

# BEFORE THE FIRS

The first petrol-engine motorcycle to appear in public was built by Gottlieb Daimier, of Germany, in 1885. As the popularity of the vehicle grew it became a machine that inspired young men to race.

Motorcycle races took place in America in 1903, and from 1907 racing had taken place on tracks of half-mile and even some of a mile to the lap. These tracks with loose, dusty surfaces were very fast with 1,000 c.c. bikes hitting speeds of over 80 M.P.H. There were many fatal accidents and by 1924, in the interest of safety the 1000 c.c. bikes had been banned. The engines size was now 500 c.c. and with the smaller engine the pendulum skid or broadside was found to be the fastest way around the bends.

One of the first record meetings was brought to light with the discovery of a postcard captioned "Ipswich. Portman Road Ground the first Motor Cycle Race 1904." The event was advertised as a great novelty motorcycle race on what is now part of the of the Ipswich Town Football complex. Organised by the Ipswich Athletic Association, the motorcycle races were staged after the Suffolk County Championship for athletics and bicycle racing on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 1904.

Although there are many counter claims, the man universally accepted and recognised, as the 'inventor' of Speedway was Mr. Johnny S. Hoskins, a New Zealand showman, and opportunist. He introduced motorcycle racing virtually by accident to the impoverished Hunter River Light Carnival in West Maitland, New South Wales Australia on the 15<sup>th</sup> December 1923.

Johnny had just two rules for that first meeting, first past the winning post was the winner, and no putting the foot down on the bends. The riders stripped their motors down; big Harleys with turned up handlebars, Indians, Norton's, big Excelsior's, motorcycles of any horsepower and any size. Eight men to a race and all on handicaps. The riders rode with no jackets or gauntlets and there was no safety fence, the lights flickered on and off, with the results being announced with a megaphone. Maitland paved the way, riders found the art of broadsiding round the bends, safety fences were put up, and rules were made as the new sport expanded to the major Australian cities of Brisbane, Newcastle, Sydney, Perth, and Adelaide.

Again there are counter claims as to who staged Britain's first-ever Speedway meeting but the first recognised meeting was held in the heart of Epping Forest, on Sunday the 19th of February 1928. The actual venue was a cinder track, surrounding an old sports field, at the back of the King's Oak Hotel in High Beech.

The Ilford and Colchester Motor Club ran the meeting and Jack Hill-Bailey the Secretary of the club and his committee had decided that if 3,000 people turned up they would have done well. In fact 30,000 flocked to the track on a fine Sunday afternoon with many getting in without paying. Considerable difficulty was found in accommodating this huge crowd, as all the spectators, owing to the danger of being run into by the bikes, were supposed to be confined to the inside of the track only. As this was impossible, the stewards could not restrain the enthusiastic crowd from crossing the track and watching the races from the outside and those who desired a grandstand view just climbed the trees.

The new sport caught on fast, Stamford Bridge the home of Chelsea F. C., held the first floodlit meeting on May 5th 1928 and soon there were upwards of a dozen tracks, operating in or near London. Within six months the provinces had also caught Speedway fever.

The early atmosphere was purely circus, roaring motors, lots of dust and only a small percentage of the excited spectators having the remotest idea what it was all about. It was the crazy, carefree twenties; otherwise the sport might never have survived.

Meeting comprised of scratch races and handicaps while exalted performers, Australians and American aces made brief appearances in special events, gorgeously labelled the Golden Helmet, Golden Gauntlet, or Golden Sash. Obviously Speedway would never have got anywhere under these conditions, but salvation was lurking round the corner in 1929, when the first league was formed. Even then league racing was crazy stuff, a match was of nine heats, and only English born riders were allowed to participate. The Australian and American aces continued to top the bills, but raced only in their own special events. The league match and not the scratch events were in those days the programme filler.

## EARLY MEETING'S IN NORFOLK

Just two months and two days after the first meeting was held in England a meeting was held in Norfolk at the Mousehold Aerodrome, Norwich on Easter Monday 9<sup>th</sup> April 1928. Upwards of ten thousand people witnessed some exciting events on the occasion of the big Motor Gymkhana, promoted by the Norfolk Motor Club, with the assistance of the Norwich Air Club, the profits from which were devoted to the local medical charities.

The grass track racing was just one of the many attractions and was well received, but it is fair to say that it really was not true Speedway as the riders were on road machines with headlights and number plates still on, still it was a start.

It would seem that the Norfolk Motor Cycle Club must have realised that there was a public waiting to see this new sport and they ran a meeting on Thursday night 16<sup>th</sup> August at Carrow Road Sports Ground. The contemporary press reported that this was the first organised programme of its kind for the city, and the innovation attracted a goodly number of spectators, the seating arrangements for them permitted an excellent view of the course.

There was also a second meeting on the following Saturday night, August 18<sup>th</sup>, when the attendance was bigger than at the opening meeting with excellent racing. Around this time motorcycle football had aroused much interest with matches taking place at 'The Nest' the then home of Norwich F.C.

The next year, 1929, Grass track racing was a feature of the forty-fifth annual charity sports, promoted by the Norfolk and Norwich Amateur bicycle clubs at the Earlham Road Enclosure on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> May with mile and two-mile races.

# THE BIRTH OF THE FIRS

Without doubt it was Donald Hannent, who got the sport started at the Firs. At this time he lived at Waldermer Avenue, Aylsham Road, Norwich and he noticed that close to his home the land off the Holt Road, which had previously been used for a few Greyhound meetings, could possibly be used to stage Grass Tack Racing.

Cornfields surrounded this site and over the road there were allotments and garden sheds, with oak trees growing along side the road. Don was not able to finance this project by himself and so he enlisted several friends, including Harry Pointer, and they ran the first meeting on Sunday the 17<sup>th</sup> August 1930.

This was not the first meeting that Donald Hannent had organised as he had ran two meetings previous to this, they could well have been the two held at Carrow Road. But there is talk that these two were held in 1930, possibly at Easter.

Various forms of motorcycle racing had taken place locally before the first meeting was held at the Firs. In the 1920's the sports days at Benacre in Suffolk had motorcycle races, and in one the American 3 mile Champion appeared. Road racing had been staged on the Lowestoft sea front and there had been several meetings in and around Norwich as can be seen from the previous pages. Motor Cycle Football had been popular at the Nest, the then home of Norwich F.C. Also on the previous Tuesday night, at Diss, motorcycle racing had been included in the Motor Gymkhana.

Right the advert that appeared in the local press for the first meeting.

Little did Donald Hannent know at that time that he had started what was to become one of the foremost speedway tracks in England until it was sold for redevelopment in 1964.

## EASTERN SPEEDWAYS

### MOTOR CLUB

#### GRASS TRACK

### RACE MEETING

Sunday August 17<sup>th</sup>

2.30 p.m.

The Firs, Aylsham Rd.

NORWICH

Many crack riders from all parts  
of the country are completing

**ADMISSION...6d ONLY**

The Tramway Companies Buses will  
run from Duke Street to the track  
at frequent intervals

### Norwich Speedway Meeting

The grass track race meeting of the Eastern Speedways Motor Club, held at the Firs Aylsham Road, yesterday, attracted a crowd, numbering about 5,000.

Following were the results; -

One mile scratch (closed) 1 J. Newlands 2 W. Littleboy, 3 G. Middleton.

One mile scratch (open), G. W. Hall, G. W. Milward, 3rd. G. Goodley

Two miles handicap (open), W. Butler, 2 B. Greenwood, 3 F. Leavis

Lap record. W. Butler and B. Greenwood tie

The officials were; - President, Mr. D. M. Levine; organising Secretary, Mr. Donald Hannent; hon. treasurer, Mr. S. Newton, vice-presidents, Messrs. C. Sadler, H. Pointer and P. T. Calver; competition steward, Mr. J. Reynolds; handicappers, Messrs and Brewater; judges, Messrs. H. Pointer and C. A. Sadler; starters, Messrs. D. Hannent and Ward; timekeeper, Mr. George Levine.

Left is the report of the first meeting. It gave more space to the officials, that the results. On the Tuesday after the meeting the Eastern Daily Press printed two photos of the meeting that I have put on the opposite page.

The riders in this meeting were, it seemed, all riding under their own names. Fred Leavis was third in the Two Mile Handicap and would become one of the top stars at the track. He later signed for Wimbledon and then rode under the assumed name of Arthur Reynolds. When team racing was introduced, to the programme in 1931, it was Arthur who became the captain of the Norwich team.

Jack Newlands won the One Mile Scratch for local riders and he was later called "Speedy Jack". In Alan Smith's book (From Grass to Grooskreutz) he refers to "Speedy Jack" as Jack Williams. I believe that I am correct that he was Newlands. A photo from the Independent (2<sup>nd</sup> Match 1931) has a photo of Jack Newlands, the winner of the Mile Handicap for local riders, wearing the number 1 jacket. The next meeting (24<sup>th</sup> May 1931) was the first mention of "Speedy Jack".

The meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> June 1931 states that the well-known local rider "Speedy Jack" Number 1. Also in this meeting Jack Williams came second in the One Mile Open Handicap and got within 1/5 of the high speed of 40 M.P.H. for three laps. This certainly proves that they were two different riders.

Bill Butler held the lap record in 1930 riding a Douglass. He rode during 30-31 and had a few appearances in 1932.

## SECOND MEETING

EASTERN SPEEDWAYS  
**MOTOR CLUB**  
GRASS TRACK  
**RACE MEETING**

Sunday September 14th

2.30 p.m.

The Firs, Aylsham Rd.

NORWICH

Mr. O' Brian (Number 1) Bill Butler (Number 27)  
And many crack riders from all parts of the country

**ADMISSION...6d ONLY**

The Tramway Companies Buses will run from Duke Street to  
the track at frequent intervals

## GOOD SPORT DESPITE DIFFICULT CONDITIONS

Despite increasing rain 1,000 fans watched the racing. The grass was treacherous being sodden, but the riders carried on pluckily under the difficult conditions, and some good sport, considering the conditions, was seen. The club officials did a good job and brought almost the entire programme to an end.

Towards the close G. W. Milward one of the top riders taking part, met with an accident in the final of the two mile handicap event, when he crashed and injured the calf of his leg. After being attended to by members of the British Red Cross Society on the ground he was taken to hospital in their ambulance and he was released later that night.

Chief honour of the day fell to Bill Butler who was riding a Douglas, who won the mile and two mile races and was third in the mile rolling start confirmed to the "big six" riders of the meeting.

In the mile the five heat winners were N. Fillingham (Douglas), G. O'Brian (Charter Lea), F. Leavis (A.J. S.), B. Butler (Douglas) and J. Wadsworth (O. K.). As was to be expected on such heavy going the times were generally were slower than at the first meeting, but Butler riding in thrilling style in the final of the mile, won in 1 minute 58 3/5 seconds with O' Brian second, Leavis third and Fillingham fourth.

In the mile rolling start event winners were O' Brian, Butler and Milward. In the final O' Brian led from the start, and his task was made easier because Butler came down in the second lap when rounding a bend. This left O'Brian with a very long lead and he went on to win in the excellent time of 1 minute 56 seconds from Milward, with Butler, who had remounted third.

Heat winners in the Two Miles races (the heats were over a mile) were Butler J. Bowden (Douglas), Milward and Fillingham. Bill Butler gave another excellent display in the final, which he won in a time of 4 minutes 31.5 seconds. 2nd Fillingham, 3rd Bowden.

In the club Mile event for the Rayne Cup. G. Middleton was the only rider to finish in the first heat and C. Payne won the second with G. Smith second. In the final Smith was successful in 2 minutes 32 1.5 seconds, from Middleton. Payne would have probably been second but for an upset when he was nearing the winning post.

Giles Bros. of Thorpe gave a programme of music and announced the details of the races by a Gilophone apparatus and the chief officials were; - Chairman. Mr. W. M. Levine. Timekeeper. Mr. G. Levine. Organising Secretary; Mr. S. A. Newman. General Secretary; Mr. S. A. Newman. Judge; Mr. H. Ridding. Clerk of the course; Mr. D. Hannant. This meeting got a better report and three photos were also published in the Independent.

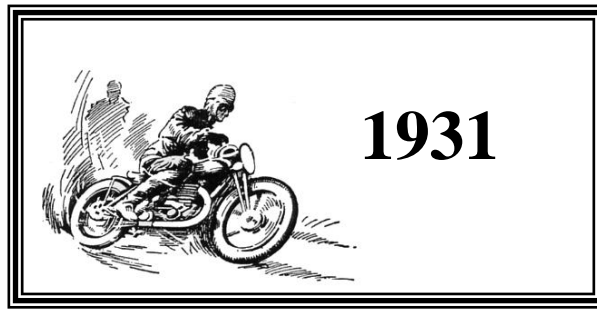
## 1928 - 1930

Speedway had come a long way in three seasons. The early atmosphere was purely circus, roaring motors, lots of dust and only a small percentage of the excited spectators having the remotest idea what it was all about. It was the crazy, carefree twenties; otherwise the sport might never have survived.

Meetings comprised of scratch races and handicaps while exalted performers, Australian and American aces made brief appearances in special events, gorgeously labelled the Golden Helmet, Golden Gauntlet or Golden Sash. Obviously Speedway would never have got anywhere under these conditions, but salvation was lurking round the corner, when in 1929, the first League was formed with eleven teams. Even then league racing was crazy stuff, a match was of nine heats, and only English born riders were allowed to participate. The Australians and American aces continued to top the bills, but raced only in their own special events. The league match and not the scratch events were in those days the programme filler.

In 1930 the sport had two leagues Southern and a Northern League that was never finished, but the sport was now going in the right direction.

The Firs had staged just two meetings in 1930 under the banner of Eastern Speedways but of course at that time it was a grass track, but this was the start of what was to become one of the foremost tracks in the country.



**EASTERN SPEEDWAY MOTOR CLUB LTD.  
GRASS TRACK RACE MEETING**

**On Sunday 26th, at 3 p.m.**

**At "The Firs" Aylsham Road, Norwich**

**Many Crack Grass and Dirt Track Riders**

**From all parts are competing**

**Special closed race for local riders**

**Admission to course 6d only Car Park 6d & 1/-**

Riders Entry Forms and those wishing to joined the Supporters Club (Seated Tickets 5/-)  
should apply to Mr, D. Hannent Waldermer Avenue, Aylsham Road, Norwich

**FIRST MATCH INTERFERED WITH BY RAIN**

**Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> April 1931**

The prospect of witnessing some exciting racing attracted some 4,000 fans to the Firs, the occasion being the first grass-track meeting of the year, the promoters being the Eastern Motor Club Ltd.

Unfortunately the sport was much interfered with by rain half an hour after the programme opened, and with a high wind springing up, riders had of necessity to exercise extra caution on a slippery track. Never the less there were skids, but riders expertly, escaped injuries.

**RESULTS**

One Mile event for local riders: - 1st Jack Newlands (Grindley Peerles), 2nd C. C. Payne, G. Middleton.

One Mile open E. W. Hall (J.A.P. Special), 1 minute 39 seconds, 2nd F. Perry (A.J.S.), 3rd G. Rooney.

The Big Eight; - 1st G. Rooney (Charter Lea), Time 1 minute 46 <sup>2</sup>/<sub>5</sub> seconds, 2nd G. Francis (Rudge), 3rd F. Perry (A.J.S.).

Two Mile open race 1st G. Rooney (Charter Lea), time 3 minutes 30 <sup>2</sup>/<sub>5</sub> seconds. 2nd G. Francis (Rudge) and 3rd F. Perry (A.J.S.).

Season tickets had been on sale at 5/- (25p)

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**WHIT SUNDAY MOTOR CYCLE RACING AT NORWICH**

**Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> May 1931**

A 3,000 crowd watched the meeting that lasted over three hours, and witnessed some good racing with one or two spills but nothing serious. "Speedy Jack" local rider put in a good show against more experience riders.

One of the best races of the day was the last, the final of the two mile handicap, of which Arthur Reynolds was the winner, in a time of two minutes 58 seconds. Reynolds also broke the three lap record bringing the time down to 1 minute 7 seconds. Two other riders who attracted attention were L. Warboys and George Francis who did some clever broadsiding, Bill Butler, although riding well did not have such a good day as he has done at previous meetings.

**RESULTS; -**

One Mile Handicap 4 laps; -

1st L. Warboys, 2nd A. Reynolds, 3rd G. Francis, Time 1 minute 32 seconds.

One Mile Handicap for local riders (4 laps).

1st "Speedy Jack", 2nd C. Payne, 3rd G. Smith. Time 1 minute 47 <sup>4</sup>/<sub>5</sub> seconds.

The Big Ten (4 laps).

1st G. Francis, 2nd L. Warboys, 3rd B. Butler. Time 1 minute 31 seconds.

Two Mile Open Handicap.

1st A. Reynolds, 2nd B. Butler, 3rd G. Francis. Time 2 minutes 58 seconds.

## Eastern Speedway

### LARGE CROWD

**Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> June 1931**

The parade was led by Arthur Reynolds Number 9, Bill Butler 27, G. Rowney 23 and the well known local rider "Speedy Jack" Number 1. Sunny weather and the prospect of witnessing some thrilling racing had attracted a large crowd from Norwich and the surrounding villages.

A special attraction had been light car races, which was won by Mr. Story M.G. Midget, 2nd Mr Hannent Sports, 3rd Mr. Layman Amilcar, 4th Mr. Higgs Vernon Derby.

RESULTS; - One Mile Open Handicap;

1st J. Francis, 2nd Jack Williams (Wallis J.A.P.), 3rd Joe Nelson Time 1 minute 47 seconds.

Two Mile Handicap; - 8 laps push start.

1st Arthur Reynolds (Dirt Rudge), 2nd Joe Nelson, 3rd G. Rowney (Charter J.A.P.).

Time 2 minutes 57 seconds. = 40. 63 M.P.H.

The Big Ten; - 4 laps rolling start. 1st Joe Nelson (Wallis J.A.P.), 2nd G. Rowney (Charter-Lea), 3rd H. Knighton (Sunbeam), 4th H. Walker (Dirt Douglas). Time 1 minute 32 seconds. =39.13 M.P.H.

3 Lap Record rolling start; - Arthur Reynolds failed to lower the record of 1 minute 7 seconds, which he established in the last meeting. Jack Williams got within 1/5 of the high speed of 40 M.P.H. for three laps.

One Mile Handicap for local riders; - 1st Speedy Jack, 2nd Jack Brand 3rd Geoff Pymar. Time 1 minute 47 seconds.

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### NORWICH HOSPITAL CARNIVAL

Capt. Hunt announced, that many offers of help had been received in the very ambitious programme for the Norwich Hospital Carnival that was being organised to raise money for the Local Hospitals. One of the offers was from Eastern Speedways Motor Club Ltd., who would donate the profits from the meeting to be held on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> June to the fund.

The sport was becoming very popular, but at the same time, there were people who were against the meetings being run on Sundays. They believed that the Sabbath should be kept for religious worship, and a day of peace and quiet, not for racing noisy smelly motorbikes.

One who was against the racing was the Rev. C. T. Coe, who had been on holiday, he was outraged on his return to find that the meeting was in the programme of events for the Carnival. He resigned from the committee and protested very strongly in a letter to the Eastern Daily Press. "Against Motor Cycle Racing on the Sunday afternoon, which he felt would offend the conscious and susceptibilities of many of the citizens and requested that the organisers consider if they could in defence to, public opinion abandon this item". Despite the protest the meeting was run.

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### SPLENDID AND THRILLING EVENTS

**Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> June 1931**

Over 5,000 were entrained to some splendid and thrilling events were the entire profits were devoted to the Norwich Hospitals Carnival Fund. Apart from the competitive races, there were exhibitions of trick riding and "stunts", by T. Newman and his lady partner that aroused much enthusiasm and applause.

An attempt to lower the three lap record of 1 minute 7 seconds set up by Arthur Reynolds was made by J. Williams and Joe Nelson, but they met with mishaps to their machine. Reynolds also endeavoured to beat his previous time, and just failed to do so by 1/5 seconds.

RESULTS; -

One Mile for local riders; -

Don Dimes (Douglas), 2nd Geoff Pymar (A.J.S.), 3rd C. Payne (Charter Lea). Time 1 minute 42.

One Mile Open Handicap; -

Arthur Reynolds (Dirt Rudge). The other riders crashed and were unable to continue the race.

The Big Ten One Mile; -

Arthur Reynolds (Dirt Rudge), 2nd Geoff Pymar (A.J.S.), 3rd D. Dimes (Douglas). Time 1 minute 41.5

• Two Mile Handicap; -

Arthur Reynolds, 2nd Jack Williams (J.A.P. Special), 3rd Joe Nelson (Wallis J.A.P.), 4th Geoff Pymar (A.J.S.) Time 3 minutes 12.8 seconds

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### LARGEST CROWD

**Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> July 1931**

The profits were handed to the Norwich Hospital Carnival Fund. Mr. Warminger also made a collection on behalf of the Fund, which resulted in four collection boxes being filled, and a further amount collected in crash helmets lent by the riders.

The attendance was larger than the other previous meetings (nearly 6,000). The entries included a number of well-known grass and dirt track riders from all parts.

RESULTS; -

One Mile Handicap for local riders; -

Don Dimes (Douglas, 2nd Payne (P and P), 3rd G. Loveday A.J.S.). Time 1 minute 45 seconds.

## Eastern Speedway

One Mile Handicap open; -

F. W. Hall No. 25 (Calthorpe), 2nd No. 9 A. Reynolds, (Dirt Rudge), 3rd C. Payne No. 2 (P and P) 4th G. Milward No. 29 (Special). Time 1 minute 30 seconds.

Big Ten One Mile; -

A. Reynolds (Dirt Rudge), 2nd J. Olley (J.A.P, Special)

Two Mile Handicap; -

No. 6 Don Dimes, (Douglas), Time 3 minutes 22 seconds, No. 11 Olley (J.A.P.) 3rd No. 1 Speedy Jack (Dirt Rudge), 4th No. 22 L. Warboys (Dirt Douglas).

In the second heat of this race the fastest time of the day was made by Don Dimes who did the mile in 1 minute 37 seconds, this being 38 M. P. H. This was a high speed considering the condition of the track, which was very loose. 26th July 1931

### **26<sup>th</sup> July Challenge Match Race between Mr. Jack Williams and Mr. Arthur Reynolds.**

Seating for 500, at a cost of 6d extra to the admission price to the course of 6d.

Car park 1/- for a car and 6d for a motor cycle

Special advantages are derived from membership of the supporters club  
all information from Mr. D. Hannett, Waldermer Av., Aylsham Road, Norwich.  
Music & Refreshments Results announced by Gilophone.

There was no report of this meeting in the local press. It is possible that the meeting was cancelled because of bad weather, as a report on cycle racing said that it had rained heavily.

## **TWO DAY MEETING**

**Saturday and Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> August 1931**

Incessant rain completely washed out the Saturday and Sunday meeting. Despite the inclement weather, several hundred spectators braved the elements, all to no purpose, however, as the grass track would have been dangerous, to the riders, of whom there were thirty experts in grass and dirt track riders ready to race. A special feature would have been the first appearance of Pat Pullen aged 7 on his Tom Thumb, and his brother Raymond aged 13 on a miniature Dirt Douglas, in competition for a silver cup present by Eastern Speedway Motor Club.

## **SPLENDID PROGRAMME AT THE NORWICH MEETING**

**Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> August 1931**

The return of summer attracted a large crowd, which numbered approximately 5,000. Master Pat Pullen aged 7 led the parade of the riders on his Tom Thumb motor cycle (75 c.c.) followed by his brother Raymond aged 13 on a miniature Dirt Douglas. Pat was afterwards presented with a silver cup, suitably inscribed, by the Club.

Several attempts were made to break the three lap record, at present held by Tich Osborne in 1 minute 6 1/5 seconds which still remains unlowered. Several new crack riders from the principal London tracks, and including one from the United States.

RESULTS; -

One Mile Open Handicap; - 1st G. Rowland (Charter Lea), 2nd G. Francis. (Dirt Rudge) Don Dimes (Dirt Rudge) 4th J. Milward (Special). Time 1 minute 40 seconds=36 M.P.H.

The Big Ten; - G. Francis (Dirt Rudge), 2nd Bill Butler, (Dirt Douglas), 3rd Tich Osborne (Dirt Rudge), 4th G. Milward (Special). Time 1 minute 32 1/5 seconds.

Two Mile Open Handicap; - 1st G. Francis (Dirt Rudge), 2nd G. Rowney (Charter Lea), 3rd Jack Williams (J.A.P. Special), 4th Bill Butler (Dirt Douglas).

## **GOOD PROGRAMME AT NORWICH MEETING**

**Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> August 1931**

Nearly 6,000 people were present at successful Motor Cycle race meeting organised by the Eastern Motor Club Ltd. Three new crack riders, Johnny Bull, Bert Linn and Bert Peters, gave a very good display, although they were not yet accustomed to the course. Three of the track's usual rider's, Arthur Reynolds, Joe Nelson and George Francis, provided strong opposition for them.

H. Walker (Dirt Douglas) won the one-mile handicap in 1 minute 40 4/5 seconds, with Bert Peters (Wallis J.A.P.) second. In the "Big Ten", Arthur Reynolds (Dirt Rudge) was first, and Bert Peters was second. Reynolds also won the two miles open handicap (push start) with L. Warboys second. Attempts were made on the three lap record, and Reynolds came the nearest to breaking it his time being 1 minute 7 seconds. A collection was made for Tich Osborne, who was injured at the last meeting, when Bert Peters throttle stuck open, and this caused him to run into Osborne, whose arm was badly cut. £17 being subscribed. Johnny Bull and Bert Peters made it up to £18 and the management of the track gave £2. Making a grand total of £20.

## GRASS TRACK TO DIRT TRACK

A good following had grown, for this infant sport, in its first year in Norwich The meetings would end with the two mile handicap final and with the grass being cut up by the churning wheels, big billows of dust would be thrown up by the riders and the fans would hardly be able to see the riders.

Riders riding style's varied, it was however noticeable, that the fastest riders, certainly the most spectacular were those that adopted the "broadside" style. This led to the assumption, that if the track was turned into a proper dirt track, the racing would gain considerable in speed and interest.

At the meeting on the 30<sup>th</sup> August it was announced that preparations were well in hand for the improvement of the track and the prevention of the dust rising. Experiments were to be made by treating the surface of the track with a special composition. Which was expected to reduce the dust, and further more make the racing more exciting and faster as more broadsiding would be to a greater degree. This was to be tried out at the next meeting, on September 13<sup>th</sup>.

Speedway itself had come a long way in just three seasons, team racing had caught on and with the two Leagues, Southern and Northern, team racing was now the main event at most tracks. Eastern Speedways also decided that team racing was the way forward, and in preparation for the 1932 season, the officials formed a Norwich team, with the idea of introducing team racing as a feature in the future programmes. They expected to complete arrangements with a team from Staines, to try out team racing at the next meeting.

The first team match was advertised as a Grass Track meeting and it was not until the 27<sup>th</sup> September 1931 that the word Dirt track appeared in the advert for the first time.

**EASTERN SPEEDWAY**  
**MOTOR CLUB LTD.**  
**GRASS TRACK RACE MEETING**  
**NEXT MEETING**  
**Sunday, September 13th, at 3 p.m.**  
**At "The Firs" Aylsham Road, Norwich**  
**Many Crack Riders are competing September 27th**  
**FIRST TEAM RACE**

1 ARTHUR REYNOLDS (Captain) Dirt Rudge    2 GORGE FRANCIES (Vice Captain) Dirt Rudge  
3 HERB PETERS JAP    4 BERT LINN Dirt Rudge  
5 JOHNNY BULL Dirt Rudge    6 JOE NELSON Wallace Blackburne

**RESVERSES**

JACK WILLIAMS DIRT JAP SPECIAL  
LES WARBOYS DIRT DOUGLAS    DON DIMES DOUGLAS

**Admission to course 6d only Car Park 6d & 1/-**

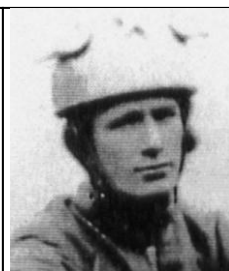
Riders Entry Forms and those wishing to joined the Supporters Club (Seated Tickets 5/-)  
should apply to Mr. D. Hannent Waldermer Avenue, Aylsham Road, Norwich

Another Avert gave the teams as; -

<b>NORWICH</b>		<b>STAINES</b>
1 Arthur Reynolds (Capt)	(Dirt Rudge)	J. Stansell (Capt)
2 George Francies (Vice Capt)	(Dirt Rudge)	J. Malone
3 Herb Peters	(Wallis J.A.P.)	Bert Kola
4 Bert Linn		J. Lee
5 Johnny Bull	(Dirt Rudge)	R. Wilkinson
6 Joe Nelson	(Wallace Blackburn)	R. Crocker
Reserve Jack Williams	(Dirt J.A.P. Special)	
Reserve Les Warboys	(Dirt Douglas)	



Karl Nickowitz



Max Grosskreutz

The actual programme gave the Staines team as; -  
Karl Nickowitz (Captain) - Dan Molone (Vice Captain)  
Bert Kola - Bill Crocker - Jack Stansell - Babe Watson  
Reserves - Leon Blazer - Fitz Berghoff - Jack Lee

Was Karl Nickowitz Max Grosskreutz?  
Max and Karl are German names and the surname is also an unusual one ending with a tz plus the photos certainly look alike. I am 99% certain that Karl was Max.

## BIG CROWD FOR THE FIRST TEAM MATCH

**Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> September 1931**

The introduction of inter team racing between six riders from Staines Speedway and six riders representing Norwich, proved a great attraction with a crowd of over 6,000. The Norwich team were the most consistent riders and won by 33-26. The returned match will take place on September 27th.

The two-mile open handicap, which again produced a good race, resulted in a win for Peters (Wallis) from Williams, the scratch man, who was barley a length behind. During this race R. Nickowitz fell rather heavily and injured his shoulder. Francies (Dirt Rudge) arrived just in time to complete in the Eagle invitation race, which he won in a very fast time. Moore riding an A.J.S won the event for local riders. He was also placed in the two-mile handicap. Several of the fastest riders, experienced bad luck through chain trouble; they are however appearing again next Sunday. Tich Osbourne who met with an accident in August is progressing favourably, and wishes to thank the public for the donation of £20.

RESULTS; - Norwich 33 Staines 21.

Eagle 1 Mile Invitation; - 1st George Francis, 2nd Herbert Peters, 3rd Moore. Time 2 minutes 21 1/5 seconds.

One Lap Record; - Johnny Bull 22 3/5, Jack Jolly 25 seconds.

The report in the Eastern Daily Press gave very little about the actual team match. Three pictures of this meeting appeared in the Independent, both the two teams photos were included, but with no mention of names of the riders.

It is also interesting to note, that the same weekend as the Firs staged the first team match, the first floodlight Greyhound meeting was held in Norwich. This was at the Norfolk and Norwich Stadium at Sprowston

### **. Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> September 1931**

**MARRIED** 1 Jack Williams, 2 Herb Peters, 3 Bill Butler, 4 George Francis,  
5 Joe Colways, 6 George Wilkie, Res. A. Maloney.

**SINGLE** 7 Johnny Bull, 8 Bert Linn, 9 Les Warboys, 10 Don Dimes,  
11 Joe Lyons, 12 Jack Stansell.

No report of this match appeared in the local press. Once again it is possible that it was rained off

### **Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> September 1931**

**NORWICH** 1 Jack Williams, 2 Herb Williams, 3 Bill Butler, 4 George Francis,  
5 Johnny Bull, 6 Wal Smith,  
Reserves Jack Jolly and Don Dimes.

**STAINES** 7 Geo. Wilkie (Capt.), 8 Jack Stansell, 9 A. Malone, 10 Joe Lyons,  
11 Bill Crocker, 12 Jack Lees,  
Reserves Joe Colways and Bill Smith.

## INCIDENTS IN INTER TEAM EVENT AT NORWICH

Between 5,000 and 6,000 spectators witnessed another thrilling and successful race meeting at the Firs. The racing was the best seen since the track was established, with the racing surface having been masterfully improved.

A collection for Bert Linn who broke his ankle at the previous meeting was splendidly patronised, the sum of £15 being realised. Before the collection was made the injured rider, together with Tich Osborne who made a welcome visit to Norwich since his accident on the track on August 9<sup>th</sup>, were driven round the track by the clerk of the course Mr. Donald Hannett.

Bill Butler (Douglas) proved an easy winner in the one-mile handicap, and Herb Peters (Wallis J.A.P.), another popular rider, won the Big 12 event with the fastest time of the day in 1 minute 32 seconds (39 M.P.H.). The surface of the track having been altered, the present three-lap record held by Tich Osborne (Harley Peashooter) in 1 minute 6 1/5 seconds has now lapsed. Jack Smythe (Dirt Rudge) set up the record for the track in its present condition 1 minute 7 3/5 seconds. Smythe also made an attack on the 1 lap record held by Wal Smith with 22 seconds (40.90 M.P.H.).

The return inter-team match with Stains Speedway resulted in a win for the visitors by one points, Norwich 26 Stains 27. In the last heat the home rider Johnny Bull had the misfortune to break a chain one and a quarter laps from home. He courageously attempted to push his machine to the finishing line, but owing to "fatigue" he resorted to being towed, therefore being disqualified. Had he managed to push his machine the result would have been a draw.

RESULTS; -

One Mile Open Handicap; - Bill Butler (Dirt Douglas), 2nd Joe Lyons (Dirt Douglas), 3rd George Loveday (A.J.S.), 4<sup>th</sup> W. E. Bradbury (Calthorpe). Time 1 minute 42 1/5 seconds.

The Big Twelve; - 1st Herb Peters (Wallis J.A.P.), 2nd Jack Smythe (Dirt Rudge),  
3rd Johnny Bull (Dirt Rudge), 4th Geoff Pymar (A.J.S.),  
Time 1 minute 32 seconds, = 39 M.P.H.

Three lap Record; Jack Smythe (Dirt Rudge), 1 minute 7 3/5 seconds.

This is a new track record for the track with the "Dirt" surface, = 40.18 M.P.H.  
One lap record is still held by Wal Smith in 22 seconds = 40 M.P.H.



## Many Crack Riders from all Parts of the World

Sunday 4th October 1931

**NORWICH** 1 Arthur Reynolds (Captain), 2 Herb Peters, (Vice Captain) 3 Bill Butler,  
4 Jack Williams 5 Johnny Bull 6 Roy Bailey,  
Reserves, Bill Smith and Don Dimes.  
**CAMBRIDGE** 7 Hugh Bentley (Captain), 8 Phil Thompson, (Vice Captain)  
9 Charlie Vincent, 10 Harry Fletcher, 11 Wal Smith, Reserves, 12 Lew Burger  
Reserve, Bob Robinson

## CAMBRIDGE BEAT NORWICH IN THRILLING INTER-TEAM MATCH

Speedway is rapidly growing in Norwich, as 7,000 saw a thrilling affair, in which the visitors won by the narrow margin of 26-28. To a certain extent the losers were handicapped, Reynolds the captain, made his first appearance since his accident at Newmarket some time ago, and while he rode it was evident that the loss of a thumb caused him some inconvenience. Jack Williams had the misfortune to damage his machine earlier in the afternoon, and was unable to compete in the latter events, while Don Dimes and Bill Butler were absent because of mishaps to their machines earlier in the week, but good team riding was seen. Herb Peters rode very consistently gaining the maximum points and Johnny Bull was a point behind.

Attempts to lower the one and three lap records were made by Peters and Bull of Norwich and Phil Thompson of Cambridge, but the times were not beaten.

A new form of programme was arranged, heats prizes being substituted for one event, to enable the programme to be completed by dusk. The Aylsham Handicap one mile consisted of five heats two semi-finals and they were keenly contested, close finishes in the heats and semi-final resulted in a well match final.

RESULTS; - Junior Race; - Jack Jolly (Rudge), 2nd Loveday. Time 1 minute 52 seconds.  
Aylsham One-Mile Handicap; - Heat 1 Thompson, 2nd Stansell. Time 1 minute 46 seconds.  
Heat 2 Wilkie, 2nd Reynolds Time 1 minute 48 seconds.  
Heat 5 Bentley, 2nd Bull. Time 1 minute 44 3/5 seconds.  
First Semi-Final; - Thompson, 2nd Milward. Time 1 minute 41 seconds.  
Second Semi-Final. Colways, 2nd Bentley. Time 1 minute 41 seconds.  
Final. Colways (Douglas), 2nd Thompson (Rudge), 3rd Bull (Rudge)  
Time 1 minute 59 seconds.

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## NORWICH BEAT DAGENHAM WITH GREAT TEAM WORK

Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> October 1931

An inter team race between Norwich and Dagenham attracted a 7,000 crowd. Great credit is due to Norwich, who, won by great teamwork by 39-14. Dagenham did not prove to be such strong opposition as was seen by Cambridge last meeting.

Phil Thompson, who rode at reserve for Dagenham in heat 7, made the record time for the course in team racing, doing the mile in 1 minute 30 2/5 seconds a speed of 40 M.P.H. with the Norwich team captain Arthur Reynolds a close second. In the junior handicap final Jack Stansell a young rider, who celebrated his 17th birthday only last week was thrown badly, through he had only some breakage to his machine, he did sustain a broken leg.

Geoff Pymar must be congratulated on his time of 1 minute 43 1/5 seconds, 35 M.P.H. on his improved riding, winning the junior handicap (one mile) at the same speed. In the two-mile open handicap his opponents proved to strong, being beaten in his heat by the winner of the final, Charlie Fuller, riding a Rudge.

During the interval the riders collected for George Francis, who badly injured his shoulder on the track three meetings ago. His popularity resulted in the sum of £23 being collected.

RESULTS; - Scratch Race local riders. 1st Geoff Pymar (A.J.S.), 2nd George Loveday (A.J.S.)

Junior Handicap One Mile; -

1st Pymar, 2nd Arthur Reynolds, (Rudge), 3rd E. W. Hall (Calthorpe), 4th Joe Nelson (Wallis Blackburn). Time 1 minute 42 2/5 second.

Aylsham Handicap Two Mile Handicap; -

1st Charlie Fuller (Rudge), 2nd E. W. Hall (Calthorpe), 3rd Arthur Reynolds (Rudge), 4th George Wilkie (Norton), 5th Johnny Bull (Rudge). Time 3 minutes 18 4/5 seconds. At a speed of 36 M.P.H.

One lap Record; -

This still stands to Wal Smith with 22 seconds.

Phil Thompson just missed breaking it by 1/5 seconds.

Bill Smythe and partner were advertised in sidecar racing for this meeting but there was no mention about it in the reports of the meeting.

## Eastern Speedway

**Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> October 1931**

### **TEAM MATCH**

**NORWICH** 1 Arthur Reynolds (Captain), 2 Herb Peters (Vice Captain), 3 Bill Butler,  
4 Joe Nelson, 5 Johnny Bull, 6 Don Dimes, Reserves - Al Frachini and Jack Smythe.

**CAMBRIDGE** 7 Hugh Bentley, 8 Phil Thompson, 9 Charlie Vincent, 10 Harry Fletcher,  
11 Lew Burger, 12 Wal Smith, Reserves - Bob Robinson and Buster Gray.

**Other Events: 1 Mile Scratch 2 Mile Handicap Big Ten and Attempts on the 1 & 3 Lap Records**

## **DRAW IN THRILLING INTER-TEAM MATCH**

A feature of this meeting, watched by a crowd of between 5 to 6,000, was the return match against Cambridge. It was a match that Norwich were all out to avenge a previous defeat, but in a thrilling run, honours were shared each team scoring 27 points.

Johnny Bull, who is usually one of the top scorers for the Norwich team, was under doctor's orders "not to ride", but knowing Cambridge to be strong opposition he sportingly rode, although it was obvious he was not fit and he failed to get his usual points.

Jack Jolly, on a Rudge, won the scratch race for local riders and was a good second in the Junior handicap final, won by Jim Milward (Special), in 1 minute 40 seconds.

There was keen competition in the heats of the Aylsham Two Mile Handicap and the final proved to be a thrilling race. Seven of the best riders faced the starter and a gruelling race of eight laps. It was a ding dong struggle from the start, and very fast which caused, the downfall, one by one of four riders, the winner being Harry Fletcher (Rudge), in a time of 3 minutes 16 3/5 seconds = 36 M.P.H. which is a very good time for eight laps.

Scratch Race local riders One Mile; Jack Jolly (Rudge), 2nd G. Loveday (A.J.S.), Time 1 minute 42 4/5 seconds.

Junior Handicap One Mile; -Jim Milward (Special), Jack Jolly (Rudge), 3rd Wal Smith, 4th E. W. Hall (Calthorpe). Time 1 minute 40 seconds.

Aylsham Handicap (One Mile for the heats)

Heat 1 Phil Thompson (Rudge), 2nd Charlie Vincent (B.S.A.).

Time 1 minute 36 seconds.

Heat 2 George Wilkie (Norton), 2nd Harry Fletcher (Rudge).

Time 1 minute 40 3/5 seconds.

Heat 3 Joe Lyons (Douglas), 2nd Bert Kola (Douglas).

Time 1 minute 43 2/5 seconds.

Heat 4 Wal Smith (Cotton), 2nd Herb Peters (Rudge)

Time 1 minute 42 seconds.

Heat 5 Bill Butler (Douglas), 2nd Hugh Bentley (Rudge)

Time 1 minute 37 3/5 seconds.

First Semi-Final Wal Smith, 2nd Hugh Bentley.

Time 1 minute 39 4/5 seconds.

Second Semi-Final Harry Fletcher, 2nd Wal Smith.

Time 1 minute 37 3/5 seconds.

Final (Two Miles)

Harry Fletcher, 2nd Wal Smith.

Time 3 minutes 16 3/5 seconds.

One Lap Record; - Thompson lowered the record held by Wal Smith (22 seconds) to 21 3/5 seconds = 41.66 M.P.H.

Thompson still holds the three lap record which he set up at the last meeting, 6 3/5 seconds.



**Norwich** – Jack Smythe, Don Dimes, Johnny Bull, Arthur Reynolds, Bert Peters, Bill Butler

**EASTERN SPEEDWAY MOTOR CLUB  
FINAL CHAMPIONSHIP DIRT TRACK RACE MEETING  
Sunday, October 25th, at 2.15p.m.  
At "The Firs" Aylsham Road, Norwich  
Big 12 and Attempts on the 1 & 3 Lap Records  
SEVERAL NEW STARS AND MATCH RACES**

**RECORD LOWERED AT FINAL MEETING OF SEASON**

**Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> October 1931**

The last meeting of the season of the Eastern Motor Club attracted over 5,000 spectators, who were entrained with some splendidly contested events in which no fewer than 25 motor cycle riders were engaged and the season closed with a programme deserving of special mention.

The three-lap record was successfully tackled by Jack Smythe (Rudge) and in the fast time of 1 minute 5 4/5 seconds he knocked 4/5 seconds off the previous record held by Phil Thompson (Rudge). The one lap record of 21 3/5 seconds stills stands to Thompson and he still holds the three-lap record, which he set up at the last meeting.

RESULTS: -

One Mile Scratch Race for local riders; -

Charlie Payne (Rudge), 2nd Jack Jolly. Time 1 minute 51 seconds.

One-Mile Championship Levine Cup.

Heat 1 Bill Butler (Douglas), 2nd Arthur Reynolds (Rudge). Time 1 minute 34 seconds.

Heat 2 Harry Fletcher (Rudge), 2nd Wal Smith. Time 1 minute 31 1/5 seconds.

Heat 3 Herb Peters (Wallis J.A.P.), 2nd Jack Smythe (Rudge). Time 1 minute 39 2/5 seconds.

Heat 4 George Wilkie (Norton), 2nd Phil Thompson (Rudge). Time 1 minute 33 1/5 seconds.

Heat 5 Charlie Payne (Rudge), 2nd Jack Jolly (Rudge). Time 1 minute 40 2/5 seconds.

Heat 6 Wal Smith (B.S.A.), George Loveday (A.J.S.). Time 1 minute 41 seconds.

First Semi-Final Bill Butler, 2nd George Wilkie. Time 1 minute 35 seconds.

Second Semi-Final Phil Thompson, 2nd Arthur Reynolds. Time 1 minute 33 4/5 seconds.

Final Arthur Reynolds, 2nd George Wilkie, 3rd Phil Thompson, 4th Bill Butler.

Time 1 minute 34 seconds = 38 M.P.H.

Junior Handicap One Mile Final; - Geoff Pymar (A.J.S.), 2nd George Wilkie (Nelson). Time 1 minute 40 seconds.

Match Races; - Herb Peters beat Harry Fletcher. Time 1 minute 33 1/5 seconds.

Jack Smythe beat Phil Thompson. Time 1 minute 28 4/5 seconds = 41 M.P.H.

Big Twelve; -

Heat 1 Phil Thompson, 2nd Jack Smythe. Time 1 minute 30 seconds.

Heat 2 Joe Nelson, 2nd Don Dimes. Time 1 minute 35 seconds.

Heat 3 Harry Fletcher, 2nd Arthur Reynolds. Time 1 minute 32 seconds.

Heat 4 Herb Peters, 2nd Johnny Bull. Time 1 minute 32 seconds.

Final Harry Fletcher, 2nd Phil Thompson, 3rd Herb Peters, 4th Joe Nelson. Time 1 minute 30 2/5 seconds.

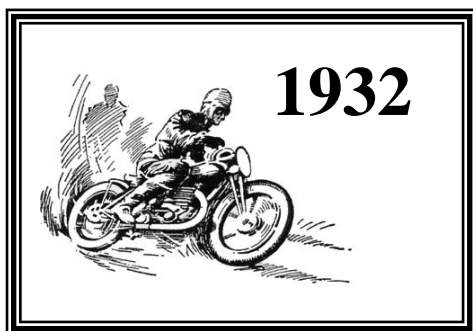
For these early meetings the crowd was kept back by large ropes on white painted stakes, and there was also a wire netting fence about four feet high set about six to eight feet forward of this rope, this marked the outside of the track. Flags marked the inside of the track. The field was on a slope, as one of the straights was slightly higher than the other. The track was a quarter of a mile, 440 yards, making it a mile for the four laps and two miles for the eight lap races.

There were scratch and handicap race plus match races and attempts on track records. The races were started with the riders riding slowly round and then accelerating once they got near to the starting line. This was the rolling start method and there were numerous false starts. The match races would be stopped if a rider came off, or had machine failure. This in some cases was used to restart a race if a rider was being beaten. There was a time when Jack Newlands (Speedy Jack) advertised in the programme a challenging to race anyone for a guinea (£1 05).

There was another area roped off with chairs set in it. This was the grandstand and was situated opposite the start and finish line. A wooden board with the rider's numbers on in the centre of the track was used to tell who was riding in each race and also the race result, this was turned slowly round so that all sections of the crowd could see it. A couple of loud speakers at each end of the track cracked out information about the afternoons racing and advertised the next race meeting as well as filling in with popular music of that era. Among the songs was Round the Marble Arch and Aint it Grand to be Bleeding Well Dead.

Later near the start and finish line on the inside of the track stood a wooden structure with windows all round where the time keeper and referee kept a check on all that went on. People stood all round the track, behind the ropes, except for an area, which was used as the pits. This pits area was roughly in the same place for the whole of the existence of the Firs.

## Eastern Speedway



During the winter of 1931-32 a lot happened to Eastern Speedways. One of the sad things was that Donald Hannent had a falling out over the direction that the Club should take with Harry Pointer. The outcome of this disagreement was that Pointer took over control and pushed Donald out of the Club.

Donald was very bitter about the split, and rightly so, as it was through him that the group had been formed in the first place to stage the racing at the Firs. Donald never forgave Pointer for this betrayal and after this acrimoniously split he never ever went to the Firs again. In fact it was Pointer who was accepted as the man who started the Firs whereas it was in fact Donald Hannent

Despite this disagreement it must be said that Harry Pointer did work hard that winter to improve the track and the Stadium. Pointer ran a construction business that had gained the contract to dismantle an ex W.D. building that had been part of the Airship hanger at Pulham St Mary's aerodrome.

The old hanger was transported to the Firs to form a grandstand that would hold 1,200 fans. This stand was to last for the duration of the Stadium. It had a dual purpose as not only did it provide a good viewing area for the fans but underneath there was plenty of storage space. Later an excellent Club Room was added.

Work was also carried out on improving the track and loads of filling was brought in to raise the low side of the field and a cinder track was put down. On the outside of the track was a spring fence of chain link wire and beyond that was banking for the spectators to stand on.

Alterations also took place along the roadside, the trees were felled and turnstiles were installed at the entrances. There was also a lot happening in the local area at that time. Houses and bungalows and a new school were being built. Later the occupants of these dwellings would make a few shillings by charging the fans to leave their bikes in their gardens. Opposite there was a pub, called the Firs, and across the road a military airfield was being built that many years later would become the Norwich Airport.

### GRAND OPENING MEETING OF THE NEW TRACK

EASTERN SPEEDWAY MOTOR CLUB LTD.

Easter Sunday Match 27

At 2.30

Special engagement of "Star" Dirt Track Riders  
**NORWICH TEAM V LONDON TEAM**  
**NORWICH**

Arthur Reynolds (Capt.) Herb Peters Phil Thompson

Hugh Bentley George Francis Jack Smythe

**LONDON**

Percy Leach Harry Jones Fred Johnson

Alex Fyffe Ralph Jay Ray Watson

Admission 7d. & 1/- (including Tax) Stand Accommodation Extra

FREE CAR PARK FOR MOTORS & MOTORCYCLES

Between 7 and 8,000 fans were at the opening Dirt track meeting of the 1932 season at the Firs on Sunday. Since last year the track has been rebuilt and a new safety fence has been erected. The promoters were unable to complete the new grandstand in time for the opening meeting. Although 600 people were provided with seats, when the stand is finished 1,200 will be accommodated. The stand will be completed by the next meeting on April 14th and the banking for standing spectators will be enlarged.

Some good racing, with the Norwich team recording a handsome win, in their first appearance of the season, beating a London side 26-13. Smythe and Bentley were the prominent riders in the Norwich team. Ralph Jay was outstanding for the visitors.

The track is very fast and when the riders get to know it better some fast speeds will be achieved.

The captain Arthur Reynolds set the fastest time for four laps, his time was 1 minute 33 4/5 seconds. Herb Peters looked likely to beat this time but he fell.

There were one or two spills. In one case, however Alex Fyffe fell, his machine landed on top of him, he was taken to hospital for had to have stitches put in his hand

**RESULTS;** - Scratch Race for local riders; -C. Payne.

Aylsham Handicap; - 1st Bentley, 2nd Smythe, 3rd Payne, 4th Stansell. Time 1 minute 48 seconds.

Big Six; - 1st Smythe, 2nd Bentley, 3rd Johnson.

Time 1 minute 36 2/5 seconds

## Eastern Speedway

### **GRANDSTAND COMPLETED** **Riders from all parts of England** **plus re-appearance of many old favourites** **Sunday 10th April 1932**

The second meeting was a distinct improvement on the opening meeting. The general arrangements were much better, and there was a minimum of delay between the races. The standard of riding also showed an improvement. The grandstand has been completed, and the banking for the spectators considerably enlarged. Several of the star riders were troubled with mechanical faults, but crashes were absent.

Jack Smythe was perhaps the most outstanding rider, and although he did not win a race, Jack Kilby succeeded in establishing a one lap and four-lap track record.

**RESULTS;** - All races were one mile (4 laps).

Scratch Race for local riders; -

1st Geoff Pymar, 2nd Jack Jolly, 3rd George Loveday.	Time 1 minute 49 seconds.
Match Races; - Arthur Reynolds beat Bert Linn.	Time 1 minute 46 1/5 seconds.
Jack Smythe beat Phil Thompson.	Time 1 minute 32 seconds.
Jim Milward beat Bill Butler.	Time 1 minute 37 2/5 seconds.
Harry Fisher beat Herbert Peters.	Time 1 minute 38 seconds.
Jack Smythe beat Hugh Bentley.	Time 1 minute 36 seconds.

Norfolk Handicap; -

1st Harry Fletcher, 2nd Herbert Peters, 3rd Jack Jolly. Time 1 minute 36 seconds.

Track Record; - Jack Kirby, One Lap 21 4/5 seconds.

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**EASTERN DAILY PRESS** Dated 8th April 1932

The Football Association considered a ban on playing matches on grounds that were used for Greyhounds or Speedway was withdrawn.

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### **NORWICH V STAINES**

**Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> April 1932**

#### **Norwich**

**1 Arthur Reynolds (Captain 2 Herb Peters 3 Bill Butler**  
**4 Hugh Bentley 5 Phil Thompson 6 Jack Smythe**  
**Reserves C. Vincent Wal Smith**

#### **Staines**

**7 Jack Kirby (Captain) 8 Harry Fletcher 9 Joe Nelson**  
**10 Bert Linn 11 Jim Milward 12 Geo. Wilkie**  
**Reserves Carl Nickowitz E.W. Hall Don Dimes**



The Norwich Captain Arthur Reynolds

Recent rain left the track on the heavy side, and the cold weather had an adverse effect on the attendance. Racing was, however, very interesting with some close finishes, the most exciting being the final of the Norfolk Handicap, when Jack Smythe, after a bad start rode brilliantly, to be beaten by half a wheel by Harry Fletcher. Reynolds and Thompson made an attempt on the lap record, but failed to beat the existing time.

**RESULTS;** - Match Races; -

Phil Thompson beat Hugh Bentley.

Time 1 minute 42 1/5 seconds.

Jack Kirby beat Jack Smythe.

Time 1 minute 39 1/5 seconds.

Harry Fletcher beat Rickards.

Time 1 minute 39 seconds.

Norfolk Handicap; - Harry Fletcher, 2nd Jack Smythe, 3rd Bert Linn. Time 1 minute 39 seconds.

Norwich 21 Staines 30

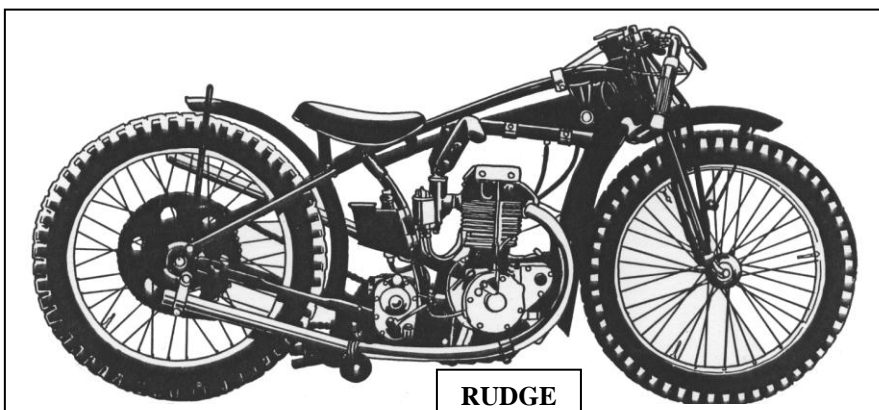
The Advert for this meeting gave at reserve for Staines as Carl Nickowitz but he had rode as Karl in the first team meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> September 1931.



## Eastern Speedway

The meeting for the 24<sup>th</sup> April is interesting as it was the first programme that I was allowed to copy. So it has given me the opportunity of listing the rider number and the make of their machines.

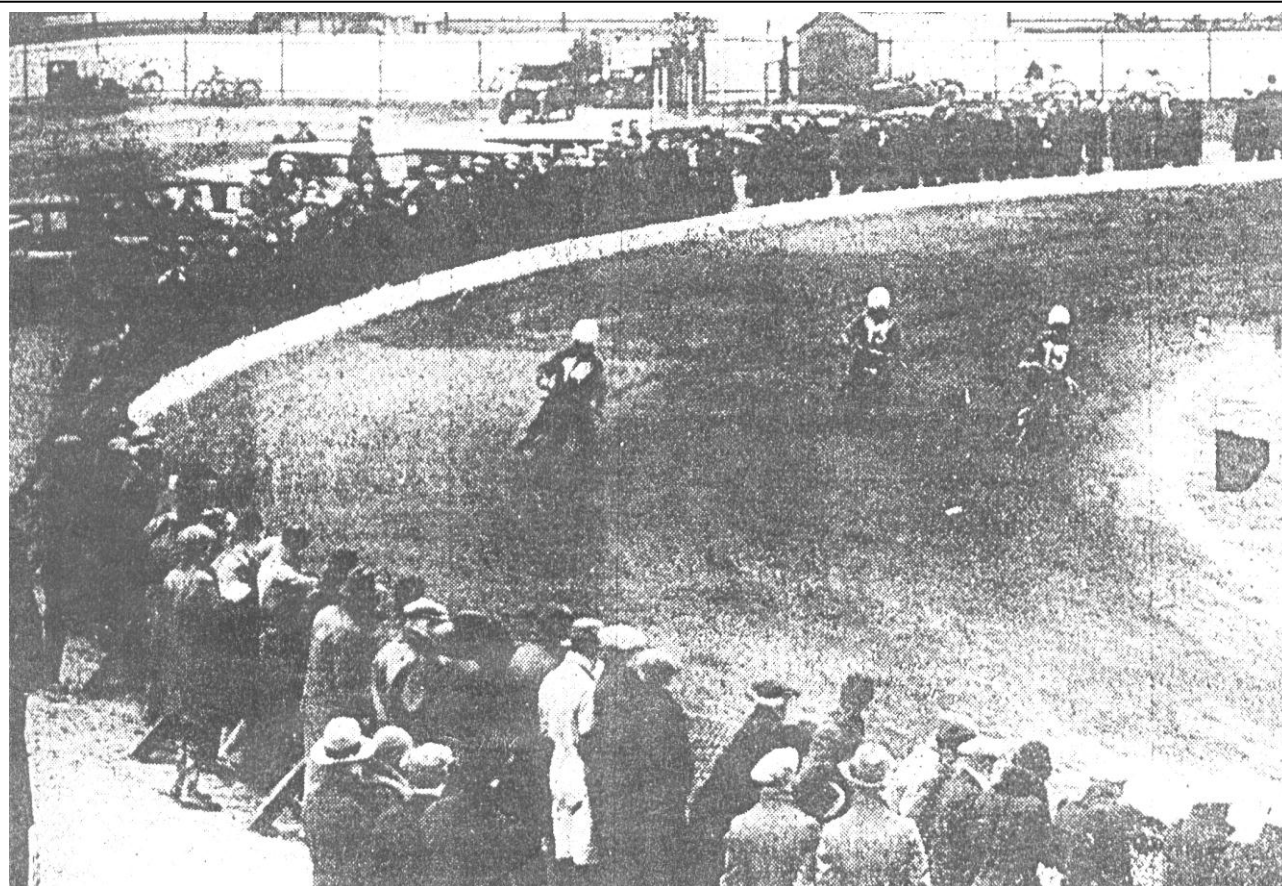
1 Arthur Reynolds	Rudge
2 Herb Peters	Wallis
3 Bill Butler	Douglas
4 Hugh Bentley	Rudge
5 Phil Thompson	Rudge
6 Jack Smythe	Wallis
7 Bill Albert	Rudge
8 Harry Fletcher	
9 C. Rickards	Rudge
10 Bert Linn	Rudge
11 Jim Milward	Special
12 Jack Lloyd	Rudge
13 Jack Jolly	Rudge
14 Geo. Loveday	A.J.S
15 Geoff Pymar	Wallis JAP
16 C. Payne	Wallis Rudge
17 Joe Ralph	Rudge
18 E. W. Hall	J.A.P
19 W. A Smith	Rudge
20 Wal Smith	Rudge
21 Archie Kemp	Rudge
22 Harry Fletcher	Rudge
23 J. Belcher	Wallis
24 Joe Lyons	Rudge
25 Geo. Rowney	Rudge



When the sport first came to the Firs in 1930 most of the riders used stripped down road machines. Many of them would rider their bikes to the tack then take off the brakes and race. One of the riders to do this was Geoff Pymar, who would ride his AJS from this home in Starston, near Diss to the track. Later Geoff got a better bike, and he also converted a sidecar to take his bike to the track

Don Dimes on the other hand used to push his Douglas to the track. The Douglas was now not so popular with only Bill Butler still using one.

The most popular bike was now the Rudge, but its popularity was soon to be overtaken by the J.A.P.



Local riders negotiating a bend in the handicap event at Eastern Speedways race meeting held on Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> April

Photo copied from the Independent & Journal 30<sup>th</sup> April 1931

This is possible the first photo of Geoff Pymar, number 15 on the inside.

## JACK SMYTHE'S FINE RIDING AT THE FIRS

Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> April 1932

The feature of Sunday's speedway racing at the Firs, Aylsham Road, was the brilliant riding of Jack Smythe. Smythe swept the board, finishing first six times in seven events, and was also successful in lowering the one lap record in 21 2/5 seconds.

Only three riders took part in the local riders race. Geoff Pymar was doing well when he had to retire as a result of his tyre coming off, thus leaving G. Loveday to beat J. Jolly.

Milward and P. Thompson made unsuccessful attempts to lower the one and four lap records. Milward was riding in excellent fashion when his front tyre burst. He was thrown heavily, but fortunately received no injuries. Several new "star riders" will appear next Sunday, when the meeting will start at 3 o'clock.

RESULTS; - Handicap Race; - (local riders) G. Loveday, 2nd J. Jolly.

Norfolk Handicap; - 1st J. Smythe (scratch), 2nd H. Fletcher (scratch), 3rd J. Ralph (2 sec.), Time 94 seconds.

Big Twelve; -

Heat 1 Jack Smythe 91 4/5 Heat 2 Bill Butler 96 Heat 3 Herb Peters 95 4/5 Wal Smith 92 1/5

Final 1st Jack Smythe, 2nd Bill Butler, 3rd Herb Peters, 4th Wal Smith, Time 94 3/5.

Aylsham One Mile Scratch Race; - J. Smythe, 2nd B. Butler, 3rd W. Smith, Time 92 3/5.

Jack Smythe clipped 2/5 seconds off the one lap record when he returned 21 2/5 in his attempt

### Eastern Speedways Motor Club, Ltd.

### *Dirt Track Motor Cycle Racing*

At THE FIRS,  
AYLSHAM ROAD, NORWICH  
**TO-MORROW (SUNDAY)**

May 1st, 1932, at 3 p.m.

**THE MOST DARING COMBINATION  
OF DIRT TRACK RIDERS EVER  
STAGED IN NORWICH**

*Norwich Speedways v. Lea  
Bridge Speedways*

#### NORWICH.

Herb. Peters  
Jack Smythe  
Harry Fletcher  
Phil. Thompson  
A. Reynolds  
Bill Butler  
Hugh Bentley

(Res.)

Don Dines (Res.)

#### LEA BRIDGE.

Les. Blakeborough  
Joe Wilson  
Eric Spencer  
Lou. Burger  
Don. Boswell  
Alf Foulds  
Harry Hutchin

(Res.)

Dick Bird (Res.)

Admission: 7d. and 1/- (including Tax).  
Grand Stand Accommodation. Free Car  
Park.

Over 5,000 spectators saw some splendid riding when Norwich defeated Lea Bridge by 33-14. Jack Smythe again rode well to get a maximum and was ably supported by Reynolds, Peters and Pymar.

Lea Bridge were handicapped by the loss of their two stars, Eric Spencer and Les Brakebrough who were unable to race after their first heats.

Reynolds made an attempt to lower the one lap record, which now stands to Smythe in 21 3/5 seconds but failed, Smythe, in an attempt only succeeded in equalling his own figures.

The Aylsham handicap provided fast racing and close finishes. Geoff Pymar, the 17 year old Norwich rider, delighted the crowd by his fine performance against more experienced men, his finish to beat Lou Burger by half a wheel in the team race was one of the most exciting of the afternoon.

RESULTS; -

Reserve Race 4 lap dash; -

Dicky Bird beat Geoff Pymar.

Time 1 minute 34 1/5 seconds.

Aylsham Handicap; -

Heat 1 1st Thompson. 2nd Butler.

Time 1 minute 40 seconds.

Heat 2 1st Pymar, 2nd Bird.

Time 1 minute 40 seconds.

Heat 3 1st Smythe, 2nd Reynolds.

Time 1 minute 39 3/5 seconds.

Heat 4 1st Peters, 2nd Boswell.

Time 1 minute 44 3/5 seconds.

First Semi-Final 1st Butler, 2nd Reynolds.

Time 1 minute 39 seconds.

Second Semi-Final 1st Boswell, 2nd Smythe.

Time 1 minute 35 3/5 seconds.

Final 1st Smythe, 2nd Butler, 3rd Bird.

Time 1 minute 38 2/5 seconds.

Pymar was not advertised to ride in the team match but probable took the place of Fletcher

The programme also had Jim Milward for Norwich and Doug Steward for Lea Bridge  
I also believe that Eric Spencer had previously rode as Johnny Bull.

## Eastern Speedway

# GEOFF PYMAR LOWERS LAP RECORD

**Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> May 1932**

5,000 fans were thrilled by some exciting racing and several escapes from serious crashes Smythe, Peters and Thompson all hit the safety fence, but riding with great skill they managed to keep on their machines. Smythe was dogged by bad luck three times his chain broke when he appeared to have the race won.

The final of the Big Twelve four lap rolling start, provided a ding-dong struggle between Herb Peters and Phil Thompson, who rode a neck and neck race for two laps, with Peters winning on the last corner.

Geoff Pymar the local lad, rode magnificently to lower the lap record by 2/5 seconds, his time being 21 1/5. Pymar, who has rapidly come to the fore, received a great ovation when his time was announced.

Bill Butler won the Norfolk Handicap, in an exciting finish from, Phil Thompson and Walter Banner.

The final of the Aylsham one mile scratch race provided the most thrilling finish, the riders were Norwich favourites, Reynolds, Smythe, Thompson and Pymar, who set a terrify pace from the start. Pymar crashed at the first corner, but fortunately, was not injured. The remaining three riders where together for the first two laps, when Smythe gained a lead of 15 yards from Reynolds with Thompson close. This order was maintained until the last corner, when Reynolds, with a great effort, rode "flat out" to pass the winning post half a wheel in front of Smythe.

The two lap dash between Smythe and Peters provided a humorous incident. In the second lap Peters machine misfired badly and Smythe went on to get a big lead until his chain broke and although he "paddled" his machine with his feet in the hope of crossing the line first. Peters came along to beat him.

RESULTS; -

Local Riders Handicap; - G. Pymar, 2nd J. Jolly, 3rd C. Payne. Time 1 minute 2/5 seconds.

Norfolk Handicap Final; B. Butler, 2nd P. Thompson, 3rd W. Banner. Time 1 minute 36 seconds

Two Lap Dash; - C. Payne beat J. Jolly. Time 1 minute 48 4/5 seconds.

Big Twelve Heat winners; -

Thompson, Time 1 minute 30 2/5 seconds. Pymar, Time 1 minute 33 2/5 seconds.

Peters, Time 1 minute 32 4/5 seconds. Spencer, Time 1 minute 35 1/5 seconds.

Final; - 1st Peters, 2nd Thompson, 3rd Spencer, Time 1 minute 29 2/5 seconds

Aylsham Mile Scratch Heat winners; -

Reynolds, Time 1 minute 36 2/5 seconds.

Thompson, Time 1 minute 30 seconds.

Smythe, Time 1 minute 33 1/5 seconds

Pymar, Time 1 minute 32 4/5 seconds.

Final; - 1st Arthur Reynolds, 2nd Jack Smythe, 3rd Geoff Pymar. Time 1 minute 30 seconds.

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## GRAND HOLIDAY PROGRAMME

**Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> May 1932**

A record crowd saw Norwich beat Nottingham 29-24. The home team were without Phil Thompson and the visitors suffered a serious loss when Fred Starbuck crashed heavily after hitting the safety fence, and had to be removed to Hospital, where he was detained.

The rival captains showed their powers in the first heat. Reynolds, the home captain, won narrowly in a fast time and obtained a maximum number of points. Geoff Pymar had chain trouble on three occasions when in winning positions.

When it looked as though Norwich would secure a runaway victory, Nottingham hit back, Spigott and Burnham rode brilliantly to out points their opponents in the latter half. Reynolds, who put up some fast times, made an unsuccessful attempt on the one lap record held by Geoff Pymar at 21 1/5 seconds. He returned 21 3/5.

RESULTS; -

Local Riders Handicap; -

1st C. Payne, 2nd J. Jolly, 3rd G. Loveday. Time 1 minute 43 2/5 seconds.

Reserve Race; - Wal Davies (Norwich), finished alone.

Norfolk Handicap; -

Heat 1 Burnham, 2nd R. Spigott.

Heat 2 B. Butler, 2nd J. Jolly.

Heat 3 H. Peters, 2nd C. Payne.

Heat 3 H. Bentley, 2nd W. Davies.

First Semi-Final; - 1st B. Butler, 2nd J. Jolly.

Second Semi-Final; -C. Payne, 2nd Bentley.

Final; - 1st C. Payne, 2nd J. Jolly, 3rd B. Butler. Time 1 minute 41 1/5 seconds.

Note – The advert that appeared in the Saturday's edition of the Eastern Daily Press had Norwich V Staines

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## ARTHUR REYNOLDS IN GREAT FORM

**Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> May 1932**

There was another programme of exciting speedway during which Arthur Reynolds the Norwich captain, displayed splendid riding, taking part in no fewer that eight events, winning five, and being placed second after being half a lap behind through his machine failing to start. In the remaining two he finished third. His three races against Smythe provided ding-dong struggles. Reynolds being a little faster that his club mate. C. Payne, a local rider, also added to his winning list by again taking the Norwich Handicap award. Geoff Pymar had the misfortune to crash in the first race, and was unable to take any further part in the racing.



## Eastern Speedway

### RESULTS; -

Local Riders Match Race; - C. Payne beat J. Jolly. Time 1 minute 38 2/5 seconds.

Norfolk Handicap; - Heat 1 1st Davies, 2nd B. Brougham. Heat 2 1st Palmer, 2nd Payne.  
Heat 3 1st Reynolds, 2nd Butler. Heat 4 1st Smythe, 2nd Jolly.

First Semi-Final; - 1st Payne 2nd Palmer, Second Semi-Final; 1st Smythe, 2nd Reynolds.

Final; - C. Payne. Time 1 minute 48 3/5 seconds.

Big Twelve; - Heat winners; -

J. Milward, 1 minute 32 2/5 seconds. W. Banner, 1 minute 29 2/5 seconds.

A. Foulds, 1 minute 32 2/5 seconds. A. Reynolds, 1 minute 30 1/5 seconds.

Final; - 1st A. Reynolds, 2nd R. Stanley, 3rd A. Foulds. Time 1 minute 27 seconds.

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## FAST TIMES

**Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> June 1932**

Fast times were registered and in the Big Twelve event Jack Kirby, the four lap holder, in addition to being the winner, broke the one lap record on his first circuit. Bill Butler, in a heat of the Norfolk Handicap, covered the distance in 1 minute 31 4/5 seconds a faster time than the final, in which he was beaten. Jack Jolly won the local riders race from Pymar and Payne after the latter had fallen. Pymar rode brilliantly in the Aylsham Scratch Race, beating Reynolds in his heat and finishing second to R. Stanley in the Final, Smythe occupying third place. Pymar made a great attempt to lower his own one lap record, failing by 1/5 second. Wally Banner, who made two unsuccessful attempts on the lap record returning the same time as Pymar in his first attempt and "overslid" on his second run when he had covered three-quarters of a lap in a fast time.

### RESULTS; -

Local Riders Race; - Jack Jolly, Time 1 minute 50 seconds.

Norfolk Handicap; - Heat 1 1st B. Butler, 2nd R. Stanley. Heat 2 1st A. Foulds, 2nd Banner.  
Heat 3 1st D. Dimes, 2nd Chill. Heat 4 1st J. Smythe, 2nd C. Payne.

First Semi-Final 1st Butler, 2nd Stanley, 3rd Dimes. Time. 1 minute 29 1/5 seconds.

Aylsham Mile Scratch Race; - Heat winners.

E. Spencer, 1 minute 32 1/5 seconds. G. Pymar, 1 minute 30 2/5 seconds.

J. Smythe, 1 minute 32 3/5 seconds. R. Stanley, 1 minute 31 2/5 seconds.

Final; - 1st Reg Stanley, 2nd Geoff Pymar, 3rd Jack Smythe. Time 1 minute 30 seconds.

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## First Appearance in Norwich

of the Famous "Celtic" team of Dirt Track Races

**Sunday 12th June 1932**

## CELTIC V NORWICH

### NORWICH

**Arthur Reynolds Reg Stanley Geoff Pymar**

**Jack Kirby Jack Smythe Wally Banner**

**Reserve Charlie Payne**

### CELTIC

**Jack Rome Les Emdle Buzz Douglas**

**Bill Cantley Pete Conroy Andy Reece**

**Reserve Jack Allby**

Another large gathering of spectators witnesses exhilarating speedway racing, when the Norwich team gained a fine win over Celtic by 36-17. Arthur Reynolds the home captain, who is riding in splendid form, again secured maximum points and he was able supported by Reg Stanley 8 points and Geoff Pymar 6 points. It was left to J. Alby the Celtic reserve to provide the two first places gained by the team from Scotland, the times returned by him proved to be the fastest for the team racing. After the match the Norwich team issued a challenge to any team of six riders in the country to race on the Aylsham track.

The captains match race provided an easy win for Reynolds, who defeated Jack Rome (Celtic), who deputised for the Celtic captain B. Douglas injured in an earlier race. J. Alby beat C. Payne (Norwich) in the reserve race. The Norfolk Handicap provided the usual thrills and fast times. Reynolds proved the winner, but he must be accounted lucky as Pymar, who had ridden magnificently, was leading by half a lap on the last circuit when his machine failed and he "paddled" it over the line to finish third.

### RESULTS; -

Team race Norwich 36 Celtic 17

Captains Match Race; - Arthur Reynolds beat Jack Rome. Time 1 minute 30 1/5 seconds.

## Eastern Speedway

Three cornered Handicap; - 1st D. Dimes, 2nd J. Jolly. Time 1 minute 46 <sup>2</sup>/<sub>5</sub> seconds.  
Norfolk Handicap; - Heat 1 1st G. Pymar, 2nd J. Milward. Heat 2 1st R. Stanley, 2nd J. Jolly.  
Heat 3 1st A. Reynolds, 2nd J. Rome. Heat 4 1st W. Banner, 2nd J. Alby.  
First Semi-Final; - 1st R. Stanley, 2nd G. Pymar. Time 1 minute 37 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>5</sub> seconds.  
Second Semi-Final; - 1st A. Reynolds, 2nd J. Rome. Time 1 minute 37 <sup>3</sup>/<sub>5</sub> seconds.  
Final; - 1st Arthur Reynolds, 2nd Jack Rome, 3rd Geoff Pymar. Time 1 minute 39 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>5</sub> seconds.  
Reserves Match Race; - J. Alby beat C. Payne. Time 1 minute 33 seconds.  
Match Race; - Reg Stanley beat Geoff Pymar by half a length in a time of 1 minute 29 seconds.

Jim Henry, the Scottish Speedway Historian, has no knowledge of any of the Celtic riders. It is possible that they were Scots lads who had formed team. Jack Allby rode in meetings before and after this at the Firs and he was one of the riders that had adopted the foot forward style of riding. While Buzz Douglas rode in the meetings held at Fakenham.

**THE FIRST EVENING PROGRAMME**  
**On the finest track in the Provinces**  
16th June 1932 at 7 o'clock  
**Star riders and record breakers**  
**Arthur Reynolds Geoff Pymar Wally Banner**  
**Jack Smythe Tommy Lane**

This meeting was advertised each day in the Eastern Daily Press.  
No report of the meeting was given in the local press, possible because the meeting would have finished late.

**JACK KIRBY ARTHUR REYNOLDS REG STANLEY**  
**JACK SMYTHE WALLY BANNER GEOFF PYMAR JACK ALLBY**  
**Sunday 19th June 1932**

## FIRS TRACK RECORD LOWERED

An attractive programme was watch by a record crowd, the standard of racing and times returned were exceptional high. Geoff Pymar, the 17-year-old Norwich boy thrilled the crowd by beating Smythe in the final of the Big 12. Smythe who had won his heat in 1 minute 29 seconds, was leading all the way, and looking a certain winner, when Pymar, throwing all caution to the winds, came all out on the outside to win by half a wheel in the most thrilling finish at the Firs.

Arthur Reynolds, who had been quite in the early races, came into his own, in the Aylsham mile scratch race. He went "flat out," all the way to win his heat in 1 minute 26 <sup>4</sup>/<sub>5</sub> seconds <sup>2</sup>/<sub>5</sub> seconds lower than the four lap record. The crowd cheered Reynolds for his daring and skilful riding. In the final he adopted the same tactics and finished an easy winner in 1 minute 27 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>5</sub> seconds, equalling the old record. Really two splendid rides.

Stanley who rode consistently well won the Norfolk Handicap. Gill, the second in this event, gave some spectacular displays but had little luck with his machine.

### RESULTS; -

Norfolk Handicap; -

	Heat 1 R. Stanley, 2nd A. Basford.	Heat 2 J. Kirby, 2nd W. Banner.
	Heat 3 D. Dimes, 2nd J. Allby.	Heat 4 J. Jolly, 2nd Gill
Semi Final	1st Stanley, 2nd Basford.	Time 1 minute 35 <sup>4</sup> / <sub>5</sub> seconds.
	1st Gill, 2nd D. Dimes.	Time 1 minute 45 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>5</sub> seconds.
Final	1st Stanley, 2nd Gill, 3rd D. Dimes.	
Match Race	Wally Banner beat Bill Butler	Time 1 minute 34 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>5</sub> seconds
Two lap Dash	Don Dimes beat Jim Milward	Time 49 seconds.

Big 12 Heat winners

Heat 1 C. Gill 1 minute 32 seconds.	Heat 2 J. Smythe 1 minute 29 seconds.
Heat 3 J. Allby 1 minute 22 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>5</sub> seconds.	Heat 4 G. Pymar 1 minute 30 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>5</sub> seconds.
Final 1st Geoff Pymar, 2nd Jack Smythe. Only two finished.	1 minute 29 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>5</sub> seconds.

Aylsham Mile Scratch

Heat 1 G. Pymar 1 minute 30 <sup>4</sup> / <sub>5</sub> seconds.	Heat 2 A. Reynolds 1 minute 26 <sup>4</sup> / <sub>5</sub> seconds.
Heat 3 J. Jolly 1 minute 30 <sup>4</sup> / <sub>5</sub> seconds.	W. Banner fastest second.
Final Arthur Reynolds, 2nd Geoff Pymar, 3rd Wally Banner.	Time 1 minute 27 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>5</sub> second.

## THE FIRS FACE COMPETITION FROM OTHER LOCAL TRACKS

Locally the Speedway bandwagon was at its peak in 1932. Apart from the dirt track racing at the Firs, grass track speedway meetings were held at, Lowestoft Road, Oulton Broad, on the 9<sup>th</sup> April and run by the Lowestoft and District Speedway. 11 meetings were held at Doles Meadow, Bradwell, ten of them on Saturday afternoons, plus a gala meeting on the Bank Holiday Monday, August 6<sup>th</sup>. The same club, Waveney Speed Track, also ran one meeting at Crown Meadow, Lowestoft on the 13<sup>th</sup> August.

Two meetings were held at the dog track at Caister Road Yarmouth on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> July and Sunday 17<sup>th</sup>. Two meetings, run on Wednesday nights, were held at Fakenham on August 3<sup>rd</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>.

Off the Lynn Road at Downham Market, a meeting was advertised, as Grand Prix Motor Cycle Racing. This meeting took place on the 14<sup>th</sup> July on a field owned by Mr. C. J. Bunkell that had natural hazards and attracted a 700 crowd.

The riders who were regulars at the Firs also rode in the meetings at these other tracks local tracks, all of which were unlicensed. Reynolds and Smythe were also racing on the licensed tracks and must have been doing very well from the sport at this time.

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## THRILL AT EASTERN SPEEDWAYS MEETINGS

### INDEPENDENT & JOURNAL

Dated 25<sup>th</sup> June 1932

To those of our readers who desire the thrilling experience of witnessing real dirt track racing the opportunity should not be missed by attending the Eastern Speedway's Motor Club meetings at their Stadium the Firs Aylsham Rd. Norwich, under the able supervision of Mr. Stanley Ketchell late of Stamford Bridge, Lea Bridge and West Ham Speedway's. These meetings are held every Sunday afternoon and are without doubt the premiere dirt track meeting this side of London and many thousands of people are journeying long distances to Eastern Speedway's and are provided with a programme, which is not excelled by any London track.

On Sunday the Four lap record was reduced to the remarkable time of 1 minute 26 seconds, being at the rate of 42 M.P.H. Nothing has been spared by the Management of Eastern Speedway's to provide for the comfort of the spectators. The whole of the surrounds to the track is terraced to provide an uninterrupted view and a grandstand to accommodate 2,000 has been erected which is justly claimed to be the finest grandstand in the district.

The special safety fence, a replica of that at Crystal Palace, together with the banked track, ensures the greatest safety for the daring riders engaged in this daredevil sport. No expense is spared by Eastern Speedway's to produce "star" riders from all the leading tracks, and on Sunday next several new riders will complete with Arthur Reynolds, Jack Smythe, Geoff Pymar, Reg Stanley, Wally Banner, Jack Allby, Les Blakebrough, Don Boswell and Tommy Laitz.

To such an extent has Eastern Speedway's thrilling programme been appreciated that regular visitors journey from London and other big centres to attend these popular Sunday meetings. The Stadium is situated amidst charming surroundings, and in their endeavour to encourage local talent Eastern Speedway's invites any rider to practice on their splendid track by applying to the secretary 2 Red Lion Street Norwich.

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With all the local competition the article looked very much like a press release. By this write up it would seem that Stanley Ketchell had taken over from Donald Hannent to organise the meetings. This was, as far as I am aware, the only mention of Ketchell, and its probable that he did not stay that long.

## THE REAL THING

### New Riders

**Hal Herbert A Johnson F. Wilkinson**

**Also the following popular riders**

**Arthur Reynolds Jack Smythe Geoff Pymar**

**Reg Stanley Jack Allby Wally Banner Ect.**

**Sunday 26th June 1932**

taking advantage passed him, though the newcomer made a great rally he was defeated by half a length. Butler sustained injuries to his wrist and was unable to ride again during the afternoon.

It was an unlucky meeting for Reynolds. In the semi-final of the Stadium handicap the Norwich captain was about to take the lead when he overslid, while in the final of the Norwich scratch race he collided with C. Gill, but fortunately the riders were uninjured. The event went to Don Boswell, who rode a well judge race, Wally Banner was second.

In response to an appeal for as collection was made during the interval on behalf of the Norfolk and Norwich Queen's Purse Fund.

The feature of the weekend speedway racing at the Firs was the splendid racing of Fred Wilkinson, a newcomer to the Norwich track. Wilkinson, who has taken part in a speedway "test" match delighted a big crowd by winning his first three race, his most brilliant effort was in a match race against Jack Smythe, whom he defeated by a narrow margin in 1 minute 28 2/5 seconds. He was rather unlucky in not winning the Stadium handicap, which fell to Geoff Pymar. Wilkinson was leading Bill Butler on the second lap, when Butler caught Wilkinson's back wheel. This slowed down Wilkinson, and Pymar

## Eastern Speedway

### RESULTS; -

#### Stadium Handicap; -

Heat 1	1st J. Smythe, 2nd B. Butler.	Heat 2	F. Wilkinson, 2nd A. Johnson.
Heat 3	1st A. Reynolds, 2nd R. Stanley.	Heat 4	D. Boswell, 2nd G. Pymar.
First Semi-final	F. Wilkinson, 2nd B. Butler.	Time	1 minute 36 seconds.
Second Semi-final	G. Pymar, 2nd R. Stanley.	Time	1 minute 36 seconds.
Final	G. Pymar, 2nd F. Wilkinson. Only two finished.	Time	1 minute 36 seconds.
Special Match Race	Fred Wilkinson beat J. Smythe.	Time	1 minute 28 2/5 seconds.
	A. Reynolds beat Geoff Pymar.	Time	1 minute 27 2/5 seconds.
Norwich Mile	Heat 1 A. Reynolds, 2nd C. Gill.	Heat 2	F. Wilkinson, 2nd G. Pymar
	Heat 3 D. Boswell, 2nd H. Herbert.	Heat 4	W. Banner, 2nd C. Payne.
Semi finals	A. Reynolds, 2nd C. Gill. Time 1 minute 28 4/5 seconds.		
	D. Boswell, 2nd W. Banner. Time 1 minute 30 3/5 seconds.		
Final	Don Boswell, 2nd Wally Banner, 3rd Arthur Reynolds. Time 1 minute 34 4/5 seconds.		
Three Corner Two Lap Dash	Hal Herbert, Wally Banner.	Time	44 3/5 seconds.
Junior Two Lap Dash	B. Albert, Don Dimes.	Time	46 4/5 seconds.

**A NEW SPORT AT THE FIRS**  
**ALL-IN WRESTLING**  
**Between British & Foreign Heavy Champion's**  
**Saturday July 2nd 1932**

All-in wrestling was described as America's latest craze, and the promoters put on a good show. The top of the bill turn was worthy of its position as there was a titanic struggle for mastery between Carl Reginsky, the German Champion and Tom Plant Of England. It was not until the third round, after 21½ minutes battle, that Reginsky obtained a fall that gave him victory.

Jack Foster of Norwich, the welterweight champion of the Eastern Counties, and Leo Wax ex-welter weight titleholder of Australia, provided the only boxing event. It was a 12 round contest and it ended in a draw.

**REAL DIRT TRACK RACING**  
**On the finest track in the Eastern Counties**  
**NEW STAR RIDERS**  
**Sunday 3rd July 1932**

In his second appearance on the track, Fred Wilkinson of Leicester, distinguished himself by winning the Nine Stars scratch race, the Norwich one mile, and equalling the track record. It was an outstanding performance of clever riding. Hal Herbert, who also comes from Leicester, showed improved form and succeeded in winning the Stadium Handicap.

A feature of the meeting was the uncompleted match race between Wilkinson and Smythe, which was started five times. A lap was completed neck and neck, but the pace was such that Smythe overslid each time. In the final attempt for two laps the riders were separated by inches only, for Smythe to fall. The race will be run off next Sunday. Arthur Reynolds got second in the final of the Stadium Handicap. The racing was fast throughout 87 2/5 being returned several times. The meeting was watched by 5,000.

### RESULTS; -

Stadium Handicap; -	Heat 1 1st Herbert, 2nd Lane.	Heat 2 1st Boswell, 2nd Jolly.
	Heat 3 1st Reynolds, 2nd Pymar.	Heat 4 1st Wilkinson, 2nd Smythe.
First Semi-Final; -	1st Boswell, 2nd Herbert. Time 1 minute 40 seconds.	
Second Semi-Final; -	1st Reynolds, 2nd Wilkinson. Time 1 minute 33 3/5 seconds.	
Final; -	1st Hal Herbert, 2nd Arthur Reynolds, 3rd Fred Wilkinson. Time 1 minute 34 1/5 seconds.	
Two Lap Dash; -	Lane beat Burger. Time 44 3/5 seconds.	
Match Race; -	Wally Banner beat Hal Herbert. Time 1 minute 30 3/5 seconds.	
Nine Stars; -	Heat 1 Boswell. 1 minute 31 seconds.	Heat 2 Wilkinson 1 minute 27 2/5 seconds.
	Heat 3 Stanley. Time 1 minute 29 seconds.	
Final; -	1st Fred Wilkinson, 2nd Reg Stanley, 3rd Don Boswell. Time 1 minute 27 2/5 seconds.	
Match Race; -	Boswell beat Butler. Time 1 minute 31 2/5 seconds.	
Norwich Mile Scratch winners; -	Pymar, 1 minute 36 seconds.	Herbert, 1 minute 27 seconds.
	Stanley, 1 minute 29 seconds.	Fastest second Fred Wilkinson.
Final; -	1st Fred Wilkinson, 2nd Reg Stanley, 3rd Geoff Pymar.	Time 1 minute 27 2/5 seconds.

## PAST STAR FAVOURITES V PRESENT STAR RIDERS

### Present Stars

Reynolds Smythe Pymar Banner Boswell Stanley

### Old Stars

Herb Peters Phil Thompson Hugh Bentley Wal Smith Bill Butler Wal Davies

Sunday 10th July 1932

also Freddie Wilkinson and Hal Herbert in Special Match Race

ANOTHER GRAND MID -WEEK MEETING Thursday 14th July

No report given in the local press of the Sunday Meeting

## WILKINSON ON FORM

Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> July 1932

The feature of Thursdays meeting was the riding of Fred Wilkinson, who has established himself as a popular favourite with the crowd. Out of his six races Wilkinson was first on five occasions.

The afternoons rain left the track in perfect condition and exceptionally fast times were returned. Three attempts were made to lower the Geoff Pymar's one lap record of 21 1/5. T. Glass a newcomer to the track returned 21 2/5. Hal Herbert in a fast ride equalled the record and then Wilkinson went round to clip 4/5 off, returning the time of 20 2/5 = 44.11 M.P.H.

The Thursday Handicap, which was won by Wilkinson from Reynolds, after a race in which neither man left the other in any part of the race. The Big 12 resulted in another win for Wilkinson. Reynolds again second in 1 minute 27 seconds = 42.5 M.P.H.

On Sunday the Staines team meet the Norwich team at the Stadium. This is the outcome of a challenge issued by the Norwich men to any team of Speedway riders.

RESULTS; - Thursday Handicap; -

Heat 1. 1st Stanley, 2nd Reynolds. Heat 2. 1st Gardner, 2nd Wilkinson. Heat 3 1st Glass, 2nd Smith.

First Semi-Final; - 1st Wilkinson, 2nd Reynolds. Time 1 minute 31 seconds.

Second Semi-Final; - 1st Smith, 2nd Herbert. Time 1 minute 35 seconds.

Final; - 1st Fred Wilkinson, 2nd Arthur Reynolds, 3rd Hal Herbert. Time 1 minute 31 1/5.

Special Match Race; - Wilkinson beat Reynolds.

Big 12; -Heat 1 Herbert, Time 1 minute 27 1/5 seconds. Heat 2 Wilkinson, Time 1 minute 28 3/5 seconds.

Heat 3 Reynolds, Time 1 minute 29 4/5 seconds. Heat 4 Pymar, Time 1 minute 34 3/5 seconds.

Final; - 1st Wilkinson, 2nd Reynolds, 3rd Herbert. Time 1 minute 27 seconds.

Match Race; - Boswell beat Smith. Time 1 minute 30 2/5 seconds.

Pymar beat Herbert. Time 1 minute 29 1/5 seconds.

This is the only report of an evening meeting that I have found. The advert for the meeting had Another Grand Mid Week Meeting and so it would seem that several were in fact held during the summer.

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Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> July 1932

## STAINES DEFEATED BY LOCAL TEAM

The Staines team were well beaten before a record crowd who saw some excellent racing. The home team were victorious by 28-11 Geoff Pymar and Reg Stanley with 7 each were the highest scorers. Arthur Reynolds, the home captain, rode a fine race in the first heat to beat Kirby, the Staines captain, by half a length. Wiltshire was the only visitor to secure a win. He finished alone after a spectacular crash in which Reynolds and Banner, the Norwich pair, collided and fell heavily in trying to avoid a Staines rider who had fell.

Fred Wilkinson had no difficulty in winning his match race against Vafrous and Kirby. He followed this up by taking the Stadium handicap from Reynolds with Herbert third. Two attempts were made to lower Wilkinson's one lap record of 20 4/5 seconds, by Herbert, 21 4/5 and Reynolds 22 seconds.

RESULTS; - Norwich 28 Staines 11

Champions Match Race; -Wilkinson beat Kirby. Time 1 minute 28 2/5 seconds.

## STAINES BEAT YARMOUTH

After the afternoon meeting at Norwich the Staines team then moved on to Yarmouth for a match that started at 8 p.m., this was the second meeting at the Yarmouth track and the first team match. The meeting was held at the Greyhound Stadium, but this was not the site that the Yarmouth Bloaters would use as their home from 1948 - 1953 and again in 1957 - 1961, but a field to the south.

The match was won by Staines 28-22 and the scores were

YARMOUTH - Jack Smythe 12, Jack Jolly 2, Wal Smith 3, Jack Eldon 3, Wal Davies 2.

STAINES - Harry Davidson 5, Bert Kola 5, George Wilkie 8, Ken Wiltshire 2, Jack Kirby 6, Bill Kent 2.

Jack Smythe was given an extra ride in the last race and I believe the reason was that Yarmouth had only five riders.

## Eastern Speedway

### BUSY TIME

The nine days starting on the Saturday the 9<sup>th</sup> July 1932 to Sunday the 17<sup>th</sup> July was the busiest time ever for the sport locally with seven meetings held at three tracks. Bradwell staged a meeting on the Saturday afternoon and the Firs had their regular Sunday afternoon meeting the next day.

On the Thursday Yarmouth opened, with a start time of 3p.m. It may now seem a strange time to run a meeting, but pre-war all the shops in the town would close at 1 o'clock as Thursday was a half day closing in Yarmouth. Then on the same night a meeting was held at the Firs.

The weekend was very busy starting with Bradwell on Saturday afternoon then on the Sunday a meeting at the Firs at 3.30 for the team match, Norwich V Staines and after this meeting the Staines team then went on to Yarmouth for an 8 p.m. start.

Donald Hannent who had been the person who had started the Firs track was the organiser at Yarmouth. It would seem that Donald was still interested in the sport after his fall out with Harry Pointer, which had led to him leaving the Firs.

As can be seen from the adverts several of the riders, rode, in most of these meetings and must have done very well. At the first Yarmouth meeting Arthur Reynolds would have been paid £7 and a good rider could expect more than that from the Norwich meetings. Arthur Reynolds and Jack Smythe who were the two top riders could well have earned over £50 from these meetings and they would have also rode at licensed tracks in this period too.

One of the interesting things that came from the two Sunday meetings was that Geoff Pymar was advertised to ride in the Norwich team in the afternoon meeting and Yarmouth team for the evening meeting, but it would seem by the report that he did not ride.

Geoff was to become a star rider reaching the Star, World and British Finals he also rode in Test Matches in England and Australia. Geoff had a long career riding for many teams including Yarmouth in 1960 – 1961. It is remarkable that he was down to ride at Yarmouth in 1932 and that he rode in the last meeting held at the track in 1961.

**A RED HOT PROGRAMME**  
**STAR RIDERS**  
**21 Events Don't Miss This**  
**THRILLS - THRILLS - THRILLS**  
**Sunday 24th July 1932**

Fred Wilkinson, in front of a large crowd, lowered the four lap record, held by Jack Kirby to 1 minute 25 = 45.2 M.P.H. Wilkinson was also the winner of the Stadium Handicap and the Twelve Star race. Very fast times were returned in these races, but the superiority of Wilkinson was pronounced. Arthur Reynolds, who finished second in the Handicap race rode neatly, but his machine lacked speed. Reg Stanley rode in his consistent way and was second in the Twelve Stars race and an easy winner in the Match Race with S. Gardiner.

A third attempt was made to finish the special match race between Jack Smythe and Fred Wilkinson. At the previous meetings Smythe had fallen on eight occasions before completing the necessary two laps. He overslid on the second lap in the first run and the race was restated, Wilkinson once more gained a commanding lead but on the second lap for the first time he overslid and fell, Jack Smythe went on to win. This did not meet with the approval of the crowd. Who were unaware an agreement between the riders to finish the event what ever happened. Eventually Wilkinson explained over the mike and congratulated the victor.

RESULTS; -

Junior two Lap Handicap; - Milward 50 2/5 seconds.

Stadium Handicap; - Heat 1. 1st Herbert, 2nd Gardiner. Heat 2. 1st Reynolds, 2nd Milward.

Heat 3. 1st Wilkinson, 2nd Glass. Heat 4. 1st Banner, 2nd Payne.

First Semi-Final; - 1st Gardiner, 2nd Reynolds. Time 1 minute 36 2/5 seconds.

Second Semi-Final. 1st Wilkinson, 2nd Banner. Time 1 minute 34 2/5 seconds.

Final; - 1st Wilkinson, 2nd Reynolds, 3rd Gardiner. Time 1 minute 34 1/5 seconds.

4 Laps Match Race; - Hal Herbert beat Geoff Pymar. Time 1 minute 28 2/5 seconds.

Special Re-Run Match Race; - Jack Smythe beat Fred Wilkinson who fell on the second lap.

4 Lap Match Race; - Glass beat Banner. Time 1 minute 29 1/5 seconds.

Stanley beat Gardiner. Time 1 minute 31 1/5 seconds.

Twelve Star Heat winners; -

Heat 1. R. Stanley, Time 1 minute 30 2/5 seconds. Heat 2, T. Lane, Time 1 minute 31 seconds.

Heat 3. F. Wilkinson, Time 1 minute 29 seconds. Heat 4, J. Smythe, Time 1 minute 31 seconds.

Final 1st, Fred Wilkinson. 2nd, Reg Stanley. 3rd, Jack Smythe. Time 1 minute 27 3/5 seconds.

Note – Johnny Glass was an Australian rider who was called Mick Murphy by Johnny Hoskins. He rode under that name in meetings, on the licensed tracks but reverted back to his correct name on the unlicensed tracks.

## GREYHOUNDS START AT THE FIRS

Saturday July 30<sup>th</sup> 1932

A 2,000 crowd watched the first meeting at the Firs. This was the start of a busy period at the Stadium as it was Greyhound's on Monday, Thursday and Saturday's. Sunday afternoon's was still kept for dirt track racing.

### GRAND HOLIDAY PROGRAMME DIRT TRACK RACING EXTRODIDARY 20 Red Hot Heats

### BIG HOLIDAY CROWD

Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> July 1932

In the Eastern Counties Championship, Wally Banner beat Jim Milward who took the place of Don Boswell 2-0. Milward overslid in both races. Johnny Glass and Bird had a wheel-to-wheel race, the riders kept together for the three laps till Bird had a puncher to his rear wheel.

Wilkinson attempted to lower his 4 lap record of 85 seconds but failed by 2/5 while Gardiner was well outside in his attempt. Geoff Pymar's attempts on the latter record were spoilt by chain trouble.

Wilkinson, Stanley and Pymar contested the final of the "Stars" race three corner contest. Pymar again had chain trouble, and Wilkinson beat Stanley after a splendid race in a time of 87 2/5. The Bank Holiday Handicap provided some excellent racing in the heats, and brought together Banner, Reynolds, Stanley and Wilkinson in the final. Banner seemed favourable handicapped at 2 seconds and he proved an easy winner from Wilkinson and Stanley.

RESULTS; - Stars Three Corner Contest. Heats. Wilkinson, 88 1/5. Stanley, 90 4/5. Pymar, 95 4/5.

Final; - 1st Fred Wilkinson. 2nd Reg Stanley. Time 87 2/5.

First Qualifying Round Eastern Counties Championship; -Banner beat Milward 2-0. Glass beat Bird 2-1

Match Race 4 laps Rolling Start; - Reynolds beat Smythe 91 1/5. Wilkinson beat Stanley 89 4/5.

Bank Holiday Handicap, Heat winners; - Heat 1 Stanley 96 2/5. Heat 2 Banner 93 1/5. Heat 3 Wilkinson 94 4/5. Heat 4 Reynolds 98. Final; - 1st Wally Banner. 2nd Fred Wilkinson. 3rd Reg Stanley. Time 92 1/5.

The finest show in the Eastern Counties – Vide Press.

### CHAMPIONSHIP EVENTS

7th August

For the comfort of the spectators a large quantity of sacking has been attached to the safety fence so as to eliminate as far as possible the nuisance caused by dust and flying cinders.

There were one or two crashes during the exciting races watched by a large crowd. C. Payne who crashed in the first event was taken to hospital, but luckily his injuries were not so serious as was first feared, and after attention he was allowed to go home.

In the second stage of the Eastern Counties Championship qualifying rounds Geoff Pymar made a welcome return to form to eliminate Arthur Reynolds in two straight runs. Pymar was easily the fastest man. Stanley passed on at the expense of Herbert. Each rider had registered three points when the third heat was reached, Stanley, who was limping, the result of a crash earlier in the afternoon, rode brilliantly in this race and was an easy winner.

Wilkinson and Smythe met in a return match-race over four laps. For three laps the riders were together until Smythe, riding the outside, went wide, and Wilkinson established a 12 yard lead, which he retained to the winning line, his time of 89 seconds was a fast one. The Big 12 was again won by Wilkinson, Gardiner second and Smythe third. The latter remounting after sportingly throwing his machine down to avoid Hal Herbert, who fell in his track. The Wroxham Handicap provided thrilling heats, and brought together in the final Gill, Banner, Pymar and Johnson. A thrilling race ended in Gill winning from Pymar and Johnson.

RESULTS; - Junior Handicap; - 1st Dick Bird, 2nd Jack Jolly. Time 1 minute 44 seconds.

First Qualifying Round Eastern Counties Championship; -

Reg Stanley beat Hal Herbert 5 points to 4. Geoff Pymar beat Reynolds 2-0.

Big Twelve Heat winners; - Heat 1- Wilkinson, Time 91 2/5. Heat 2- Herbert, Time 89 3/5 Heat 3- Smythe, Time 92.

Fastest second Gardiner. Final; -1st Wilkinson, 2nd Gardiner, 3rd Smythe. Time 89 2/5 seconds.

Match Race; -Wilkinson beat Smythe 89 seconds.

Wroxham Handicap; -

Heat1-1st Gill, 2nd Banner. Time 93 seconds. Heat 2-1st Reynolds, 2nd-Stanley. Time 94 seconds

Heat 3-1st Pymar, 2nd Smythe. Time 96 seconds. Heat 4-1st A. Johnson, 2nd Jolly. Time 95 seconds.

First Semi-Final; - 1st-Gill, 2nd Banner. Time 93 1/5. Second Semi-Final; -1st Pymar, 2nd Johnson. Time 95 seconds.

Final; - 1st Gill, 2nd Pymar, 3rd Johnson. Time 93 seconds.

## Eastern Speedway

The Advert for the 14<sup>th</sup> August meeting included for the first time that Eastern Counties Buses would go from Lowestoft to the track

**NB. Special Eastern Counties Buses  
Direct to Course 2/6 Retune  
Leave Waveney Road Lowestoft  
DO NOT MISS YOUR CHANCE TO SEE  
A REAL SPEEDWAY SHOW**

### **“STAR” DIRT TACK RIDERS**

**Artur Reynolds, Jack Smythe, Don Dimes, Jim Milward, Wal  
Smith**

**The Well Known Freddie Wilkinson (Leeds)**

**Hal Herbert will race for the first time**

**Special Eastern Counties Buses Direct to Course**

**Church Plain, Great Yarmouth for track at 2.30 9d. Return  
Waveney Road, Lowestoft for track at 2. 1/3 Return**

No reports on these two meetings

It's interesting to note that the first week the price from Lowestoft the fare was 2/6 (12½p) retune and for the following week it had been halved to 1/3. I believe that the price reduction was probable because of the popularity of the bus, as it seemed that the one from Yarmouth was well used.

During 1952 I worked at the Beech Road Co-op and the manager was Mr. Barnes, who later opened his own shop in Yarmouth. He told me that he had taken advantage of the opportunity to go to the Firs on the bus and that he had definitely enjoyed it. It seems that there was not a lot to do on a Sunday in Yarmouth and as it was his only day off during the week he became a regular on the Yarmouth bus to the track.

Mr Barnes told me that in his opinion the top rider was Arthur Reynolds. In fact he took a photo of Artur racing and he had it in his wallet. As he knew that I was very interested in speedway he reluctantly let me have it. It is not a good photo but nevertheless I have included it underneath as it is still a bit of the history of the Firs.



This is a blow-up of Mr. Banes photo. When he gave it to me it was 20 years old and he said the rider was Charlie Reynolds. But later I was to realise that he had made a mistake



**VISIT EASTERN: SPEEDWAYS, NORWICH**

THRILLS      THRILLS      THRILLS

**REAL DIRT TRACK RACING**

**On SUNDAY, AUG 28<sup>th</sup>, at 3.30 p.m.,**

The finest Show in Eastern Counties – *Vide Press*

Admission 7d. and 1/-, including tax.

Free Car Park

Grand Stand Accommodation for 2,000

**DO NOT MISS YOUR CHANCE TO SEE A REAL SPEEDWAY SHOW**

**GREYHOUND RACING Every Monday, Thursday & Saturday at 8p.m.**

Admission to Course, 7d. (Including tax)

**ADMISSION FREE - FREE - GRAND GALA NIGHT**

No Charge for Admission to Course at the

**FIRS STADIUM, Aylsham Rd., Norwich**

**EASTERN SPEEDWAYS**

Invites entries from all GREYHOUND OWNERS to enter their dogs for a series of

**OPEN EVENTS**

To be held on **WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 31<sup>st</sup>, at 8 p.m.**

The Public are invited to come and witness **FIRST CLASS**

**GREYHOUND RACING**

Free of Charge, on the finest illuminated Track in the Provinces

**BOOK THIS DATE and come along at our expense**

OWNERS wishing to enter Dogs (must be Greyhounds) should fill in the entry form below and send 2/6 for each dog entered. Prizes: 10/- First, 5/- Second in each race

To the Racing Manager, Firs Stadium, Eastern Speedways, Aylsham Road, Norwich

I wish to enter my Greyhound (s) in Wednesday, Aug 31<sup>st</sup> .....

and enclose herewith.....value.....at the rate of 2/6 per Dog.

(Signed) Mr., Mrs., Miss or Rev.....

Above is the advert for the Dirt Track and free Greyhound Meeting

The Firs were doing all they could during this time to pull the fans into the Stadium as the above advert show as they included free entry to this Greyhound meeting

**THRILL'S IN  
MATCH RACE**

**Sunday 28th August 1932**

Visitors to the dirt track had their fill of thrills from the outset, Reynolds and Johnson, in a rolling start match race, got away together at high speed and broadsided into the bend, shoulders touching. Then Johnson's machine developed a wobble. The rider held on for 20 yards, and seeing a crash was inevitable, let his machine run from under him. He sat on the track and watched his machine still upright, charged the safety fence. Thereupon he got another machine, and still won the event. Reynolds having chain trouble when leading.

Jack. Allby and S. Gardner had three fine races to decide who should pass to the next round of the Eastern Counties Championship the former winning by 5 to 4. Jack Smythe gave a glimpse of his real self in his heat of the Big Twelve. Getting away well he won by a distance in 87 4/5.

The crowd cheered their approval when an additional tit-bit was added to the programme in a special match race between Wilkinson and Smythe. Getting away well Smythe gained a length at the first bend, and he maintained this for two laps. Wilkinson, however, passed him on the stand straight, and

when on to win in the fast time of 87 2/5. Wilkinson also beat Stanley in the same time after a wonderful race.

The Stadium Handicap provided more thrills. In the second heat Banner held a good lead from Glass who was closely followed by Herbert at great speed, hit the machine, and was thrown several feet in the air. The spectators felt relieved to see the rider get up and walk off the track unaided. The Stadium Handicap was won by Banner (2 seconds), who never looked like being caught. Stanley (1 second) being second and Reynolds (1 second) third.

RESULTS; -

4 Lap Match Race; -

Johnson beat Reynolds 92 1/5.      Johnson beat Wilkinson 89 1/5.      Wilkinson beat Stanley 87 2/5.

First Round Eastern Counties Championship; - Allby beat Gardiner by 5 points to 4.

Junior Handicap; -      Don Dimes beat Jack Jolly.      103 2/5 seconds.

Big Twelve; -Heat winners.

Stanley 91.      Smythe 87 4/5.      Glass 92.      Fastest second      Johnson.

Final; - 1st Johnson, 2nd Smythe, 3rd Glass, Time 97 4/5 seconds.

Stadium Handicap; -

Heat 1    1st A. Reynolds, 2nd W. Smith. Time 97.      Heat 2    1st Banner, 2nd Wilkinson. Time 94.

Heat 3    1st R. Stanley, 2nd J. Allby. Time 95 2/5.      Heat 4    1st G. Pymar, 2nd J. Smythe. Time 97 4/5

First Semi-Final; -      1st W. Banner, 2nd A. Reynolds. Time 93.

Second Semi-Final; -      1st R. Stanley, 2nd G. Pymar. Time 95 2/5.

Final; -      1st Wally Banner, 2nd Reg Stanley, 3rd Arthur Reynolds. Time 92 1/5 seconds.

## **WILKINSON IS THE TOP MAN**

**Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> September 1932**

Wilkinson won five of his seven races and was the hero of the day. The final of the Stars Handicap brought together Wilkinson (scratch), Allby (1 second), Reynolds (1 second) and Glass (2 seconds). The rider got away well and after the first lap it was obvious that Glass would take a lot of catching. Allby riding beautiful and lying 20 yards behind the timed man, Wilkinson, 15 yards in the rear, began to creep up, and riding "flat out" passed Allby on the first bend of the third lap, made up so much ground that he attempted to pass Glass on the outside of the first bend of the last lap. Glass riding the line kept his advantage and Wilkinson at the last bend coming on the outside again as the two entered the straight at a terrific speed Glass leading by a machine length and he won by half a length.

RESULTS; -

Junior Handicap; - 1st Don Dimes, 2nd Jim Milward. Time 101 seconds.

Second Qualifying Round Eastern Counties Championship; - Gill beat Banner 5 to 4 points.

4 Lap Match Race; - Smythe beat Pymar. Time 87 1/5. Wilkinson beat Reynolds Time 87 2/5

Big Twelve Final; - 1st Wilkinson, 2nd Banner, 3rd Herbert, Time 87 1/5 seconds.

Star Handicap; - 1st Glass (2 seconds), 2nd Wilkinson (Scratch), 3rd Allby (1second) Time 92 2/5.

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## **RIVAL RACE TRACKS**

### **HELLSDON GREYHOUND VENTURE DISCUSSED**

#### **COUNCIL'S DECISION**

**INDEPENDENT & JOURNAL 17<sup>th</sup> September 1932**

The rival Greyhound racing concerns. The Boundary Road National Association (Norwich) Ltd., who have defied the Town and Planning Authority and are pushing ahead with the building of a new Stadium, the Eastern Speedways Motor Club Ltd., who are already running greyhound races, and have applied to the town and Planning committee for permission to carry on the meetings, were discussed at a meeting of St. Faiths Rural District Council on Tuesday.

The position so far as the local administrative authorities are concerned, is complicated by the Town Planning Act. On grounds used by the Speedway Company there was greyhound racing years ago, before town and planning began. In the case of the new company, Saint Faiths Council, claims that when the town planning order is made final, the promoters of the company can be compelled to pull down their buildings and reinstate the site.

Eastern Speedways were allowed to continue but that they would have to comply with four points.

- (1) No greyhounds on Sunday.
- (2) The buildings including the stand are maintained in satisfactory conditions, and are to be removed by the promoters if the ground ceases to be used for the present purposes.
- (3) No amplifiers in addition to those in existence are installed.
- (4) The promoters agree to use every effort to ensure that the undertaking is carried on so as not to be detrimental to the amenity of the neighbourhood.

It was also advised that the Chief Constable should be consulted as to traffic arrangements.

It is interesting to note that greyhound racing had taken place years ago at the Firs.

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### **SPECIAL ENGAGEMENT OF NED HENDERSON & WALLY STEVENS 20 RED HOT EVENTS Sunday 26th September 1932**

## **MILLWARDS POPULAR WIN**

A large crowd witnessed a fine programme. A newcomer to the track in Edward Henderson showed good form in his first race with Wally Stevens. The latter, who improved in his next run when he met "flyer" Wilkinson. The latter won, but had to do 85 2/5, which is an only 2/5 outside the four lap record.

Geoff Pymar and Reg Stanley were down to contest the right to entry to the third round of the Eastern Counties Championship, Stanley won the first heat, but was hurt in attempting to pass Stevens, in the second heat of the big Twelve, Stanley made a splendid effort to come inside at the last bend, but caught the latter's rear wheel and came off. Gardner, in the rear tried hard to avoid the fallen rider, but was unsuccessful, and his machine hit Stanley, who received injuries, which necessitated removal to hospital. It was afterwards announced that Stanley was suffering slight concussion.

The final of the Big Twelve was contested by F. Wilkinson, W. Stevens, N. Henderson and Johnson. Wilkinson quickly established a good lead and appeared to be a certain winner when he lost his chain on the last lap. Johnson proved the winner from Stevens and Henderson third.

## Eastern Speedway

The Stadium Handicap was won by Jim Milward from Reynolds and Gill. Riding from three seconds Milward rode brilliantly to stave off the challenges of Arthur Reynolds, who was never far behind, Milward is the track's most cheery rider, week after week some slight trouble has stopped his machine or when leading he has overslid, but nothing removed his smile. On Sunday, the crowd cheered smiling Jim Milward, who has struck to it and gained his reward.

RESULTS; -Junior Handicap; - 1st J. Milward, 2nd Phillips. Time 102 seconds.  
Match Races; - W. Stevens beat Henderson. Time 89  
F. Wilkinson beat N. Henderson. Time 85 2/5 W. Stevens beat Johnson. Time 89.  
Big Twelve; -Heat winners. F. Wilkinson, 88. Stevens, 89 4/5. Henderson, 86.  
Fastest second; -Johnson. Final 1st Johnson, 2nd Stevens, 3rd Henderson. Time 89 seconds.  
Stadium Handicap; -Heat winners.  
Reynolds 92 1/5. Wilkinson, 100 2/5. Milward, 100 2/5. Smythe 95 1/5.  
First Semi-final; -1st Reynolds, 2nd Gill. Time 94. Second Semi-final; -1st Smythe, 2nd Milward. 97.  
Final; - 1st Jim Milward, 2nd Arthur Reynolds, 3rd C. S. Gill. Time 95 3/5.

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## ADVERTS

Meetings were advertised in the Eastern Daily Press - But no report's appeared.  
The adverts however did make good reading.

**Come off That Sofa**  
**Dump Those Vegetable Bullet**  
**Thrill Instead Of Pills**  
**A staggering programme of**  
**Dirt Track Racing.**  
**Iron Horse's with Riders of steel.**  
**A Team Which Defies Defeat.**  
**Nothing as good Anywhere**  
27th August

**STUPENDOUS ASTONISHING IN**  
**ITS AWEINGSPIRING**  
**MAGNITUDE**  
**Must be seen to be believed.**  
**A riot of excitement**  
4th September

**85,000 Spectators at Wembley**  
**Second to none in England.**  
**Norwich Team has yet to be beaten**  
18th September

**ARE YOU DEAD**  
**(Asleep in a stuffy room)**  
**or ALIVE**  
**(to the delights of this Great World)**  
**Team Racing**  
**by Gladiators of the dirt track**  
11th September

**Freddie Wilkinson's Team**  
**Wilkinson. Arthur Reynolds. J. Glass.**  
**Jack Smythe. Hal Herbert. Reg Stanley.**  
**Reserve, Geoff Pymar.**  
**Wally Steven's Team**  
**Stevens. Ed Henderson. Vic Read. J.**  
**Allby. S. Gardiner. A. Jackson**  
**Reserve Wally Banner.**  
30th September

**A GRAND DANCE**  
**AT THE SPRING GARDENS**  
**30th September**  
**8.30 to 1a.m Admission 2/6.**  
**Don't miss this!**  
**Your favourite riders are coming**  
**Are you?**

**Lady Sybilk Crashelmet V Omar**  
9th October

-----  
This meeting could well have been rained off  
as the same advert was put in for the next meeting.

## THIRSTY GREYHOUND FANS

An application for half an hour extension to the local pub on greyhound nights was refused.

## Eastern Speedway

### GEOFF PYMAR'S SUCCESS IN STADIUM HANDICAP

**Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> October 1932**

A large crowd witnessed an attractive programme. Wally Bird, a new rider to the track, showed fine form. Fred Wilkinson crashed in the final of the Big Twelve, but was allowed to leave the hospital after receiving attention. The "great race" between "Omar" (Jack Jolly) and "Lady Sybil Crashhelmet" (Jack Brand) was a riot of fun from start to finish. A dead heat resulted after a "sparkling" display by both machines.

The Big Twelve was won by W. Bird. E. Henderson second with Banner and Wilkinson crashing.

The Stadium Handicap provided the usual fast riding and close finishes. Geoff Pymar rode a splendid race to beat Wally Banner in the second heat, and in the final he got home by half a length from Stanley, Milward was third. J. Glass and J. Allby had two of the closest rides seen at the track. Glass won by half a length each time to enter the third round of the Eastern Counties Championship.

Mr. Newton, the secretary, announced that Dirt Track racing and Greyhound racing, under lights, would be held at the Firs Stadium next Saturday, when eight of the leading London track riders would appear.

RESULTS; -

Strangers Match Race; - Wally Bird. Time 88 1/5 seconds.

Match Race; - Henderson beat Johnson. Time 89 3/5 seconds

W. Stevens beat A. Reynolds, Time 87 4/5. Wally Bird beat Jack Smythe, Time 90 1/5 seconds.

Second Round Eastern Counties Championship; - J. Glass beat J. Allby 2-0. 86 Times, 4/5 & 87

Big twelve; -Heat winners. Henderson 89 1/5. F. Wilkinson 89 1/5. W. Bird 89.

Fastest second. Banner. Final; -1st W. Bird, 2nd Henderson. Time 88 seconds.

Stadium handicap; - Heat 1. 1st Bird, 2nd Milward. Heat 2. 1st C. E. Gill, 2nd A. Reynolds.

Heat 3. 1st Pymar, 2nd Banner. Heat 4. 1st R. Stanley, 2nd D. Steward.

First Semi-Final; - 1st Milward, 2nd Bird. Time 97. Second

Semi-final; - 1st Pymar, 2nd Stanley. Time 96 4/5.

Final; - 1st Geoff Pymar, 2nd Reg Stanley, 3rd Jim Milward. Time 95 3/5 seconds.

### COMBINED PROGRAMME AT THE FIRS GREYHOUND & DIRT TRACK RACING

Saturday 22nd October 1932

#### NORWICH REGULAR RIDERS

Arthur Reynolds (Captain). Reg Stanley.

Fred Wilkinson. Geoff Pymar. Jack Smythe. Jack Allby.

Reserve, Wally Banner.

#### THE REST

Claude Rye (Captain). Wally Bird. Vic Read.

Ed Henderson. Doug Steward. Wally Stevens.

Reserve, Hal Herbert.

The enterprise of Eastern Speedways in presenting a combined programme of Greyhound and Dirt Track racing on Saturday night was rewarded by the attendance of approximately 3,000 spectators. At all times a thrilling spectacle, the staging of Dirt Track racing at night was eagerly looked forward to by the Dirt Track enthusiasts, and the advent of new riders on the track more than justified their expectations. The riding was of a high order. The illumination of the track was augmented by extra high powered arc lights. The combined programme is to be held again next Saturday, and it is anticipated that the attendance will be still further increased.

The usually programme of seven Greyhound races was appreciated. During the evening a collection was made for the British Red Cross, who have rendered such valuable services at Eastern Speedways.

RESULTS; -Strangers Match Race; -Wally Bird beat Claude Rye. Time 1 minute 32 4/5.

Marathon Scratch Race 4 laps rolling start; - Heat winners.

A. Reynolds. W. Bird. H. Herbert.

Final; - 1st Bird, 2nd Reynolds, 3rd Herbert.

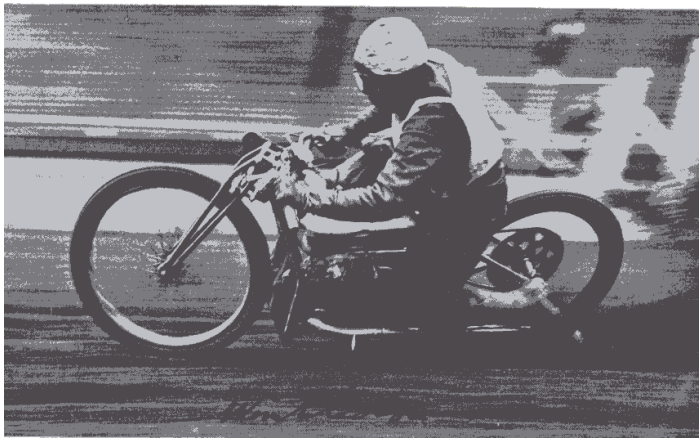
Special Match Race; -Claude Rye beat Jack Smythe.

**October 28th 1932**

**It is anticipated the present standing records  
will be made to sit down and make New records  
Come and watch the new riders  
Claude Rye and Wally Bird.**

Claude Rye had rode at the Firs in the unlicensed days. He used the assumed name of Charlie Barley as he said that it was the nearest that he could get to his name. I have not however found any reports with Charlie Barley mentioned.

## RIDERS HAVE A BETTING COUP



Ivor Hill, in action, who rode at the Firs as Wally Bird.

It seemed strange that the double bill of Dirt Track and Greyhound racing was not repeated, especial after attracting such a big crowd. The report of the meeting had that 'the combined programme is to be held again next Saturday, and it is anticipated that the attendance will be still further increased.' So why did they run Pony Racing with the Greyhounds the next week?

I believe that the explanation for this comes in Ron Hoare book *Speedway Panorama*. In which in the tenth chapter, *Speedway in Wales*, Ivor Hill relates a story: -

An outstanding is of the time when riders used to turn out on what is known in dog circles as 'flapping tracks' using assumed names. One such track was Norwich and as I

remember, my name was 'Wally Bird'. As far as I know, no one ever discovered 'Wally's' true identify! Then there was the classic time when the promoters let the bookmakers in to a certain stadium and they began to make a book on the races. Needless to say, this was an opportunity too good to miss and we had a brother of one of the riders up in the stands putting on the bets whilst we organised the races. I need hardly say that they never came again to make a book on speedway racing!

It was true that Ivor had rode at the Firs as Wally Bird. On the night of the Combined programme Wally certainly rode and therefore I am certain that this meting was the one he referred too.

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## THE FIRS FACE A RIVAL

It was announced early in 1932 that a rival company was going to develop a 15-acre site at a cost of £25,000 in Hellesdon, less than a mile from the Firs Stadium. The new Stadium would have a track for Greyhound racing and it was hoped that Norwich F. C., who had out grown their home at "The Nest", would take up the option of moving to this new Stadium.

The development of the Firs in just three years was quite remarkable. It was obvious that a lot of money had been spent in turning what had been just a field, that had a few greyhound meeting held previously, into a decent Stadium.

Eastern Speedways had to generate more revenue to make it a viable business. All-in Wrestling was tried without too much success. It seemed that they realised that the new Stadium, Boundary Park, would be open before November and would be having Greyhound racing. So Eastern Speedways beat them by announced in July that "Greyhound racing" was coming to the Firs.

At the dirt track meeting on the 24<sup>th</sup> July 1932 the first 1,000 fans received a free ticket for the first Greyhound meeting. This helped to swell the crowd to over 2,000 for the first meeting on Saturday night August 30th. Racing then continued on Monday, Thursday and Saturday nights at 8 p.m.

As the date for the opening of Boundary Park got closer Eastern Speedways added Wednesday nights, making four nights a week for Greyhound racing. The first Wednesday meeting was advertised as a Gala Night with free admission.

One of the adverts for the Firs was obviously having a go at their rivals, stating "that this track, for which every ounce of labour and materials was supplied locally, and is not affiliated or contracted in any way with any Union or Association, or any other governing body, which reserves to themselves the right of jurisdiction, even the racing at this splendid Stadium. We invite clean and friendly competition. Our notice to the general public is in our programme".

Boundary Park opened in grand style, on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> October 1932, with fanfares to start the races. Many prominent and leading citizens of Norwich were present in the 3,000 crowd.

With the two Stadiums trying to out do each other to pull in the crowds, it seemed as if Boundary Park was winning the battle. At the end of September they attracted a good crowd, not withstanding the weather. The same night it was reported that only 350 fans were at the Firs.

Mr. Newton, the secretary of Eastern Speedways, announced at the next afternoon's dirt track meeting "that Greyhound and Dirt Track Racing would be held at the Stadium next Saturday night, when eight of the leading London riders would appear". This was a clever move as the double bill attracted a crowd of 3,000.

With the weather turning and the Speedway season ending, Eastern Speedways kept a double bill on the Saturday nights, they dropped the dirt track racing, but added a new attraction, Pony Racing, and for the first meeting 2,000 enjoyed this new spectacle.

The Firs now advertised, the most brilliantly illuminated track in the Provinces, and that Greyhound and Pony Racing was voted the most interesting and attractive spectacle placed before the public.

Boundary Park hit back with a Grand Hurdle Match and bragged they had an all-electric Tote. So the rivalry was to go on, with the two tracks so close and both after the same public.

## Eastern Speedway

No more Dirt Track meetings were reported in the local press.  
Below are two some of the adverts and reports from the two local tracks

16th November 1932

### **BOUNDARY PARK**

The finest Greyhound racecourse in Great Britain

All Electric Totaliser

Bookmakers in the Grand stand Enclosure

Provides London sport & comfort for Norwich at reasonable prices

6th November 1932

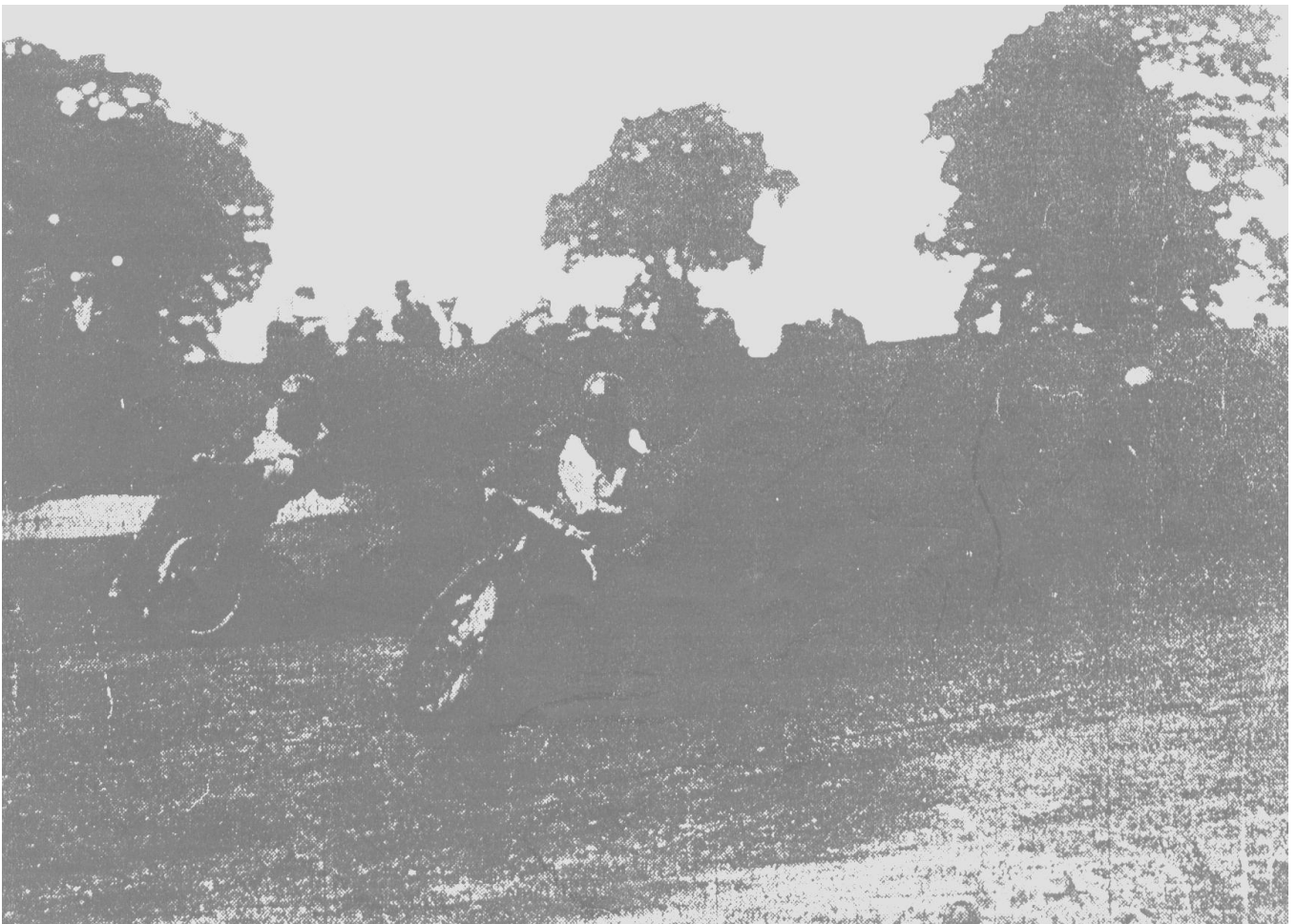
### **THE FIRS**

Lady jockeys were also included in the Pony Racing  
with Miss Tallwin, on her fine Pony, winning a race.

### **THE FIRS**

#### **VAX POPULLI**

**LICENSED** and justly entitled to claim by increased attendances of the public that the combined programme of Greyhound and Pony Racing is the finest sporting event ever staged anywhere



Some thrilling riding was seen at the Firs, Norwich, last Sunday, during the Stars' Four-Lap Dash event. Our photo shows Wilkinson and Reynolds fighting for position on the bend, with Jack Smythe nearly obscured by the dust in the background.

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This is a copy that I have taken from The Independent & Journal dated 9<sup>th</sup> July 1932 (meeting held on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> July 1932).  
In the report of this meeting there is no reference to this race.





The battle of the two Stadiums' was still going strong. The Firs had added Whippet racing to the Greyhound and Pony Racing. Boundary Park advertised - Under the strict control of the National Greyhound Racing Club.

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**FOURTH SUCCESSIVE SEASON  
AIRSHIPS VISITING NORWICH  
FOR THE GRAND OPENING MEETING OF EASTERN SPEEDWAYS  
DIRT TRACK RACES**

**On SUNDAY NEXT, April 2nd, At  
THE "FIRS" STADIUM, ALYSHAM ROAD, NORWICH**

Will not be allowed to use the Grand Stand as a Base  
FIRST RACE AT 3 p.m. GATES OPEN 2 P.M.

Admission 7d and 1/- including Tax. Grand Stand Extra. Free Car Park

**REFRESHMENT BUFFET and TEA ROOM**

**BOOK EASTER SUNDAY FOR OUR NEXT SUPER PROGRAMME**  
20 events.

**NORWICH TEAM**

Captained by Arthur Reynolds

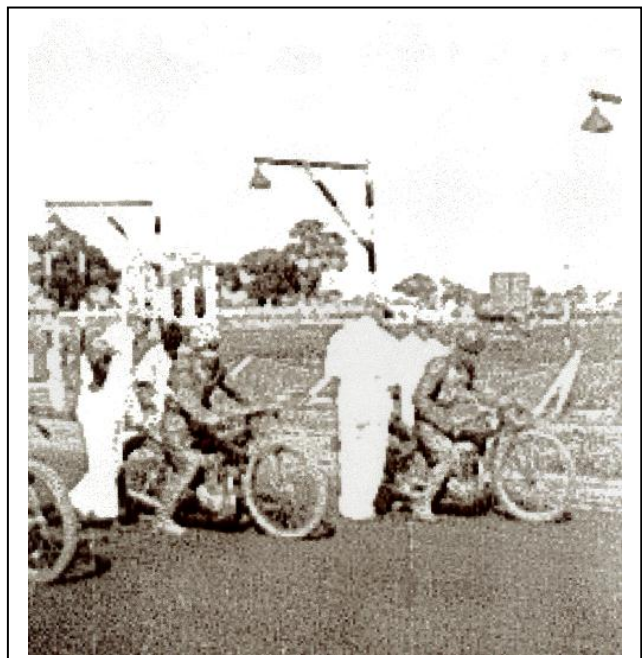
The opening meeting of Eastern Speedways fourth successive season was held on April 2nd, the grounds being packed with "speedway fans". A special evening meeting has been arranged for Good Friday at 7 p.m. also a special meeting on Easter Sunday 3p.m., when side car racing will be included for the first time. Now that the riders have had an opportunity to try out their machines, even better racing will be seen in the future. It must be born in mind that the riders and machines have been laid up for the winter, and that no one quite knows what will happen or now the machine might behave at the first meeting.

The new pavilion at the rear of the grandstand is now completed. Tea dances will be held in the near future, and a dance band of competed musicians will be in attendance. Dancing will commence directly after the Dirt Track racing has finished, and will continue till 7 p.m.

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**DIRT TRACK RACING  
Good Friday By  
Floodlight**

Right is a rather poor quality photo a start of a race. This is the only photo that I have that clearly shows the Greyhound track, with the lights inside the Speedway/Dirt Track.



**ATTRACTIVE PROGRAMME**  
**For the first time Sidecar Racing**  
**Sunday 16th April 1933**

On Sunday 6,000 spectators attended the Firs, when an attractive programme of scratch and match races were held. The second event a match race between Arthur Reynolds and Wally Banner put the crowd on its toes. Banner on the inside rode magnificently to prevent Reynolds getting the lead until the last bend. When riding flat out the pair passed the line together. A dead heat seemed certain but the judges declared Reynolds had won by inches.

Jack Smythe, although still felling the effects of his crash on Friday returned fast times to win the final of Grade A riders scratch race. Smyth's bad luck continues, his machine "blew up".

Bert Poole rode consistently to win easily in the Grade B riders' race. The Stadium Handicap provided some exciting racing. Pickering's effort in the second Semi-final to beat Stanley on the last bend proved that the riders are getting back to their best form, and some records will be broken when the track gets firm again.

The sidecar events were somewhat disappointing each machine in turn "cut out" and the times were slow. The first event provided a thrill when Edwards, machine in attempting to pass on the outside, skidded into the safety fence. The competitors, however, were not injured, and after minor repairs to the machine, the events were continued. Best, in the final race, showed that, this form of racing could be exciting when he lapped in 28 2/5.

**RESULTS; -**

Local riders Match Race; -	E. English beat J. Woodrow.	Time 1 minute 57 2/5 seconds.
Three Cornered Match Race; -	Arthur Reynolds, Reg Stanley.	Time 1 minute 29 2/5 seconds
	Jack Smythe, Arthur Reynolds.	Time 1 minute 31 seconds.
Grade B Riders Scratch Races; -	Heat 1. B. Poole, A. Ryder.	Time 1 minute 32 seconds.
	Heat 2. G. Pymar, J. Milward.	Time 1 minute 33 seconds.
	Final; -1st Bert Poole, 2nd A. Ryder.	Time 1 minute 31 seconds.
Grade A Riders Scratch Race; -		
Heat 1. 1st J. Smythe, 2nd Arthur Reynolds.	Time 1 minute 29 1/5 seconds.	
Heat 2. 1st W. Banner, 2nd R. Stanley.	Time 1 minute 31 2/5 seconds.	
Final; - 1st Jack Smythe, 2nd Reg Stanley.	Time 1 minute 28 2/5 seconds.	
Side Car Contest; -	J. Best Beat J. Edwards 2-1.	
Stadium Handicap; -		
Heat 1. 1st W. Banner, 2nd A. Reynolds.	Time 1 minute 31 2/5 seconds.	
Heat 2. 1st J. Milward, 2nd J. Smythe.	Time 1 minute 36 2/5 seconds.	
Heat 3. 1st F. Picking, 2nd R. Stanley.	Time 1 minute 38 seconds.	
Heat 4. 1st B. Farmer, finish alone.	Time 1 minute 34 2/5 seconds.	
First Semi-Final; -	Milward (2 seconds), 2nd Reynolds (scratch).	Time 1 minute 34 2/5seconds.
Second Semi-Final; - Pickering (scratch), 2nd Stanley (1 second)	Time 1 minute 34 2/5 seconds.	
Final; -Stanley (1second), 2nd Pickering (scratch), 3rd Reynolds (scratch).	Time 1 minute 33 2/5 seconds	

**May 20<sup>th</sup> Big Twelve** - Meeting advertised but not reported in the local press

**EXCITING INCIDENT**  
**Sunday May 28<sup>th</sup> 1933**

There were several spills but luckily the riders escaped any serious injury. The team racing commenced with a thrill. In the first heat all the men went into the corners at terrific speeds and on the second lap Howard, the Blues captain touched another machine and fell off. He and his machine rolled over several times and hit the fence. It seemed that the rider must be seriously injured, but after a doctor's examination it was announced that he was only shaken. Jim Milward fell heavily in each of his heats, but practice has made him perfect, and he walked off each time smiling. B. Poole, who has been riding very well lately, was an easy winner in the Scratch Race. W. Banner was second and S. Fair third. In the Match Race Smythe rode in brilliant fashion and left Bird by 20 yards, an unusual happening, for Bird is one of the fastest men riding.

**RESULTS; -**

Reserve Race; -	1st Milward, 2nd V. Smith.	
Scratch Race; -	Heat 1 1st W. Bird, 2nd J. Smythe. Time 87 1/5.	Heat 2 1st B. Poole, 2nd F. Howard. 92 1/5.
	Heat 3 1st V. Smith, 2nd W. Banner. 89 2/5	
First Semi-Final; -	1st Bird, 2nd Banner. Time 86 1/5.	Second Semi-Final; - 1st Fair, 2nd Poole. Time 89 2/5.
Final; -	1st Poole, 2nd Banner.	
4 Lap Match Race; -	Fair beat Poole. Time 91.	Smythe beat Bird. Time 85 2/5.
Team Match.	Yellow's 14	Blue's 8.



# **!! WE LEAD AGAIN !!**

## **THE "FIRS" STADIUM**

**Aylsham Rd., Norwich**

**OPEN AIR BOXING TOURNAMENT**

**THURSDAY, JUNE 1st, 7.30 P.M. (Wet or Fine)**

**Jack Foster, Ginger Sadd, Don Fermann, Brian Priestley  
And Many Other Lads**

Admission 1/- 2/6 & 3/6

2,000 Seats Under cover

## **GREYHOUND RACING**

EVERY MONDAY – WEDNESDAY – THURSDAY

FRIDAY & SATURDAY at 8 p.m.

## **DIRT TRACK RACING**

EVERY SUNDAY At 3 p.m.

**IT'S THRILLING !! IT'S DANGEROUS !! IT'S GRAND**

Admission 7d & 1/-

Grandstand Accommodation

**FREE CAR PARK**

### **OPEN AIR BOXING – June 1<sup>st</sup>**

Jack Foster of Norwich was well beaten on points by Jack Ellis. Ginger Sadd of Norwich won by a K. O. in the eight Round over Kid Lewis. Bert Priestley stopped Johnny Gordon who retired in the seventh round. Bill Haynes won on points over Bob Firman. Young Tuner of Norwich beat Ronnie Barber of Lowestoft on points. The crowd was about 1,200.

**JUNE 1933** - A meeting was advertised for June 4<sup>th</sup>. The advert stated that after the racing there would be dancing in the Pavilion to the Carlton Dance Orchestra. The advert also had a promise, of better days to come. Watch this space for a special announcement in the very near future. The Firs then stopped the dirt track racing until the 25th June.

7th June- The directors of Norwich City F. C. considered a move from the Nest to Boundary Park.

9th June- Another Greyhound Stadium open. Norwich City Greyhound Racing Stadium. Thorpe Road. Who advertised, The Goodwood of racing. Natural Grandstand and free car park. Admission prices of 6d and 1/- and they would have meeting's on Monday and Saturdays. This now gave Norwich three Greyhound tracks and they all had meeting's on Saturday night's. It seemed now that the Firs were really losing out. The great news was finally announced.

## **!! GREAT NEWS !!**

### **WHAT YOU HAVE BEEN WAITING FOR**

### **DIRT TRACK RACING**

### **UNDER A.C.U. PERMIT NO. R. 366**

AT

**THE "FIRS" STADIUM, AYLSHAM ROAD, NORWICH**

**SUNDAY NEXT at 3.30 p.m**

**Definite Appearance**

**of**

**Dicky Case**

**and his Australian team**

**Max Grosskreutz Tiger Lewis Dick Wise Ernie Evans**

**ADMISSION: 7d. and 1/-, including Tax. Grand Stand Accommodation**

**Teas and Refreshments.**

**FREE CAR PARKS**

## THE "FIRS" STADIUM

AYLSHAM ROAD, NORWICH

Sunday 2nd July 1933

### A GREAT SHOW IS PROMISED

#### CASES TEAM

Dick Case (Capt)  
Ernie Evans  
Max Grosskreutz  
Tiger Lewis  
Dick Wise  
Sid Rowe  
E. Cooper (Res)

#### THE REST

Fred Leavis (Captain)  
Reg Thorne  
Tiger Hart  
Ivor Hill  
Wally Banner  
Reg Stanley  
Jim Milward (Res)

There were three absentees from the teams that were advertised.

Ernie Evans and Max Grosskreutz were absent from Cases Team and Ivor Hill was away from the Rest. E. Cooper and Jack Sharpe filled their places for Cases team and Fred Wilkinson replacing Ivor Hill.

Jim Milward rode as reserve for both teams.

There were several times that Milward was given in reports as Milward.

## AUSTRALIAN TEAM BEATEN AT THE FIRS

Speedway racing under the A. C. U. permit was held for the first time in Norwich on Sunday, when Eastern Motor Club held their first meeting at the Firs, Aylsham Road.

Several well know riders from the Speedway League teams completed, the most notable being Dicky Case, who had been chosen to ride for the Australian's against England at Wembley next Thursday.

The programme opened with team racing between Case's team of Australian riders V the Rest. Case was the outstanding man in the team, riding in brilliant fashion; he obtained 8 out of the 9 possible points, while Leavis and Thorne for the Rest scored 7 points.

The final result of the match, 28-26 in favour of the Rest was a fair one. In the afternoon riding. High speeds were returned and in eight out of the nine races the time was 87 2/5 seconds or under.

In the captains race between Case and Leavis the most thrilling seen at the Firs, Leavis won by half a wheel in 86 2/5 after the riders had been together for the four laps.

Case won the final of the scratch race from Leavis, Hart being third after a thrilling struggle, Case who was in the final as the fastest second had a hard race with J. Sharp in heat 2. Case slightly in the lead after the first bend went six lengths in front. Then Sharp, after trying to pass on the inside and then the outside, passed his rival and on the home run he came flat out to win by inches in 87 2/5. Case won the final from Leavis and Hart. Sharp had engine trouble in this race and he finished last.

#### CASE'S TEAM

Dicky Case 8  
Jack Sharp 4  
Tiger Lewis 1  
Dick Wise 4  
Sid Roe 5  
D. Boswell 4  
Reserve R. Cooper 0

#### THE REST

F. Leavis 7  
R. Thorne 7  
Tiger Heart 6  
F. Picking 4  
Wally Banner 1  
Reg Stanley 3  
Reserve Jim Milward 0

Captains Match Race; - F. Leavis beat Dick Case.

Reserve Match Race; - Cooper beat Milward

Scratch Race; - Heat 1. 1st Leavis, 2nd T. Lewis.

Heat 2. 1st Sharpe, 2nd Case.

Heat 3. T. Hart, 2nd R. Thorne.

Final; - 1st Dick Case, 2nd Fred Leavis, 3rd Tiger Hart.

Time 86 2/5.

Time 91.

Time 87 4/5.

Time 87 2/5.

Time 88 2/5.

Time 87.

The mach was reported as the Australia team but it was it was advertised as Cases team

This match is interesting because now that the track had an A. C. U. permit rider's rode under their real names. Arthur Reynolds, who had been the star rider from the start in 1930, now rode as Fred Leavis and captained the Rest, and Jack Smythe was in fact the Australian rider Jack Sharp.

Also of interest is that both Max Grosskreutz and Dick Wise were advertised to ride. Max would become the man to bring League Speedway to Norwich in 1937 and Dick would become the captain of the team

Dick Case scored 8 points in the Test Match the next week at Wembley. Max had not rode in the Norwich meeting, possible because the test selectors did not want him to get injured prior to the meeting. But he crashed in his first race and took no further part in the match. In this match Jack Sharp scored 3 points in his first Test match in England. The 76-47 defeat was Australia's worst performance of the season.

## Eastern Speedway

### First Test at Wembley July 29<sup>th</sup> July 1933

#### England 76

Harold Stevenson 13+2, Tom Farndon 1, Ginger Lees 20+1, Claude Rye 0, Eric Langton 16, Wal Phillips 4+1  
Reserves Syd Jackson 15, Jack Parker 7+2

#### Australia 47

Vic Huxley 12, Lionel Van Pragg 5, Max Grosskreutz 0, Dick Case 8, Bluey Wilkinson 8+1, Ron Johnson 8  
Reserves Ernie Evans 3, Jack Sharp 3

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This was the first Test Match in which clutch starts from a (hand-operated) starting gate were used  
The Scoring was 4 - 3- 2- 1

### JULY 1933

#### GREYHOUNDS

To celebrate the 200th Greyhound meeting at the Firs the directors gave free admission.

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At this time the Firs were getting a lot competition from other greyhound tracks.

With the Firs advertising - Great News. Lowestoft Speedway Motor Club who had started to run meetings at Kessingland Road replied with their Advert

### Still Greater News if at Norwich why not at Lowestoft Real Speedway Racing

The Firs hit back with

### THE "FIRS" THE ONLY REAL SPEEDWAY IN THE EASTERN COUNTIES

Sunday July 9<sup>th</sup>

Dicky Case Coventry Ivor Hill Nottingham Wal Morton Coventry  
Jack Sharp Plymouth Fred Leavis Wimbledon Alf Foulds Clapton

**Come and see real Dirt Track Racing  
On the track build for the job.**

**THE "FIRS"**  
Sunday 9th July 1933  
Dick Case  
Wal Morton Ect.

After this meeting the Firs announced that racing would take place alternative Sundays.

### THE "FIRS" MORE NEW RIDERS THE GREATEST SHOW IN THE EASTERN COUNTIES

Sunday 23rd July 1933

Stan Greatrex Coventry	Jack Sharpe Plymouth
Wal Morton Coventry	Reg Stanley Plymouth
J. Glass Coventry	Fred Leavis Wimbledon
Tiger Louis Coventry	Wally Banner Norwich
Ivor Hill Nottingham	Jim Milward Norwich
F. Wilkinson Nottingham	Fred Ralph Norwich
Mick Silick New Zealand	Tiger Hart West Ham
Reg Thorne West Ham	

Another advert for the meeting gave the teams as

#### GREATREXS SIX

Stan Greatrex (Capt)  
Wal Morton  
Mick Silick  
Fred Wilkinson  
Jack Sharpe  
Tiger Lewis  
Alf Foulds (Res)  
E. Cooper (Res)

#### THE REST

Fred Leavis (Capt)  
Reg Stanley  
Ivor Hill  
Wally Banner  
Reg Thorne  
Tiger Hart  
Fred Ralph (Res)  
Jim Milward (Res)

Fred Wilkinson, Tiger Lewis, E. Cooper and Reg Stanley did not ride. Jim Milward rode at reserve for Greatrex's team.

## Eastern Speedway

### KESSINGLAND

Astonishingly Kessingland advertised Real Speedway England V Australia. The report of this meeting was in the Independent, the match that was won for Australia by the magnificent riding of Wal Smith. This rider also broke the track record 21 4/5. Wal Smith had rode many times at Norwich and came from Newmarket, not Australia, so Kessingland must have been a real farce.

During the interval of the meeting a collection raised £8 and 3 shillings for Spike Antonio Riando who had just left hospital after receiving injuries at the last meeting. Spike also rode at Norwich, Yarmouth and Bradwell in 1932 and was a well-known midget car racer.

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## BOXING

**Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> August 1933**

Ginger Sadd of Norwich had a well-deserved win on points over Jock Steward (Leicester)

Bert Holden Norwich holder of the Eastern Counties Feather Weight Championship beat Tiger Bert Ison of Leicester.

Young Turner of Norwich was stopped in the 8th round by Newsboy Kirk (Lowestoft).

Snowy Edwards took 90 seconds to K. O. Johnny McCabe of Sheffield.

Eric Pleasants defeated Allick Grey both boxers came from Norwich

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**AUGUST 1933** - Only one Dirt Track meeting was advertised at the Firs in August.

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## JACK SHARP

INDEPENDENT 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1933

Jack Sharp the popular rider who hails from Perth Australia arrived in England in 1931 and rode for High Beach for two years. He was singularly unlucky with his motor. This season he signed a contract with Plymouth, where he has gained no small success, being one of the highest scorers.

Among the trophy's he holds a cup for the best pairs in cooperation with Harry Bray, and one for the record at Rochester 1932.

Incidentally, before arriving in England he rode a season in Singapore and left there after winning a Silver Gauntlet and holds the track record. Jack is 24 years old.

Note; - previous to the A. C. U. permit Jack had rode at Norwich and Yarmouth as Smythe

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## RE-OPENING DIRT TRACK

**Sunday Next September 3rd**

## WORLDS BEST RIDERS

**AMAZING! TERRIFIC! COLOSSAL!**

**The only recognized Speedway in East Anglia**

**A Galaxy of Stars are coming**

**New Riders A.C.U Licensed**

**Qualified Dirt Track riders only**

This advert would tend certainly confirm that no racing took place during the summer at the Firs

### GREYHOUNDS

Saturday 9th September 1933

Another good crowd at Boundary Park. Well-attended meeting at Thorpe

Meeting at the Firs, but no mention of the crowd

**Come to the only real Speedway in East Anglia  
Were Qualified Dirt Track Riders Appear.  
Magnificent Display of Nerve and Skill**

## Eastern Speedway

### The Firs

6th August 1933

#### Riders

Stan Greatrex	Coventry	Wal Morton	Coventry	John Glass	Coventry
Tiger Lewis	Coventry	Ivor Hill	Nottingham	Fred Wilkinson	Nottingham
Mick Silick	New Zealand	Jack Sharp	Plymouth	Reg Stanley	Plymouth
Fred Leavis	Wimbledon	Reg Thorne	West Ham	Tiger Hart	West Ham
Wally Banner	Norwich	Jim Millward	Norwich	F. Cooper	Norwich
				F. Ralph	Norwich

## EXCITING RACING

10<sup>th</sup> September 1933

Over 4,000 fans watched as two attempts were made on the lap record, but although speeds of 44 M.P.H. were recorded no rider was successful in beating the record of 20 1/5. Owing to the high speeds reached at times crashes were frequent but no ride was seriously injured.

RESULTS; - Three Cornered Match Race; - Jack Sharp 89.  
 Flying 8 Clutch start; - 1st Ivor Hills, 2nd J. Glass, 3rd F. Leavis. Time 91 1/5.  
 Grade B. Flying start; - 1st Stan Lemmon, 2nd Jim Milward, 3rd Wally Banner. Time 86.  
 Firs Handicap Push start; - 1st J. Milward, 2nd I. Hill, 3rd D. Wise. Time 91.  
 Favourite's Match Race; - J. Glass beat Tiger Lewis Time 89 2/5.

### CHAMPIONSHIP EVENTS

## Eastern Motor Club Championship

# Dirt Track Races

## Heats and Final (Senior and Junior)

17th September 1933

## PROFESSOR POWSEY

The World famous high diver, direct from Alexandria Place London  
will give a display of High Diving from a mask 70 ft. into a small tank

**SEEING IS BELIEVING    ASTOUNDING**  
**HE DIVES IN FLAMES, HE DIVES IN A SACK**

### CHAMPIONSHIP EVENTS

Fred Leavis was the lucky winner of the senior event. Qualifying for the Semi-finals as the fastest second, he rode a really good race to return the fastest time of the day 84 3/5 from a clutch start. This brought him against Tiger Hart in the Final. Hart was swoon a length to the good, and increased his advantage to three lengths.

Then Leavis overslid, and as the race was under match race rules a re-run was made. This time Hart overslid. On the third run both riders got away well, and for a lap kept together Leavis gradually gained ground and was about two lengths in the lead when in the third lap, Hart's plug lead came a drift and his motor stopped to leave Leavis the winner. It was unfortunate that the draw brought, Hill and Sharp together in the heats. Hill was the winner after a re-run in which Sharp crashed heavily in the third lap when attempting to pass inside at a fast pace. Hill never got going in the Semi-final, his machine misfired badly causing him to finish a long way last.

Dick Wise won the Junior Championship from Jim Milward in 85 1/5 from a rolling start. Fairbairn would properly have contested the final had he not turned round so often to look for Milward who at the last bend came "all out" to beat him on the post.

Mr. Adcock, one of the Speedway supporters presented the prizes.

RESULTS; - Senior 4 Laps Clutch start; -

T. Hart beat T. Lewis 86 1/5. J. Glass beat F. Leavis 87 1/5. I. Hill finished alone 94.

Semi Finals; - Leavis. Hart. Final Leavis beat Tiger Hart 93 4/5.

Junior 4 Laps rolling start; -

Milward, F. Ralph 89 1/5. E. Cooper, V. Smith 90 2/5. S. Fairbairn, D. Wise 87 1/5.

Semi Finals; - Wise Milward. Final Wise, Milward 86 1/5.

Senior Consolation Final; - J. Hill, T. Lewis. 86 2/5.

Junior Consolation Final; - A. Foulds, F. Ralph, E. Cooper. 89 3/5.

## From Grass to Grosskreutz by Alan Smith

### At the race meeting on September 17 1933

One of the events was 'Senior Match Race Championship.' Heat 3 was Jack Sharpe versus Ivor Hill. This turned out to be a good race.

Ivor Hill got the break at the start and lead into the first corner, and Jack Sharpe tried all he knew to find a way past on the inside of Hill. Ivor was riding well in to the inside line, and blocked Jack's attempt to pass. On the last lap Sharpe threw caution to the wind and tried to take a line around the outside of his opponent, but Ivor realised what was happening and drifted from the line forcing Jack out into the deep cinders, this with the flying dirt from Hill's skidding machine caused Jack to lose control and crash.

Ivor Hill went on to win. This result wasn't received very well, Ivor got booed by the crowd: Jack Sharp was everyone's hero at Norwich. I expect Ivor had been booed by better boopers than we were during his career as a speedway rider, so didn't worry too much.

At that time I felt that Jack Sharp had been robbed, but after what happened in the pits I changed my mind. I'll tell of this later.

How did I know what happened in the pits?

As an added attraction that week a diving act had been booked in. A man dived from a tower in the centre of the track onto a tank of water with roughly four or five feet of water in. Most of his act was during the interval, but his final was done after the racing was over. For this an inflammable liquid was poured on the water and ignited. The diver in a protective suit was also covered with liquid and set on fire, making his bid dive aflame into a tank of fame. When he emerged, none the worse for his flaming ordeal he invited anyone who wished to inspect his tank to see it was just as he claimed it to be.

This was too good a chance to miss I thought. Not bothering too much about his water tank I and some of my mates climbed the wire safety fence and were on the sacred cinder track. We had a quick look at the water tank and it looked roughly as the diver had claimed. He was welcome to his job, it didn't appeal to me at all.

There were other far more interesting things to see though. On the far side of the track, were the pits with bikes and riders any much more exciting things than tanks full of flaming water. That is where I had to get and it all seemed so easy. After the racing was over, the pits staff had gone off duty and the pit gate stood open. It was easy my mates and I just walked in. If the track was sacred what was this?

We were not the only ones to head for the open pits gate and to take advantage of the chance to really meet the riders. Now here they were all together, not the leather clad gladiators that we were used to seeing but ordinary men dressed in normal cloths, looking like other people that you meet in the streets, no halo's no horns. All were busy with their helpers loading bikes onto trailers or the back of a car, getting ready to go to where ever their destination happened to be.

It was at that pits that Sunday afternoon during 1934 that my view on speedway racing and of the riders changed slightly.

After the match race incident when Ivor Hill finished along after Jack Sharp had fallen, it was thought unsporting for Hill to finish the race. However it had been said before the race started that it would be decided in that one race and so be it. Another visitor to the pits that afternoon was a tall bespectacled young man obviously a Jack Sharp supporter (weren't we all?) who on seeing Ivor loading his equipment remarked "Platy the game Ivor." As can be imagined the rider was not pleased with this remark and retorted "That's enough to start a row you know." There was an exchange of words but fortunately the row didn't erupt and Ivor went on to explain speedway tactics to the young man and to all of us who were listening.

"Speedway racing isn't a teats of speed" Ivor said, "It is racing and includes a lot of bull. You have to bluff your opponents into thinking that you are going to other than you really do."

"When in front you have to figure out how he will try to pass and you've got to be on that bit of track he will need to use to do so. When behind and trying to pass you have to do your best to out think the rider who is forever in your way and find a way past him, That is racing. It is a lot of bluff, but it is racing."

"You tried to bluff us you were Wally Bird at one time" replied the bespectacled man. This remark was ignored.

I was interested in seeing Dick Wise loading two bikes into his large car. The bikes less their wheels strapped to a wooden platform at the back of the car with the wheels and all the extras in the back of large car. Why two machines and two lots of gear?

As we watched Dick, from the changing room came Jack Sharp. Jack walked to a quiet corner where a lady was waiting near a motorbike ready for the road. Not a speedway bike.

He pushed the machine off the stand and with a sharp kick on the starter brought the engine to life. The lady whoever she was, Jack's lady, climbed onto the pillion seat and with a curt "O.K?" to his passenger, they were gone. What about his speedway machine and his entire racing gear, where was it all.

It was then that we took more interest in what Dick Wise was loading and there we found the answer to our question. Both Dick and Jack were at that time members of the Plymouth team, and of the two lots of speedway equipment in Dick's car one belonged to Jack. There is a great sense of comradeship among all the riders, which was evident on that Sunday afternoon.

## Special Match Race

### Fred Leavis Senior Champion V Tiger Hart

## TRACK CHAMPION'S SUCCESS AT NORWICH

Times were a little slower than usual, due to the heavy state of the track caused by rain. There were however, some splendid competitive riding and exciting finishes, and inches only divided Foulds from Summersby in the four lap race. F. Leavis enhanced his reputation as senior track champion by winning all his events in fast times considering the handicap of a heavy track. His finishing was great against rivals who appeared to hold winning leads.

### RESULTS; -

Three Corner Match Race; - J. Glass beat T. Lewis. 91 4/5. F. Leavis beat J. Glass 88 3/5.  
Four Lap Match Races; - J. Milward beat F. Ralph. 93 1/5. J. Sharp beat T. Hart. 90 1/5.  
F. Leavis beat I. Hill. 94 1/5. S. Fairbairn beat Wise 85 2/5. Hustwayte beat V. Smith. 94 2/5. A. Foulds beat A. Summersby. 93 2/5. F. Leavis beat T. Hart. 86 2/5.  
Grade B Riders four lap dash; -  
Heat 1 1st Fairbairn, 2nd A. Foulds. 87. Heat 2. 1st Cooper, 2nd F. Ralph 96 2/5.  
Final 1st S. Fairbairn, 2nd A. Foulds, 3rd E. Cooper. 87 3/5.  
Flying Eight; - Heat 1. 1st I. Hill, 2nd J. Sharp. 88 4/5. Heat 2. F. Leavis, 2nd T. Lewis. 92 1/5.  
Final; - 1st Fred Leavis, 2nd Jack Sharp, 3rd Ivor Hill. Time 88 2/5.

### JOHN GLASS

Started Riding in 1928 at Claremont Perth under the assumed name of Mick Murphy, a name given to him by Johnny Hoskins, as he did not want his mother to know that he was riding. He also rode at West Maitland before coming to England to ride for Stamford Bridge as Mick Murphy in 1931. He was outstanding for Plymouth in 1933-34. Rode at Norwich under his real name.

## GEOFF PYMAR

The local boy and teammate of Vic Huxley of Wimbledon  
PLUS

Stan Lemmon (Crystal Palace) Charlie Blacklock (Nottingham)  
Bill Summersey (Crystal Palace) Ivor Hill (Nottingham)  
Stew Fairbairn (Nottingham) Jack Sharp (Plymouth)

**Return of the wander GEOFF PYMAR  
ALL AT THE DIRT TRACK RACES**

Sunday 8th October 1933 at 3 p.m.

**THRILL UPON THRILL**

**"THE FIRS" Aylsham Road, Norwich**

Unusually price of admission

Teas and Refreshments

COME TO THE SUPER SHOW : :

Under ACU Rules

This meeting was not reported

Right is a rather poor copy of a photo that was published in the in the Independent.

Geoff being welcomed by Mr. F. W. Howes the Steward together with Stan Lemon, Jack Sharp, Dick Wise, Wal Morton and Fred Leavis



## Eastern Speedway

Sunday 15th October 1933

**G. Dykes (Nottingham) C. Shelton (Nottingham)**  
**Sid Griffiths (Clapton) C. Parkinson (Clapton)**  
also  
**Ivor Hill, Tiger Hart, Fred Leavis, Wal Morton**  
**Ect.**

# 18 Super Speedway Heats

## FIRST DEAD HEAT AT THE FIRS

The final meeting of the season and for the first time in the history of dirt track racing in the City a dead heat was witnessed in a thrilling race between Cliff Parkinson and C. Shelton. Ivor Hill distinguished by winning each event that he contested. Several attempts were made to lower the one lap record which stands to the credit of Jack Sharp in 20 1/5.

G. Dykes put up a stunning show and returned 20 1/5. C. Sheldon and Tiger Hart also made attempts but were not successful.

RESULTS; -

Match Races; -

Ivor Hill beat Blacklock	Time 90 4/5.	G. Dykes beat Jim Milward	Time 84 4/5.
Tiger Lewis beat Wal Morton	Time 87 2/5.	C. Parkinson and C. Sheldon, dead heat.	Time 93.
J. Glass beat D. Wise retired with engine trouble. Blackwood beat Tiger Hart by inches 94.			
Tiger Lewis beat Fairbairn	Time 93 2/5.	Foulds beat Ralf	Time 98 1/5.
Tiger Hart beat Wal Morton	Time 91 1/5.	Hart finished alone.	

Scratch Races; - Heat 1 Ivor Hill, Tiger Hart Time 88.

Heat 2 Tiger Lewis, Wal Morton. Time 90 2/5. Heat 3 Fairburn beat Parkinson, Time 89 1/5.

First Semi-Final; - Ivor Hill, Tiger Hart, Tiger Lewis. Time 88 2/5.

Second Semi-Final; - Dykes. Parkinson, Milward. Time 86.

Final; - Ivor Hill, Parkinson, Dykes. Time 88 1/5.

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The 1933 season was not so successful as the previous seasons. The track did not run regular Sunday meetings as they had done in 1932. They closed then re-opening again, but they did at last get an A. C. U. Permit.

It was also noticeable that several of the riders who had been successful in past seasons had it seemed stopped riding at the Firs when they obtained the official licence. But in fact they had just changed from their assumed names to their correct names. Arthur Reynolds and Jack Smythe were two such riders. Both of them rode at Lowestoft under both names. This must have been very confusing for the fans.

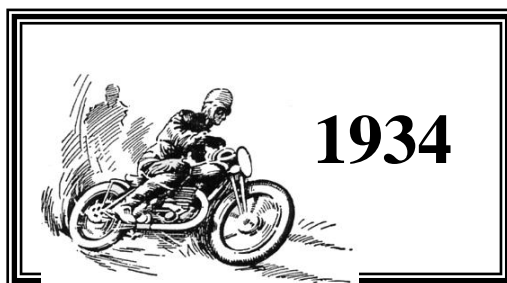
At Norwich Arthur Reynolds had been a star rider from the start and now he was no longer Arthur but Fred, This all seemed to point that the sport was run in a real "Micky Mouse" way.

There were adverts in the local press for meetings but they were not all reported in the local press. But the Greyhound racing at the three local tracks, on the other hand, got a lot of coverage. It was also noticeable that the Firs had a lot of dead heats in their Greyhound meetings. The Pony Racing had been dropped and Whippet racing did not stay on the programme for long.

The adverts at the end of 1932 were large and always interesting for the Greyhound meetings at the Fir's, but in 1933 got very small in comparison with the two rival tracks.

In seemed that the Firs were certainly running out of steam and were not getting the support needed to make the Stadium a paying concern.





# RED HOT NEWS

UNDER A. C. U. licence

GRAND OPENING MEETING

## EASTER SUNDAY 3.30

A Staggering programme of Dare-Devil Riders  
on the finest track in the Provinces

7d. 1/-      Grandstand for 2,000      FREE CAR PARK  
Refreshments in the Pavilion

BOOK THIS DATE      Come and get Thrilled- Super Men  
in a SUPER PROGRAMME

TIGER HART      WAL MORTON      TIGER LEWIS  
Fisher Ect.

Another advert gave more riders

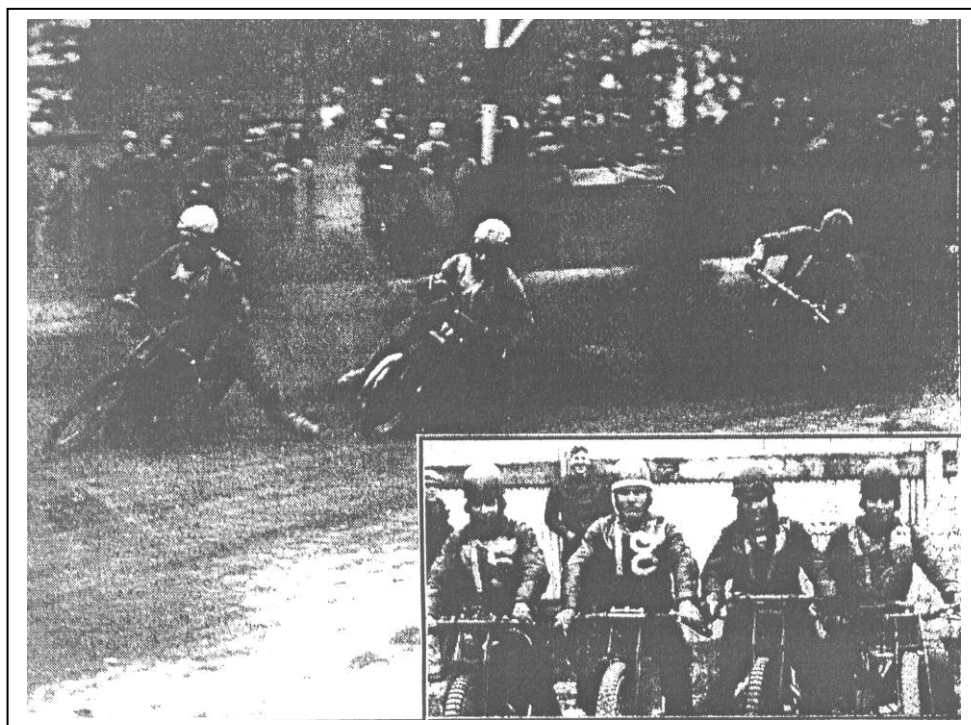
Jack Smythe F. Leavis Ivor Hill (just back from Australia)

Tiger Hart Tiger Lewis Stan Greatrex H. Macaskiei

Wal Morton and many more STAR RIDERS

Full Programme of Super Events No Push Starts

Another advert gave more riders Sunday April 1st 1934



No report of this meeting  
appeared in the local  
press.

The Independent  
publishes two photos of  
this meeting. Copy on the  
left

The Eastern Motor Club held their first programme of Dirt Track Races for 1934, at the Firs Stadium, Norwich, last Sunday. Our photo shows Tiger Hart, Wal Morton and Tiger Lewis taking a bend in the Senior 4-lap "Tear-Up" event. Inset- Four of the local competitors C. English (Fakenham), A. Fisher (Lowestoft), Pat Eastell (Attleborough), and J. Land (Drayton)

## Eastern Speedway

July 1932- March 1934  
**STILL GOING STRONG  
THE FIRS  
GREYHOUND RACING**  
is the best in East Anglia  
Every Monday Thursday Saturday  
Special Meeting Good Friday

At Easter it was reported that Norwich had been crowded with visitors who enjoyed the many attraction, including the annual Fair. Norwich F. C. had a record crowd, with 22,365 fans packing into the "Nest". This was 2,000 more than the previous best crowd. No mention at all of speedway

APRIL 22nd 1934

## ALL STAR RIDERS

ALSO

E. LAND Drayton E. ENGLISH Fakenham  
S. NEWSOME Lowestoft PAT ESTELL Attleborough  
J. WOODROW Lakenham

The line up for this meeting at the Firs did not look very good and once again no report appeared.

A report of a meeting that took place the same day at Pakefield was reported. 19 riders took part, many were the riders who had been in previous seasons rode at the Firs. In the team match Norfolk defeated Suffolk by 28 -24. Fred Leavis the Norfolk captain won three races. R. Elder and Milward had two wins each. The next meeting was advertised for Whit Sunday and the riders were

J. SHARP TIGER HART JOE E. BROWN FRED LEAVIS DICKIE WISE  
Also local boys J. Woodrow (Lakenham) F. Newson (Lowestoft)  
F. Land (Drayton) R. Munnings (Lowestoft) Pat Eastoll (Attleborough)

Another advert nearer the date

## WHIT SUNDAY

AT 3 p. m.

### DIRT TRACK RACING

THE FIRS STADIUM AYLHAM ROAD NORWICH

Promoted by the Eastern Motor Club

A. C. U. regulation

### MAGNIFICENT DISPLAY of NERVE and SKILL

### by ALL STAR RIDERS

The Following Local Boys are also Competing

F. Newson and J. Colby (Lowestoft)  
E. English (Fakenham) J. Land (Drayton)  
S. Warren and Pat Eastoll (Attleborough)  
J. Woodrow (Lakenham) V. Houston  
(Clacton-on Sea)

Follow the Crowd on Whit Sunday  
to the Dirt Track

Buses all day from Duke Street

## WHITE SUNDAY MEETING

20<sup>th</sup> May 1934

At the Firs on Whit Sunday a large crowd witnessed one of the finest Dirt track meetings of the year. The racing was of a high standard and the novices races showed that a definite improvement has been made J. Land (Drayton) rode finely.

A new style of numbering the riders instead of naming them has been inaugurated to facilitate the running of the programme. This must be tried out thoroughly before comment is made. Rider number 6 crashed in the second heat of the big eight race, although carried off the course on a stretcher he was not seriously hurt.

No results were published of this meeting. This would have been rather pointless because it seemed that riders were numbered instead of named. This was an insane situation with number 6 crashing, and not being named.

The Independent had in previous years mentioned the racing at the Firs in its section on were to go over the Bank Holiday period. For the first time there was no mention at all of the Firs.

Under Greyhounds only Boundary Park was mentioned.

Grandstand for 4,000. Racing on Monday, Wednesday Friday and Saturday night's. Also its admission prices are the smallest for any track of its kind. The admission to the Grandstand and Paddock is 7d.

No more adverts appeared in the local press after Whit Sunday until September for Dirt Track Racing at the Firs

Diss again run a programme of racing at their annual Gymkhana over the August Bank Holiday period a photo of the one mile scratch event was published in the Independent.

## Eastern Speedway

Dirt Track racing did take place at the improved Gunton Hall Speedway during this time under the auspices of the Lowestoft Motor Club (Affiliated to the A. C. U.). Some team matches took place. Suffolk beat Essex 38-21 and the Rest 38-21. Some races had three riders from each team contested a race. The Suffolk captain was Dusty Flint (Jim Milward) and other riders mentioned were T. English, J. Royal, R. Elder and Land.

18th August Boundary Park held the Norfolk County A. A. A. Sports meeting

Thorpe put on Pony Racing and held meetings on Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday's at 11.30

### **HOLIDAY MONTHS ARE OVER DIRT TRACK RACING**

**Will Recommence at**

**The Firs Stadium Aylsham Road Norwich**

**Sunday Next September 23rd at 3.15p.m.**

**Gates Open at 2.15p.m**

**COLOSSAL DISPLAY BY PROFESSIONAL  
RIDERS.**

**JACK SHARP**

**(The Australian Test Rider)**

**J. Milward (now in Wembley team) F. Levis. J. Pickett  
Ivor Hill J. Hash G. Hammond T McLaughlin  
L. Downing Leon Legrice, and 8 other Speedway Stars**

**THRILL ! THRILL ! THRILL !**

**Admission 7d & 1/- (including tax) Covered Grandstand for 2,000  
Tea and Refreshments obtainable Free Car Park for all**

**Sunday 7th October 1934  
NORWICH V ST CHRISTOPHER'S  
(Touring "A" Team)  
Come and Support Your Team! Great Show!**

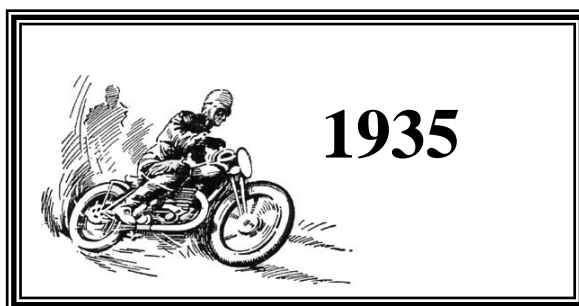
<b>ST. CHRISTOPHERS</b>	<b>NORWICH</b>
<b>1. Leon LeGrice (Capt)</b>	<b>7. F. Leavis (Capt)</b>
<b>2. T. McLaughlin</b>	<b>8. J. Milward</b>
<b>3. J. Pickett</b>	<b>9. W. Morton</b>
<b>4. T. Alic</b>	<b>10. F. Ralph</b>
<b>5. Dick Wise</b>	<b>11. Reg Stanley</b>
<b>6. M. Muller</b>	<b>12. G. Dykes</b>
<b>Reserve – B. Stannard</b>	<b>Reserve – J. Riddle</b>

No report the local press of this meeting.

I have a copy of the programme, but with no results recorded in it so I have included the teams as programmed.

Yet another Greyhound track opened on the 13th October 1934. This new one was at the back of a Pub in Bunwell on the main Norwich to New Buckinham Road. It did not last that long as this publican had several dogs and when it became plain that if his dogs were not in a winning position the hare that he had rigged up with a car pulling it would have some problem and the race would be declared void.

With the Greyhounds having so much competition the Firs were certainly losing out badly. Dirt track racing was also on the way down with fewer meetings in 1934. The competition for the fans was with Lowestoft who ran more meetings and they also had better riders than the Firs. The rot had set in and this was the start of a bad time for the Stadium that had promised so much.



**EASTER SUNDAY  
DIRT TRACK  
RACING**

**THE "FIRS" STADIUM**

ALYSHAM ROAD NORWICH

Gates open 2.15 First race 3.15

**THRILLS EVERY SECOND  
PROFESSIONAL RIDERS ONLY  
THE MOST EXPENSIVE PROGRAMME  
EVERY PRESENTED IN NORWICH**

Leon Le Grice (1934 Record Holder) Hans  
Platz, Jack Sharp (1934 Test Rider) J. Nash  
D. McLaughlin, Tiger Harford  
and 10 other "Super Speedstars"

No Novice Races

Admission 1/- & 7d (including tax)

Covered Stand for 2,000 All cars FREE

Teas and Refreshments served in the new

PAVILION

Buses to and from the track at  
frequent intervals from Duke Street

All Riders

This was the only meeting advertised in the local press for the Firs in 1935. The last Greyhound meeting had taken place on the 14<sup>th</sup> January 1935 and it seemed that the Stadium was destined to remain closed unless someone would come in to run it in a more professional way.

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**EAST COAST SPEEDWAY PAKEFIELD LOWESTOFT**

The Dirt Track fans could still enjoy the sport as Pakefield ran meetings during the 1935 season. Team matches and The Championship of the East Coast were the main features. The Championship was a match race that took place at each meeting. The team's captain Fred Leavis was the Champion beating Tiger Hart, Jim Milward before losing out to Squibb Burton.

July 14<sup>th</sup> - East 37 South 35 Fred Leavis beat Tiger Hart (West Ham).

Great Holiday Programme 21 riders from Cambridge, Newmarket, Lowestoft, Attleborough and London.

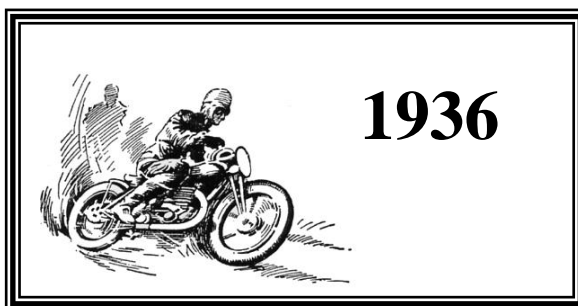
Suffolk 29 Essex 36

August 11<sup>th</sup> - Lowestoft 36 London 30. London included riders from Hackney Wick, Wembley and West Ham. In the team match with one race to go the scores were 30 all. The last heat had six riders in and the Lowestoft riders gained the first three places to win 36-30.

September 1<sup>st</sup> - As a mark of respect the club flag was flown at half mast in the memory of Tom Farndon the British Speedway Champion who died last week and at the beginning of the meeting the crowd stood for a minutes silence. Lowestoft 18 Hackney Wick 29. The Leicester captain C. F. Burton took the East Coast Championship from Fred Leavis after Leavis had taken a fall and injured his ankle.

September 15<sup>th</sup> - Lowestoft 22 London 25. The top riders were Fred Leavis Squibb Burton, Jim Millward & Jack Sharp. Fred Leavis was the top rider of the season and was presented with a Trophy. He had competed in 34 races and had won 24 and 7 seconds and no thirds giving him 86 points.

## Eastern Speedway



East Coast Speedway ran a few meetings at Pakefield They held an A.C.U. Permit No. R 52'

The Grand re-opening meeting was on Whit Sunday 31st May 1936 Tiger Lewis, Jim Milward, Ted English, Jerry Williams and West Ham's Canadian star Eric Chitty plus all the local favourites were advertised. Suffolk fielded a strong team in the team match and beat London 25-19. Of the seven races Suffolk won three London one and three were drawn. The most successful rider was Jim Milward who gained two first places. Eric Chitty of West Ham took a first second and a third place to top score for London.

28th June 1936 -Tiger Hart and his Provincial Team rode against Jim Milward and his East Coast team.

2nd August 1936 -Jim Milward, Tiger Lewis, Tiger Hart, Ted English

16th August 1936 -Jack Smythe (Australian Test Rider), Jim Milward Wembley, Tiger Hart West Ham, Tiger Lewis Hackney, De La Porte South Africa

30th August 1936 -Jack Sharp was advertised the previous meeting he had been Jack Smythe

# SPEEDWAY RODEO & CIRCUS

**Putt Mossman, World Champion Stunt Motor Cyclist**  
and his **AMERICAN SPEEDWAY ACES** appearing at  
**THE FIRS STADIUM, ALYSHAM Rd., Norwich**  
Sunday Next, 13<sup>th</sup> September at 3p.m.

## 20 ----- Events----- 20

Including Team Races, Match Races, Midget Cars Record Attempts, and  
Putt Mossman will present his sensation Solid Board Crash Out at 40 mph  
Also see him climb over 10ft. ladder attached to the rear of

Machine while going at 40m.p.h, handlebars

Free and controlling machine by balance of body

**Admission 2/- & 1/- (including tax). Children half price**

### Sunday 13th September 1936

The only meeting advertised at the Firs was when Putt Mossman, the world champion stunt motor cyclist, and his American Speedway Aces appeared in a Speedway and Rodeo Circus.

No report of the meeting was given in the local press. The show had drawn good crowds all over the country and it seems Norwich was no exception.

## A GLIMMER OF HOPE

There was still hope among the speedway fans that the sport could be saved in the City as the Firs had attracted some good crowds to see this exciting sport but it had not been run successfully. The starts were never very good, push starts and rolling starts were particularly bad. In a rolling start the riders had to come up to the line together on the move, but they would frequently circle the track half-a-dozen times before they were judged to be in line, as in most race one rider would jump the start to gain an advantage. Handicap races with riders again jumping the start were a farce and in the two-mile handicaps, the fans would not be able to see because of all the dust.

The Greyhounds were also a joke, they were run inside the Dirt Track and a man, no luxury of an electric hare rail in those races, pulled the hare.

Apart from the Mossman show, the Firs had just laid empty in 1936. Here was a Stadium that if run in a professional fashion, could well be saved and run at a profit. All it needed was a Knight in Shinning Armour

At the end of the 1936 season Max Grosskreutz, the famous Australian Speedway rider, decided that he would like to run a track himself. Maybe he did not arrive at the Firs in Shinning Armour, but he was without doubt the Saviour of the Firs. It was said ex-riders do not make good promoters and that no one would be able to make the Firs a successful track. The knockers had a field day.

Max took a long look and maybe he had spoken to his Australian teammates, some like Dick Wise had rode at the track. There was certainly a public for the sport in the City all Max had to do was to clean up the Stadium and then put on a good show.

All during the winter of 1936-37, Max and his band of helpers, worked hard to put a new wooden safety fence. He also worked hard on the track itself, putting down a good cinder track, very much like the track at Belle Vue. Also and most importantly of all a starting gate to stop was put in to spot all those bad starts.