

er' on ets

erton 'Hogslayer' out-
on American head-
on Los Angeles'
Boulevard. The ul-
street machine?

Wizard leaves

NORTHERN riders in sprints
and drag races will know the
name Peter Gill, the quiet
spoken bearded wizard of the
watches in that neck of the
sprouting woods.

Sadly, I have to report that
Peter is moving shortly to take
up an appointment in Holland.
He'll be missed on the English
print scene, and it was a fitting
gesture that the National Sprint
Association should present
Peter with an engraved silver
ray and award him life
membership of the Association.

n tune

red that the timing will not
p again by doing a nifty
ch of welding to tack the
wire sleeve of the ignition set-
onto the mainshaft.

John is pulling a much
her gear on the Yamaha
n he did when using plain
petroleum as the source of
over. "It's easier to ride, with
over all the way. But you
re to watch the revs — they
straight up and off the clock
'm not careful," he told me
sently.



DRAG RACING

● Drag racing is a test of accelera-
tion over a quarter of a mile, and
as such, the emphasis is on good
engine preparation, but driver skill
definitely plays a far greater part than
most people who have not done drag
racing seem to think. To run a road
car your best bet is either production
or modified production. The production
classes offer an excellent opportunity
for the beginner. Although dubbed
'Production' there are some modifica-
tions allowed. For instance, engine
mods—you can gas-flow the head
and you can use any carburation so
long as it's bolted to the standard
inlet manifold, and the exhaust system
is free. Limited-width racing boots are
allowed as are brake-line locks for
doing tyre burnouts. Classes are
divided up on an hp to weight basis.
For instance, take a Mini Cooper,
advertised hp 55, dry weight 1420 lb.,
power-to-weight ratio therefore equals
25.8 lb. per hp. Such a car would run
in Class GP for cars of 23-26.99 lb.
per hp.

With 14 classes in which to run,
practically any well-prepared pro-
duction car can be competitive, from a
997 Anglia right through to a 429
Boss Mustang. If you want to run
more exotic machinery, then the
modified class will be the one for you.
Here the rules allow free modifications
of the engine. In this class of
racing, though, the classes are divided

up on the basis of capacity-to-weight,
so again, everyone is in with a good
chance, irrespective of the type of car
entered.

Cars with front-wheel-drive are
allowed a 5 per cent advantage over
rear-wheel-drive because of their
inability to get off the line quite so
fast. In the production class, some-
thing like a Cortina GT can be
highly competitive. A carefully built
engine, plus modified head, 2B/36
Weber, extractor exhaust, plus a
session on the dyno can be very
effective. Although slicks aren't
essential, they are highly advantageous
as races are won or lost on the start
line. Variety of machines used is very
wide, but typically cars like full-race
Minis, Anglias and Escorts seem to
do well. From the safety point of view,
roll cages are a must in the Modified
Production Class, although the Pro-
duction Class requires only a laminated
screen, roll bars not being a
requirement.

To compete you will need a Speed
Licence either Restricted, National or
International, depending on which
meetings you are going to do.

Clubs to write to are BDR & HRA
(Mrs S. P. Watts, Secretary),
"Scrambleduff," All Saints Lane,
Clevedon, Avon BS21 6AY, and
Miss June Noakes, NDRC, 11
Northumberland Avenue, Horn-
church, Essex.

Drag at Snetterton

This weekend, May 3/4, drag racing
returns to Snetterton, where the first
meeting this year was virtually
snowed out. Heading the entry will
be Dennis Priddle, whose star is
definitely in the ascension at the
moment. At the time of writing it is
not definite which car he will field,
but if it is the dragster, Liz Burn, Roz
Prior and Trevor Young will have
their work cut out to match him.

If, however, he turns up with the
new funny, it will at least give Clive
Skilton a chance to beat him with his
new car, which will be fully painted
for its second appearance, and either
one could run a six if pushed hard
enough. The Hillbilies Reliant and
Liam Churchill's Capri will round
out the foursome.

In the Pro Comp class, the favour-
ite looks to be the DB Motors car,
fresh from its 8.2s run recently —
which was in fact, accompanied by a
speed of 173 mph, not 153 as reported
here last week. The team are deter-
mined to get into the sevens with the
unblown car, which should be within
reach, and eventually hit 200 mph as
well.

Mike Hall with his altered and
Peter Barnett in Stratton's funny will
be out again, and will be joined by
Pat Cuss's 392 powered dragster and
Martin Rowat's smart rear-engined
car, now sporting a 427 Chev and
two speed — by far the best entry yet
for the new class.

All the other regular competitors
will be out for qualifying between 12
and six on Saturday, and racing all
day Sunday. Admission is £1 all-in on
the first day and £1.50 on Sunday
with children free.

It was unfortunate that none of the new big bikes made their appearance at Blackbushe, because the National Drag Racing Club's meeting there on April 13 provided the best racing weather of the season so far.

There were still some exceptionally good times on a surface not noted for good traction, with Keith Parnell setting a new strip record of 9.45 seconds on Rouge et Noir, his 750 Triumph.

Hoping to fit a new short stroke 750, built by Mick Hand, as reported in my last Dragstrip column, Parnell, after having a few words with Ray Baskerville, has also ordered a replica gearbox and clutch as used on the Miller-Churchill machine which attracts a lot of attention in the pits.

Both items are neat pieces of work. The clutch is also a Mick Butler's shopping list for the next future.

Parnell has joined forces with Mick Hand and 'Ag' Moran to form a race team called McCoy Dynamics. This will be a force on the strips as all three are experienced holders with their respective mounts, and are not short of ideas to make sure they keep well to the fore in the top ranks.

Norman Hyde turned up on Blackbushe for a last race on his Trident before handing it over to its new owner. It's converted to 750 cc, and is now a newcomer to drag — Richard White from Eastleigh.

Norman tells me his new twin Trident is also running in about three weeks in good form. Initially, the pair of seven-fifths will be on petrol — would you believe.

With a genuine 80 bhp per motor, Hyde will still have a reasonable amount of power. Compression ratio will be 12:1, and the motors will feed their diet of petrol through no fewer than six Amal GP carburetors.

For the "useless information" department, Norman will be seated on the same

WORLD RECORD HOLDERS JOIN FORCES

By KEITH LEE

World record holders join forces

When he raced the works 'three' at Daytona a few seasons ago and will hopefully keep Hyde's rear end correctly positioned under hard acceleration.

There was one new addition to the bike ranks at the meeting — Johnathan Mann's new machine, very much inspired by Tom Christenson. The young fair-haired rider from Andover, where he runs the family business, has built himself a new 790 cc blow-off Norton.

Like Christenson's bike, the engine is fitted with Hilborn injection and pump drive. The motor contains a pair of 101 twin jets, a high lift American Norton carburettor running in needle rollers. To make the capacity, the motor is over-bored and fitted with a slightly longer stroke crank.

Transmission is handled by a slipper clutch and automatic type Bewley two-speed gearbox, which is actuated by a small lever mounted on the handlebars.

Rear tyre is a 63in wide M & H slick, mounted on a Minilite mag wheel. A counter-shaft is fitted behind the gearbox to allow easy chain runs without upsetting the

balance of the bike. Twin leading shoe front, and disc rear brakes handle smoothly with lots of stain-steel trim and a neat paint job, the work of friend Colin Boast.

Munn is keen to sort out the teething problems, and hopes to make inroads on Ted Dunmore's record for an unladen British bike, currently standing at 9.5 seconds. A few of the top American riders have made it to the mid-nineties with unladen twin cylinder machines, and both Dunmore and Munn aim to be on par with the best of them.

Seen around the Blackbushe pit area were John Todman and John Jacques, who talk to me about their new triple-engined machine now nearing completion. Theirs must be one of the most exciting new projects under construction at the moment.

No fewer than three six-fifty Triumphs form the basis of the mighty machine, and there will be pumped a healthy dose of M & H slick, mounted on a pair of 25 per cent over engine speed.

One of the latest items to arrive are the Hilborn injection

Three injectors feed the blower inlet with 50 per cent of the fuel mixture, while the other half is injected straight through the engine inlet ports through a total of six nozzles. Hopefully to alleviate some of the setting up problems Hilborn have run details of the motor through their computer in America to come up with the necessary jet sizes.

The pair will in fact be starting straight-off with petrol — not wanting to be involved with the agro of re-tuning when starting out on methanol.

Both Johns will take it in turns to ride the beast — they've each run in the ninies with their previous machines. Todman has a best of 9.72 sec on his double, and Jacques 9.76 sec on his 650 Triumph. Both machines have never been sold to make way for the new project.

John Jacques built the new 76 in wheelbase frame in his garage in Epsom, into which the gear-coupled engine has been slotted. Marti Scripps helped out by fitting the gear casing and some of the other necessary bits and pieces.

Denselube Superchall handle the rest of the driv-



line — the primary chain being coupled to a Gregory-Christenson clutch which is speed units. As with Mann's machine, a countershaft is fitted behind the box, and in good reason.

The immense 81 in wide slick used really gave problems were the chain not off-set in this way. Those who saw Hogslayer on his visit will have noticed the 20 pounds of lead needed to counterbalance the gearbox and clutch, which were offset to line up the drive.

Lockheed calipers, acting on home-made dual discs, are

Keith Parnell got a new strip record of 9.45 seconds on his 750 Triumph at Blackbushe, and has exciting plans to keep in the front of the Top Bike ranks.

The many stainless screw fittings are provided by CDS Screws — you wouldn't believe just how many screws are needed to hold a construction like this together!

Sharpe still in front

The continuing battle of the Jaguars was kept alive at Snetterton at the weekend, with Alan Sharpe getting his V12 powered Senior Dragster down to a 10.25s 134 mph, although his run was rather overshadowed in the class by Russ Carpenter's staggering 8.9s/154 mph in his blown 3.5 Daimler rail.

Bob Messert responded to the growing threat of not only Sue Coles but Mick Saunders in their respective small block Chevies, both running low 11s and high 120 mph speeds. But the ever popular Minivan took all in its stride, clicking off a 10.63s/127 mph run and backing it up with a 10.55s run — a staggering four tenths improvement in one day for a car that is repeatedly thought to be at the limit.

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During Saturday's qualifying session, Brian Chapman was top with 10.19 seconds, but clock on his 111 were Keith Parnell with 10.26, Tony Weeden with 10.32 and Pete Miller with 10.31.

Fast qualifier in the Street class was Alex Neal, a Brighton rider of a 1000cc Kipper Camo Honda that parlayed the opposition with 11.61 seconds at 120 mph — the best time by a Ho-ova in the Street category. Mike Catalist with the Denselube-sponsored 150 Kawasaki could only get 12.3/118.

Racing got under way with



Clive Page gets the jump on Mike Hall, but a gear shift robbed the former of victory in the run.

Ladies provide variety

The two day event at Snetterton was a most enjoyable drag meet, with plenty of exciting racing right down the field, and some impressive times were turned in by many entrants.

For once Top Fuel was not really the highlight of the meeting, for although Priddle qualified with an easy 7.5 on Saturday, and Roy Prior improved on this with a 7.34 on Sunday, neither Trevor Young nor Liz Burn were at their best. The first round of the elimination saw Dennis clocking an improved 6.72s at 200 mph, with Liz Burn slow to start but catching up with a strong 204 mph top end. Unfortunately, her parachute failed to open, and after hitting the brakes a little too hard she hit Priddle, breaking his right rear wheel and allowing him round before she went on, throwing stack wide open to disappear into the fast for some distance — a write the car off completely. Liz was bruised but unhurt, following a check-up, and when Roy Prior had a walk-over against Young with a 7.14s at 196

mph, it looked like the end of the day as far as Top Fuel went. But she went on to come to lay down her best run to date, a really immaculate 6.98s at 213 mph. Roy handling the car with great skill as it snaked up the strip.

Priddle's car was essentially undamaged, but doubtless picked up some dents under the chassis as well as the wheel and tyre.

In Funny Car, Clive Skilton started as favourite with his new Vauxhall, but when he found that the bodywork was deforming, rather than to all-out until some reinforcing could be done. Nonetheless, he dropped into the sevenths with a 7.8s on Sunday morning to show the potential. With three cars running, a round-robin was organised, with Liam Churchill defeating Roland Pratt in the first round after some spectacular burn-outs from both competitors. Liz was bruised but unhurt, following a check-up, and when Roy Prior had a walk-over against Young with a 7.14s at 196

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Snetterton Dragsters

A FIRST CLASS day's racing and entertainment was had by a large Snetterton over the weekend of May 3 and 4 — with but a couple of exceptions in Top Fuel, where Liz Burn and Dennis Priddle could have had a happier time.

Dennis had led qualifying on Saturday with an easy 7.4s run on a day when few were running very hard in front of the small crowd watching practice. His time was beaten by Roy Prior on Sunday with a 7.32s at 198 mph, with Liz Burn running an 8.7s at 165 mph and Trevor Young a rough 9.3s at 162 mph.

Priddle opened up a little against Liz Burn with a 6.7s at 200, and was caught by the rear-engined car's 205 mph top end as Liz came rocketing past after the finish with no parachute. She clipped the right rear of Priddle's Revell car before running out of steam and totalling the car out in the fields after her fastest and last run in the car. With Priddle's car also suffering damage as the broken wheel dropped the car onto the ground, only Prior and Young remained in action, with Young losing five when the time came to face Roy. But he put in her best-ever run anyway at 7.14s at 196 mph and even came out to run the final after repairing a broken retainer, to further improve with a fabulous 6.98s at 213 mph for the Miss Revell car.

The 204 Pro Comp Class continued to show improvement with a five-car entry, though Clive Page's Senior Comp Chev altered was only in through lack of opposition in his own class. But despite only running petrol through his twin Holleys, he showed Peter Barnett the way home in his blown-injected, methanol-burning Funny Car and very nearly did the same to Mike Hall's similarly powered

altered. But despite the biggest "look-see" seen in ages, a slow two to three shift caused by a worn part in his gearbox gave Hall the race as he posted a best of 9.2s/171 mph to 9.7s/139 mph. Bob Spence, in the D.B. Motors rear-engined Chev, raul Roland Page's very short 354 Hemi car with an 8.5s to 9.5s, and then met Hall in the final. The immaculate dragster was soon ahead after a good start and clocked its best-ever run at 179 mph in 8.12s to 168 mph in 7.2s for Hall.

The other Funny Cars entered all ran in the Funny Car elimination, these running nitro as opposed to the methanol that they are restricted to in Pro Comp. Skilton's new Vauxhall, now carrying most of its new paint work, was suffering from body distortion but still ran a 7.8s on Sunday with ease. Roland Page and Liam Churchill looked set to burn each other out into the ground before they even raced, both cars overheating, the start area with smoke as they burnt out and staged for the first round. But Pratt was not on form for his first race, and his 392 Scimitar was left by Churchill's 392 Capri, 9.2s to 11.2s. Pratt then improved to a 8.2s against Skilton who also improved to a 7.5s at 171 mph to take the second round, the three-cornered match, burning a couple of valves in the process.

This eventually left Churchill with a solo run for the win, and he was obviously out to set the tyre alight by the amount of smoke he laid down with the hard-working 392 motor before he actually staged the car. In the end he nearly lost it as the car got away from him in a frightening slide apparently caused by a broken chassis member, but no great damage was done — except to nerves.

I.T.D.



Before, Liz Burn blasts off the line at Snetterton in a run that ended in a Norfolk ploughed field after the chute failed to open. Below: Liz suffered no injuries.



showed a few weeks before. But when damaged a few valves in the run and was unable to make the final, which saw Liam Churchill laying claim to the title of "Burn-out King" as he laid down two stupendous boiling white smoke screens. Coming off the line, the run is looked stronger than ever and well on the way to a respectable time, but suddenly the car got violently out of shape and looked to be on the point of rolling. But somehow Liam gathered it all up on the grass, and amid clouds of mud, Capri to a halt in the other lane. A chassis member had apparently given way at the front, grounding the big fuel tank and other parts, but luckily nothing caught fire as Liam vaulted out before the car had stopped rolling.

In Pro Comp, the DB Motors car started as favourite, but a dark horse outsider was Clive Page, with the only carburetted petrol burning car in the field in the absence of any opposition in his own class. Senior Comp. He started off by beating Peter Barnett in the rear engine Vauxhall funny, and then faced Mike Hall in his blown 392 altered. Making a tremendous start, Page came out with great skill as it snaked up the strip. Priddle's car was essentially undamaged, but doubtless picked up some dents under the chassis as well as the wheel and tyre.

TRIUMPH POWER

Jim Reynolds at Snetterton drag races

TRUMPH exponents Keith Parnell and Tony Weeden showed how fast Triumph twin engines can be made to go when they met in the Top Bike final at Snetterton's drag strip on Sunday.

In the fastest all-British drag race, both riders recorded personal best times, Parnell finishing in 9.23 seconds at 132 mph and Weeden screaming in 10.00 rpm pursuit with 9.33 132 mph.

During Saturday's qualifying session, Brian Chapman was top with 10.19 seconds, but clock on his 111 were Keith Parnell with 10.26, Tony Weeden with 10.32 and Pete Miller with 10.31.

Racing got under way with

100 mph time to defeat Brian Chapman's 10.11/119 mph. The late Mike Miller raced Keith Parnell, beating him away from the start but being overwhelmed at the top end as Parnell charged past to a 9.80 142 mph win over Miller's 10.7/115 mph.

The final was one of the best, Parnell left the start ahead of Weeden, but the lighter 580cc bike gained ground for the first 150 yards; Parnell's greater power helped him pull away in mid-field and ahead to win by ten yards.

PROVISIONAL RESULTS

Top Bike: K Parnell 1750 Triumph Range of 9.23/132 mph. Senior Bike: Clive Page 1000cc beat Peter Barnett 10.00/132 mph. Middle Bike: Arthur 11.20/120 mph. Street Bike: A Neal 1000 Power 10.7/115 mph. Street Bike: A Neal 1000 Power 10.7/115 mph. Street Bike: A Neal 1000 Power 10.7/115 mph.

UP, UP AND AWAY! And as onlookers gasp in amazement the front of the car rears way up into the air as, on its rear wheels only, the machine roars off into the distance.

An exhibition wheelstander or "wheelie car" has just travelled a full quarter mile on two wheels—a special feature at many drag racing events in Britain and America.

These machines are specially built, with the engine re-mounted in a position which gives the correct "weight transfer" to force the centre of gravity of the car to shift directly above the rear axle under acceleration, and allows the front of the car to rise. Most straight drag racers fear "wheelies", but not so the drivers of these machines, whose aim is solely to entertain the crowds.

Right: A wheelie is the last thing a funny car driver wants—it wastes power and time. Many fit bars with tiny castor wheels to the rear to stop their cars lifting up. **Below:** The Jaguar engine fitted in the back of Brian Richards' Vauxhall Estate exhibition car.



How does Brian see where he is going when his wheelie car "lifts-off"? The answer is a Perspex panel let into the floor through which he can look down the strip. Keeping at this angle the whole way down the 1/4-mile drag strip demands a fine sense of balance.

Left: A Mini-van funny car performs a mini-wheelie coming away from the startline.

Driving one of these machines is like being a tightrope walker—it calls for a fine sense of balance to stay up in the air. Too much power and the car stands up on end, but then makes a very quick and shattering return to earth; too little, and a series of short frog-like hops is the result!

STING-RAY ANTICS

Of the British-built cars, the most famous is the one with which Roy Phelps has thrilled the fans at the Santa Pod track for some years with the somewhat unpredictable antics of the machine, a replica Chevrolet Stingray.

Sitting alongside Roy, in what would normally be the passenger's seat, is a seven litre V-8 engine which drives through a Rolls-Royce automatic gearbox to the rear axle. Over 100mph has been recorded by the wheelie

Stingray before coming back to earth—and that isn't as easy as it sounds if you intend to keep the car in one piece!

A newcomer to the wheelstanding game is Brian Richards from Tipton, Staffordshire. Having had a desire to build a car of his own for some time he set to work building "something different", and the result was a Vauxhall Victor estate car, but one which is decidedly different! Sitting in the back is a 3.8 litre Jaguar engine.

ANTI-UPSIDE DOWN!

The pair of small castor wheels that can be seen protruding from the rear of the body are to prevent the body being scraped by the tarmac, and the possibility of the machine ending topside down!

At present the Jag engine is fairly standard, running on petrol through triple S.U. carburettors.

"But I'm considering adding a second Jaguar motor to give extra power in the coming year!" exclaimed Brian, who builds trailers for a living.

The blue-and-gold painted estate car made its debut at Swindon early in 1974, but before taking it to the race meeting Brian wanted to try it out and make sure that the car actually would lift the front wheels. He found out that it would by performing wheelies down the short driveway at his home!

In case you wonder how the driver can see where he is going, Brian explained that he has installed a Perspex floor panel which enables him to see along the track beneath him when he is "airborne".

Steering wheels are not much use when the front wheels are well over six feet off the ground, so how does Brian control "Second Invention", which is the name of

his unusual machine, when it is flying high?

"I've fitted individually-operated rear brakes that are controlled by a pair of levers that can be seen mounted on the steering column. A light touch on either lever is enough to correct the car's direction if it starts wandering," he explained.

SPARKY SHOWMAN

King of the wheelie racers is "Wild Bill" Shrewsbury. His car, the "L.A. Dart" is really outrageous—it has a supercharged V8 Chrysler motor sitting in the boot! The orange and white striped vehicle accelerates to 150 mph in 10 seconds or less in the standing start quarter mile, trailing a shower of sparks from the rear of the chassis—the ultimate drag strip showman!

WONDER WHEELIES

150mph with their noses in the air!



BACK TO THE NINES FOR 'LOCOMOTION'

WHEN JOHN Lloyd's 1970 cc VW engine "Locomotion" took its first trip into the nine second bracket at Santa Pod on April 20, it was a welcome return to old territory for John himself.

John was the second rider to record a nine second quarter mile in the United Kingdom, back in the days of big Vincents. Only Alf Hagon beat him to that title of "first", so John's no quarter-mile fool. In its latest form, the big flat-four is getting off the start line

very fast indeed. In fact, John was getting some exciting wheelies, despite the bike's long wheelbase and considerable weight.

Talking afterwards, John was both happy and relieved. "We had a disastrous weekend at Blackbushe, our local strip, recently. And as our sponsors, Blackbushe Motors, were there to watch the bike run, we weren't very happy. This puts it right and shows that the bike can go."



Straight up WITH JIM REYNOLDS

'Polaris': rocketing out of the shadows

A VERY neat and tidy Norton is quietly making progress in the drag racing world and beginning to make people sit up and look.

It's Ivan Wileman's smart black and gold "Polaris", which uses an 830 cc Commando unit in virtually standard trim — only departure from standard is a balanced and Tufride crankshaft.

The motor gets its urge by use of a Shorrock supercharger, pushing the fuel into the cylinders to good effect.

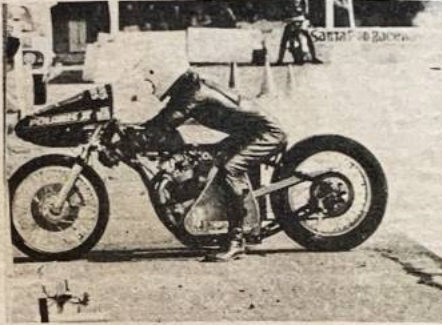
That's good enough to record a best time of 10.84 seconds for the quarter mile, using straight methanol alcohol with no nitro in sight.

More exotic fuels will come later, when quiet-spoken Ivan gets used to the jump from a

—WITH A
10.84
QUARTER
MINUS
NITRO

very rapid 250 BSA to the big twip.

The fact that Ivan and his father run a Norton/Triumph agency in Derby may have something to do with the way the bike goes. As he said, "We ought to know how to make 'em go." They do, they do.



Polaris — the push comes from a Shorrock supercharger.

Speed son of Wales?

WELSH RIDERS have been in short supply since Duncan Hocking left these shores to travel to America. But a lot of his bike bits have been bought by Ron Hughes, of Newport, Gwent, newcomer to the drag racing scene.

Ron's 750 Triumph is being prepared by Alan Terry, boss of Terrison Engineering, who has the brains behind much of Duncan's success. First ride on the bike was at the recent Trefri sprint, where Ron put Alan's

handovers to good use and made fastest time of the day in 13.13 seconds, running on straight methanol fuel on an inclined surface.

Ron and Alan are active members of the South Wales Drag Racing Association, a great crowd of enthusiasts who meet every month in a pub that used to be used as a monastery. Details of membership and meetings from Road, Pen Coed, Bridgend, Glamorgan.

THIS MAN TALKS OUR LANGUAGE!

NEWCOMERS to sprinting and drag racing often wonder where to get specialised little jobs done. Even if you know a good engineering shop nearby they can seldom talk the same language and don't really know the finer points about bikes.

One man who knows more than most is Derek Chinn, partner in the double-Norton.

If you're stuck for a special bit it could save a lot of problems to have Derek look after the work. Contact him at F. & S. Engineering, 274 Amptill Road, Bedford.

'Do demos, Angus'

FOLLOWING my comments in last month's "Straight Up" about Angus MacPhail's dilemma on whether or not he could race at drag meetings, Alan Wigmore, chairman of the National Drag Racing Club, has made the picture clear.

By general agreement after consultation with riders, three-wheelers may race at NDRC meetings only if they drive, through one wheel. Obviously,

a majority of riders at the 1974 end-of-season gathering thought that two driving wheels give a big advantage in traction and all the organising clubs have fallen in line with the riders' wishes.

"Angus is very welcome to do demonstration runs. It's such an unusual and attractive vehicle, and it would be a pity not to let people see it in action," said Mr Wigmore.

Santa Pod promise quickest runs yet

THE WHEEL-SPINNING power of Britain's fastest accelerating drag racing bikes will be in ear-splitting action at Santa Pod Raceway on Sunday, when riders compete for points in the MCN Top Bike Drag Racing Championship, writes Jim Reynolds.

With a £250 first prize in the championship to aim for, riders will be blasting down the 440

yards of super-grippy tarmac during the morning qualifying runs in their efforts to be in the race for the points.

Fastest man so far this year has been Keith Parnell, with a 9.48 second dash at the Blackbushe round of the series. That set a new strip record for the Surrey course.

Joint leader with Parnell is Brian Chapman, winner at

Blackbushe and ready to perform the impossible once more as he wheels out his knee-high 500cc Vincent "Mighty Mouse".

That "Mouse" prefers prize money to cheese and Chapman's previous best time of 9.49 seconds could be shattered in his determination to hold on to his position.

Mick Butler's double-engined

Butler Special "Hobb-slayer" let him down during the first round, but at the Pod he will be on his home track and out to ride the big 'un to a time better than his best of 9.23 seconds.

That was set on a slippery Santa Pod surface at the last meeting of 1974, so Butler must be a hot tip to put in the fastest qualifying time and perhaps go one step nearer to breaking into the elusive eight-second bracket.

Mick is spending long hours fettling the bike to carve away those fractions of a second that

can make him Europe's first eight second two wheeler before his great rival John Hobbs lets loose 1700cc of Weslake power in a late-season bid to grab some of the money.

Backing the superstars will be current third place man Derek Penfold, trying to wring enough power from his 650 Triumph to break into single figures for the quarter-mile.

He will be faced with opposition from Dave Johnson's 1800cc Rout-Triumph "Savage", Pete

Smith's Hadleigh Custom Triumph and the darkest horse that all the fast men are watching as it makes progress in the march towards the fastest time in the land — Pete Miller's as yet unnamed 900 Miller-Baskerville dragster.

Bike qualifying runs start at 9.30 am and racing at 12 noon. Santa Pod Raceway is near Podington, on the Northants/Beds. border and is easily reached from the M1 (Junction 14 from Newport Pagnell) or the A6 trunk road.

Drag men modify

Mike Hall will be taking steps to improve his chances in Pro Comp shortly by fitting the B&J three speed that he has just bought from Keith Harvie. Dennis Stone had originally bought the unit from Harvie's American altered for the Hemi-Hunter dragster, but following its recent blow-up, a change of plan has materialised in the Stone camp.

The blown engine from Tee-Rat will now go in the dragster and become the first non-Chrysler based engine to run in Top Fuel in this country (apart from the Ford "Commuter" some years back). With a

best of 7.7s in the old altered the team are confident of running low sevens and dipping into the sixes without too much strain, which as Dennis Stone said, "won't catch Priddle, but it will give the rest something to think about." The altered now nearing completion to replace "Tee-Rat" will also have a blown Chev-this being the one from Harvie's car which has run a 6.9s on methanol in the US. Hopefully the dragster will be out this weekend at Santa Pod, as will the Precision Tapes Escort that has just come back from the spray shop.

Wales?

to good use and at time of the day in ponds, running on ethanol (fuel on an in-furce. and Alan are acers of the South Drag Racing a great crowd of who meet to be pub that used to be nonastory. Details of and meetings from an. 38 Minf'wrd Coed, Bridgend.

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of riders at the 1974 season gathering at two driving wheels advantage in traction the organising clubs en in line with the shes. is very welcome to instruction runs. It's unusual and attractive and it would be a pity people see it in ac-Mr Wigmore.

WS, May 7, 1975

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with's Hadeigh Custom umph and the darkest horse all the fast men are watching at makes progress in the march ards the fastest time in the — Pete Miller's as yet uned 900 Miller-Baskerville gester. like qualifying runs start at am and racing at 12 noon. ta Pod Raceway is near ington, on the hants/Beds. border and is y reached from the M1 ction 14 from Newport ell) or the A6 trunk road.

ENDING 17 MAY 1975

Butler set to break nine

WITH times of 9.38s and 9.39s in the early rounds of top bike elimination at Sunday's Santa Pod drag race meeting, Mick Butler blasted out a warning that he is getting set for a crack at the nine-second barrier.

But it was Brian Chapman's diminutive 500 cc Vincent single that took the win in a very close-run final.

Chapman hammered the little Vinnie for all it was worth, and tripped the win light just 9.56s later, with Butler right behind him at 9.75s on his twin-engined 1,000 cc Norton.

Chapman led the qualifying at 9.83s, the morning's session seeing a new nine-second runner when Phil Drake pushed his 750 cc Triumph to a strong 9.89s pass to clinch the number two spot.

First round of competition was highlighted by Mick Butler's 9.39s run, but the closest race was between Ted Dunmow's unsupercharged 750 cc Triumph and Phil Drake's blown seven-fifty.

Drake wheeled at the halfway mark, and despite keeping the throttle open he just lost out — 10.16s (142mph) to Dunmow's 10.15s (136 mph).

Butler then disposed of Dunmow in the first semi-final, and Brian Chapman turned 9.52s (149 mph) to down Peter Miller who again succumbed to chain problems, setting the stage for the final in which Chapman proved that you don't have to run big engines to win in top competition.



Santa Pod Stardust

THE one-day event at Santa Pod last weekend was a minor affair not too well attended by crowds or entrants, and with only one car running in Funny Car and Top Fuel, it understandably lacked something. But the two cars that did run put on their usual good show, with Allan Herridge in 'Stardust' doing a 6.93s at 207 mph, a speed he has only bettered once with a 210 mph run last year. The expected debut of Dennis Priddle's new Funny was delayed again.

Top Fuel was to have seen the debut of the Stone team's blown 'Hemi-Hunter', for the team has decided to run in Pro Fuel by replacing their recently demised injected engine with the blown 427 from the 'Tee-Rat' altered. Unfortunately the Lenco gearbox proved unable to cope with the extra strain as it broke on the fire-up rollers.

With the continued improvement of the D. B. Motors dragster in Top Dragster, the gap between the two classes gets smaller every week, with Kevin Burrows knocking on the door of a seven-second run in the rear-engined Chevy to the tune of 8.07s at 180mph, although in the end an iced-up throttle stopped him from running the final against Pat

Cuss's short-wheelbase 354 Chrysler rail which, although a bit slow at the bottom end at the moment, is showing very good form with a winning speed of 161 mph in 9.7s.

To prove the point that it is the start that counts, Dave Page, despite being nearly 20 mph slower with his 427 Chev Senior Comp car, running petrol instead of methanol or nitro, still ran quicker times with the car's meteoric 'launch' terminating in a best of 9.3s. This held him to win all three runs against Bob Deichen's 4.6 Daimler altered.

Other wins of note came from Bob Messent, unbeatable as ever with 'Strip-teaser' at 10.8s to 11.8s over Pete Skinner's Jag-powered Falcon, and Brian Monday, who has established as tight a grip on Junior Comp with his Jag/T as Messent has in Middle with his Jag/Minivan. Monday's time was a quick 11.8s at 118 mph.

Dennis Wheatley took Top Street again with his 440 Charger at 13.3s/100 mph over Jim Camaro at 15.4s: 87 mph, whilst newcomer Jim Kirk took SuperStreet with his 340 TVR when Al O'Connor had trouble keeping his Chev/Pop on the ground.

J.T.D.

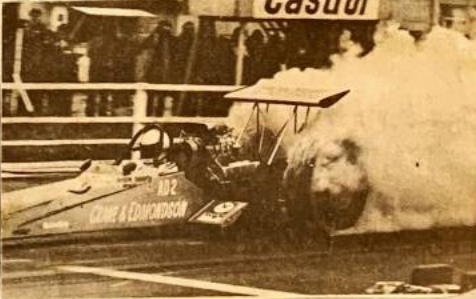
Sports extra

Crane confirms form

Although Santa Pod's meeting of drag racing on Sunday couldn't be termed brilliant under any circumstances — as the crowd figures must prove — there were some high spots. Perhaps of most significance were the two times set by Pete Crane. Confirming his earlier form this year, Crane put in two runs of 6.43s/213 mph and 6.40s/219 mph, with considerably higher terminal speeds than normal. Crane's Hunter Plastics

sponsored rail was the only top fuel contender. Trevor Young was having his second meeting with Revolution 3 and improved a whole second on his previous best with a 7.3s. Kevin Burrows in the DB rail set up a record for the fastest ever run in an unsupercharged car with an 8.07s at 180 mph although his final run was terminated when the nitro iced up the throttle slides.

Peter Crane blasts off the line to another 6.4s run.



Message from the Gods

Jim Reynolds looks at a triple engined Triumph

JOHN TODMAN and John Jacques are both members of the exclusive Nine Second Club. They have both covered a quarter of a mile in less than ten seconds from a standing start. For most people, that would be enough, but for the two Johns, it is just the starting point.

Now they want to really go places, so have pooled their resources to build one real quarter-

mile flyer. Jacques had a single-engined Triumph last year, Todman a double, one plus two equals three, so that's what they've got — a three-engined, 1950cc Triumph dragster rejoicing in the title Chariot of the Gods.

A long-faced John Todman explained the reasoning behind the creation: "With three engines giving about 400 bhp and an all-up weight of about 520 lbs, we should have a better power-to-weight ratio than Russ Collins' triple Honda. And with three crankshafts spin-

ning, the mid-range torque should be very good."

His face grows long — "The trouble is, we've spent about £1800 of our own money and now we're flat broke."

The three engines are connected by Ariel Square Four gears and are mounted in one-piece engine plates for greater strength than the usual collection of bits and pieces of dural. Cylinder heads will be strapped to the engine plates by bolts running from the dural cross pieces on the cylinder head down to the plates.

A big Wade supercharger sits above the transmission, puffing 80 per cent nitro-methane fuel into the engines at a boost 18lbs above atmospheric level. But only 50 per cent of the fuel load will pass via the blower — the remainder will be injected through nozzles into the inlet ports. As John Todman explains: "This way we'll be able to meter the fuel more accurately, even under hard acceleration."

One of the most interesting items that the two Johns have spent their money on is a high speed "lean out valve," to bleed excess fuel out of the injectors and back to the tank as the engines begin to rev really hard. Most bikes run drastically over-rich at the top end of the strip, but with the greater volumetric efficiency provided by the special valve, "Chariot of the Gods" should be living up to its name and moving on some at what the

American racers call the "Big End."

All this power has to be used properly, so the transmission system is a genuine Tom Christenson two-speeder and slipper clutch. That package cost quite a bit. As John T. graphically puts it: "A bankruptcy price of £750."

Using a modified Rambler car overdrive unit, the two-speeder gives a top ratio 30 per cent higher than the first gear.

Rear rubber has to be big enough to cope with a lot of power if it is not to be spun away in smoke all the way up the quarter-mile, so an 8 inch wide M and H slick keeps the rear wheel and its Dave Harper hub off terra firma. Chain line was a problem until a countershaft, was mounted behind the "gearbox", taking drive from the left to the right-hand side.

Frame was designed by the team-mates, from 16swg j and 1/8 inch tubing. Having got the beast moving, stopping should not be a problem, with aircraft quality dural disc brakes at front and rear.

Norton Insurance forks up at the sharp end carry a Tony Foale magnesium wheel, but the wheel is bare! It's bare because there's just no more money in the kitty and the Jacques/Todman partnership needs a Fairy Godfather to help them with a few bits to get the bike finished and give the drag fans a real treat.



John Jacques (left) and John Todman ponder the future of their monster.

"We'd help to meet the cost of the painting, pistons and bearings the crates, machining a lump dural to make a case for the connecting gears and the front tyre," he told me. "We'll need some new leathers too," added John T. "We've lost so much weight working and worrying that our old ones don't fit a now!"

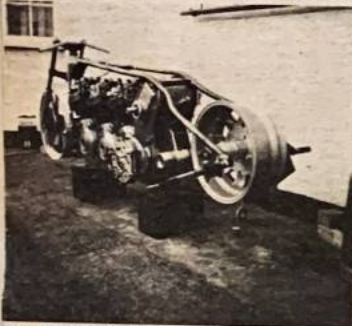
They have had a lot of help from some good friends already, Friends like Jim Yine, W and R Motors of Wimbledon, who have supplied a lot of engine parts. And CDS Screws, who have supplied enormous quantities of their speciality. "And Alan Baker, of Denselube (Chassis has been areas help —

he's a really terrific guy," they add. Denselube Chain will be used exclusively on the triple.

For two devoted competitors to have put so much money and effort into the venture and to be thwarted at this stage is really frustrating. "But if anyone will help us, we'll give him good advertising," they explain. "We're having a tall furring made by John Cliff and any new sponsor has that space reserved for his own use."

So the "Chariot of the Gods" is almost ready to roll with a high-speed "Space to Let" that must be filled if it is to carry the partners towards their right second goal. Any offers?

ENDING 10 MAY 1975



"Chariot of the Gods" a worthy title for such a machine.

Street bikes: out of the doldrums

JUDGING by early results, Street Bikes look to be the class where development is really shooting ahead.

With the loss of Dave Rawlins and his 850 Norton to road racing, Hondas have now taken control. Terry Revill has come up trumps this year, with virtually total sponsorship for his potent 812cc Honda.

Sponsors include Dixon Racing, Gulf, AGV, Michelin, Denselube and Dreda. Most important is the backing by Dave Dixon who has prepared a Yoshimura power unit which is a replica of Gary Fisher's Daytona engine, and knocks out about 90 bhp.

Specifications include Daytona cam, overize barrel and piston kit, Yoshimura crank

and four Keihin carbs. Gearbox is fitted with close ratio Dreda internals. Rev limit is set at 9,500 with useful power between 6,000 and the 3,500.

Fairly screaming down the quarter, the machine set a top time of 11.88 seconds/118 mph last year and both Revill and Dixon are looking for more.



with KEITH LEE

Future developments, include a new frame from Colin Seeley which will allow fitting of the Yoshimura tuned exhaust system.

The bike is still streetable in current form — Terry having in fact spent a lot of time travelling up and down the M4 motorway to loosen up the gearbox and engine.

Twenty seven years old, Revill was introduced to drag racing with a Fiat 124 Coupe, but his enthusiasm for bikes was obvious — calling his car "Vira Ago". Switching in the bike class, he first rode a 750 Honda (the basis of his current machine). He then raced an 850 Norton. Next came a threepoint Kawasaki, before Revill finally rebuilt the Honda.

Terry has no illusions about how difficult will be consistently to win the street class this year and should have himself a new mount before the end of the year. Power will come from a big bore Kawasaki, with all the best Yoshimura goodies.

There are three Hondas currently terrorising the strips at the top of the street division, and the second is Chris Russell's Hadleigh-sponsored umph. After two years racing a supercharged 750 cc Triumph street machine and getting down to a best of 12.53 seconds/109mph, he now rides a 1000cc four which ran

11.66secs at its first meeting at Santa Pod last December. Frame is standard Honda and the 28-year-old Rochford rider often takes his wife Sylvia for a spin. At present, Chris is a professional drag racer, which takes full advantage of the twin Weber carbs acquired from a 20-year-old MGA.

Russell's black Honda is certainly different from the Triumph which proved to be something of a handful with its rather unpredictable antics. Incidentally, that same Triumph motor now resides in Pete Smith's competition bike and has already recorded 10.2 seconds on a reasonable dose of nitro.

Both Revill and Russell are well known names to drag fans, but one that wasn't—but most definitely is—after the Easter Pod meeting—is that of Alex Heal.

At the March 2 practice day, a neat black haired Honda was noticed making some reasonable runs, but no-one thought that self-same bike would, at its first-ever race meeting a few weeks later, equip both of the previously-mentioned riders, turning in several sub-

Sharpe's funny wrecked

Disaster struck Dick Sharpe and the Dorset Horn drag team ten days ago during some unofficial practice runs with their brand new car. This was the first time out for them this year, and apart from a new lightweight body, they had a new chassis, new wheels all round and new engine parts, the sum being a very potent car looking just about as much like a funny car as is possible for an A35? But on the very first run, intended to be a hundred yard try-out, the

throttle jammed open and after what looked like a very quick run, the car hit the fence at the finish, the tyres apparently having broken loose on the two-three shift and setting the car up in a slide that Dick was unable to hold. Although he was unhurt, the body was badly damaged and the entire front half of the chassis was wrecked.

Putting a brave face on the heartbreaking situation, they promised to be out again as soon as possible with a new front half.

Burns' plans Cruel luck

The Burn family were seen walking through the Santa Pod pits at the last meeting, discussing plans for their imminent return to competition after their Snetterton accident. Lawrence has bought a replica of the Steve Skilton's funny car chassis and plans to fit a Bantam body like Mike Hall's of it, with power coming from his Donovan. His iron motor will go in another replica, this time a rear engine motor being built for him by the DB Motors crew fashioned after their own immaculate car. Both will run methanol in the Pro Comp class, with the altered slated to appear within about six weeks and the dragster sometime around August.

Dennis Stone remarked recently that it was cruel luck that their injected engine should have finally given up the ghost after an estimated 160 plus second runs (in first the altered then the rail) just when the DB Motors car has started to run very competitive times — their best being 8.1s at 176 mph with the sly-blocked "Hemi-Hunter" to the 80s/180 that of the new rear engine car has recorded.

Driver Gerry Andrews has not had any really strong opposition in Top Dragster since Roy Prior moved out of the class last year to go into Top Fuel, and the prospect of the two Chevys, with near-identical equipment, battling it out was an exciting one a few weeks ago.



Newcomer to the Street Bike class this year, Alex Neal

twelve seconds runs on the way to an impressive win, with a best run of 11.1secs/117mph at the BDR & HRA meeting. Incredibly, Alex confessed that he is still getting used to riding the machine! This bike has also received the big bore treatment, the 800cc kit. Only problem with the machine at the moment is a tendency for it to jump out of fourth gear at around 10,000rpm.

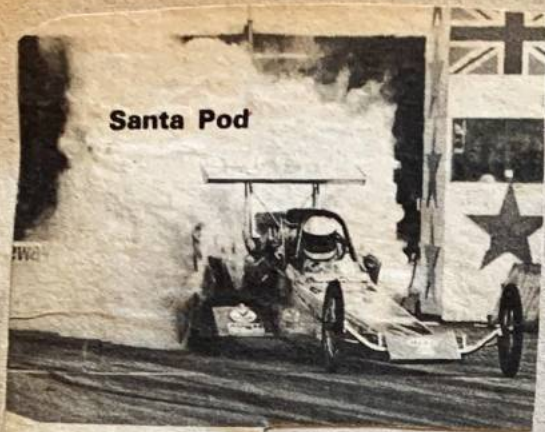
Heal's bike, often used round his home town of Brighton, has scope for development and the 24-year-old electrician will be scrutini-

ng as soon as he is happy with his riding technique. The street class would look to be between these three Honda riders, but don't discount Phil Broster with his big-engined Norton, who is determined to break into the elevenes. Also, Colin Digby is showing signs of improvement with yet another Honda in the doldrums through low entries and predictable results. Now it is wide open and the field has increased to a very acceptable level, with a full field of sixteen bikes at most meetings.

Right: An afternoon's work is over and one side of John Hobbs' fairing takes on almost its final appearance. But there is still the gold lining, the lacquering and the final cutting down to give a deep, mirror-like shine.



One of the top three in the Street Bikes class this year, Chris Russell warming the tyre up on his Hadleigh-Honda



Santa Pod

Hobbs' 1700 for Pod

EUROPE'S fastest quarter miler John Hobbs hopes to have his new 1700cc double Weslake in action this weekend for the three day drag race meeting at Santa Pod Raceway in Bedfordshire.

But there will be no time to test the bike before firing it up on Sunday. Even if Hobbs can only perform demonstration runs there will be a galaxy of drag racing stars to contest the prize money and provide neck and neck racing.

Keith Parnell's 750 Triumph (9.29 seconds) Mick Butler's

1000cc Butler Special (9.38 seconds) Tony Weeden's 500 Triumph (9.35 seconds) and Brian Chapman's 500 Vincent (9.25 seconds) will be the fastest men present all aiming to win the coveted Top Bike prize on both days.

Street Bike Class will be one of the closest matches with big Hondas ridden by Alex Heal, Terry Revill and Chris Russell all out to beat the Denselube Kawasaki of Mick Butler and the 830 Nortons of Phil Brister and newcomer Jon Sharp.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE'S Santa Pod Raceway hosts Britain's first ever three-day Drag Race meeting over Spring Bank Holiday weekend. The £10,000 prize fund has pulled in a top class entry and right at the centre of the action will be the attempts by Dennis Priddle and Peter Crane to set the first quarter mile under six seconds in this country. Priddle has already made a run in 6.04s this year and he must start favourite to do a 250 mph run and smash the six second barrier.

Liz Burn's recent accident in which her car was spectacularly written off has put her out for this weekend, but Roz Prior will be there upholding the ladies' honours. Practice takes place on Saturday morning with racing from 15.00 on Saturday afternoon and all day Sunday and Monday.

● Phil Elson's dramatic improvement at Santa Pod continued with a two out of three victory over Mike Hall, with a best run of 8.6s from his blown 392, though it should be said that Hall's three-speed equipped car was running straight methanol, but the three runs were all very close and just the stuff for fuel altered fans.

AUTOSPORT, MAY 29, 1975

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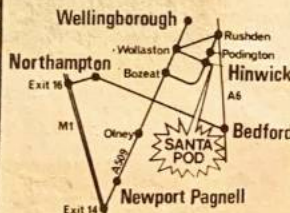
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Dennis Priddle gave his new funny car its British debut this weekend.

Crane's magic mill

Without doubt the biggest news of the weekend at Santa Pod centred yet again on Pete Crane's Top Fuel entry, for although Dennis Priddle's new Funny car also made its British debut, this had been expected, the car having run a strong 7.6s in Sweden the weekend before.

Crane's bombshell to the drag racing world nestled just behind his shoulders in the shape of an all aluminium Milodon engine of some 500 cubic inches. This is based on the late model 426 Chrysler Hemi as opposed to the early 392 that the Donovan ally engine is fashioned after. After one warm-up run Crane unleashed a 6.17s run to show that he was serious in the race for a five-second run, but later runs on Sunday were troubled by clutch problems of minor nature that kept him in the low sixes.

Other entries included Owen Hayward, who spun a bearing in the Houndog rail and was unable to make a hard pass on the first day, Ron Picardo in 'Firefly' who went very well to record a 7.3s against Dave Stone in the blown Hemi-Hunter, which was embarrassed by a surplus of power leading to wheelies and other alarming antics until the team got the clutch and ballast situation headed in the right direction with a 7.7s run.

Priddle's funny car made its first timed run on Sunday with a blistering 7.03s at 198 mph, rival Owen Hayward in the Houndog funny having to cut the motor when

the fuel tank sprang a leak on the first burn-out. Allan Herridge ran a 6.9s with the Stardust funny en route to the first day's final, when it was Priddle's turn for bad luck when his supercharger drive belt broke just as he was staging, leaving Herridge with a perfect 6.8s blast to win.

With one of the biggest entries this year, there was plenty of interesting racing going on all day, with cars grouped together in time brackets irrespective of class. Outstanding runs here came from 'Stripteaser' yet again, driver Bob Messent getting the car down to 10.2s at 128 mph to beat Gerry Andrews in the Stone team's Escort Chev. He had earlier run a 10.5s, but in the vital final, slowed to a 10.8s when a bearing worked its way out of the back of the gearbox. This run from the Jag powered Minivan regained the team's status as quickest Jaguar powered car from Allan Sharpe's V12 dragster.

Dave Page and Phil Elson met again, with Page's carburated car taking the first of three runs with a best ever 9.27 to 9.29s from the blown car, while Elson turned the tables for the next run at 9.35s to 9.5s, the last also going to Elson: 8.7s to 9.5s.

Mike Hall returned to the 8-second range with his 'Shutdown' altered with the B&J three-speed fitted, but lost his final race against the incredible blown 2.5 Daimler rail of Carpenter and Anderson, who hit

a stunning 8.6s to 8.7s for Hall's big 6.3 Chrysler.

The second day's racing was what everyone was looking forward to — could Crane make history with a five-second run, could Dennis Priddle get his new funny into the sixes and beat the two big American cars?

The answer to the first question was no, for Crane's form deserted him again, and although he ran consistently through the day, he could not match the 6.17s time of Sunday. His first run was against Dave Stone in the HemiHunter rail, but disaster nearly struck Stone as he fired up, a stone jamming the throttle open as he approached the end of the fire up road at sixty miles an hour. With one hand on the brake desperately trying to stop, he had to let go of the wheel to kill the ignition, and the front offside wheel caught the barrier, stopping the car with, luckily, only minor damage to the front axle. Crane soloed to a 6.7s at 203 mph. Ron Picardo won the second semi-final after the lights malfunctioned, but Owen Hayward in the Houndog car was still unhappy with the crank in the expensive engine, so was not too sorry about missing a hard run. In the final Ron nearly came to grief against the crash barrier, the big 'Firefly' kicking up clouds of dirt as he trailed Crane through to 6.6s 210 mph to 8.8s. It seems more or less certain that a five will come soon, but it obviously takes more than a little luck as well to get everything just right.

But the answer to the other question was yes, for Priddle unleashed an arrow-straight 6.96s/187 mph against Peter Barnet in the Pro-Comp Castrol funny.

Herridge beat Hayward in a thrilling race that started with a three-foot wheelie for Herridge, but he kept on it and got past Hayward at the finish with a 7.06s run, Hayward not getting a time. Hayward was not finished though, for on a later run to decide third place he hit a 6.9s after controlling a slide onto the dirt that lasted half the strip!

For the final, the tension was at fever pitch, both Herridge and Priddle loaded for bear and laying down vast clouds of smoke, two burn-outs each. At the green both cars pulled their wheels clear, but poor Dennis came down slightly crooked and had to shut down as he headed for the fence, with Herridge powering through to a 7.02s at 204.

It was a shame that a great two days' racing should have ended like this, but there's always next time, and Priddle will be more eager than ever to win.