



Mick Hand and his superfast blown 250 Honda in action at Wroughton last April. Will he do a nine-second run.

250 in the nines?

WITH the prospect of a 250 cc drag bike getting into the Top Bike list, drag racing fans have some interesting competition at the British Drag Racing and Hot Rod Association two-day "Firework Spectacular" at Santa Pod over the weekend.

Included in the 40-bike line-up are the fastest riders and bikes on this side of the Atlantic, including John Hobbs, who has clocked the quickest British run so far, of 9.16 secs with his 1,500 cc double Triumph, and also Derek Chinn, Mick Warne, Jeff Byne, Tony Weedon and Brian Smith.

The man to look out for is Ealing's Mick Hand, however, who clocked 10.08 secs with his phenomenal blown, nitro-burning 250 cc Honda at the last Snetterton meeting. If the conditions are right, he could jump into the nines and give some of the top boys a surprise.

SANTA POD '74 DRAG RACING

SATURDAY & SUNDAY FIREWORK SPECTACULAR

Saturday night special demonstration of DRAGSTERS & FUNNY CARS. Plus a large FIREWORK DISPLAY

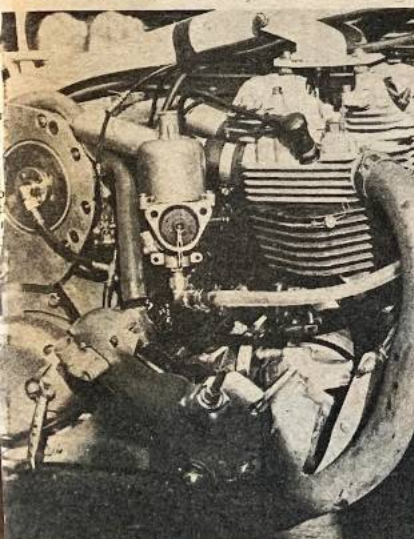
Drag Racing as normal on Sunday, from mid-day

£1 per person per day children under 12 free, including car park & VAT London Office 01-464 5445

FUN FOR ALL THE FAMILY

THE SANTA POD 8SEC BIKE RUN STILL UNCLAIMED, WILL IT BE WON.

NINE SECOND FIREWORKS FROM CLIFT

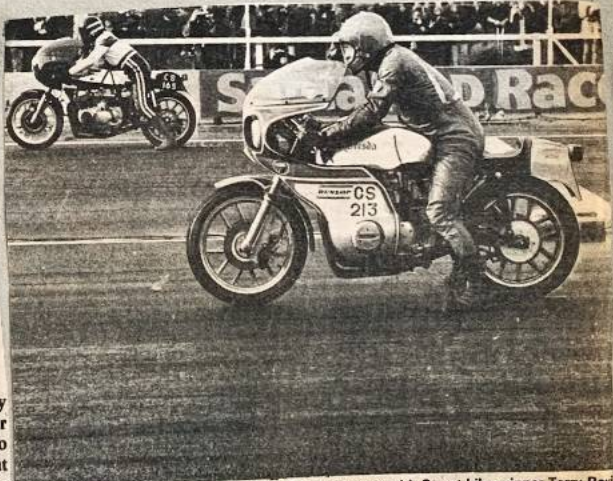


THE DAMP and foggy weather of a November weekend seemed to affect every rider at Santa Pod's Fireworks Spectacular except Epsom ace John Clift.

John was the only rider able to master the conditions well enough to record a nine second run on both days. He took home the Motor Cycle News Top Bike Trophy for the best time of the meeting after racing was abandoned at 5 o'clock on Sunday.

Saturday's qualifying runs were late starting, with riders compelled to wait until the fog had cleared and the track was beginning to dry. By four o'clock the fastest time stood to Dave Rawlins' Norton Commando with 12.33s at 111.6mph. Then Terry Revill got the 812cc Dresda Honda working well and stole Rawlin's thunder with a dash-in 12.23s at 114.6.

John Hobbs came out on Olympus Two and crossed the finishing line at 148.8mph. His time reflected the slippery con-



Dave Degens lags behind in a Dresda v Dresda contest with Street bike winner Terry Revill

AT SANTA POD: Jim Reynolds. Pictures: Keith Simmons

ditions — a lowly 10.62s.

Ten minutes later John Clift left the line on his 750 ARE-Triumph "Co-respondent" and headed for the horizon with 9.96 at 131.4mph.

Jeff Byne suffered his worst blow-up of the season, spreading the bottom half of the engine clear across both lanes.

Fastest man in the dark was Charlie Harrison, blasting his 500 Triumph "Olympus 1" through the quarter mile in 11.24s and heading into the inky blackness across the line at 120.2mph. Fastest speed across the line was recorded by John Hobbs with 129.53 at the end of an 11.68s dash.

Sunday dawned wet and cold with the strip again too wet to use until the early afternoon. Even then only S and C class bikes were allowed to run.

The street class was dominated by Terry Revill and

his superb Dresda Honda. The fastest class qualifier on Saturday, Revill then put in four runs in the low 12s bracket including beating Dresda boss man Dave Degens.

The final saw arch-rivals Revill and Rawlins matched together yet again. Revill is the only man who has beaten Rawlins this season and his determination to repeat the performance showed in the way he charged off the line, giving Rawlins no chance to get on terms. The 812cc Honda ran through the quarter in 12.19s at 110.7mph with Rawlins easing off to a below par 13.2/100.2mph.

No competition bikes were allowed to run until four o'clock then John Jacques showed that he was determined to win the Senior Bike title when he won his first round in the best class time of

10.75/127.1mph as he beat challenge from local man Bob Bailey.

John Hobbs should have met John Webster in the Top Bike illumination for the MCN Trophy but Hobbs enjoyed a solo run as an unhappy Webster looked on from the side lines, his bike in the van ready to go back to the workshop.

Tony Weedon's 500cc American Triumph raced Brian Chapman's 500 Vincent in the closest race of the day, Weedon getting away first and staying there with a time of 10.22/141.1 to Chapman's 10.32/139.1.

PROVISIONAL RESULTS
Street class: T. Revill (10.75/127.1), J. Hobbs (12.19/110.7), B. Bailey (12.33/111.6), D. Rawlins (12.23/114.6), J. Clift (9.96/131.4), J. Harrison (11.24/120.2), J. Byne (10.62/106.2), J. Clift (10.08/148.8), J. Hobbs (12.19/110.7), J. Jacques (13.20/100.2) (rod light).
Motor Cycle News Top Bike Trophy: John Clift (750 ARE-Triumph) 9.96/131.4.
Co-responder: 9.91/139.1mph.

The shattered remains of Jeff Byne's engine.

JOHN DICKSON'S DRAG RACING

DRAG COLUMN

PRIDDLE WINS
The August Bank Holiday Super Nationals at Santa Pod produced some of the wildest racing seen this year, with the funny car battle of Priddle, Haywood and Herridge being the star event.

With qualifying spread over Sunday, the big cars took their time coming out to run but when they did, it was no holds barred as they chased after a special £300 award for the fastest car over the accumulative six runs. Clive Skilton was a welcome entry and he started off with a 6.75s, 209mph run, followed by a tremendous 6.55s, 216mph charge that equalled the strip record set by Norm Wilcox last year in Priddle's car. Priddle himself was arriving but still recorded a terrific 6.8s on a damp track as rain settled in that afternoon.

Pete Crane, in the new Crane and Edmunson Fueller, ran a strong 7.4s at 100 on his second attempt with the car, shutting down early, whilst Mike Hutcherson hit a 7.2s in the new Howdard rail.

On Sunday morning all the drivers were keen to make further runs, with Crane dipping to a 7.05s and Hutcherson to a 6.96s at 194mph. Skilton, too, was down to 6.7s but as the car went through the finish a front tyre deflated and sent it hurtling into the barrier, ripping the front and rear axles out, but not hurting Clive or damaging the car beyond repair.

For the first round, Hutcherson had a bye, whilst Crane faced Priddle, who shot off to a 6.65 in Crane's big 454cu. in. Ed Pink motor swallowed a valve and slowed to 7.23s.

Priddle reinforced his stranglehold on Top Fuel by hitting another 6.60s to beat Hutcherson in the final as he trailed with a 7.4s.

ANDREWS WINS £500

Meanwhile Gerry Andrews had been clocking up run after run with the Stone's injected Top Dragster, taking four on Saturday and two more on Sunday to win from Alan Blount, and whilst each run around the 170mph mark was slower than the Top Fuel cars, none of these made more than three or four runs, so that the team's gamble had paid off handsomely—they had been waiting to run as the strip

continued ▶

AS THE drag racing season draws to a close, it is time to consider any necessary revisions to the rules, and other possible improvements to be made for next year.

The British Drag Racing and Hot Rod Association recently held their annual riders' meeting at the Abbey Hotel in North West London, to put forward some ideas and also to hear any proposals from the 80-odd competitors in attendance.

Also present were members of the National Drag Racing Club Committee. The increased co-operation between the two clubs will result in a uniform race procedure for 1975 — a big step forward.

Among the points discussed was whether or not there should be any bike-only meetings next year, the riders having voted against the idea at Santa Pod earlier in the year. The general consensus of opinion was that drag racing is unique in having both bikes and cars at the same meetings, and that this has proved to be a very successful combination.

Most heated arguments concerned the question of whether or not car engines should be allowed in the bike classes. Several riders had rather strong views on the subject. As it is, car engines will still be allowable, mainly because no one could decide when a car engine ceases to be one. At least one competitor will be riding a

DRAGSTRIP

by KEITH LEE

seven-fifty next year which will be powered by a 1,500 Ford motor reduced to two cylinders — bike or car engine, who's to say? (More news of this ingenious motor in the near future.)

As often seems to happen with this sort of meeting, too much time was wasted on trivial arguments, precluding discussion of items of importance to the majority of riders.

Timekeeper Alan Nash spent some considerable time in an effort to allow Eamon Hurley's turbo-charged Imp-engined bike to compete in future. It had been excluded on the basis that machines with crankshafts aligned other than transversely would encounter serious handling problems owing to torque reaction, and Hurley's bike proved the point when it appeared at Santa Pod sometime ago.

However, on assurances that it is possible to counteract the torque, this type of machine will be allowed, providing it meets

the safety standard set by a group of riders who will watch the sole qualifying runs of each individual machine.

One thing that riders should note, although it is a minority of bikes affected, is that the turnout of a reasonable standard of everything is to be expected, but competitors should remember that the money and doesn't come to see tacky-looking bikes or cars.

Overall the appearance of the two-wheelers has improved considerably, and helps give the sport its "show and go" image.

So that's about it — no major changes in the pipeline for next year, but we do still have another meeting to run on the 1974 calendar. The BDRHRA has added the new date, called, appropriately, "Winternationals", to be held on November 30/December 1. It is open to this year's class winners and runners-up, plus invited com-

petitors to make up the field. Given good weather, the meeting should see the season out in fine style.

With the recent news of a shake-up at the ACU came mention of the introduction of new competitors' licence fees.

For speed events, which include drag racing, the fee is £10 for national and £2 for a restricted grade licence. The ACU certainly intend to increase their revenue — they should end up richer than the new RAC. Even with the new RAC rates, an international bike licence will cost twice as much as the equivalent car licence, the 1975 RAC rates being £5, £4 and £2 respectively.

I don't know about circuit racing, but the ACU do little or nothing for drag racing to justify their revenue. In fact, I sometimes wonder if they know of the existence of the sport. One can only hope that the planned re-organisation will result in some benefits to drag racers.

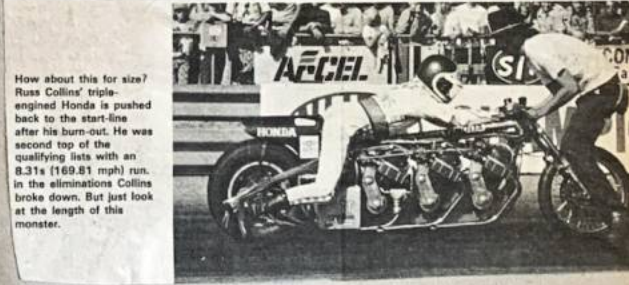
DRAG RACING'S GREATEST EVENT

Marion Owens, a little-known racer from Oklahoma city, burns out his twin-engined Harley-Davidson, before winning the fifth National Hot Rod Association Super Nationals and World Finals drag race meeting at Ontario, California.



Owens had to lay down his Harley at 100 mph when he "had problems" after he crossed the finishing line. It was his first major victory. In the final, he clocked 8.28s (160.71 mph) to beat Joe Smith, whose twin Harley pitched off a chain just before the lights.

Veteran Joe Smith urges his twin-engined Harley-Davidson (No. 7111) off the line on his way to a record-breaking 8.21s (171.78 mph) for the standing-start quarter-mile. Besides him, getting a "hole shot" — Americanese for getting off the line first — is Danny Johnson, also on a twin Harley. Johnson was to become only the second fuel bike rider to go over the 175 mph barrier when he topped Jerry Cox with an 8.32s (175.09 mph) effort.



How about this for size? Russ Collins' triple-engined Honda is pushed back to the start-line after his burn-out. He was second top of the qualifying lists with an 8.31s (169.81 mph) run. In the eliminations Collins broke down. But just look at the length of this monster.

DRAG RACING

SANTA POD

No 1 in Europe where drag racing comes first

2nd NOV.

FIREWORK SPECTACULAR

3rd NOV.

BDR & HRA WINTERNATIONALS

30th NOV.

1st DEC.

A GREAT NEW DRAG RACING EVENT

PRO-STOCKS, WHEELIE CARS, FUNNY CARS (BIKE MAGAZINE - CUSTOM BIKE SHOW)

Santa Pod Raceway, Podington, Nr Wellingborough. Enquiries 01-464 5445

THE PROMOTERS RESERVE THE RIGHT TO ALTER AND/OR AMEND OR CANCEL THE MEETING WITHOUT NOTICE OR REFUND

DJ to open Derby show

DISC JOCKEY Noel Edmunds will open Derby's "Motor Sport on Wheels" show on Saturday week at the town's sports centre on the ring road.

Among the bikes on exhibition will be John Hobbs Olympus Two, Mick Butler's Super Cyclops and the Bike magazine sponsored Pegasus drag bikes.

There will also be a John Player Norton on display and a whole range of competition machines.

17

LAST CAR

EL car '2s 's 7.23s, shaft was head her first Three Speed at car.

red, a 7.9s Volvo vede tly, hit the nable to Shaver ran 3 best yet, tered Priddle ment debut v Scimitar ycar itates. On i the ran, w low e runs, his rail ut he was and n beat th a 7.2s n came ng into a

TON ted at it news of ally her Herridge e at 7.48s when pt lane sing . The ng the The Dave is funny control, similar

AS THE drag racing season draws to a close, it is time to consider any necessary revisions to the rules, and other possible improvements to be made for next year.

Among the points discussed was whether or not there should be any bike-only meetings next year, the riders having voted against the idea at Santa Pod earlier in the year. The general consensus of opinion was that drag racing is unique in having both bikes and cars at the same meetings, and that this has proved to be a very successful combination.

Most heated arguments concerned the question of whether or not car engines should be allowed in the bike classes. Several riders had rather strong views on the subject. As it is, car engines will still be allowable, mainly because no one could decide when a car engine ceases to be one. At least one competitor will be riding a

seven-fifty next year which will be powered by a 1,500 Ford motor reduced to two cylinders — bike or car engine, who's to say? (More news of this ingenious motor in the near future.)

As often seems to happen with this sort of meeting, too much time was wasted on trivial arguments, precluding discussion of items of importance to the majority of riders.

Timekeeper Alan Nash spent some considerable time in an effort to allow Eamon Hurley's turbo-charged Imp-engined bike to compete in future. It had been excluded on the basis that machines with crankshafts aligned other than transversely would encounter serious handling problems owing to torque reaction, and Hurley's bike proved the point when it appeared at Santa Pod sometime ago.

However, on assurances that it is possible to counteract the torque, this type of machine will be allowed, providing it meets

the safety standard set by a group of riders who will watch the sole qualifying runs of each individual machine.

One thing that riders should note, although it is a minority of bikes affected, is that the turnout of a reasonable standard of everything is to be expected, but competitors should remember that the money and doesn't come to see tacky-looking bikes or cars.

Overall the appearance of the two-wheelers has improved considerably, and helps give the sport its "show and go" image.

So that's about it — no major changes in the pipeline for next year, but we do still have another meeting to run on the 1974 calendar. The BDRHRA has added the new date, called, appropriately, "Winternationals", to be held on November 30/December 1. It is open to this year's class winners and runners-up, plus invited com-

petitors to make up the field. Given good weather, the meeting should see the season out in fine style.

With the recent news of a shake-up at the ACU came mention of the introduction of new competitors' licence fees.

For speed events, which include drag racing, the fee is £10 for national and £2 for a restricted grade licence. The ACU certainly intend to increase their revenue — they should end up richer than the new RAC. Even with the new RAC rates, an international bike licence will cost twice as much as the equivalent car licence, the 1975 RAC rates being £5, £4 and £2 respectively.

I don't know about circuit racing, but the ACU do little or nothing for drag racing to justify their revenue. In fact, I sometimes wonder if they know of the existence of the sport. One can only hope that the planned re-organisation will result in some benefits to drag racers.

Marion Owens, a little-known racer from Oklahoma city, burns out his twin-engined Harley-Davidson, before winning the fifth National Hot Rod Association Super Nationals and World Finals drag race meeting at Ontario, California.

Owens had to lay down his Harley at 100 mph when he "had problems" after he crossed the finishing line. It was his first major victory. In the final, he clocked 8.28s (160.71 mph) to beat Joe Smith, whose twin Harley pitched off a chain just before the lights.

Veteran Joe Smith urges his twin-engined Harley-Davidson (No. 7111) off the line on his way to a record-breaking 8.21s (171.78 mph) for the standing-start quarter-mile. Besides him, getting a "hole shot" — Americanese for getting off the line first — is Danny Johnson, also on a twin Harley. Johnson was to become only the second fuel bike rider to go over the 175 mph barrier when he topped Jerry Cox with an 8.32s (175.09 mph) effort.

How about this for size? Russ Collins' triple-engined Honda is pushed back to the start-line after his burn-out. He was second top of the qualifying lists with an 8.31s (169.81 mph) run. In the eliminations Collins broke down. But just look at the length of this monster.

DRAGSTRIP by KEITH LEE

DRAG RACING'S GREATEST EVENT

DRAG RACING SANTA POD

2nd NOV. FIREWORK SPECTACULAR

3rd NOV. BDR & HRA WINTERNATIONALS

30th NOV. 1st DEC. A GREAT NEW DRAG RACING EVENT

PRO-STOCKS, WHEELIE CARS, FUNNY CARS (BIKE MAGAZINE - CUSTOM BIKE SHOW)

Santa Pod Raceway, Podington, Nr Wellingborough. Enquiries 01-464 5445

THE PROMOTERS RESERVE THE RIGHT TO ALTER AND/OR AMEND OR CANCEL THE MEETING WITHOUT NOTICE OR REFUND

anyone who supports Stones race team in drag racing will be pleased to hear that The Stones Club has been formed. Secretary is Debbie Webb at 25 Avenue Gardens, Bearstead, Maidstone, Kent and membership fee is just £1 which includes pic. card and regular news-sheets

GOSSIP... I hear that Keith Harvey of Ameri-car will be seen running in a Chevrolet-powered rear-engined rail before long — he's rumoured to have a £20,000 sponsorship deal tied up.



The Stone's Tender Trap Escort was driven by Gerry Andrews and raced well against George Hamlyn in the final.

DRAG

Night racing attracts good crowd

Once again the weather played the dominant role in the BDR & HRA's annual Fireworks Spectacular event at Santa Pod on November 3. A heavy mist hung over the strip throughout most of Saturday's qualifying period, preventing any runs through lack of visibility for much of the day. When the mist eventually did lift the track remained damp, although it did dry out enough for some runs to take place, but without exception, all the larger cars were severely hampered by the tricky conditions, and qualifying times throughout the field were at least a second off the usual standard.

But despite this, a large crowd had assembled by the early evening in anticipation of the fireworks display, and they were well rewarded with some spectacular night racing by the big fuelers and funny cars.

With some extra spotlights fitted up at the finish end of the strip, there was just about enough light to see the length of the strip and into the braking area, and the sight of the glowing exhausts vanishing into the darkness brought back memories of the night meetings held some years ago.

Highlight of the evening was a double burn-out with the two funnies of Haywood and Herridge, and it was only these two cars firing up, bringing everyone to the stands that revealed just how many people were standing in the cold. Herridge's Stardust car had trouble in keeping going, the engine dying after the first burn-out. After restarting the car quickly, it was hoped to run the two together, but by that time the headers on Haywood's car were glowing white hot and the car was starting to steam so the engine was cut.

Later on, Pete Crane made several attempts at a fire burn-out with the Hunter Plastics car, and finally managed to set the volatile liquid alight with the flames from his headers, so the evening "show" was well received by all.

On Sunday morning it was raining again, but the sky cleared almost miraculously at mid-day and the long process of trying to dry the strip started yet again, with push cars driving up and down for hours on end.

Eventually conditions had improved enough to start racing, but with the early darkness, it would be a tight schedule. The first really hard run came from fearless Allan Herridge, who opened up "Stardust" to a fine 7.8 s at 156 mph, the car snaking viciously all the way as the tyres went from wet to dry and back again. Dave Stone was not so lucky, for in his first run of the weekend in "Tea Rat," he got crossed-up coming away from the start

and just when it looked as if he had gathered it all up again the car turned sharp right and smacked the crash barrier, writing off the chassis and doing some hopefully superficial damage to the big Chevrolet engine. The team had been planning to sell the chassis anyway and replace it with a new one styled on the more modern funny car lines such as Keith Harvie's new car, but even so it was a sad end to perhaps the most successful chassis in drag racing.

With Dennis Stone away on holiday, Gerry Andrews took over the driving of the team's Precision Tapes Escort and had a terrific race against George Hamlyn's similar Escort Chev in the Super Street final. After being left at the start, he charged after the other car and made it in the very last inch with an 11.45 s/119 mph to 12.49 s/116 mph.

Andrews also qualified for the team's Top Dragster with a nine second run, but again showing tremendous potential in the class was Kevin Burrows in the D. B. Motors rear engine 427 Chevrolet. His time was also in the nines with the poor traction, but the car turned its highest terminal yet at 171 mph and sounded very, very powerful. Unfortunately, the two never met as rain stopped the meeting before their final race.

In Top Fuel Pete Crane had been fastest qualifier with a time "somewhere in the 13s," which again showed what it was like, but he drew Dennis Priddle for the first run. For the first time this year, Dennis red-lit, apparently through "creep" rather than over-enthusiasm, but Crane was thundering away as the green came on, his car launching well with its new lower ratio final drive and Lenco two speed. But within a few yards the tyres started to smoke and as Crane said afterwards "it didn't seem to be doing too well in that gear so I tried the other one." This did the trick for the car hooked up to record far the quickest time of the weekend at 7.4 s/196 mph, his best top speed to date and proof of the advantage of the Lenco. Priddle slowed with a 10 s run after his first defeat at Santa Pod this year.

Mike Hutcherson had earlier recorded a bye at 8.1 s/180 mph, so it looked good for a final between the two newest cars in the class. When it came it was dark and rain started to fall as the two fired up, so that by the time they were staged, it was pouring down and the track was soaking once again. Both cars snaked all over the track at the green, with Hutcherson shutting down after a hundred yards and Crane hanging on a little longer before calling it off after getting right up to the barrier, and then

coasting through to his first Top Fuel win in only three meetings in the class—and under atrocious conditions.

Not long before, Priddle had avenged his Top Fuel defeat by taking on Owen Haywood in the STP Avenger funny. This race was in the dusk, so that conditions were more favourable for a full power run, but the flames from the headers could be seen clearly. The white smoke billowing from the burn-outs was lit by dozens of flash bulbs going off and the blue-white flames of the exhausts. Dennis Priddle was away first, with Owen Haywood chasing and closing all the way, the whine of the superchargers screaming above the thunder of the engines. The bigger car almost made it as they tore across the finish line, the three foot long flames thrusting the cars into the ground each side like small rocket motors but Priddle's 8.64 s at 167 mph was not enough to hold off Haywood's terrific 8.47 s at 200 mph as he shot past just after the finish. Fantastic stuff!

With Stone out, Keith Harvie had his first win against Phil Elson's big Chrysler T with an 11.04 s/126 mph hole-shot over 10.84 s in Top Competition, whilst in Senior, the four car field was reduced to three when John Dickson's big Oldsmobile threw a rod whilst warming up, leaving Vic Hammond and Dave Page in the final when Freeman Rodgers also had trouble with his big Ford when staging.

Once again, the surprising but encouraging thing about the day's activities was the amount of people who turned up to watch, the banks being well packed each side, while in the pits, despite there being one more event to go, talk was already turning to next year and new cars.

DRAG RACING SANTA POD

No 1 in Europe where drag racing comes first

30th NOV. 1st DEC.
THE RACE OF THE CHAMPIONS

* COMPETITORS BY INVITATION ONLY

THIS GREAT NEW
SPECTACULAR WILL
FEATURE THE WINNERS
AND RUNNERS-UP OF
ALL THE 1974 MEETINGS

No 1 FUNNY CAR DRIVER
ALAN HERRIDGE WITH
HIS RECORD BREAKING
STARDUST WILL BE THERE



Santa Pod Raceway, Podington, Nr Wellingborough. Enquiries 01-464 5445

THE PROMOTERS RESERVE THE RIGHT TO ALTER AND/OR AMEND OR CANCEL THE MEETING WITHOUT NOTICE OR REFUND

Santa Pod

THE penultimate drag racing event of the year at Santa Pod, the traditional Guy Fawkes event, was held in damp and miserable weather that stopped any real racing from taking place in all but a handful of cases, but nonetheless the large entry tried manfully to put on a good show in the conditions for the big crowd that had ventured out. Saturday was more or less a write-off as far as respectable qualifying times went, with no cars on the strip until late afternoon, and even then only under the handicap of a track like a skating rink at the start.

With Priddle, Crane and Hutcherson in the Top Fuel class, and Priddle, Herridge, Haywood and Pratt in the Funny cars class, some exciting racing was on the cards, but of course none of these could turn in any sort of time, and not all even tried.

But in the evening some spectacular runs preceded the usual fireworks display, with the funnies of Haywood and Herridge going through repeated burn-outs with the nitro-laced flames pouring from the upturned headers. Eventually after Herridge's car had lost fire two or three times, Haywood's became too hot to run so the expected race was abandoned. Many other cars came down to put on demonstration runs, Pete Crane managing a fine fire-burn-out after several attempts with the rear-engined Hunter Plastics fueler.

On Sunday morning it was even worse, with rain falling steadily and apparently endlessly. But luckily it did stop and the track dried out by the middle of the afternoon. Alan Herridge was the first to run a really good time with the Stardust funny car, skipping from dry patch to dry patch to record an astounding 7.6s 156 mph run.

Later on Haywood and Priddle came out to run in the gathering dusk, and this was the stuff the crowd had been waiting to see, a no-holds-barred run in near darkness by two of the fastest cars in the country. Burn-outs over, the two cars crept into stage, flames licking at their sides clearly visible from the finish end. The lights shone brightly as they flickered down to green, and then Priddle was moving first, the STP Avenger striving to put distance between

itself and the more powerful American car. By midpoint it looked as if he had done it, but then it became apparent that Haywood was reeling Priddle in, and finally in an explosion of sound the two cars were past and over the finish line, engines at bursting point and exhausts glowing — but Priddle's win light was on earlier at 8.4s (169 mph) having held off the 8.47s (200 mph) run of Haywood. Both Herridge and Pratt made extra runs, but did not better these times, with Pratt's in particular being held very late with a light drizzle falling that led to him shutting down after crossing the centre line.

In Top Fuel, the big upset of the day was when Peter Crane, meeting Dennis Priddle for the third time in as many meetings, was handed the win by Dennis red-lighting in the Mr. Revell car. Crane kept on the power to make the day's best run of 7.4s at 196 mph, his new two-speed transmission working well to boost his top speed to the best yet. Mike Hutcherson took a bye run at 8.1s to go into the final, which allowed Pratt's dramatic funny car run. The rain was quite heavy by then, so it was really a case of who was bravest longest! Neither driver tried too hard of course, with both cars easing off the line and shutting down very early, with Crane holding on a bit longer to cruise

through to his first Top Fuel win. In Top Dragster, the new D. B. Motors car driven by Kevin Burrows again showed its potential in a 171 mph run in 9.4s, so that the final between the rear engined Chevrolet and the consistent front engined Chev of Gerry Andrews would have been a good one if the weather had permitted it, Andrews having qualified with a similar time instead of his usual low eights.

The second car in the Stone team finally came into contact with the barrier after several hairy moments over the past months, when Dave Stone got crossed up on a damp patch just off the line and bent the front end of the chassis round the big Chevrolet engine in 'Toe Rat', ending the life of the frame after some four or five year's use in various hands.

The other big Chev altered of Keith Harvie upheld the Chevrolet half of the field though, by narrowly beating Phil Elson's Chrysler "T" in the final with a hole-shot 11.4s to 10.84s.

Meanwhile, with "Daddy" Stone away on holiday, Gerry Andrews climbed into the Super Street. Escort Chev and came from behind to beat George Hamlyn's similar Escort Chev in a very, very close race, the Stone car coming in the last inch with an 11.45s to 12.49s. J.D.



DAVID STONE'S Tee Rat ended its days after this picture was taken, skewing off into the barrier.

Meet



ANYONE WHO
RUNS A 200 MPH
VAUXHALL AND
A 130 MPH
CHEVY MALIBU
MUST BE
ECCENTRIC—
JUST LIKE
ED SHAVER

ED SHAVER IS AN ECCENTRIC American—the two often go together, and there's no doubt at all in Ed's case. He's just plain eccentric. Anyone who runs a 200 mph Vauxhall VX 4/30 on the strips and then drives home in a hopped-up '64 Chevrolet Malibu must be plain eccentric. Believe me.

You all know Ed, of course—drag racing's Mr Extrovert. There's no fooling around at it with Ed—he's been kicking round the drag-strips since he came out of diapers (that's nappies, yer knuckleheads) first in the US of A and then in Great Britland while serving ten years at the pleasure of the President in the United States Air Force. He's the man who got the bleeper in the excellent Chrysler film of the '73 Silverstone Internationals when asked for comments on his funny car. And he's always had the taste for cars that much different—like his own street-running AMX which first appeared over here in John Wolfe Racing colours and leopardskin interior (remember the feature we ran in **Hot Car** of April 1970 with the whole team in front of an F111 fighter at USAF Upper Heyford?). Then Ed had the car done up in a dreadful (or delicious if you're inclined that way) shade of pink. He was the man behind Ecstasy, the Reliant funny car, and for the past 18 months has been owner/driver of two Vauxhall funnies, this Castrol-sponsored one being the second.

And if all that isn't the same as being in heaven, then Ed must have really made Paradise—cos when he goes on a picnic it's in his Bird of Paradise. That's the name of his 1964 Chevrolet Chevelle Malibu (and that's a hell of a long name) which runs the roads packed full of goodies. Engine is a 327 cu in Chevrolet VeeB, standard in every way—every way except Edelbrock Torquer aluminium inlet manifold, and Holley 750CFM double pumper carb assembly. What's a bigger carb anyway when you've already

got five-and-a-half litres of gas-guzzling VeeB throbbing away under that mean long hood? Air filter has been copper-plated and likewise the filter and breather pipes. Fresh out of the chrome shop are fan, alternator bracket, dipstick (who needs a chrome dipper?), engine pulleys, and bonnet catch (and bonnet catch?). If it hasn't been chromed, it's been polished—like inlet, Cal Custom rocker cover and the alternator itself.

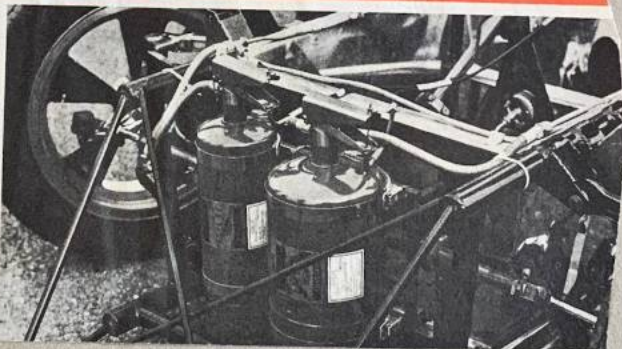
Paint job was done by Auto Art of Waltham Cross, and the roof and bonnet were treated with Velvetex of St Albans—old Hertfordshire customs. Interior was done by Aston Martin (how can they go bust with the sort of prices Ed paid?) in black Naugahyde—no expense spared. Completing the Malibu treatment are gleaming Wolfraze (what else) spoked wheels all wrapped up in Goodyear tyres.

Which brings us to Ed's weekend wheels—the Vauxhall. The chassis was built by Mark Stratton (remember Metronome, the amazing four-wheeled Bond Bug?) and friends, who make up Huster Racing. It's a hobby for them, not a profession, but the VX has still finished up as one of the smartest cars on British drag strips. Built in a backyard evenings and weekends, the chassis is made from 4130 chrome moly tubing and has a 118 in wheelbase. Front suspension is Triumph Herald—as is steering for a good lock in case of parachute grab as once happened, pulling the car sideways—and engine is mid-mounted.

That's a full Chrysler race V8 with all the goodies from Danekas blower to Venolia pistons, coming out a 6.3 litres. Engine builder is Phil Cornish, the man who also looks after Clive Skilton's engines. Power is somewhere in the immeasurable 1800 bhp region running on 65 per cent nitro and the VX has turned in mid seven times at 200 mph.

Ed runs the car with Clive's rail for the big English Team Castrol effort, and together they make an impressive partnership. But not as impressive as Shaver's Ravers we've shown—
—one man's dream of automotive paradise.

MIKE KEY



Shaver's Ravers



'Hi guys' mumbles Big Ed from behind his Simpson gear (far left) which doesn't frighten the birds so much when he's out cruisin'

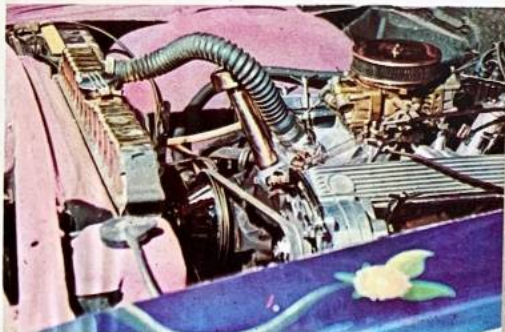
Wolf in see-through clothing - piccie man Mike Key captures the funny (above) with his amazing fast-shooting trick box Brownie

Mark Stratton's attention to detail is reflected in this front view of the Vauxhall funny (left) - note massive fire extinguisher installed

With interior by Aston Martin and paint by Auto Art, Shaver's roadie has got a real touch of class about it inside (above right)

Just good friends (top) are one man's wheels - the Castrol-aided Vauxhall funny and Ed's fully customised Chevrolet Malibu V8

Copper plating combined with chromework and polished alloy makes for an unusual engine bay effect (right) in the Malibu Chevy



Nitro ban discussions again

Following the extremely expensive American meetings, talk once again turned to the old subject of a nitro ban. Opinion in the States is understandably divided between the few teams who are making money or at least breaking even with sponsorship deals, and those who cannot hope to compete on level terms without a bottomless supply of motors—which can only be paid for by winning, the same old vicious circle. But when it gets to the stage that it appears to have lately, even the richest teams cannot afford to use an engine on every single run just to qualify. One entrant in Funny car apparently burnt 29 pistons trying to qualify, and didn't make it then. A reversion to straight Methanol would not only cut fuel costs dramatically, but also cut down on parts expenditure to a point where one engine might even last a season instead of a race.

The comparatively new Pro-Comp eliminator has combined several classes into one heads-up eliminator with injected fuel Funny cars and blown gas dragsters to name but two, all running within a tenth of a second or so, with times around the 6.9 s and 200 mph mark.

It has been suggested that a similar move in the UK would be a good idea, and if one looks at some of the cars running today in thinly populated classes at the top end

of the scale, it does begin to make sense. Top Dragster has never had as many entrants as had been expected this year, despite having some excellent cars turning in very good times, while similarly the majority of the Top Comp and Funny car competitors cannot really afford to run as hard as they would like or indeed have to, to compete against the three low seven second funny cars that dominate the class, so although a mixture of types would not be popular in some camps, it could provide regular eight car eliminators with close racing in the high seven second range without being disastrously expensive. Available prize money which is already stretched to the limit this year with so many meetings rained off, would go further towards meeting expenses which with nitro rumoured to be costing up to £10 a gallon next year, will be greater than ever.

Those entrants who would want to race in Top Fuel or Funny Car with no holds barred could continue to do so, knowing full well the costs involved in running blown fuel motors, and they would continue to give the sport the ultimate performance that draws the crowds in the first place.

Discussion over the winter months will decide if any of these ideas have popular support from the people concerned, but they certainly deserve close attention.

Startling times at NHRA Nationals in the States

Following on news of the NHRA Nationals recently (the event that was shown on World of Sport a couple of weeks back), the big event at Ontario Motor Speedway produced some even more startling times. The low qualifying spot was set at 5.81 s, but at a cost of a complete Keith Black aluminium 426 engine destroyed in just one run. The bump spot for the 16 car Top Fuel field was an incredible 6.05 s, with seven cars in the fives, the rest grouped in that 0.05 s! Gary Beck, the all-conquering Canadian entrant, set a new official Top Speed record of 248 mph, but lost out in the eliminations, where old pro Don Garlits made yet another "comeback" to win.

Dave Condit took Funny car with a best of 6.16 s to score his first major NHRA win, while the recent domination of T. C. Christensen's twin Norton seen over here earlier in the year took another knock when Joe Smith powered his fearsome twin Harley to an all-time best of 8.2 s at 176 mph to take Fuel Bike.

Among the 50-odd pilgrims over to see the event on the Queensway Travel flight was Lawrence Burn, who as already reported, is the new owner of Clive Skilton's dragster.

He took steps to improve his chances next year by buying a Donovan 417 that had just been rebuilt at Donovans following a blow-up, so with a spare 392 is well set to tackle what could be a furious Top Fuel field next season.

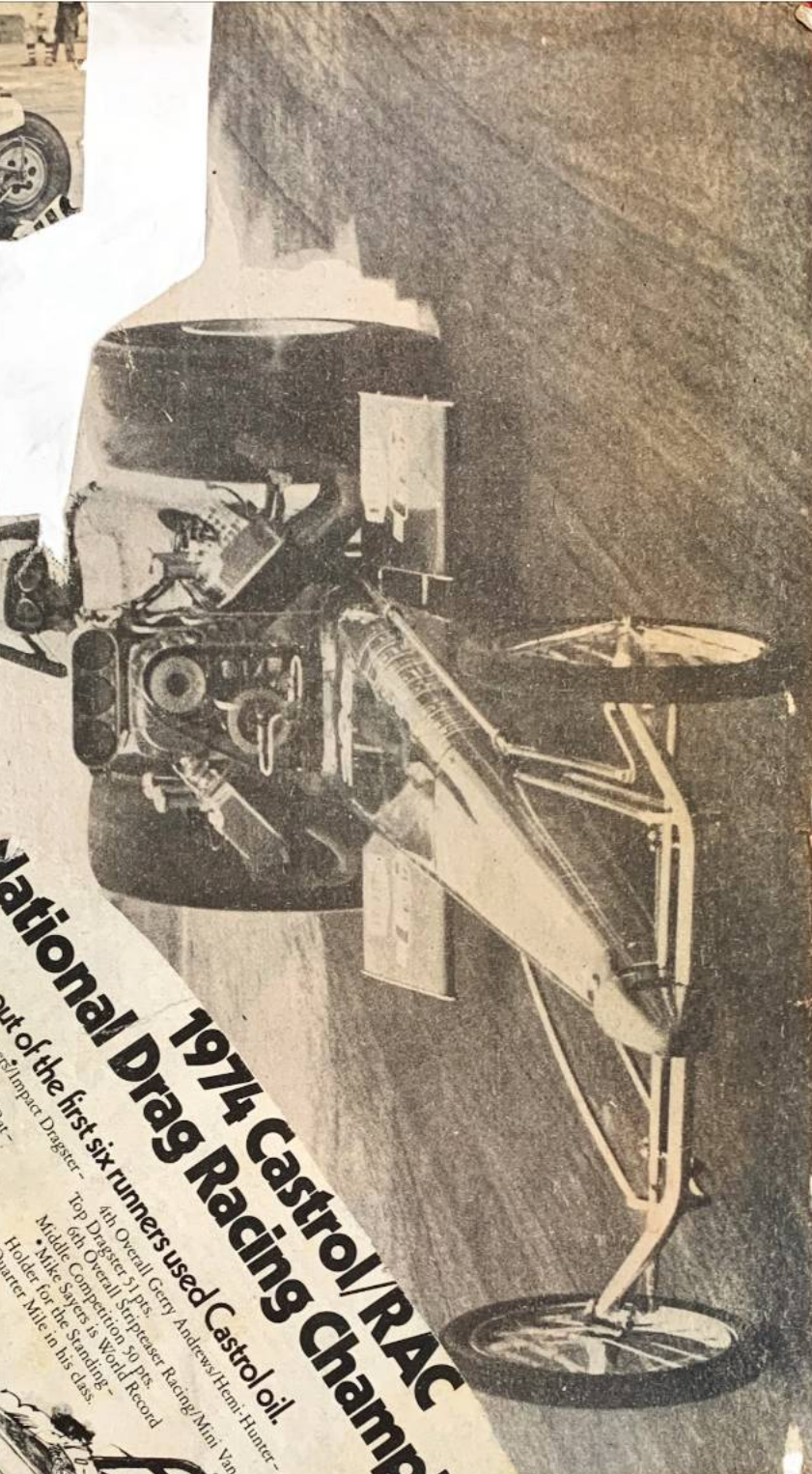
ROLAND'S FUNNY CAR!



It's the one everybody's been waiting for—the new Hillbillies funny car! Replacing Roland Pratt's Vauxhall funny which was destroyed while back at Santa Pod in a spectacular flip is their new Scimitar funny with Pat Cuss body and Revell sponsorship. Roland has already run a 9.5 at the new Snetterton dragstrip. And there's more to come yet!

"Heavies" departure boosts Pro Stock

The Pro Stock class looks as if it will climb back to its previous position of popularity next year with the news that both the "Heavy" cars have gone or are about to go back to the States. Despite their sensational times, they have not been as spectacular as the slower but closer racing of the '73 season, and their very existence has obviously made the handful of entrants in the class think twice about even trying to compete with them, particularly in view of their controversial Lenco transmissions, which had been excluded from the class for '75. With the two cars gone, the pressure in some quarters to allow them to continue to be used should be lifted, and the lone Camaro of Gary Goggin will once again have a batch of Camaros and hopefully a lone Nova and Barracuda for good measure to race against



1974 Castrol/RAC National Drag Racing Championship

Five out of the first six runners used Castrol oil.

- 1st Overall Mike Syvers/Impact Dragster
- Junior Dragster 57 pts Dave Stone/T Rat
- 2nd Overall Dave Stone/T Rat
- Top Competition Altered 55 pts L. L. Mini
- 3rd Overall Robin Tallis/B. L. Mini
- Phoenix-Middle Street 54 pts
- 4th Overall Gerry Andrews/Hemi-Hunter
- Top Dragster 51 pts
- 6th Overall Stripreaser Racing/Mini Vag
- Middle Competition 50 pts
- Mike Syvers is World Record Holder for the Standing Quarter Mile in his class.



Now more than ever you need the high performer with heat

