



THE OBSERVER

For the members of Castle Colchester MCC – **Santa's Little Helpers**

Christmas 2015 Edition

We haven't had a Christmas Edition before but as there's a bit of content floating about it seems like a good idea to punt it out while it's there. I think it's fair to say the Club has had another good year and, if we can repeat this, we should look forward to a successful 2016.

Apologies for this but The Observer will be taking a sabbatical for a few months and will appear only occasionally or in a very truncated format. Please do send in anything you may feel is of interest because it'll find its way out to the membership sooner or later (can I point out that every article received over the last 3 years has been included – nothing got edited out – and whatever you send will see the light of day unless it has to be properly censored!).

The last thing to do is wish everyone a Very Happy Christmas and all of the Best Wishes for the New Year.

2016 Information

Further to the little bit about the AGM in last month's Observer here's a bit more information for you in the form of a couple of snippets from the minutes of the AGM. First up is a list of the Club officials, so you can look see what post you'd like to volunteer for next year, and probably more interestingly the provisional dates for the trials that we'll be running in 2016. If you didn't know already the Eastern Centre Provisional Fixture List is up on the Eastern Centre website under the 'Events' tab.

Election of Officials

Gary enquired if any nominations had been received or anyone wished to volunteer for any posts. He then proposed that we vote the officials in en-bloc unless anyone wished to stand down or change their role. After a brief discussion one change was agreed with Derek volunteering to act as an Eastern Centre delegate.

The club officials for 2016 are as follows (agreed by all present):

Chairman: Gary Wakley.

Secretary: Richard Norman

Company Directors: Richard Norman, Richard Eley and Gary Wakley.

President: Derek Clampin.

Vice Presidents: Les Johnson and Jim Cammack.

Membership Secretary: Neil Kemp.

Newsletter Editor: Chris Eley

Eastern Centre Delegates: Mick Deeks (Deputy Andi Deeks) and Derek Clampin.

Provisional dates for Castle fixtures for 2016 are:

Date	Event	Venue	Clerk of Course	Secretary of Mtg.
7 th February	Phil King	Pebmarsh	Jim Cammack	Richard Norman
24 th April	"May"	Thorrington	Gary Wakley	Chris Eley
4 th September	Harvest	Pebmarsh	tbc	Neil Kemp
9 th October	Royal Enfield	Alphamstone	Jim Cammack	Rich Eley

How to Win an Eastern Centre Championship...

...using forgetfulness, apathy, low cunning, bad sportsmanship and smugness.

At the start of the year I noticed that, for the first time ever, the Eastern Centre was running Championships for both the Expert B and Inter B riders. Now, riding a Championship series is seldom a bad idea because it at least gives some structure to the season and all the other events can be fitted in around it. With that thought in mind a tilt at the Inter B's seemed like a good plan especially as a severe talent deficiency precludes riding the Inters proper.

And so it began:

The first Round at Spanseys Wood went very well as did the second at Bramford with 1st and 2nd places respectively. Unfortunately, I couldn't ride the 3rd Round due to family commitments but, hey, it was 'only Raydon' - and you can drop one score from the 9 rounds so maybe I could live with that.

Forgetfulness:

With the total dedication of the true athlete I completely forgot that our trial at Thorrington was the 4th Round of the Championship. Consequently I rode the red/blue route - thereby scoring a big, and very fat, zero points.

Apathy:

At this point my 'enthusiasm' took a dive and I missed Great Ellingham (didn't fancy the drive up to Norfolk) and Round 6 at Hawkedon (more family stuff to do) and having thereby 'blown' the championship the whole plan was pushed firmly onto the back burner through the months of June, July and August.

Apathy (more):

September dawned, and the Gazette came out, followed by a scan of the Regs to see which trials to enter. Oh, yeah. Championship Round 7. Up to Middleton Pit (bummer) followed by rounds at Raydon, again, and then Corton. Not the most inspiring fixtures to my lazy way of thinking. That set me wondering if it was really worth bothering so a look at the current Championship standings was called for and, to my great surprise, I was in second place overall.

Low cunning:

At that point it occurred to me that the title was actually there for the winning - mostly because nobody else was really bothered about it - and perhaps simply turning up and scrambling a few points at the remaining rounds could be enough to do it. It had to be worth a try so I decided to ride at Middleton, see how things went, and take it from there. The Middleton round turned out to be a success with a class win and another 20 points. That was kind of good but now it meant I had to ride at Raydon.

Bad sportsmanship:

As it happened there was a Norwich Vikings trial scheduled for the same day as Raydon and I thought that this might 'take out' two of the main contenders who are both local to Corton and might not want to travel down to Suffolk. My luck was in and it came to pass that being a bad sport can pay off as only me and one other contender arrived for Round 8 at Raydon. This was just as well because, shall we say, I have ridden better - but still managed to scrape another 20 points into the bag. That decent result gave me a 10 point overall lead - which was good - but not good enough to avoid having to drive up to Corton for the final round.

Smugness:

By this point it was definitely worth making the trip up to Lowestoft as the Championship was within touching distance. A decent ride and a 17 point score meant that I could add the 2015 Inter B Championship to my 2009 Novice Championship.

And so it ends:

After all that it can't be said that I've covered myself in glory because my attitude has been pretty terrible and it seems that no one else was interested, really, so the win has almost been by default. Still, the tail end of the season has been quite fun - and it's given me something to write about - but to me Inter B feels like the Championship of not being good/brave enough to ride the red & blue. Let's hope it gets taken more seriously in 2016.

Apologies if that was 'a bit much' but getting desperate for content - as you can probably tell.....



December Trials Round Up

The results don't come out very quickly at the best of times but the Christmas Holidays are worse than usual for obvious reasons. As a consequence the round up may be a little bit light on information.....

Lowestoft Invaders - Corton - 6th December

Luckily the weather was pretty good and a brisk wind had dried the ground in the preceding days. Invaders had laid out 12 sections, to be ridden 3 times, in the woods and the pit, and I reckon they made a good job of it. There was a pretty decent turnout of 59 riders for what was the last round of the 'B' Championships.

Round-up continues on the next page.....

Yellow: No Castle riders.

Red/Blue: Chammers looked to be going well and rode into 10th overall on the red/blue with a score of 21.

White: You have to feel for Invaders' Odin Mummery who rode clean all the way to the last section, last lap where he dropped his solitary dab for the day. There was a two-way battle for second place between our own Paul Lonergan and Southend's Steve Smith, who both finished on a 2 mark score. I think Paul edged it on 'furthest clean' but who knows for sure? Chris Eley, who also got caught on that very last section, came home 4th on 3 dabs.

Norwich Vikings – Lyng – 13th December

It won't come as a great surprise to know that there were no Castle riders in this particular event.

North East London – Bayford Woods – 13th December

Quite a few eastern centre riders entered this event including four from Castle. The published results are listed by rider-number, rather than by class/route, and would take more time that I'm prepared to give to work them out. Richard & Tom Norman were non-starters and this left Jason Warren and Paul Lonergan in the mix. Jason finished top in the Sportsman class and Paul finished somewhere in the middle of the Inters. By the look of the results it must've been pretty tough going because 27 out of 84 starters retired – that's one third that packed it in.

There's a disturbing footnote to the results that states that, after 61 years of use, the land has been lost due to riders 'racing up and down the lane' and 'riding up and down the banks in the start area'. Let's hope NEL can talk the land owner into changing his mind for the future. This should strike a cautionary note to all riders in that we should exercise a responsible attitude at all times, in any situation, at any event.

Braintree – Beazley End – 20th December

No surprises here as Braintree hadn't published the results by the time The Observer was finished.

Nothing To Do With Anything Much



Always walk the section first...



Err. Yes...



Irn Bru slippers for Christmas...



Three gratuitous...



...Santa based....



...dirt bike pics

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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