



THE OBSERVER

For the members of Castle Colchester MCC – **The Ace(s) of Spades**

December 2015 Edition

This edition is going to be a bit on the 'dry' side, let me warn you, coz most of it is what you might call 'admin'. First we have a little resume and a few pics of the Dinner & Dance, then we get into a brief report about the AGM and we round things off with a summary of the recent Trials Forum meeting.

Before we get to all that can I just offer the good wishes from all Club members to a couple of our guys who've been going through a hard time. Matt Rayner is recovering well from a fairly serious accident and we hope this continues apace. Also, Geoff Calver has really been through the mill and we wish Geoff a speedy recovery and an upturn in fortune in the coming months.

Apologies for The Observer being late – and also I've got that 'I've forgotten something' feeling about it.....

Dinner & Dance

There was a very good turnout for the D&D and thanks must go to, among many others, Don Blackman and the Southend Club. Don managed to coerce a lot of enduro people into coming along and the Southend Massif arrived in force – and everyone seemed to have a really good time. Gary Wakley's hard work paid off handsomely especially with a master stroke of inviting Southend's Mark Kemp to be our guest of honour.

For those of you that don't know Neil is to embark on a round the world motorcycle ride, starting in the early part of next year, and is raising money for charity in the process. The funds raised from the raffle etc usually go to Essex Air Ambulance but this year got redirected to Mark's chosen charity The Teenage Cancer Trust. So, by supporting one of the Centre's trials guys (Neil) we indirectly support another (kind of) in Dom Feeks who has recently had further surgery.



Guest of Honour: Mark Kemp.....



Chairman Gravitas...



The Chamleys hear about the Beamish...

2016 Annual General Meeting

You won't be surprised to know that there wasn't a whole lot of change at the AGM. The usual procedures were followed, of course, and the meeting started off with Derek giving his President's Report. Gary followed that up with the Chairman's Report and summarised that we had another successful year, with four trials run, the Dinner & dance etc and (with the Treasurer's hat firmly on his head now) that we even made a miniscule operating profit. Neil gave a brief report on the membership situation which has pretty much remained static, again. Then it moved on to electing the Club officials and, to cut a short story even shorter, all of last years' officials were re-elected – mainly on the grounds that no one else has offered their services instead. The last topic was the open discussion and this quickly morphed into the early stage planning for the 2016 Phil King Trial.

End of AGM report.....

The meeting was well attended which must have been encouraging for the trials committee (TC). Castle were out in some force with Gary W, Paul W, Dick N and myself forgoing the more obvious delights of bonfire night. Clive Dopson chaired the meeting and did it well which was no easy task with so many well-intentioned but opinionated characters in attendance. This was his last duty as outgoing chairman after three years. Fortunately, his professionalism will not be lost and he will remain on the committee as secretary. Paul Nash and Chris Cook will share chairman's duty for 2016 and will undoubtedly bring something different to the table.

I'm not going through the whole order of business - you'll find the minutes on the Eastern Centre website in due course if you're that keen.

Section Severity: For a number of years the TC has been encouraging clubs and clerks of the course (CoC) to make the yellow and red/blue routes easier to give a better range of choice for the majority of riders and encourage progression. This has clearly not happened and it is felt that average scores on these routes are often too high. Many riders have moved down a route, very few have moved up a class and even fewer have chosen to stay up. Expert entries are often only half a dozen riders or so. Ultimately, the CoCs are the only people who can change this situation.

For those starting out or looking for an easier ride the fixture list will highlight trials that will run a more wobbler friendly route.

Red/Blue Route: In an attempt to make sections more rideable the TC will recommend that it should be possible to ride every section without hopping the bike. It doesn't mean that you can't hop if you want to but the section should be set out so that there is no need to. An easier yellow route would allow riders to move up and develop such skills. *Sounds like a simple change that's worth trying to me.*

Expert B Route: This will now be a 50:50 route. Riders will tackle the harder red/blue sections and the easier (*let's hope they are*) yellow sections. The intention is to help the best Inters make the move up to Expert sections. Expert Bs at the meeting seemed unconvinced by this proposal and a compromise agreeing to try it for one year was reached. On a more positive note, Castle have donated the Paul Thomas Trophy to the Expert B championship. Lets' hope a Castle rider wins it!

Twinshock Championship: Monoshocks that have been converted to twinshock will not be allowed in the championship (*might stop a few TY monos being butchered*). There will now be a red/blue route (points scoring), a new 50:50 route (points scoring) and white only route (no points).

2015 Observer's Award: This went to Peter Horrex. All four nominated candidates were highly-deserving and have helped Castle many times. It was very hard to choose between them.

November Trials Round Up

Southend – Poles Wood – 1st November

Not a huge turnout for this event, really, but at least we had one Castle member in the mix.

Yellow: No Castle riders.

Red/Blue: Chammers took 6th overall on the red/blue with a score of 109 marks lost.

White: No Castle riders.

Cambridge Matchless – Hinxton – 1st November

Quite a lot of Eastern Centre regulars made the trip to this out-of-centre event, a couple of miles south east of Duxford, and amongst them were five Castle faithful. The South Midland Centre seem to have a very confusing set of classes, and route markers for that matter, so make of this what you will.

Expert: No Castle riders.

50/50: Paul Whitehead topped this class, losing 10, with Tom close on his heels on 15 marks. Richard finished 6th with a score of 41.

Inter: Paul Lonergan came in 2nd having dropped 45 (I think the Inters rode the same route as the 50/50's).

Novice: There was quite a big novice entry wherein Alan Day dropped 52 dabs and got 16th place.

EFA – Thorrington – 22nd November

We had three Castle members (or ex-members) out on the day.

Hard – Pre-unit: One time (?) member Hamish Eadie started but had to retire, unfortunately.

Hard - Unit: Paul Whitehead rode into 3rd in class losing 15 marks in the process.

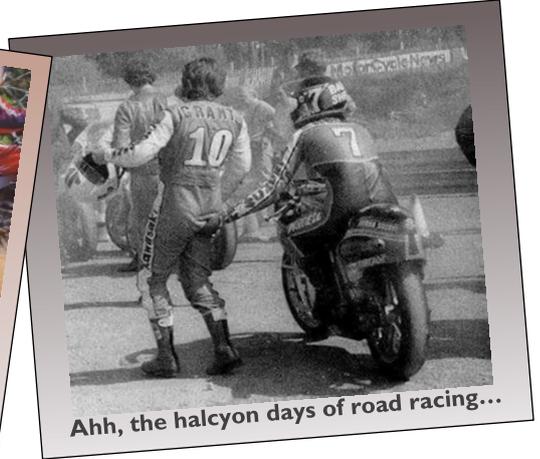
50/50 - Unit: Derek's Cub made a rare appearance, with Dick Norman on board, and topped out this particular class with a score of 16 marks.

N&SJ – Great Hockham – 29th November

Just one Castle rider in the mix at Great Hockham.

Yellow: Chammers flew the Castle flag finishing 10th on a 32 mark score.

Nothing To Do With Anything Much



Club Night – Doesn't really exist anymore....

Club Night Diary:

Due to a general lack of interest Club Nights will now be on an ad hoc basis.

Keep an eye out on social media.....

Could be anytime, anyplace, anywhere.

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