

Wakefield Park's April all-Historic meeting, organised by Historic Sports and Racing Car Association, included a hopeful sign for that long-promised air-cooled revival. HSRCA gave the air-cooled cars their own class, and presented the Ashley Cowan trophy for best air-cooled performance. This trophy will henceforward be awarded annually at this meeting, giving us not only some recognition, but also a date to aim for next year. There are excellent potential runners in our classifieds!

WONDERFUL WINTON 2002

For the first time in four years Winton all-historic meeting in May was smiled upon with almost perfect weather - clear blue skies, 18-20 degrees during the day, although cold and frosty at night.

There was a high entry and a massive variety of cars, and was the racing good! Derry Greneklee had repaired his Mk 9 1100 V-twin Cooper JAP and was really demonstrating what it could do. In Group Lb (post WW2 to end 1960) his main opposition was Dick Willis in the 2-litre ex-Mildren T51 Cooper Climax. In two of their three races Dick was on pole with Derry alongside, and Derry generally managed to be first into the first corner. After that it was all on, with Dick leading and Derry giving him a hard time for the remainder of the race.

The only other air-cooled at Winton was Frank Cuttell, with his De Havilland aircraft-engined Cirrus with a self-built GN-type chassis. All told, it was a great meeting. *Max Fisher*

BITS AND PIECES

☛ The very pretty pale blue Mk 4 Cooper Vincent restored by Garry Simkin has just completed a stint on display in the front window of Sydney's "Motor Books" on busy Military Rd in Cremorne. The last Cooper to be on display in a Sydney showroom was probably the brand-new red Mk 8 JAP which spent some time in John Crouch's Darlinghurst premises in 1954-55 before being bought by Roy Blake.

☛ According to the Historic column in Auto Action, "It should soon be possible to have a race entirely for aircooled cars." Date of the column? April 12, 1979.

☛ The very special Manx-engined Mk 9 Cooper imported in 1955 by Murray Rainey, modified to wishbone/coil front suspension at the Cooper factory in 1959, and run by Rainey in supercharged form as both a 500 and a 750, has been sold by

LOOSE FILLINGS



This is the startline at Ohakea, NZ, in March 1954 before an 8-lap scratch race. From left to right, W.J. Lee (Cooper Mk 6 JAP, DNF), D.G. Avery (Cooper Mk 4 JAP, DNF), P.J. Ward (JBS JAP, 2nd), A.T. Freeman (Cooper Mk 4 JAP, DNF), R.A. Frost (Cooper Mk 6 Norton, 1st). Picture courtesy Max Fisher.

John Caffin to Mark Palmer in England. John brought the car back to Australian Historic racing, and had offered the car for sale here for several years before finding an overseas buyer. John will be in England later this year and hopes to drive the car at one of the UK hills.

☛ Meanwhile Terry Wright, while competing at Prescott with the Walton JAP (see elsewhere this issue) met Murray Rainey's daughter Joy, and had a beer with her at the local pub after the event. Terry has also made contact with the Australian owner of the Trenberth Vincent, which is now based in the UK.

☛ In New Zealand, Dave Silcock's Mk 9 Cooper Vincent "Jilly" has been sold to Mike Bigoini in Toronto, Canada.

☛ While continuing the search for the Peter McLeay trophy for air-cooled racing cars, Loose Fillings came across the Victorian equivalent, contested at Winton in the late '70s and early '80s. Featuring a

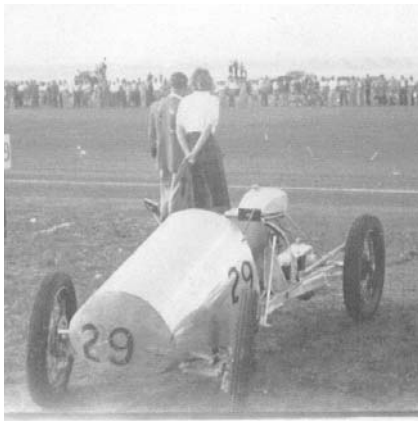
Victa lawnmower barrel, it was won by Peter Tucker and Rob Kirkby, and finally was won so many times by Malcolm Thorn that it was awarded to him in perpetuity. Malcolm's Ewing special is currently being rebuilt with Harley/Norton twin by Bob Morey in Canberra.

☛ If you haven't recently sent a book of 45c stamps to Garry Simkin (address in the box) this might be a good chance to do so, thereby assisting with the mailing cost of Loose Fillings.

CLASSIFIEDS

☛ For sale: Cooper Mk V Norton, ex Bob Gerard (UK). Immaculate. Don Hall, 08 9386 2346

☛ For sale: Cooper Mk V JAP 500, history in UK and Australia with Tom Hawkes and Bill Patterson with 500 and 997 JAPs. Brian Reed, 20 Carnoustie Ave, Jan Juc 3228.



Mystery pic. What is the car, the circuit and the date? Answer next issue.

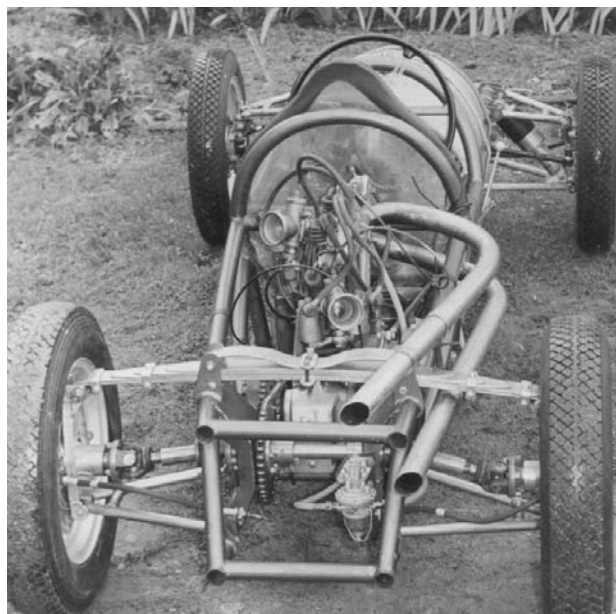
☛ For sale: 1961 Lynx Vincent, ex John Marston, oldest surviving Lynx. Very original, partially restored (see Loose Fillings # 4) includes new Terry Price Vincent crankcases, other Vincent parts. Asking \$20,000. David Lawry, 08 8373 1633

☛ For sale: Scarab Triumph, NSW race history from at least early 1960s. Rebuilt Bonneville engine, new 4-speed box, single Amal. No trailer. \$20,000, all offers considered. Graeme Worsley, 02 6362 8734

☛ For sale: Cooper Mk 8 Norton, bought new by Dick Campbell, held 350 and 500 NZ speed records. More details from Max Fisher (fax +64 9 534 2245).

THE LOG

THIS section of Loose Fillings records those special occasions since the previous issue where an air-cooled racing car not only appears in public, but actually fires. Mention in The Log is not boasting. It's a celebration.



Does anyone recognise this car? John Crouch found this picture amongst his records, and Diana Gaze has two more. The car has a rubber-mounted 8/80 JAP and an upright Norton gearbox. Many details - curly leaf rear spring, straight tubes, Hartnett alloy wheels - point to late 1950s construction. On the other hand, rear uprights are very similar to early Cooper, and Diana Gaze's pictures show the car had a Fiat or Ford 10 type steering box. Absence of rear shock absorbers, and general highly polished presentation, suggest it had not run when the pictures were taken.

☛ March 20: GEAR club, Wakefield Park - Maurie Pearson, Norton special

☛ April 7: Vintage club Bol d'Or, Ringwood hillclimb - Mike Bendiech, JMW Jawa 150 (eight runs and a trophy!)

☛ April 27-28: HSRCA historic races, Wakefield Park - Andrew Halliday (Cooper Mk 5 Norton), Garry Simkin (JBS Norton), John Gale (Cooper Mk 4 JAP 1100), Derry Grenekee (Cooper Mk 9 JAP 1100).

☛ May 26-27: Historic races, Winton - Derry Grenekee, (Cooper Mk 9 JAP 1100).

THE LAST COOPER

BERNIE Allen, the Norton restorer and replica builder in Wiltshire, UK (from whom I purchased my 1953 Mark 7-Manx, which he also restored) tells me he was commissioned recently to restore the Francis Beart long-stroke engine #FRB59/82 out of the Cooper Mark 13 which was the last of the series to come out of the Cooper works in 1959.

It was sold originally to Hap Sharp and raced by Alexis Dupont at Silverstone and Brands Hatch before being taken home to the US. It is currently owned by Charles McCabe of San Francisco who has also commissioned from Bernie a short-stroke Summerfield Manx for the car (to the same specs. as my engine) to be used for historic events in the US; it would appear the Beart engine, when restored, will only be used for display and demonstration runs.

Bernie also mentions he is on the track of a Mark 9/Beart short-stroke car raced at Goodwood by Stirling Moss for a friend of Charles McCabe, so that they can both go racing on the West Coast of the USA!
Graeme Noonan

JOHN CROUCH

JOHNS Crouch, whose racing career began before WW2, was recently made a life member of CAMS in recognition of his long involvement in the sport. Notable amongst many successes was the 1949 AGP at Leyburn driving a Delahaye, and the 1952 Australasian Hillclimb Championship at Rob Roy driving a Mk V Cooper JAP 1100.

He was the NSW and later Australian distributor for Cooper cars, and was also a prominent figure in the early years of CAMS. He was presented with his Life Membership by Colin Osborne, current President of CAMS, at a ceremony during the 2002 AGP luncheon at Albert Park.



John Gale at Wakefield Park in April talking with John Crouch, who imported John Gale's Mk IV Cooper JAP 1100 and had great success with it in 1950-51 before selling it in West Australia. Photo John Gale



The Ashley Cowan trophy, in memory of Cooper racer Ash Cowan, was presented to Garry Simkin for best performance by an air-cooled car at the April HSRCA meeting at Wakefield Park. In this picture (l. to r.) HSRCA president Colin Haste, Garry Simkin, John Gale and Andrew Halliday, who drove the ex-Cowan Mk 5 Cooper Norton. The air-cooled cars had their own class. Photo Steve Oom.

WALTON WORLD TOUR

FROM TERRY WRIGHT - SOMEWHERE IN ENGLAND - PART I

WE [Terry and wife Ray, Ed] arrived in the UK on April 2 and the container with the trailer and Walton JAP was unloaded at Southampton about a week later. The first event in late April was at Loton Park, near Shrewsbury on the way to North Wales along the A5 from Birmingham.

It seemed nice enough when we arrived not too late on a cold Friday evening. But it took an hour to put up the tent on a hillside scoured by an increasingly strong wind from nearby Wales; we must have been the only team without a decent sized motor home.

The course looked, well, long. You start off with a right, a left, a left, a left and then rush downhill to a tight right (Triangle) where there always seemed to be heaps of understeer. Then you accelerate through the left-handed Keepers followed by a long flat-out climb to a sharp left (brakes needed seriously), a sharp right (more brakes) and a short stretch to the finish.

The novelty of Loton, at least for this 'new chum', was that much of it was level or downhill and the fact that there were twisty bits after the fast bits. It was cold and it was wet and just when the big JAP was starting to motor seriously there was a need for brakes, steering, handling, none of

Wiscombe Park (map below) with lots of understeer at Sawbench (right). Below: the end of this slide at Martini saw the Walton's right front wheel climbing over the straw bale protecting the timing beam just visible below the Shell logo. There were bluebells in the cockpit afterwards!. Photo PAJ.



which I felt too confident about under the circumstances.

In the last run of practice at the end of the main hill I slid into what looked like grass but was really a sand trap. With the Walton's clearance I was able to keep going and fishtail out much to the bewilderment and/or amusement of the modern drivers watching from the early finishing paddock!

At most of the hills, there is no return road so there is a finishing paddock. This has a little hut where your times are printed out for you to tear off. There is a time for the first 64 ft, a trap time at the fastest initial part of the course, a mid course time, and another trap on the finish.

This was a British Championship round with the odd oldie such as the Walton making up the numbers. The big Formula Libre cars are awesome and none more so than the current, and no doubt to be 2002, champion Graeme Wight Jnr who did an FTD of 48.52.

The best of five runs in miserable conditions and with wrong gearing got the



Walton down to 70.30 which I thought was a bit ordinary compared with my handicap target time of 67.50.

The second hill a couple of weeks later was Wiscombe Park in Devon, a bit east of Exeter. It's a magic spot, with the course being the road down into the grounds of the "big house" around which was spread the open grassy paddock. The run starts level just before a tight left, a fast dog leg through a gate, then a series of esses (still more or less level), a right hairpin (Sawbench), a long straight climbing through a wood and a left hairpin (Martini) to finish.

The meeting on the Saturday was run by the 500 Owners Association with a quite separate meeting for the VSCC on the Sunday. My times were 56.11, 54.28, 52.44 on Saturday then 51.62, 51.33, 50.78 and (bugger it), 51.47, on the Sunday.

Although this seemed better than at Loton - I was starting to get the hang of the car and the environment, using fewer gears and more revs - there were two 500s doing 48s and a supercharged 1000 doing the same.

Tyres were a problem, I was finding. There seemed to be no midway between all grip and no grip but maybe that's just my lack of finesse. Nobody uses Michelins as I was, here; Firestones are said to be much grippier. Most of the other air-cooleds have Dunlop racing R5s.

The next weekend was spent at Gurston Down near Salisbury, again a championship meeting not too far from where we are living in West Sussex. Whereas the



weather at Wiscombe had been glorious, Gurston was cold and wet like Loton.

But practice was dry. You start with an exciting rush downhill through left hand curves (Hollow), then tight climbing right and left hairpins followed by a continuing straightish climb to the finish.

Practice times were 45.96, 42.98 and 42.29 with the Walton's best speed being 78 mph in third. The top cars were doing nearly 140 mph!. It rained on the Sunday and with no competition for the Walton and no hope of improving on practice times we decided to leave early just before the meeting was abandoned anyway.

A week later was Shelsley Walsh. Again it was a British Championship meeting with extra interest added by Stirling Moss turning up to do demo runs in a variety of cars.

Shelsley has to be seen to be believed. In operation since 1905, it's in the valley of the River Teme, west of Worcester where the Teme joins the Severn. The valley is quite the most beautiful place you could imagine - about a mile wide, I suppose, with meadows low down and thick woods higher up.

The course starts (as does Gurston) in a farmyard and climbs up the side of a secondary valley leading to the top of the escarpment. The first half curves left through several flat-out apexes (Kennel and Crossing) then, like Gurston but not as tight, there are climbing left and right turns, (The Esses), followed by a full throttle climb to the finish.

The weather was glorious all weekend and records went in many classes probably helped by the resurfacing of the start strip. 'Junior' won 1000 pounds for the first ever run under 25 seconds. I saw him do it and it was sensational. The 2.5 litre V6 Cosworth engined Gould seems to have it all over the heavier 3.5 litre V8s but there is no doubt Graeme is a great driver. I keep looking at him at work and wondering if that was what Bruce Walton was like?

Practice times with the Walton were 40.70, 39.10 and 'fail' because a magneto contact-breaker assembly vibrated loose despite being well lockwired. The first run in competition on the Sunday was also a fail - the rear inlet manifold broke where it had been welded by way of modifying a Norton part.

The second run was therefore with the carburettor bolted direct to the head which seemed to be OK and got us down to 38.24 which is starting to get respectable for a newcomer. Actually, of the 11 Coopers of various kinds (mainly 500s) running in a special invitation class, only Roger Willoughby's supercharged twin Mk 7 was quicker with a 37.19.

Then a week later was Prescott which is a totally different kettle of fish. There was



a Bugatti Club meeting on the Saturday and a loosely defined "historic" meeting on the Sunday.

From the start you go fast left more or less level (Orchard), brake into a right hairpin (Ettores) dash up to a left hairpin (Pardon) climb to the Esses then finish after a tightish 170 degree turn (Semicircle) which has a worrying drop on the outside.

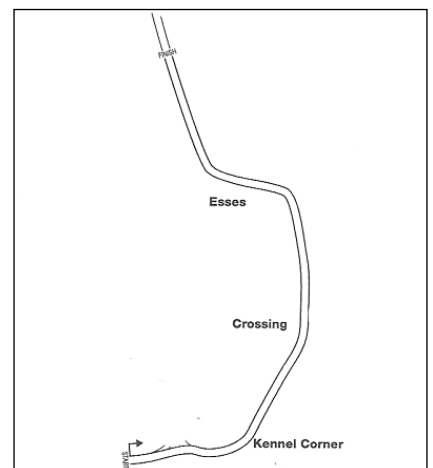
Saturday times were 57.46, 53.96, 53.97 (clutch slipping after a gearbox sprocket change) and 55.51 (the magneto end came adrift as at Shelsley). This meant a magneto change (a job I hate) so nearly missing dinner with Joy Rainey who had come along to see how we were going after we first met at Shelsley.

Had we got down to 52s I would have been quite happy but Sunday was wet so we did miserable times. In fact we nearly didn't even get a competitive run. Push starting downhill had been o.k. in the morning for practice but after lunch I couldn't get the back wheels to grip and turn the motor. So we got permission for a tow in the paddock and even then the back wheels were skidding with the motor turning over only at the last possible moment.

Then I made a mistake in trying to take Ettores in third instead of second which only made the understeer worse and took the car into the gravel trap. As at Loton we were able to drive out unaided. After that it seemed like a good idea to pack up while still in one piece and save the car for a better day.

That brought us to the end of the first set of meetings - six full weekends in seven-weeks. We have had a fantastic welcome, made quite a few new friends and find it all worth the effort and expense.

Shelsley Walsh (map below), the awesome British classic hillclimb, with the Walton flat out approaching Bottom Esse. Note the crowd. Photo Derek Hibbert.



Now [first week in July. Ed] we have a break of four weeks before heading across to Craigantlet and Eagle's Rock in Northern Ireland and then there's just Shelsley and Loton again before it's all over and we head home. *To be continued.*

*Edited by Graham Howard,
1248 Pacific Highway, Pymble
NSW 2075 phone/fax 02 9440 4081
(grimes@optushome.com.au)
Produced by Terry Wright
(twright@natspec.info)
Published by Garry Simkin,
28 McClelland Street, Willoughby,
NSW 2068 phone/fax 02 9958 3935*