SPEEDWAY : DAVID TAPP
WOFFY BACK ON BIKE AUSSIE TITLE : BRADY KURTZ
PHIL MCURTAYNE'S SIDECAR SCENE EUROPEAN NEWS : SGP UPDATE
STATE SECRETARY ROUNDUP WHAT'S ON THIS WINTER



MEET THE ASRA 'A' TEAM

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NEXT ISSUE Q3 Copy Date May 23rd . Contact Terry Starbuck to book.

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PRESIDENTS REPORT Dave Mills

I attended the Showcase meeting at Nepean on February 15th. The combined day of speedway and dirt track riders was a great success, with the pits packed with both divisions. The idea was to let the younger dirt track riders see speedway first hand and to have a come and try day to attract younger riders to speedway. I feel that this was a stroke of genius, and hopefully will show results in the near future and foster more young speedway riders. Josh Pickering came along to do some laps and gave a truly inspirational talk, explaining the speedway career pathway to a captive junior audience.



I was asked by Liverpool Council to come along to their museum with a midget car rep, a sprint car rep and saloon car rep to speak to a selected class of high school children. When we arrived the class was broken into groups. Each group were given our resumes and sat down outside to speak with their assigned rep from their selected division. We were then taken inside the museum with our assigned group. I was blindsided by a recording studio, set up with a cinema photographer, a lighting engineer and sound engineer. After setting up, one student was assigned as the interviewer, one as the camera operator, one as the sound operator and one as the lighting engineer. The interviewer then proceeded with the questions that were put together by the group. Everybody performed really well. The school, the museum and the council were really pleased with the end result. The edited film footage of each interview will be archived into the museum's records.



Dave Mills/Peter White/Mick Page



Bill Powell/Val Wotton

What a wonderful day we had at Liverpool Regional Museum's Open Day on the 1st March THE PLACE OF PACE SPEEDWAY MEET . The day featured competitors, cars, bikes and sidecars. What a great day it was, a big crowd with many interviews with past competitors from Liverpool speedway.

I caught up with many riders, having not seen them for many years. We sat around and reminisced about the good old days with Wayne Forrest, Bill Landells, Bob Campbell, Greg Kentwell, Ken (Mousey) Benson, Ricky and Carol Day, Gordon Guasco's sister Nola Harper and Gordon's mechanic Keith Hunt, Peter and Liz White. The permanent museum display tells the story of the Place of Pace from day one till its closure. It's well worth the visit.



Nola Harper & Keith Hunt

I hope everyone is well. So until I write my next report.



SECRETARY REPORT John Walker

Since the tapes flew up back in November, we are now full-throttle into the first turn of our race to revive the ASRA, to re-establish its lines of communication (via a new Facebook site) and to attract younger riders and supporters to membership of the Association by increasingly making it relevant to them – they are currently writing the next pages of the history of speedway in Australia, and will eventually become the veterans of the sport.

We are still saddled with some tricky issues in our laps, and emails between team members have been flowing like Castrol R off a hot primary chain. But we ARE on track!


A number of new and exciting projects are underway or under development;

NEWSLETTER Q1 issue well received across the board with positive feedback on the new format, content and email/postal options. It also prompted over fifty membership renewals and new member registrations.

NEW FACEBOOK PAGE (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1806219326812242>) quickly established, already having 187 FB members, many of whom are current riders. Some lively discussions and contributions are developing, and we believe it will eventually result in a flow of new memberships of ASRA. *Click on the “Files” tab to access an ASRA membership form and invite all your speedway friends to join.*

HISTORIAN TEAM - Bill Powell has agreed to take on the role of ASRA Historian Manager, a natural extension to his current position as Memorabilia and Archives Manager. Bill will oversee and advise on input from the ASRA Historian Team including Brian Darby, Peter White, Con Migro, Dennis Newlyn, Tony Webb and Brian Lear.

MEMORABILIA. Members can register memorabilia with their State Secretary and/or order identification stickers to be issued shortly. We have also arranged a valuation service via and Donnington’s Auctions details tbc. This is all part of our long term plan to compile a comprehensive national database of ASRA memorabilia.

DESCRIPTION/YEAR

OWNER:
TEL:
Contact ASRA for advice on memorabilia display, donation, loan or disposal. Bill Powell: bill.p133@live.com 0420 863169

NEW AWARDS SOLO PROGRAM We are developing a performance-based awards system to generate an ongoing rider interest and interface. The Committee has agreed that I should explore a statistical approach to “most improved” type awards, similar to the Association of Tennis Professionals ranking system. Riders will score ranking points according to his/her results at various levels of the sport - British, Polish, Swedish and Danish leagues plus SGPs and Australian state and national championships. Categories will include Most Improved Open, U21, 250cc and 125cc riders.

MEMBERSHIP PAYMENTS are an immediate priority as they provide essential funding for ASRA administration, particularly Newsletter design, print and distribution. Many longstanding members have yet to renew their 2025 membership, see details below, Call me if you are not sure if you’ve already paid.

Members are advised to renew their membership asap, now valid to end 2025 and also confirm their membership contact details so that we can update and publish a new Membership Directory.

\$25 [emailed newsletter] or \$40 [posted hard copy newsletter]

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YOUTH AMBASSADOR D43 DARCY WARD talking to Steve Magro

Darcy Ward, in recent times the promoter and driving force behind speedway at North Brisbane, has opted out of hosting club events at the Mick Doohan Raceway.

“The venue ran very successfully until recently when new guidelines were set by the North Brisbane Junior Motorcycle Club. Costs associated with running events such as rent, lighting, permit fees for open events and other expenses make this a challenging prospect”.

“We’ve not made a decision about the future of speedway at the venue and currently have no dates set, but we’ve been granted the option by NBJMCC to submit proposals for a limited number of open meetings” There are other junior clubs operating in Queensland but without the invaluable input of Darcy Ward. “I would help if it was wanted. I tried it out before, but I was chucked out. It’s their venue. I would just try to help, but I’ve been shot down numerous times.”

Adding to that, Darcy has moved house, to Brisbane’s north side, Bribie Island area, and is taking a well earned break from speedway promotion. “It’s only been six weeks, but it’s all been good”

His recent Invitational meeting was a success, albeit without some of the programmed stars from the first attempt due to rain. “We had some good racing and MotoX star Corey Creed was there. I thought the whole show was pretty cool with Dougie (Ryan Douglas) having his first Invitational win – it was impressive to watch him ride. And we had some good support with the 250’s.” *See results below.* Indeed, Dougies British club Leicester is due to give him a testimonial meeting in March this year.

DARCY WARD INVITATIONAL Feb 1st : *by Gavin Elmes /Peter White for Speedway Star.*

Ryan Douglas dominated this sixth annual staging of the Darcy Ward Invitational. He and Kye Thomson progressed directly to the final, joined by the two semi-final winners Declan Kennedy and Jacob Hook. Both semis were cut-and-thrust affairs. The first developed into a Kennedy brothers spectacular with Zaine commanding the first two laps before Declan took over. The second semi saw Workington signing Jacob Hook battling it out with veteran Aussie international Davey Watt who was having his first meeting in years. Both Douglas and Thomson were having their first and only Australian meeting before returning to Britain to join Leicester and Edinburgh respectively. In his second race, Tate Zischke was alarmingly torpedoed by Reid Battye. Luckily both riders suffered only minor injuries.

Semi 1: 1. Declan Kennedy 2. Zaine Kennedy 3. Flynn Nicol 4. Mitchell Cluff(f).
Semi 2: 1. Jacob Hook 2. Davey Watt 3. Brad Page 4. Harrison Ryan.
FINAL: 1. Ryan Douglas 2. Kye Thomson 3. Declan Kennedy 4. Jacob Hook.



Battye (Y)
Zischke (W)



Axel Watt &
Hudson Raffin

With his Youth Ambassador helmet on Darcy is tipping better things ahead for Cooper Antone, Guy Mitchell, Axel Watt (Dave Watt’s son) and Kozza Smith’s son Ryder as the young guns to watch.

Darcy also commented on Brady Kurtz SGP debut prospects....

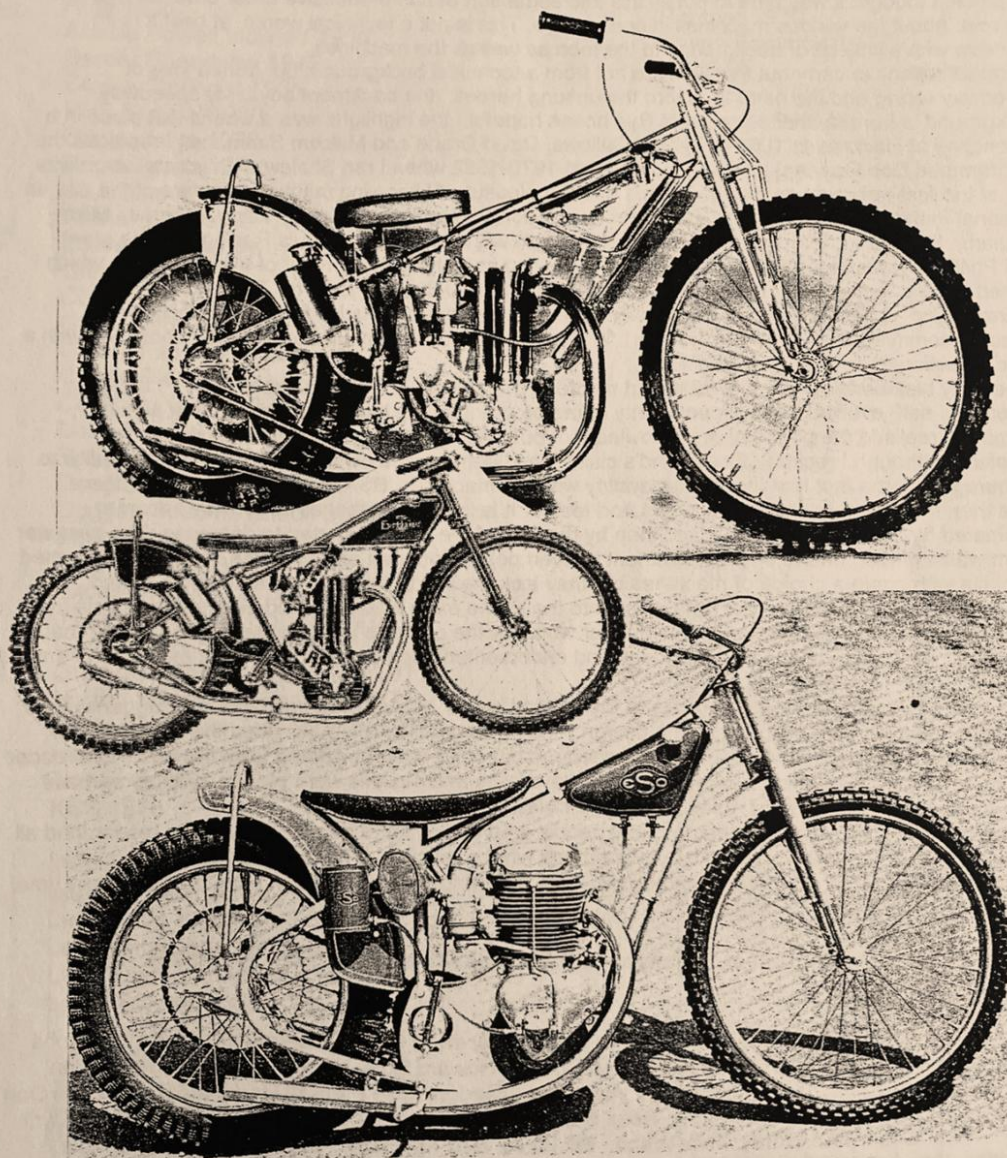
“Brady will be good at times but not so good at other times - a bit up and down. But he could win a Grand Prix if the track suits him.

He’s got aggression to go out and ride a difficult track, but I think he’ll get eaten up many times and his flaws will be shown”

SPECIAL FEATURE IN NEXT NEWSLETTER
A-Z OF SPEEDWAY MACHINES 1926-1980
by Tony Webb



A-Z of Speedway Machines 1926-1980



*EDITED AND RESEARCHED BY TONY WEBB. BRISBANE. QUEENSLAND.
JANUARY 2007*

Vic Huxley

THE ORIGINAL BROADSIDER ... courtesy of Speedway Star, Brian Burford & John Somerville



VIC Huxley had raced before thousands and felt the pressure of their expectations. He was on first name terms with danger, had shaken hands with fate and seen some succumb to its whims, but sitting in the St. Marylebone registry office in London with his bride was the most nervous he'd ever been. He didn't have butterflies, he had bats.

Huxley, who was described by journalist Tom Stenner in *Thrilling the Million* (John Miles, 1934) as "the greatest speedway rider the world has ever known", married Sheila King on October 23, 1931. Just how edgy he was about his impending wedding could have been displayed in a couple of meetings prior to his nuptials.

On the 19th, he only scored five for Wimbledon in their loss at home to Crystal Palace, which included a rare fall, and also lost a match-race to Jack Parker, 2-0. The evening before his most jittery of dates,

Whether he was the greatest speedway rider the world has ever known or not, there is no disputing Vic Huxley's pedigree and earning power in the 1930s. **BRIAN BURFORD** looks back on the career of one of the sport's all-time greats...

Huxley dropped a point at Wembley in his team's 30-23 defeat.

In contrast, three days after becoming a husband, he was unbeaten for the Dons and conquered Ivor Hill to win the Wimbledon Riders' Championship, perhaps proving that even the most daring of men can be anxious about the prospect of lifetime commitment.

Victor Nelson Huxley was born on September 23, 1906, in Woolloowin, Brisbane, and was the third of four children. He first saw racing as a boy at Deagon, Queensland, and was hooked, but a lack of money prevented

him from participating in his passion.

Due to an outbreak of bird lice, the authorities put a bounty on certain breeds, so he set about catching them from which he amassed £13. Combined with a loan from his mother, he was able to obtain his first Triumph motorcycle.

In 1998, his younger brother, Marsh Huxley, recalled Vic's early years in an account published on cybermotorcycle.com. Aided by his daughter, Marilyn Thomson, he wrote that Vic began work on a dairy farm when he was 16, which involved a daily journey of 25 miles by train from Brisbane. Two years later, he joined Exide Batteries and saved up enough money to purchase an AJS G8.

"It was not long before he got the bug of speed, joined a motorcycle club and entered in any competition that meant going fast – flying quarter-mile, hill climbing and the first speedway meeting, which was in 1927 at the Deagon one-mile trotting racecourse," said Marsh.

"I was 12 at the time and all the family were there for the day's racing. I can't recall whether he won anything because a few interstate riders came up with big Harleys and Indians; in fact, there were all sorts of horsepower on the day."

There is a tale that Vic had once competed without his family's knowledge because he was worried his father would object. Instead, he told them he'd gone fishing. Awkwardly, he then had to explain to his dad how a newspaper had reported his success!

Nevertheless, Marsh recalled an occasion when promoters recognised his talent and the subsequent result demonstrated his popularity as well as his versatility.

"The opening of the quarter-mile Exhibition Speedway was one mile from Brisbane city centre and serviced right to the main gates by the electric trams. Opening early summer in 1927, Vic had quite a lot of success but could only run second in scratch races against the 'Peashooter' Harleys (Harley-Davidson). One night, towards the end of the season, his AJS failed when he pushed off from the pits to race in the final.

"The promoters had the presence of mind to have two spare Harleys for loan and Vic was given one. Needless to say, he won the



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Speedway Star

final race of the night and the mob went wild. They overran the pits and we couldn't get near him for quite some time – from then on, it's history."

More victories followed at Brisbane's Davies Park and at Toowoomba Showground, which established him as a top rider in the area. With the sport in its infancy, growth beyond the land Down Under was on the minds of those who could see a bright future for motorcycle racing on dirt-covered ovals.

AJ (Albert John) Hunting, pioneering promoter and entrepreneur, staged the sport at Davies Park and his creative mind introduced glamorous-sounding competitions, which caught the public's imagination, such as the Silver Sash and the longest-running moniker of them all, the Golden Helmet. Consequently, through AJ's savvy promoting, Huxley's profile grew and he acquired the nickname 'Broadside'.

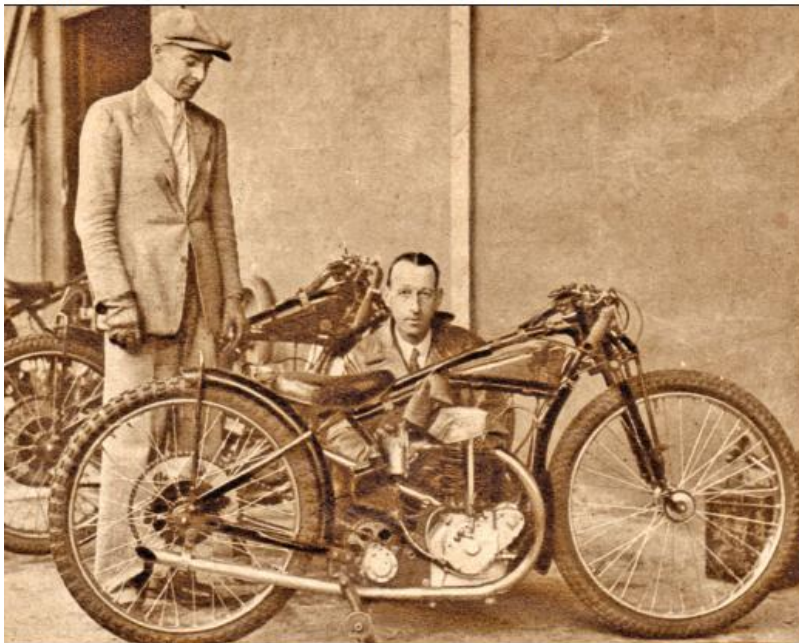
In John Chaplin's *Speedway Superheroes* (Halsgrove, 2012), he included a quote from Huxley that illustrated his dedication.

"I lived for motorcycles in those days. There wasn't time for anything else. I never went out and I didn't even have a girlfriend. I was racing against experts like Frank Pearce and Charlie Spinks, who had proper racing machines. Most of us had stripped down ordinary road bikes."

When Hunting gathered a group of riders to take to Britain in 1928, naturally Vic was among them. International Speedway Ltd. was formed and Huxley was joined by officials and fellow riders like Frank Arthur, Jack Bishop, Hilary Buchanan, Noel Johnson, Billy Lamont, Pearce, Spinks, Dicky Smythe and Ben Urwin.

Most, except Lamont, who was already on his way to England via the USA, were due to embark the Orient liner, Oronsay, in Sydney, on Wednesday, March 28. Huxley and Smythe joined the party at Adelaide the following Monday for the near 40-day journey to England.

But Huxley's enthusiasm and determination caused him to jump ship when the group docked in Naples. He took a train to Paris where he caught an Imperial Airways plane for England.



Vic looks on as mechanic Dick Dendy works on his bike, 1931



In this picture from Toowoomba, Vic Huxley is sitting on the front mudguard next to the standing AJ Hunting. We believe speedway's first World Champion Lionel Van Praag is on the roof.

SPEEDWAY was still called dirt track racing and it was quite different then. Standardisation hadn't occurred and it attracted bikers who had a passion for riding motorcycles in everyday life, never mind on track.

Huxley's machine needed modification before he could race it – which was standard operating procedure. He removed the exhaust, brakes, lights and anything else that was superfluous to going fast. Having only been in England for around 24 hours, he was ready.

Speedway in Britain was still a baby and its first steps had been tentative, yet promising. But word had already spread of Australia's superiority in this discipline, so when Vic spectacularly set two track records at Britain's accepted birthplace of the sport, High Beech, on Saturday, May 5, 1928, his success, while not unexpected, still had almost everyone agog.

So much so, following his initial record-breaking performance, the audience was stunned into silence and Huxley wondered if he'd done something wrong.

The Motorcycle Magazine reported that 12,000 people assembled to see the action and the nice weather and England's Roger Frogley and Australia's Billy Lamont were said to have been major draws. But it disclosed an interesting travel excursion for Vic, which displays some marketing vision.

"Although Billy Lamont was unable to



Vic is presented with a Golden Helmet trophy by King Alfonso of Spain in 1929

appear owing to an indisposition, there was an able substitute in Vic Huxley who broke all the records for the track on a Douglas. Huxley had been specially brought from Naples by air and was given a great ovation."

Applause turned to agitation, though, as apparently officials were peeved that this antipodean interloper had come in and stolen thunder and lightning from newly struck home-grown heroes. They insisted the meeting couldn't continue until local honour had been restored by Frogley. Huxley had broken his one-lap record and the riders were united in enabling him to regain his mark.

But, on a stripped down Rudge-Whitworth, Roger's best efforts fell short of the Australian's time. And then, just to kick dirt into their faces, Vic established a five-lap record which, according to *Motorcycle Magazine*, was three-fifths of a second "faster than the previous best".

That evening, as the crow flies, roughly 16 miles south-west of High Beech, his soon-to-be rival and friend, American Lloyd 'Sprouts' Elder, under the lights of Chelsea's Stamford Bridge in the capital, mirrored Huxley's inspirational display with Stateside showmanship, which really did capture the imagination of the wider public and would-be competitors.

Incidentally, Huxley's nickname, 'Broadside', was believed by some experts to be a misnomer because they claimed he rarely was sideways. Perhaps they were comparing it with the classic image we're familiar with today, because in Elder's book, *The Romance*

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of the Speedway, he described him as "that fine exponent of the art of broadsiding", while Stenner added: "Though essentially the 'white line' rider, Huxley was the most spectacular of them all, for he developed the art of the perfect broadsiding, and this has characterised his riding ever since."

As the season progressed, Huxley won a large collection of honours with the words bronze, silver and gold in their titles, as well as prize money. His triumphs amounted to separation, though.

Britain introduced league racing in 1929, yet they put riders like Huxley in a category called the Star System, which meant they couldn't compete for clubs in league matches. Even the Star Championship, a forerunner of the World Championship, was a split competition for English and Overseas racers – it's believed the former weren't up to speed with the rest of the world.

Through a series of match races, Huxley transferred to the final where he was runner-up to his fellow countryman Frank Arthur. But it was another year of records and all manner of trinkets and rewards came his way as he traversed British tracks.

The following season, Vic joined Haringay when the league was divided into northern and southern leagues. This time, the Star Championship was not segregated and the top 12 scorers in the Southern League's first 15 matches qualified for the final. Huxley was equal third on 104 points alongside Roger Frogley, while defending champion Frank Arthur led the qualifiers with 113.5 from runner-up Jack Ormston on 106.

A series of three-rider elimination heats took place at Wembley. Vic won his heats, set a new track record during his semi-final victory and progressed to the Grand Final where he met Arthur. This time, Huxley whitewashed his opponent, 2-0, to become champion.

As speedway has evolved and the biggest individual championship, the world title, has eclipsed all solo competitions, Huxley's triumph in this event cements his place in history. Unfortunately, it rarely appears in any World Championship Roll of Honour, which means he's often overlooked, if not forgotten.

However, what isn't ignored, and is quite possibly one of Huxley's proudest achievements, was riding for Australia in the first official Test series against England in 1930, when he was also captain.

A semblance of competent cooperation and organisation had still to take hold amid much rivalry among the promoters, so the opening match at Wimbledon was a nine-race affair. Vic was unbeaten (he set a new track record in Heat 1) and Australia won, 35-17.

By the second match at Belle Vue, there was a more coherent effort by all involved and



At High Beech in 1929 alongside Billy Lamont, right, with promoters William Cears, left, and Cecil Brown either side

England levelled the competition. It was an indifferent display from Huxley, who won two races in his seven-point haul. He passed the captaincy to Frank Arthur at Stamford Bridge, where he returned to double figures, yet England won again. The hosts made sure of the series when they revisited Hyde Road, even though Hux, skipper once more, was unbeaten – invincibility he carried forward for the last international at Wembley.

Star Champion and captain of his country, his consistency underlined his status as one of the best riders. As noted, there wasn't an official World Championship at this stage, yet 'world championships' were arranged. To highlight a memorable campaign, Huxley won what the French called Dirt Track Championnat du Monde (Dirt Track World Championship) in Buffalo Velodrome, Paris. This probably led to Cyril May's declaration in *Ride It: The Complete Book of Speedway* (Haynes, 1976) that he was "the undisputed speedway champion of 1930".

He was certainly feted on his return home with the *Brisbane Courier* praising his achievements and 'a large crowd' gathered to greet him. It enthused he'd "established records on practically all of the 50 tracks scattered throughout the British Isles" – May stated it was 52 records across 35 tracks. The story went on to say he'd won over £5,000 in prize money – according to the Retail Price Index that's nearly £400,000 today. The *Courier* added that in one week, he'd won an unprecedented £480.

Huxley, who joined Wimbledon in 1931, where he'd stay for the rest of his British career, retained the captaincy of his country on 27 occasions over 34 international Tests – he handed the armband to Frank Arthur when they raced on his track, Stamford Bridge. In

Vic's final year (1936), the leadership changed hands for each venue, so he was skipper for the Wimbledon Test.

It's been said his biggest rival was Jack Parker, yet clearly he and Frank Arthur competed for the right to be Australia's No. 1. In his book, *Sprouts Elder* was clearly fond of Hux and called him the "Napoleon of the track".

"Besides being a brainy and spectacular rider, (he) is possessed of all those characteristics of style and strategy that go to the making of a perfect broadside," wrote Elder.

"To watch him in an attempt to lower a track record is a picture; his cornering is perfectly timed, and so true is his judgement of the sweep of the curve that one might well imagine his machine to be pivoted by an invisible iron rod radiating from the centre of the curve; it takes a good bump to upset his fine calculations or his dignity.

"If he had not been a dirt-track rider, he would probably have scored as a tightrope walker; a Blondin" of the white line he certainly is. I don't know of a safer rider to have as an opponent."

MODERN commentators have likened Huxley to Ivan Mauger, mainly due to his successes and partly because his triumphs made him a divisive figure – and green-eyed monsters were plentiful.

One Gosford journalist, who was obviously fed up of Vic's winning habit, wrote: "While paying full tribute to the brilliance of the visitor, it must be admitted that his presence detracted from the interest of the racing. Every event in which he appeared was a



Side by side with great rival Jack Parker, right, in 1933



Vic with wife Sheila

procession. Invariably he led from the first bend to win as he chose."

Such was his consistency, rumours spread he was cheating by using bigger engines than was permitted, and a complaint was lodged after a meeting at Harringay. Perhaps tired of the accusations, it was Harringay's joint managing director Charlie Knott who instigated the investigation. In *Speedway Superheroes*, its author related the episode from a scribe calling himself Chancellor.

"Charlie Knott has done Vic Huxley a good turn. There have been whisperings that Hux has an oversized engine and it is good that the point should be cleared up finally...I learn now that the machine was duly measured and found to be in order."

A more unsavoury incident occurred on the track, the kind that Vic himself would say "you don't want to talk about". Two opponents ganged up and tried to sandwich him in an attempt to plant him in the dirt. But they didn't reckon on his natural motorcycling skills for he wasn't intimidated, maintained his speed and let their actions be their undoing. As they tried to dump him off in a pincer movement, at the last second, he sped away, leaving his rivals to emulate the Keystone Cops by crashing into each other as Huxley rode to victory.

The crowd roared with a combination of approval and hilarity. When Vic enquired after his antagonists' well-being and learned they were unhurt, he grinned triumphantly. By most people's standards, he did well to maintain his composure during and after what could have been a very serious skirmish.

Steve McQueen was maybe dubbed the 'King of Cool' but Hux was the real deal, and there was no play acting.

"One can always depend on Vic in an emergency," said Elder. "His calm, resolute character is reflected in those steady grey eyes and that tighty-set mouth."

Much has been made of Huxley's safety record and this self-preservation could have come about because he was seemingly accident-prone as a youngster. One of his more spectacular pre-racing mishaps was losing control of a horse and sliding down a cliff. But as soon as he adopted mechanical horsepower, personal damage was kept to a minimum and it's believed he only suffered one major injury during his career.

Obviously, it's wise to exercise caution in a dangerous sport. During each of the two preceding months before his wedding, a pair of riders lost their lives as a result of crashes: fellow Oronsay traveller Noel Johnson at Plymouth on August 25, 1931, and James 'Indian' Allen at Belle Vue on September 12. Huxley's brother Marsh narrated a notorious pile-up, when skulduggery could have been at work again.

"Someone loosened the grub screw holding the throttle twist grip on and when he went into the first bend in a stop broadside, to line up for the straight, the grip came off under pressure and down he went.

"The rear wheel gathered up his left leg and drove it down the side of the frame and wedged it there. They had to get bolt cutters and cut the frame away to get his leg out. The result was a badly mauled foot and it forced him onto crutches for the rest of the season."

Looking on was a worried Sheila. But, typically, he raised his arm above the cluster of track staff and medics to let her know he was all right while they cut him free.

Yet not all of his adversaries came in the form of crash helmet and leathers, some were in suits and trilbies, often described then as 'spivs'. Until the pandemic, speedway was largely a cash business and it undoubtedly was in Huxley's era. He didn't come from a

privileged background, so he was wiser than some to their ruses, and kept tabs on who controlled the finances.

"It is true that I did keep my eye on that side of things, but I could have done better," he said. "You had to stand up for yourself when dealing with some promoters. A few were fly-by-nighters. Sometimes I had to demand cash before I started up."

Of his many prize monies, another chronicle reckoned in a single season he won eight £100 events, which even the more conservative GDP gauge indicates adds up to approximately £57,000 today – stunning figures at a time when the best weekly wage was roughly 31s and 8d (£105).

His reputation may have been as someone who was unflappable, yet he wasn't beyond enjoying his prosperity in London's fashionable West End with his fellow riders and revellers.

Impeccably dressed off-track, he and Sheila made for a smart, glamorous couple, fitting in with 1930s chic. Their financial well-being enabled them to mix with high society and they were said to have mingled with royalty and celebrities such as T.E. Lawrence.

Hux's affluence enabled him to join fellow racers like Roger Frogley in flying airplanes. A crash, from which he crawled out from under the wreckage with little more than a broken nose, was an indication that outside the oval circuits his luck wasn't as sympathetic. He still raced the next day, though.

WHEN it comes to achievements, it should be taken into account that the Australian's career cannot be measured by the honours we're familiar with today.

Some of the pre-war records have been lost, mainly due to the passage of time, but also preservation of such things was not valued like now.

In a book titled *The Record-Makers* by Major F.A. De V Robertson and Edward Rugg, published in 1936, the authors claim that Hux won more races than any other. While they admit the exact number cannot be verified, they estimated his achievements numbered more than 5,000.

"Huxley is not only the creator of more records than he can remember, he is a record in himself," they wrote.

This could explain why, when this publication and the former *Vintage Speedway Magazine*, conducted a poll at the end of the millennium to find the best rider of the 20th Century, Huxley was one of only four pre-war racers to enter the top 50 of 100 entries – he was at 49.

It wasn't difficult in a pioneering era to create firsts, after all speedway was still evolving, therefore individuals managed to do so with little effort.

Huxley became the first rider to be broadcast on BBC radio's long-running 30-minute *In Town Tonight* programme in 1934. Sadly, those recordings appear to be lost.

But a flavour of the era can be experienced on YouTube from a British Pathé newsreel of the first England v Australia Test from Wembley that year, which really does feel like reaching beyond the veiled World War II barrier into a forgotten age.

Like all sporting high-achievers, natural



Vic and Sprouts Elder, left, in 1929

talent alone isn't sufficient to create consistency and a mass of trophies which require a recurring order of polish from Amazon. With an approach that's recognisable today, Huxley was ahead of his time because he had up to seven machines at his disposal, and a couple of mechanics who maintained them.

One of them was Dick Dendy, who Vic's wife found so cheerless she thought he'd been better suited as an undertaker. But Hux regarded him as "one of the greatest mechanics in the world" and invented a chain tensioning mechanism that may have given him an advantage.

Critics reckoned Huxley was hard on his machinery, which turned out to be another fib, as Dendy explained: "Vic won £1,800 last year on one machine whose total replacements were a piston and two valves."

He retired from British racing at the end of the 1936 season (he qualified for the inaugural World Final, finishing joint sixth), although he did compete in Australia during the Tests against England.

He resumed his captaincy for the opening matches in Sydney and Melbourne – the hosts won the series, 3-2.

He then ran a motorcycle business in Brisbane, British Motorcycle Co., where he lived modestly – his trophies and other paraphernalia associated with his career locked away in the shed at the bottom of his garden.

He died three months following his wife's passing at Kangaroo Point on June 24, 1982.

"Lucky Huxley they used to call me," he said. "But I wasn't lucky. I made sure I had good equipment all the time."

* *Blondin, Charles, real name Jean-Francois Gravellet, was a French acrobat who was best-known for walking a tightrope across Niagara Gorge in 1859.*

■ **NEXT time: Ashes or cinders? Britain Goes Speedway Mad!**

VETERAN TIMELINE courtesy of Brian Darby



2000 VSRA /ASRA RE UNION DINNER DOLLS POINT

MEMBER QUIZ. How many faces can you identify ? Email your list to Brian Darby bdarby@bigpond.com
The member with the most correct names will receive FREE 2026 membership.



Solo Action
6 OF THE BEST



Cec Platt - Garry Hay

Liverpool City Raceway - Photos by Des Lawrence



Gordon Guasco - John Langfield



A McGrath Solo Team

SIDECAR SCENE 1 Phil McCurtayne

Well, the sidecar fraternity has been busier than a one-legged man at a bum kicking contest over the last couple of months with many of the seasons big meetings having been run and won.

The Darrin Treloar Cup at Gillman certainly lived up to the hype with some great racing and plenty of drama including Darrin not making the final. He got hooked up coming out of turn two and was carted infield in the semi and was excluded, not giving him enough points to qualify.

Mark Plaisted/Ben Pitt took out the final with an outstanding outside pass on Trent Hedland/Jaxon Ryner in the last corner. Third was a wounded Justin Plaisted/Brian Anthony. Justin had suffered a bad knee injury in the Jim Irwin Cup when he was involved in a crash with Tyler Moon and had his leg trapped under the sidecar chassis, tearing ligaments. He was riding a bike generously loaned to him by Mick Farrell. Fourth over the line was Mick Headland/Brenton Kerr Mick Farrell



Judy McKay photo



Mark Plaisted/Ben Pitt

Judy McKay photo

At the Gillman Speedway Sidecar Spectacular on the 10th January. Mark Plaisted/Ben Pitt continued on their winning ways taking out the meeting on 15 Points. Second was Trent Headland/Jaxon Rayner on 14 Points. Tyler Moon/Adam Lovell on 13 and Max Howse / Riley Commons 10 Points.

The Bowes Family Cup on February 8th 1st Tom Adams / Campbell Stafford 10 points. 2nd Shane Rudloff / Damian Egan 12 . 3rd Malcolm German / Cameron White 11. 4th Aaron Silvy / Jaron Silvy. 9 .

The Victorian Title was always going to be a big contest and the final certainly lived up to it on February 11. The all-conquering team of Plaisted and Pitt got the chocolates but not without an epic battle with Tyler Moon/Adam Lovell for the entire race, just pipping the Queenslanders on the line and with Max Howse / Riley Commons a close third. This meeting also carried the Warren Monson Memorial Shield in memory of the late Victorian Champion

Back at Gillman on the 22 Feb the SA Title was on the line. Once again Mark Plaisted and Ben Pitt were too good finishing ahead of Trent Hedland/Jaxon Rayner and with Tyler Moon/ Adam Lovell third and with the Broken Hill duo of Max Howes and Riley Common third.

This was a record four SA titles in a row for Plaisted. Unfortunately, the night was marred by a nasty incident when veteran passenger Greg Black was dislodged from the back of Josh Pascoe's outfit and was hit by the bike of Wayne Lethbridge and Grantley Simounds who were right behind them and had nowhere to go. They then crashed heavily on the infield whilst taking evasive action.

Greg suffered a dislocated hip a broken arm and broken ribs. Wayne and Grantley concussion and broken ribs. All are recovering fortunately.

SIDECAR SCENE 2 Phil McCurtayne

Speaking of injuries, my old mate, two times SA Champion and long time competitor Chris Rea suffered a broken leg (three places no less) riding in the Classic Sidecar support races for the Victorian Title. This is the same leg he broke eighteen months ago and he's talking retirement. It will be a huge shame to lose him from the Classics. He runs a Brian Shultz replica in the Post Classic and an immaculate Peterbuilt in the Evo Class and is still a very strong competitor.



Chris Rea (Robmac photo)

On the other side of the continent Pinjar Park played hosts to the West Australian Title on the 22nd of February in front of a very healthy crowd. Josh Well/Cory Blackman took out first place with Jonah Sita/Jamie Forrest second and Mark Mitchell third.



Headland/Raynor



Tilo-Schultz/Riley-Edson

Broken Hill hosted the NSW Title on 2nd March. It was great to see this track running a major sidecar meeting, its first for some time with a good crowd and well prepared track providing some excellent racing. Trent Headland/Jaxon Raynor took out the final from local Broken Hill team of Rick Stephens /Nick O'Brien second and Broken Hill youngsters Max Howes and Riley Common third. Justin Plaisted/ Brian Anthony were excluded for a rough pass on Howes and Commons.

The NSW Junior Title was also run as part of the support programme with Tito Schultz and Riley Edson coming in the winning combination. Tito is the grandson of the late, great South Australian sidecar rider Brian Schultz. The Classics also ran as support to the main event with many of the bikes generously supplied by Mildura's Brian Gathercole. Unfortunately, the racing was soured when competitor Rod Higgins was struck by an exhaust header pipe, lost by another outfit, and flick up from the track striking him in the chest. He was transferred to hospital with broken ribs and a punctured lung.

The make up of the field for the Aussie Title at Bowen next Easter should become clearer soon. Some teams have done an enormous number of miles already this year and it's got to be stretching the budget. There is some doubt about who will represent WA as I believe Josh Wells won't be making the trek.

The evolution of speedway sidecars continues. This interesting front end was seen recently



BRADY KURTZ : AUSSIE TITLE & SGP DEBUT

by Dennis Newlyn



Speedway GP newcomer Brady Kurtz has ended his nine year wait for his second Australian Championship win after sealing the Trophy at Albury-Wodonga on Jan 8th.

The final North Brisbane round of the series was cancelled due to a forecast for heavy rain, which meant Wednesday's round three was declared the last leg of the championship. The 2024 FIM SGP Challenge winner came to the tapes with an eight-point lead over nearest rival Jack Holder. The pair had collected seven points apiece in their opening three rides, meaning victory in his fourth outing in heat 13 would be enough to seal the championship for Kurtz.

The Cowra-born (NSW) racer delivered, seeing off Zach Cook, former SGP3 rider Mitchell McDiarmid and former Aussie Under-21 champion Michael West to lift the title. with a heat and the semi-finals and final to spare, before ending the series on 53 points by taking 2nd spot in the final behind winner Rohan Tungate.



Kurtz, who won the Australian Championship at the first attempt in 2016, also earns a spot in the FIM Speedway Grand Prix qualification rounds, where he will battle for a place at the FIM SGP Challenge in Holsted on August 9. If he can replicate his top-four finish from the 2024 event in Denmark, Kurtz will be guaranteed a spot in the 2026 Speedway GP series.

Holder joins him in the Speedway GP qualifiers as championship runner-up, having sealed second place with victory in his final heat, which took him to 13 points from five rides. He ended up on 42 points overall.

Kurtz was unable to complete a clean sweep of round wins. Despite victories at Gillman and Mildura, outgoing champion Tungate won the final to top the podium on the night at Albury-Wodonga. Kurtz had to make do with second place ahead of 2012 Speedway GP World Champion Chris Holder in third and Ben Cook fourth.

Third on the night for Chris Holder was enough to hand him third place overall on 38 points – one point ahead of former SGP2 star Keynan Rew, who was fourth on 37. The Speedway of Nations 2 bronze medalist made it through the heats on nine points, but his semi-final exit dashed his hopes of reaching the rostrum.

Tungate's victory left him fifth overall on 35, with Ben Cook repeating his sixth-place finish from 2024, scoring 27 – leaving him one ahead of brother Zach Cook, who registered 26.

The series ended in disappointment for Speedway GP star Max Fricke, who pulled out of the Albury-Wodonga event, having been forced to withdraw from round two in Mildura on Sunday. Fricke crashed in the opening race and, despite taking third place in his second outing, he did not continue in the meeting at Olympic Park.

FINAL AUSTRALIAN CHAMPIONSHIP STANDINGS:

1. Brady Kurtz 53
2. Jack Holder 42
3. Chris Holder 38
4. Keynan Rew 37
5. Rohan Tungate 35
6. Ben Cook 27
7. Zach Cook 26
8. Josh Pickering 25
9. Jaimon Lidsey 23
10. James Pearson 16
11. Max Fricke 12
12. Mitchell McDiarmid 11
13. Sam Masters 10
14. Harrison Ryan 10
15. Michael West 10
16. Mitchell Cluff 7





Changes in the Speedway Grand Prix.

The Grand Prix of Great Britain, originally scheduled for August 16 in Cardiff, has been replaced by an additional round in Manchester on June 13.

03.05 – Grand Prix of Germany, Landshut 17.05 – Grand Prix of Poland, Warsaw 31.05 – Grand Prix of the Czech Republic, Prague 13.06 – Grand Prix of Great Britain, Manchester 14.06 – Grand Prix of Great Britain, Manchester 21.06 – Grand Prix of Poland, Gorzów Wielkopolski 05.07 – Grand Prix of Sweden, Målilla 02.08 – Grand Prix of Latvia, Riga 30.08 – Grand Prix of Poland, Wrocław 13.09 – Grand Prix of Denmark, Vojens

There have also been changes to the competition system, which include:

- **Modification of the rules for determining the order of starting gate selection**, introducing a three-stage qualification process (Q1, Q2, and Q3) before each event. In Q1, eight randomly assigned pairs of riders will compete. Each competitor will have 60 seconds to set the fastest lap time. The losing riders will be ranked from 9th to 16th place, while the winners will advance to Q2, following the same rules. The winners of Q2 will proceed to the decisive Q3, where four riders will once again have one minute to compete for the fastest lap time. In rounds held in Landshut, Warsaw, Gorzów Wielkopolski, Manchester, and Wrocław, instead of Q3, the top four riders will compete in a sprint race.
- **Elimination of semifinals.** The top two riders after the main phase will advance directly to the final race, while riders placed 3rd to 10th will compete in two last chance heats, with the winners also securing a place in the final. The first last chance heat will feature riders ranked 3rd, 6th, 8th, and 9th, while the second will include riders placed 4th, 5th, 7th, and 10th.
- **Reduction of the time allowed for riders to prepare at the start** – from two mins to one and a half mins.

■ New Australian on the European scene.

Declan Kennedy has signed a contract with the Scunthorpe Scorpions, the British Championship's third-placed team last season, marking his debut in a European league. He will ride for the Scorpions together with his older brother, Zaine, who is returning to the team after a two-year break.

■ Club rider movements for the 2025 season (situation as of February 28).

Poland. Jason Doyle: GKM Grudziądz → Włókniarz Częstochowa; Chris Holder: Arged Malesa Ostrów Wielkopolski → ROW Rybnik; Brady Kurtz: ROW Rybnik → Sparta Wrocław; James Pearson: Włókniarz Częstochowa → Kolejarz Opole; Josh Pickering: Wybrzeże Gdańsk → Unia Leszno; Keynan Rew: Unia Leszno → Stal Rzeszów.

Sweden. Ben Cook (debutant): Smederna Eskilstuna; Ryan Douglas: Dackarna Målilla → Rospiggarna Hallstavik; Jaimon Lidsey: Lejonen Gislaved → Vargarna Norrköping; Sam Masters (return to racing in the Swedish league): Rospiggarna Hallstavik.

Great Britain. Fraser Bowes (debutant): Workington Comets; Mitchell Cluff (debutant): Plymouth Gladiators; Ben Cook: Belle Vue Aces Manchester → King's Lynn Stars; Zach Cook: Birmingham Brummies → Belle Vue Aces Manchester; Jye Etheridge: Berwick Bandits → Workington Comets; Jacob Hook: Plymouth Gladiators → Workington Comets; Declan Kennedy (debutant): Scunthorpe Scorpions; Zaine Kennedy (return to racing in the British league): Scunthorpe Scorpions; Luke Killeen: Oxford Spires; Matt Marson: Belle Vue Colts Manchester → Edinburgh Monarchs Academy, and Poole Pirates (until June 28); Mitchell McDiarmid (debutant): Oxford Cheetahs; Keynan Rew: Ipswich Witches → Birmingham Brummies; Dayle Wood: Berwick Bandits. **Denmark.** Jason Doyle: Region Varde Elitesport → Esbjerg Vikings.



STATE SECRETARY ROUND UP

QLD Steve Magro [Graham Gardiner & Darren Sonnenberg]

Saturday May 24th. Ray Owen Classic Bike Show and Swap Meet
Classic Speedway Bike and Car show TBC. May 2025.

The 2025 Australia Day display was another successful event held at the Albany Creek Tavern in Brisbane. Hosted by the Albany Creek Tavern Social Club we enjoyed great turn out of Classic Cars , Speedway Cars and Bikes.

Grahame Gardiner with his 4 Valve JAP and Laydown Jawa was joined by Andy Nightingale with his restored Weslake and Michael Lee tribute bike fitted with a 4 Valve Jawa engine. Ricky Nicol completed the display with two of his former race bikes. Congratulations to Andy for winning the Best Speedway Bike Trophy for the Michael Lee bike.

Once again was plenty of interest in the bikes and we heard some great memories and stories from those in attendance. Thank you to the Albany Creek Tavern and Social club for putting on the display.



WILLOWBANK NEWS

Apparently MQ & MA have changed all practice rules so speedway and dirt track can not run on the same permit and same time ! What a joke as this will undermine dirt track to speedway transition and the lifeblood of our sport for many years. If you can do it in NSW, why not in QLD?

Permit Fees; Speedway \$50 fee and \$8 a rider and cannot use a \$35 day license anymore.

Dirt track free and \$6 a rider And you can get a \$38 day license

A real shame that Darcy Ward has apparently pulled the pin on running off season events at Mick Doohan Raceway in Brisbane. The winter meetings provide local riders with a great opportunity to hone their skills, but Ward's exit will bring that to a halt. He hasn't ruled out running other meetings during the summer but has not guaranteed it either.

QLD Welfare officer Grahame Gardiner visited Kevin Torpie with John Finglas at the end of February. Kev was looking a little better than previous visits but his health is such that he wont be able to return home. Christine is currently looking for a care facility and it sounds like this has not been easy but is the only option to look after Kev and keep him comfortable.

STATE SECRETARY ROUND UP

WA Tony Wilton



ASRA Most Improved 2024 Rider Award:

Presented to Mitch McDiarmid at the Pinjar Park Gordon Rowland Memorial on Feb 1st. Mitch made it a clean sweep of all solo races
'Great way to finish off the Australian season. We had a great night winning the Australian Speedway Riders Association Award. I also set my fastest race time doing a 59.0 in the first heat and scoring a maximum for the night. I can't thank Pinjar Park and my supporters enough for the help given to me this year'.



Feb 22nd W.A. Sidecar Title. The best crowd all season turned out at Pinjar Speedway to see Josh Wells and passenger Corey Blackman take out a well deserved win. Although they were unbeaten on the night, all races were hotly contested with little between place getters in heats and the final.

Sighted amongst the crowd were many previous top competitors from days past on two, three and four wheels including Mick McKeon, Andy Bowman and Geoff Stanton.

The final saw Wells win the start with Liptrott, Jonah Sita and Mitchell close behind. An incident near the pits left the Liptrott machine sitting mid track and the race was stopped and re started minus Liptrott and Thomas. Josh Wells and Corey Blackman again gated fast and won a narrow but well deserved victory from Jonah Sita/Jamie Forrest, and Mark Mitchell/Tony Carter.

Jack McDiarmid won the 500cc solo went home with clean leathers, winning all his heats and the final from Nigel Flatman and Trevar Dossett. Phoenix Elliott won the 250cc final, and Mason Robins the 125cc final.

The legend that is the Felixstowe Flyer Watching speedway at Claremont in the early 90,s I saw a new British rider and thought, "This chap knows his way around". Little did I know, I would still be watching him at Pinjar Park more than 30 years later! The rider in question, none other than Nigel Flatman who, now in his mid 60's still pushes the limits to this day. He made his British leagues debut during the 1977 National League season, riding for Peterborough who won the Fours Championship. Nigel also ran second to Kenny Carter in the British under 21 Championship. By 1980, he was also a regular rider for Ipswich and reached the final of the Under 21 World Championship. He then rode exclusively for Ipswich and won the Knockout Cup in 1981 and the league and cup double during the 1984 British league season. Nigel continued to ride for Ipswich and doubled up with Peterborough in the National league and rode 12 consecutive years for Ipswich before having two final seasons with Peterborough in 1989 and 1990. Fast forward 35 years and he is still serving it up at Pinjar. Early in the current season he was always up front in the B grade solo but the youngsters have been learning from him and are now giving him plenty of competition.



There is an amazing story to this great photo by Graham Veasey .When Nigel was racing for Ipswich a young girl called Kazz Dossett used to watch him race with her mum and dad. Her son Trevar Dossett (on the outside) is now mixing it with Nigel at Pinjar Park. Nigel also still gets about a bit. He came 4th in British Upright Championship at the Isle of Wight in 2023.



STATE SECRETARY ROUND UP

NSW Rod Colquhoun



Nepean Speedway Showcase on Feb 15th was a huge success thanks to MNSW endorsement and promotional support. 'Well, that's a wrap on our first Speedway Development Day for the year! It was fantastic to see a good mix of some twenty eight junior 50cc, 125cc and 250cc riders, along with our Senior 500cc and Demo 500c up and coming riders. Not to mention the likes of Joshie Pickering having a hit out before heading back overseas, and of course the old boy's class which was good to see.Quite a few riders coming from interstate and afar so thanks heaps for making the trip to Nepean - see you at the next one!'



Rising SGP superstars Beau Bailey and Cooper Antone gained help and advise from super coach Mick Holder

The Kurri Kurri Speedway Club's EmpowerRide program launched into full swing with a Come and Try/ Recreation Day on Saturday 08 March 2025 at the Loxford Speedway venue.

The EmpowerRide program has received funding from the Australian Government Play Our Way scheme and will be used to help the Kurri Kurri Speedway Club increase participation of women and girls in motorcycling through purchasing equipment, providing women with the opportunity to obtain their coaching and officiating qualifications, and delivering women's-only events



Big congratulations to Brady Kurtz on winning his second national speedway crown in early January. The likeable Cowra rider was in sublime form and dominated the series from start to finish. He was clearly up for the job, as he brought his best engines from Poland back to enhance his chances.



Ex ASRA President the late Ralph Warnes partner Robyn spent almost three months cataloguing his extensive collection of bikes and memorabilia for the Feb 9th auction.

Nice work from Rohan Tungate in winning the Oceania Solo Championship at Gillman, as he secured himself a place in the Grand Prix qualifying series as a result. Rohan is a wonderful talent, but much like fellow Hunter Valley resident, Sam Masters, he is yet to convert great form into a regular GP place. We wish him every success!

AUSTRALIAN SPEEDWAY SPOTLIGHT

David Tapp interviewed by Rod Colquhoun



In the eyes of many, the outlook for Australian Bike speedway has never been more bleak. Despite many Australians performing with distinction overseas there are less and less riders coming through and very few meetings of note during the Australian summer, compared to the past 30 years. In fact, only three tracks nationally run semi regular bike meetings. One highlight of the recent summer season was double header conducted by International Speedway Masters guru David Tapp, and whilst the two night affair was a treat for race starved fans he has vowed never to promote speedway again. We sat down with 'Tappy' to find out some of the challenges he faced and his opinion of the sport as a whole.



Hi David, thanks for your time;

The International Speedway Masters at Gillman was easily the biggest event of the recent season and featured a stellar field as well as live Streaming and delayed national TV coverage on Fox Sports, Kayo and Foxtel GO. How would you rate its success? ***DT: I was happy with night one. The crowd was roughly what I anticipated it would be and the overall, I'd have to say, it was the best sidecar meeting I've ever seen. Night two was hugely disappointing given the costs involved in staging an international solo fixture. The crowd was only 128 people better than night one, and that was demoralising, both emotionally and financially, to be very honest. Night two was 1,000 people down on my expectations. It was a good show but overall, hugely disappointing.***

Despite all the obstacles riders face, Australia is still producing world class competitors, why do you think this is happening? ***DT: It's due to the efforts of the likes of the Mildura Motorcycle Club, Adelaide Sidewinders, Gillman Speedway, Kurri Speedway Club, Pinjar Park and individuals such as Mick Holder and Craig Boyce.***

What are your thoughts on any strategies that could be used to boost the popularity and appeal of Aussie speedway for future generations? ***DT: To encourage more youth to take up speedway motorcycle racing as a hobby/career the sport needs to be higher profile. Simple as that. Major events on TV, professional marketing, and a business plan.***

To be blunt, the bulk of Australian bike fans are getting old and sadly dying - is that a fair comment? ***DT: Mate, the sport is in awful trouble in Australia, especially solos. Sidecars are strong in some pockets, such as Adelaide, but most club's promoting events would struggle to break even on "normal shows". Solos, at a high level, are totally unviable due to the costs involved. There is a massive generation gap. The sport's fan base is aging, and the average young person would not have a clue who Jack Holder and Max Fricke are. There is a complete lack of quality venues in major capital cities and there are no entrepreneurial promoters. The sport has no leadership, no business plan, no media strategy, and no marketing plan. It's embarrassing the sport has allowed itself to be in this position, which has eventuated due to a complete lack of vision and fundamental leadership. I genuinely fear for the future of the sport in Australia. The way it's going, it may not exist, as we know it, in ten years' time.***

UK speedway seems to survive almost in spite of itself, while from afar Polish Speedway looks to be booming, do you have a global view of the sport, or is Australia your only real interest? ***DT: I follow the sport globally and the UK and Scandinavia are struggling for survival. Poland, as good as it is, has created a false economy that the rest of the world cannot match. Some riders, in fact many of them, have the expectation to earn "Polish money" in other markets and it is simply unsustainable. Bringing foreign internationals and even the top Aussie boys to an event, such as the one I recently staged at Gillman, is not viable. The riders' asking price cannot be absorbed given the poor crowds that attend. I could not have done a better job with marketing and advertising. We placed 87 x TV commercials on Channel 7 and 7 Mate and purchased some 120 radio commercials. The solo event comprised several SGP riders, former World Champions, and competitors from five countries, yet only 120 more people, than the sidecar night, attended? Sorry, but this says it all.***

STATE SECRETARY ROUND UP

SA/NT Shane Parker

Peter White's
Speedway World



The International Speedway Masters Leigh Adams Cup on December 28th was staged by David Tapp Power Productions Pty. Ltd., who leased the venue from the Speedway Riders Association of SA. It was a nod to the famous international series Tapp successfully ran from 1995 to 2001 and which was basically a forerunner to the Speedway Grand Prix.

The meeting attracted a large crowd, around the 1500 mark, many who came for a rare chance to see some foreign riders, such as Jan Kvech and Luke Becker, and others to see the Australian stars as a taster for the Aussie Championship round.

The meeting format was that being used by the SGP in 2025 with the final consisting of the top two point scorers and the winners of two last chance semi-finals, and there was no doubt about the top two scorers as Jack Holder and Jaimon Lidsey dominated the scorecard.

Holder went through the card unbeaten, and perhaps more importantly, he was not winning the starts but was still able to pass his opposition riders to finish with his 15 point maximum.

In total there were 11 heat winners, showing the closeness of the racing, and the other rider to score a race win was the 16-year-old rising star Mitchell McDiarmid who beat Grand Prix rider Max Fricke in heat 18.

Although he was only riding junior speedway at the start of the year, such has been his rapid rise in senior speedway his win over Fricke, thrilling as it was, was not a total shock. In his previous race he was only a couple of bikes lengths behind Kvech and Chris Holder as they had one of the best dices of the night.



For the final Jack Holder took red, Lidsey blue, Chris Holder white, leaving Kvech with yellow and before the race started it was mind-games between Jack and Jaimon, two of the Aussie Championship favourites. They were elbow-to-elbow at the tapes and neither was willing to move. When they eventually were forced to move apart, Chris took advantage of their games to race to the lead and was looking every bit a winner until he went wide on the second lap and had to slow which allowed Jack to take the lead. Chris quickly regained his composure to hold second place and the two brothers then had a thrilling race for victory and the Leigh Adams Medal, and it was Jack who prevailed to complete his unbeaten night, with Chris second, Kvech a very close third and Lidsey fourth.

27th December THE DARRIN TRELOAR CUP. 1st Mark Plaisted / Ben Pitt 14 ,2nd Trent Headland / Jaxon Rayner 14, 3rd Justin Plaisted / Brian Anthony 11 **3rd January Australian 500cc Solo Championship CBS Bins Round 1** Final Kurtz ; J. Holder, C. Holder, Rew **10th January Gillman Sidecar Spectacular** Final Plaisted.

Headland ,Moon, Howse **25th January FIM Oceania 500cc Solo Championship** Final Tungate Lidsey Pearson Brennan (B-fell, exc) **8th February Bowes Family Sidecar Cup** Final Adams Rudloff ,German , A. Silvy

22nd February South Australian Sidecar Championship Plaisted ,Headland ,Howse, Moon

Remaining meetings this season at Gillman Speedway;

March 15th Bob White Sidecar Cup March 29th SA FIM Oceania Speedway Sidecar Championship

Shane Parker will be running coaching days through out the rest of the season and into the Winter.

STATE SECRETARY ROUND UP

TASMANIA Leon Jowett



2025 has come with a rush of enthusiasm and a relentless workload for the Committee and volunteers of the Tasmanian Speedway Motorcycle Association (TSMA). The Moorland Beach Speedway has been transformed from a bare paddock to now a near finished speedway complex. The junior track and the senior track are now complete. Junior track length is 120 metres on the pole line, the senior track is 330 metres on the pole line. Track surface is crushed blue metal. Our clubrooms (sheds) are now also completed. As our club membership has grown, an adjacent shed is for bike storage and has a fully fitted out machine shop and workshop facility, where our juniors will learn their bike maintenance skills.



We thank our local Federal Politician Jackie Lambie and the Latrobe Municipal Council for the interest they have shown for our youth development program.

'Had an absolute ripper of a morning at Moorland Beach Speedway with a top bunch of locals!. If you haven't been down there yet, get on it – it's bloody great. Big thanks to everyone for showing me the ropes – I had a blast! Next time, I might have to strap on a helmet and do a few laps myself... but no promises I'll keep up with Levi!' Jackie Lambie



January 26th saw the TSMA have a static junior speedway bike display at the Australia Day Henley on Mersey at Latrobe. Thanks to 10 year old Levi Connell who fronted to help on the day.

February 8th - 9th the TSMA had another static bike display at the North West Motorcycle Show at Ulverstone. This is one of the largest motorcycle events in Tasmania. There was a lot of interest for solos, sidecars and flat trackers. Thanks to Ray Andrieux for showing the immaculate Vincent HRD speedway sidecar. A chat with another local sidecar rider from the past was Henry Bishop. Many people from (over the sea) mainland states would remember Henry and his swinger Greg Lillico.

The what's on or maybe what's not on in Tasmania will depend on a few factors. Mainly we are waiting on both track approval permits to be issued. Secondly the water bore contractor has been delayed till May due to a mechanical breakdown, this may restrict us to the junior track only.



Tasmania Speedway Motorcycle Association (TSMA) Moorland Beach Speedway
Proposed March 1st 2025 Junior Come and Try Day
Proposed March 23rd 2025 Devonport Motor Show Static speedway bike display
Information day/club membership drive

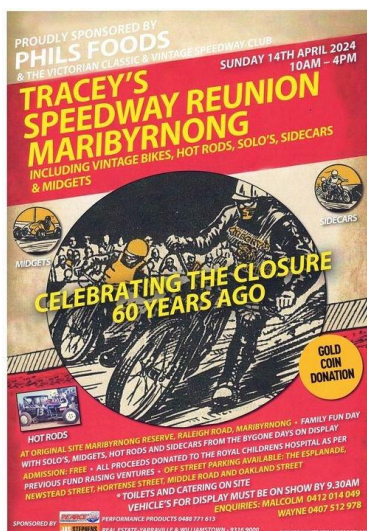
STATE SECRETARY ROUND UP

VICTORIA Tony Webb



- The Shannons Classic Bike event at Broadford is now confirmed for Easter weekend April 18,19,20. See poster below. For more information and details contact Rachelle Pettifer 0408 652 877 email: rachel240871@gmail.com
- Undera have apparently encountered some venue licence/permit change issues with MV. The scheduled March 1st practice day tbc
- Tracey's Speedway Reunion Maribyrnong, organised by the Victorian speedway club is on Sunday April 13th from 10am to 4pm at the stadium. See poster below.
- Victorian Speedway Heritage Face book Group has been set up to gather local speedway history heritage and to share with ASRA history plans.
- Ballarat Victoria's golden city has not heard the roar of speedway bikes for many a year and although speedways most famous promoters, the Hunting brothers who took speedway world wide in 1928, were born in the city.

There are many Victorian connections with motorcycling for which recognition is sadly lacking. Phil Irving, Australia's finest engineer had his shop in the city centre. It's also the birthplace of Victorian champion and International the late Danny Kennedy. The Aussie road racing Championships were held for several years at Victoria Park. Pioneer speedway rider Steve Langton struck gold there in his retirement when he found 13 gold nuggets. All is not lost as local history groups are now awakening to the forgotten past and addressing our rich heritage.



Future Calendar March 8 Mildura Sidecar Shoot Out

'I have made the decision to step down from an active role in the ASRA.

This is not an easy decision and I will not go into chapter and verse, but it has come to a head after a routine medical check revealed another problem apart from the vision deterioration. This requires twice weekly appointments which impacts on my family as I cannot drive in myself. My wife Maggie has always supported my computer failings, however I do not want to place a burden on other people. I cannot be effective so is time to say enough is enough after 75 years.

The timing is right as last week my entire collection was digitised by an archives consultant. Everything is now on file and on USB, some 110.files .Arrangements are being made for the Victorian files to go in a state archives. My work is also available to ASRA.

I am totally committed to the objectives of the ASRA as a benevolent association caring for members. I will endeavour to find a replacement representative for Victoria.

This is my decision, time to fade into the sunset' Tony Webb

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WOFFINDEN BACK ON BIKE in OZ

Story from FIM Speedway GP

courtesy Dennis Newlyn



Triple Speedway GP world champion Tai Woffinden admitted, “I’m loving every second of it” after getting back in the saddle Down Under.

Woffinden’s 2024 season was ended by a badly broken elbow suffered at the FIM Speedway GP of Poland – Gorzow on June 29, with the Perth raised star forced to undergo a lengthy and patient recovery following surgery. This appears to have paid off after a delighted Woffinden uploaded footage from Western Australia of his first practice session since he suffered the injury.

He posted: “Not even sat on one of my bikes in the last seven months! Straight back to it and I’m loving every second of it. Body feels great, no issues with the elbow, see you all in a month’s time.”

I am borrowing (Oxford rider) Luke Killeen’s bike, and I am hyped!



Woffinden’s return to fitness comes as a timely boost to his European clubs as he lines up for British Rowe Motor Oil Premiership side Sheffield, Polish Metalkas 2 Ekstraliga team Rzeszow and Swedish Bauhaus Elitserien club Vastervik.

While this will be his first season outside of the Speedway GP starting line-up since 2012, he will serve as third substitute rider for the championship and could be called into action if one of the 15 regular members of the series are sidelined due to injury, illness or other reasons.

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OUR THOUGHTS AND GOOD WISHES ARE WITH YOU

– by Bill Powell, Memorabilia Officer



Fred Williams

During the 1960/70s golden era of solo and sidecar speedway racing, many businesses, trade houses and individuals provided generous support through the donation of prize money, trophies, equipment and motorcycles for the Season point score winners. This created a rider incentive and provided and encouraged an exciting and successful racing format. These rewards to riders and passengers for their efforts resulted in top speedway action for the paying speedway public. On the Sydney scene, ASRA Members Graeme Hartman and Jim Airey, displayed this supporter's passion.

I recently had the honour to catch up with 94-year-old Fred Williams at his mid-north coast residence, who fulfilled the above role over many years.

A little background regarding the remarkable Fred Williams – Father of Australian water-skiing. Fred's early interest and involvement in water skiing led him to become a trail blazer within the industry. An accomplished skier himself, he was instrumental in water ski design and manufacturing, boat building, speedboat owner and driver, ocean yacht racing and ship chandlery.

His accomplishments – Fred, the designer, competitor, administrator and promotor, has done it all.

Fred's first involvement in sponsorship of speedway is recorded here by NSW and Australian sidecar Champion, Graham Young

My speedway pal, Neil Wanstall and I walked into Fred Williams' store in Ashfield one Saturday morning to buy some rope to tie down our sidecar onto the trailer. We both liked boats and skiing and were looking around at some second-hand boats Fred had for sale. Fred came over, introduced himself and we got talking about boats and stuff. We told him we wanted to buy a rope – he asked what we wanted it for. I told him and he started grinning. "You guys ride at the speedway – I go there every Saturday night – we love the speedway". I said to Fred, jokingly, when we buy a boat do you want to sponsor us at the speedway? "Bloody oath – I will sponsor you whether you buy a boat or not", said Fred.

Well, he sure did. Everything Fred said he would do – he did and brought a little professionalism to our team. He got the bike painted and decked us out in nice gear.

Fred got so involved with the sidecars that he put on a season's point-score prize of a boating package which was the envy of all other sections of the sport.

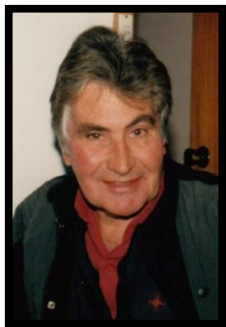
Fred's enthusiasm was catching and his little pep talks were priceless. The week before the Australian Championships in 1969 we ran lousy. Fred said to Ray Murray and I "you blokes are riding like old women. I could beat you on a Vespa. Get that bloody bike going and get out there and blow them up:". We did – thanks Fred.

In later years he sponsored the Fred Williams Marine Speedway Solo Team at Liverpool Raceway. Fred recently enjoyed reading a number of our past Newsletters (see photo) and made the comment that he was so pleased to be still remembered by his speedway family.



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CHEQUERED FLAG – by Bill Powell , Welfare Officer



It is with deep sadness and regret that I have to inform you of the sad passing of valued Queensland ASRA Member and friend Gordon Marx aged 89 years. Gordon passed away on Thursday 19th December 2024 following a long illness.



Gordon's life revolved around motorcycling, especially dirt track and speedway. He originally joined the Sydney Central Motorcycle Club before transferring to the Bankstown/Wiley Park Club.

From 1983 he was the Bankstown/Wiley Park Club Dirt Track Director and also a Nepean Motor Sports Club Director. He was instrumental in organising and officiating the popular and very successful dirt track event the "King of Nepean".

During his involvement at Nepean Raceway Gordon was very active organising and officiating at many Club and Open dirt track promotions. In 1989 he was elected Bankstown/Wiley Park Club President and was granted Life Membership in 1990.

After moving from Sydney to Pimpama on the Queensland Gold Coast he utilised his management skills and became a very active volunteer at the Gold Coast's 320 Gordon in 2004.

He distinguished himself by filling many roles, Grid Marshal, Start Marshal, to name a few.

Behind the scenes, Gordon's organising skills and dedication were the reasons the Sel Walton Memorial Aussie Classic Speedway event was a major success on the east coast of Australia.

Gordon was a most remarkable man who displayed passion and drive for the sport and the people he loved. Recognised for his outstanding achievements and contributions to our sport, which is largely carried out by a volunteer workforce. Gordon will be remembered as an incredibly vibrant, passionate individual who was full of positive energy to share with all.

I am honoured to have known this most inspiring individual as well as I did.

Deepest sympathy is extended to Gordon's family and friends at this sad time.



On behalf of the ASRA, our heartfelt sympathy is extended to all those who have lost someone dear to them





Oct. 27-Nov. 10, 1950

AUSTRALIAN SPEEDWAY WORLD

Page 7

VAN PRAAG - WORTHY AUSTRALIAN CHAMPION

Says Rodney Allen

IS Lionel Van Praag destined for a return to the top rank in speedway? His present form is a revelation, and he is displaying skill and verve matching those of his palmiest days when he was at the top of the speedway tree.

Lionel proved he is no spent force when, at Sydney Sports Ground on October 6, he disposed of Arthur Payne to become the first holder of the newly - instituted Australian Match Race Championship.

Fourteen years have passed since he won the World Championship. War service and retirement have intervened. Yet he must now be considered a strong candidate for Test honours this season.

The comeback trail is not an easy one to follow, but, by dint of hard perseverance and determination, Lionel has regained most of his old brilliance.

£500 TROPHY

He is a worthy holder of the new title. His victory won him the Gold Helmet, valued at £500, which will remain in his possession for so long as he retains the championship.

Payne was making his first appearance after flying back



Van Praag being presented with the Golden Helmet

from England and had to ride a borrowed machine.

Nevertheless, he showed good form and won the first heat in 35 secs. Van Praag fought back and levelled the score with a winning ride in 35.2 secs.

In the decider, Van returned 34.8 secs, only 1/5 sec. outside the two laps record held jointly by Aub Lawson and Jack Biggs.

At regular intervals, the title holder will be called upon to defend his championship against selected challengers, as is done in England.

LONGLEY SHINES IN 'TEST' WIN

Victorian Bill Longley sparked at Shelbourne Park, Dublin, when he led a team labelled "Australia" to an exciting victory over an "England" side by 45 points to 39.

The issue was in doubt until the final heat, a maximum win by New Zealander Trevor Redmond and Merv Harding over Eric French and Ron Mountford securing the honours for the Australian side.

The meeting was packed with thrills, with the teams jockeying for the lead throughout.

Graham Warren had a good meeting, scoring nine points, one less than Longley, while Frank Lawrence, with 10, was best for "England."

Lawrence received good support from Bill Kitchen (8) and New Cross Team mate Cyril Roger (7), but the team lacked the balance of the Australian combination.

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WHATS ON John Walker

Email details of your events to john.walker_nbn@iinet.net.au

- March 22** Goolwa Teams Meeting, Sidewinders U16 Speedway Club, Eighth St, Wingfield, SA
- March 23** SSRAV Speedway Sidecar Racing Association Victoria Club Day : Broadford
- March 29** Oceania Sidecar Championships, Gillman SA
- April 5** - Rod Slater Super Series Grand Final plus Blast from the Past, Pinjar Park, W.A.
- April 5** Dirt Track Only, Ipswich Switches Junior MC, Qld
- April 6** SSRAV Speedway Sidecar Racing Association Victoria Club Day : Broadford
- April 7** Vintage Motorcycle Club of Victoria, Motorcycles Only Swap meet, [1200 Ferntree Gully Rd, Scoresby Vic.](#)
- April 12** Club Day Speedway solos/sidecars/flat track, Kurri Kurri Speedway, [73-81 Dickson Rd, Loxford NSW](#)
- April 13** Tracey's Speedway Reunion Maribyrnong Vic Contact Malcolm 0412 041049
- April 18,19 and 20** - Broadford Easter Weekend Contact Rachelle Pettifer 0408 652 877
- April 26** Speedway & American Flat Track only Ipswich Switches Junior MC Speedway Club, Qld.
- April 26** Speedway Experience, Nepean Speedway [112 Rickards Rd Castlereagh NSW](#)
- May 3** – Speedway & AFT only, Ipswich Switches Junior Motorcycle Speedway Club, Qld.
- May 10** Club Day – Speedway solos/sidecar/flat track, Kurri Kurri Speedway, [73-81 Dickson Rd, Loxford NSW](#)
- May 24** Dirt Track Only, Ipswich Switches Junior MC, Qld
- May 27** Speedway Experience, Nepean Speedway
- May 31** Speedway & AFT only, Ipswich Switches Junior MC Club Qld
- June 7** Dirt Track Only, Ipswich Switches Junior MC Qld
- June 7** Speedway Experience, Nepean Speedway
- July 12** Club Day Speedway solos/sidecars/flat track Kurri Kurri Speedway, [73-81 Dickson Rd, Loxford NSW](#)
- July 26** Speedway/AFT only, Ipswich Switches Junior MC Qld

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