

original and best and ever so silly

JANUARY 1986

95p US \$2.75

bike

**AT LAST!
THE
SILLY
SEASON
SPECIAL**

**Silly bikes
silly stories silly pictures**
(including terrifically
silly **Moped Mayhem** race reports!)

MESSAGGIO DA MILANO

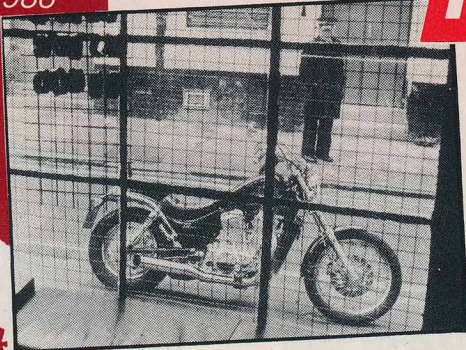
For once, the Italian show was worth going to. New generations of wop screamers, plonkers and chuggers take on the Nips

KINGMAKERS

How Kel Carruthers and Erv Kanemoto keep pushing those damn Yanks to the top of the pile

CLONE ZONE

A goodly ogle of the Harris answer to Yamaha's factory Genesis chassis. Stavros Parrish is probably going to race it, too, if he can find time between Truck GPs



THE 1985 BIKE MAGAZINE AWARDS

Forget Oscars, Humphreys, Grammys and Egberts, as we make prestigious presentations to the fairest — and the foulest — in the land

BARK AND BITE

Two versions of Frankenstein's monster's dog lurking down in the depths of funny farming territory. A Norton-engined Gilera crosser faces off against the only Honda 400/4 in a Yam DT chassis (fortunately)

ANYTHING GOES

The bike, you sweet young boys, not the contact pages. Suzuki's cryptopog, the Intruder, goes mincing round leather bars

ROADTESTS

THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS

Suzuki RG500s as Tweedle Dum and Tweedle Dee. One's the Gamma road bike and the other's a full-blown Skoal Bandits GP tool. Both the same? I don't think so . . .

ARABIAN NIGHTS

If Paris-Dakar posing pedestals are nicer to look at than ride, why bother getting cold and wet? Dashing desert doobries from Honda, Cagiva and BMW. (We've heard some dodgy excuses for not riding testbikes in winter and leering at photographer's models but this is ridiculous . . .)



MOPED MAYHEM

Hold the front page an' quite a lot more inside, too, 'cos this is the not-so-awful truth in all its gory detail

ON-LINE

To be perused at the reader's own risk . . .

LIFE IN THE PIT LANE

Scotty tells it like it might be

FOULKES OFF

Still telling tales out of skool

AGONY COLUMN

Letters pray (Let us pray? geddit? Jesus, I wish the pub was open)

STAFF BIKES

We don't really believe he bought it

LAST PAGE

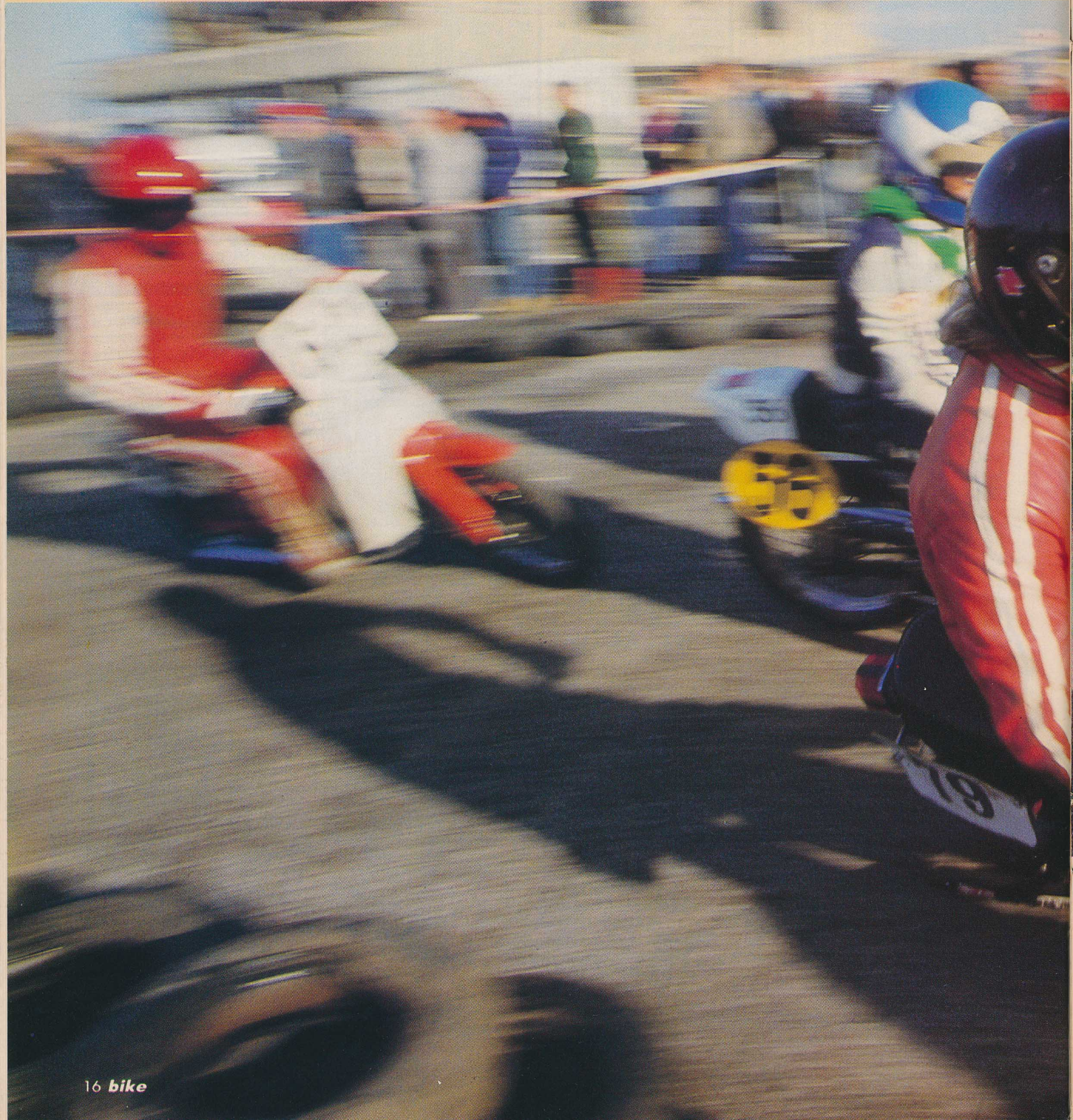
Till next month, anyway

Editor — Roger Willis
Assistant Ed — Roland Brown
Features Ed — Peter Nielsen
Art Ed — Tommy Campbell
Ad/Ed A's't — Julia Smith
Ad Manager — Sandy Murdoch
Ad Rep — Alison Rose
Classified Ads — Nick Hulme
Publisher — Mark Revelle
Managing Director — Peter Strong

Scribblers — Andy Foulkes, Michael Scott, Colin Schiller, Tony Sleep, Mac McDiarmid
Smudgers — Kel Edge, Matt Parry, Don Morley, Malcolm Bryan, Tony Sleep, Colin Schiller
Sketchers — Anni Axworthy, Paul Sample, Nick Davies

Editorial and advertisement offices: 2 St. John's Place, St. John's Square, London EC1M 4QX; telephone 01-608 1511 (both departments). Telex 32157. Postal subscriptions: UK & Eire £15 a year, Overseas surface mail £16 a year. Airmail Europe £23 a year. Other airmail rates available on request. All from Bike Subscriptions Dept, Competition House, Farndon Road, Market Harborough, Leics. Marketing & Circulation Depts, Bretton Court, Bretton, Peterborough PE3 8DZ; telephone 0733 264666. Published by EMAP National Publications Ltd. Origination by In-Step Ltd, London EC1. Printed by Peterborough Web,

THE ABSOLUTELY OFFICIAL, DEFINITELY
HONEST, FORTHRIGHT
MOPED MAYHEM

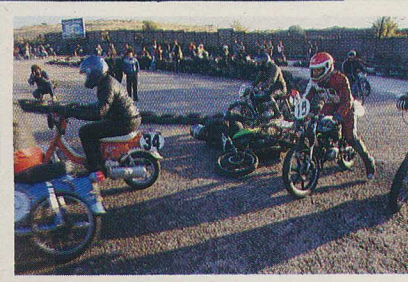


TAILED, ANALYTICAL, FACTUAL, ORIGINAL AND BEST ENDURANCE RACE REPORT

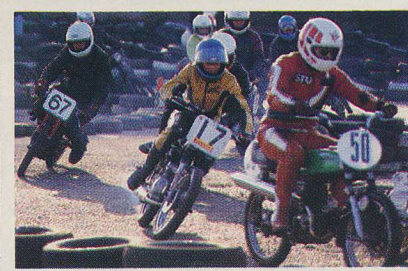


McDiarmid mumbles . . .

The Stegosaurus was a dinosaur. It weighed-in at sixteen tons, had a top speed of about forty mph, a brain the size of a pea and all the credentials for early extinction. It's also reputed to have been pretty docile, probably the only thing to distinguish it from the bunch of good-natured lunatics who lined up for the *Bike* moped endurance bash. (History doesn't record whether the beast had a sense of humour, though I doubt it.)



The idea was born — that should probably be misbegotten — to ad rep Nick Hulme in one of his periodic lapses into dementia; he likes to call them 'episodes of free-form creativity', a moniker his shrink had the gall to charge him 50 quid for, but we know better. Willis, always one for a smokescreen of chaos



to cover his deadline deficiencies, duly approved, delegated, and cleared off to the South of France. An improbable combination of good luck, goodwill and minor miracles and organisers descended on a startled Birmingham on the appointed day. This, as they say, is their story.

The venue's worth a few words. The Birmingham Wheels Project used to be a thirty-acre rubbish tip but even our best efforts failed to return it to its native state. Over a period of three years a Manpower Services Commission community programme has employed in all nearly 1000 long-term unemployed people to convert

the site into a thriving adventure park within a mile of Birmingham city centre. The facility houses no fewer than 20 wheeled sports, including BMX, go-kart, roller-skating and motocross tracks as well as the city's speedway stadium. Run by the West Midlands Probation Service, its motto is that 'excitement, enjoyment, self-expression and industry beats boredom, frustration, vandalism and crime'; however precious this may sound, it surely beats the sterile formulae of repression or pious indifference usually knee-jerked at such situations. Plus the Wheels project stepped in where others, notably in Rugby, feared to tread.

Meanwhile, back at the race, Roland was giving his pre-race briefings as Clerk of the Course. It'd have been clearer if he'd been addressing a blind convention in semaphore, but not half so funny. Every time he got within chucking distance of an intelligible idea the tannoy packed up, someone interrupted, rode a moped over his foot or just fell about laughing. Eventually he settled for saying that anyone not paying attention to the rules (everybody) would be hauled away and beaten up by everyone else (nobody). On the whole this didn't seem too frightening a prospect but no-one seemed to mind, much less understand, least of all Roland.

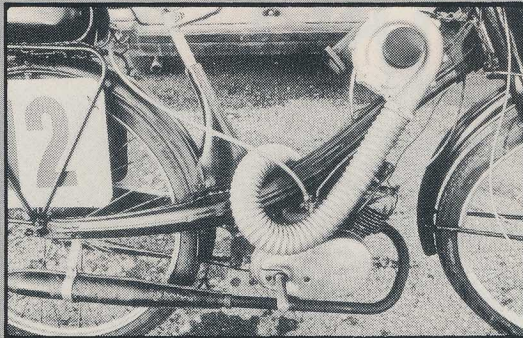
It was that sort of day, Pandemonium reigned everywhere; five minutes after a decision was by some accident reached it was countermanded by another 'official', the tea-lady or a passing stray dog; anybody who did think they had a clue what was going on wasn't telling and had no right to be there anyway. It was just as bad in scrutineering, for which I'd been pressganged, with bikes and riders barrelling in from all directions for the ritual laying on of hands. Much to my surprise the standard of machine preparation was actually rather good, suggesting that some people had put some thought into this stunt even if we hadn't. And some weird and wonderful contraptions there were too, ranging in age from zero to 25 years (an NSU Quickly), colour from all-over rust to shocking pink (Team Ermintrude whose personal package included pink beer cans labelled Erminbrew and pink oil cans containing Erminlube), and power from dog slow to utterly gutless. There was even an F.F. Honda 50, brainchild of self-styled academic Paul Bleazard who'd



Not quite under starter's orders, or anybody's



... off where?



Supercharger used as ballast



Tough boys, eh?



Big sponsorship deals were apparent



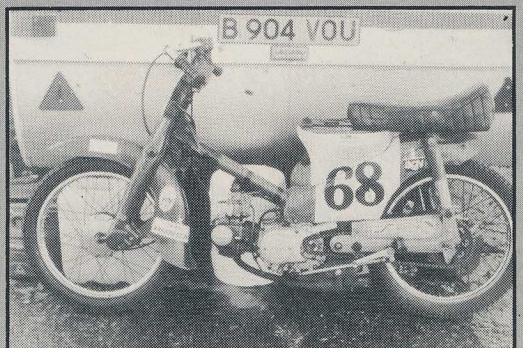
Lapscorers frozen to seats



The famous Team Ermintrude



Some kiddies tried to look serious



Club hammer-tuned Honda C50



Roland grins and bears it at the riders' meeting



If there was a racing line, nobody could find it



The winning Kwack tonks on through . . .



Mrs Campbell puts rider in the soup



Medical assistance got to him before the marshals got his wallet



Team Fart First with their technical cul-de-sac



Trying harder and harder and harder and . . .



Rush hour through the top turns

demonstrated the superiority of this lay-out by slinging the F-F-Flying Banana up the road (yet again) on his way to Brum.

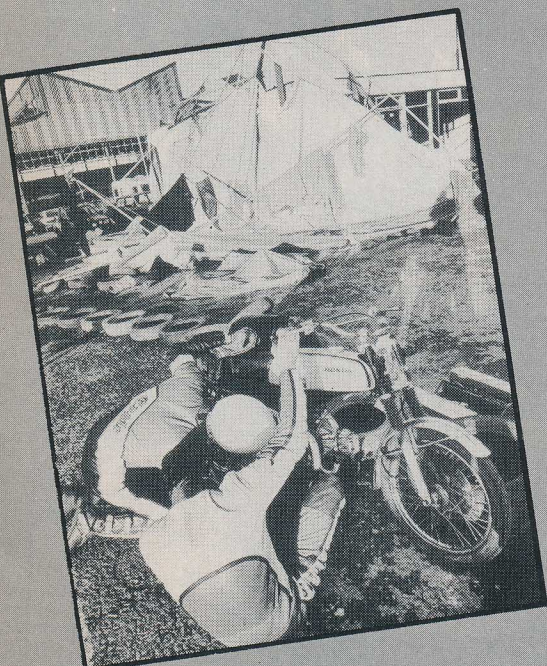
Eventually 11.30 arrived: the off. Or not — we had a clock for the timekeepers but no timekeepers 'cos their psychic powers weren't receiving on Roland's frequency. By the time we got them assembled the clock didn't work: some obscure technical detail like there being no diesel in the generator which didn't work to which it wasn't connected in the first place. Willis exerted his executive authority, postponed the start for an hour, and retreated to a warm bar.

Bikers, it's true to say, have a reputation for being short-tempered hooligans. Aren't they supposed to go berserk, raping chickens and biting old ladies' heads off in this sort of situation? No-one batted an eyelid; despite the odd snow flurry and the complete lack of creature comforts an unshakeable enthusiasm pervaded the whole event. People were far too involved in tweaking, mending or merely talking bikes and enjoying each other's company to give a toss. Or maybe, most of them having experienced practise by this time, they were just concocting a plausible line for St Peter.

Eventually they got under starter's orders. It'd be helpful now to describe the circuit: it varied between four and eight yards wide, bounded on both sides by thousands of old tyres, and of a surface which may once have been tarmac. Roland had laid it out in a series of short straights to keep the speed down, cunningly routing the first turn through a stream, which by now had almost thawed. The entire shooting match was about 400 yards long. Assuming the riders were evenly spaced out, which they were only in the metaphorical sense, this gave each the princely distance of maybe two yards in which to plot a collision course with the bike ahead. Being dedicated crazies to a man the jockeys had

The Editor speaks . . .

Early in the summer of 1985, motorcycling history will show that *Bike* began to publish ridiculous suggestions about moped endurance racing. As the summer dragged on, the various clubs, promoters and circuits approached with what was obviously a moronic and uninteresting idea were unanimous in their total lack of response. Our readership, on the other hand, wrote in their zillions, pleading for information and entries. It we didn't re-discover the generation gap then at least we seem to have gone a long way towards underlining the 'official' side of motorcycle sport's stunning credibility gap.



Wot a nice wind-resistant marquee we hired

elected to launch themselves into this misadventure by a single mass *Le Mans* start.

Finally the countdown to the off for the second time of asking: ten, nine, eight, bang! — some joker lets a firework off. Eighty finely-honed athletes sprint the six yards to their mounts, a fair number promptly tripping over 'em, the air erupting with the wail of highly-tuned smokers' coughs. Team Special Delivery and Team Dwarf make a clean getaway whilst someone in about 20th topples and gets run over by number 21 through 40. Eighty riders wanting the same square yard of road is like trying to get the toothpaste back into the tube, but with more sparks. Within five seconds there's the first pukka spill as two sloped collides at the first bend, sending one crashing into the tyres. A couple of spectators pick him up, dust him off and fling him back into the fray.

Eventually the field spreads itself out, mostly across the tarmac; everyone's going for it like crazy, taking any line that affords a bit of grip, especially if someone's there already. The din's deafening — you can't hear yourself think so you don't bother. There are so many flags being waved it's like a Fifth Avenue parade out there; flapping 'em only seems to encourage these nutters to go



Tuck it in an' tip 'im orf



Excuse me but this bit's mine



"Well hello, how are you?"



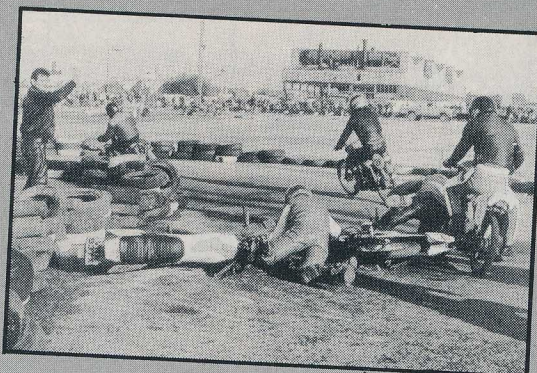
One down, all down



Rider about to be used as racing line



No. 86 scuttles to approximate safety



Looking for lost contact lenses?



A stepthru misses all the fun



No place to take a rest



More close encounters imminent

Sometime in early August, worried about the lack of concrete plans for an inaugural event, we made an approach to the ACU on a national level, via their Press Officer, only to find we didn't even warrant the courtesy of an acknowledgement, let alone positive or encouraging reply. Luckily for us, as it turned out, circuit owners

propositioned with the idea of hosting a pirate event also backed off, fearing ACU blacklisting...

In September, we were put in touch with the Wheels Project, who appear to be, along with the City of Birmingham which is their home, in touch with the grassroots of what sport on anything resembling a motorbike should be. A date was set and the Wheels Project's PRO Joe McLaughlin undertook to carve out enough tarmac from their admittedly small karting track and adjacent car parking area to make a suitable circuit.

We sent out entry forms and were overwhelmed with a response that included huge heaps of cheques for thirty quid a time. Resisting the obvious temptation to cash the lot and bolt for Brazil on the first plane out, a draw was held and eighty lucky teams selected, spread across four classes. Armed with some cash money, we bought a million quid's worth of promoter's insurance, hired truckloads of fire extinguishers and a marquee

and firmly cross our fingers. The splendid chaps from the Wheels Project looked after those little necessities like medical facilities and a bar selling alcoholic sustenance and, as November drew near, it all started to look as if it might actually happen. A week prior to the event, the ACU woke up to the fact that something was going on. An anonymous female emissary was despatched to the *Bike* stand at the NEC Show, to heap abuse on editorial ears and issue dire threats. (How would you like to have Neville Goss fart in your face?) She was only identified by being surreptitiously followed back to the ACU's bunker. The day before the race, as loyal *Bike* retainers, enthusiastic aspirant moped racers and the entire congenitally lazy editorial staff slaved away on site in freezing rain, transporting and manhandling about twenty truckloads of old car tyres into the form of a tight little circuit, a pleasant chap called Pete Lovell from the ACU's Midlands Centre arrived to issue firm threats that any of their licence holders riding in our race could well find themselves suspended — probably by their thumbs if the ACU's Rugby HQ had its evil way. Despite my somewhat robust and obscene comments on this possibility, Pete turned out to be far too sensible and reasonable to put any such dreadful retribution into action and we didn't see him taking names on raceday. He did, however, illustrate the ACU's staggering aloofness from the real world by describing this magazine — the top selling motorcycling monthly in Britain — as being a fringe publication and categorised its readers as fringe elements. This will not be forgotten . . .

Anyway, as the world knows, the race happened. There were thousands of happy participants, riding, marshalling and spectating and they were all winners. We are extremely grateful to the Wheels Project, the Birmingham city fathers who had the imagination and foresight to let such a wonderful place be established in the very heart of their metropolis and, of course, to our sponsor HL1 Lubricants who helped defray the substantial costs of mounting the whole bash. There was only one loser — the ACU, and I'm glad. Despite it being an organisation in which there are many good people, some of whom I would call my friends, it is still a body that functions collectively to kill the living heart of motorcycling and motorcycle sport. I have, therefore, only two things to say to it as an institution in terms of any future interference it might attempt in the healthy growth of moped racing — Fuck off and die.

Roger Willis

quicker. Everywhere you look are grins like piano keyboards, not quite believing this raucous spectacle. The mopeds are slow enough for you to get a good deckers at the riders' mugs, alternating between delight ("got 'im") and terror (no explanation necessary) about every crankshaft revolution; it's a wonder they don't seize. Willis sidles up, in a state of ecstatic confusion since this is the first legal thing he can recall enjoying; Nick on the other hand feels responsible for the monster he's created and wants

to call an amnesty until we show him the rope for the inevitable lynching.

After the first rider-change came a chance to gauge reactions from the sharp end (apart from the publicity-seeker who'd already high-sided onto my note book). Still high on adrenalin, comments came like "break dancing on wheels", "blindfold despatch riding", plus lots of "totally freaked" and "effing marvellous". Most of the competitors hadn't raced before and revelled in it, but

many of these who had, seemed to prefer it to the real thing: it's infinitely cheaper, far less time consuming, at least as competitive and probably a deal less hazardous. The only tyre problem, for instance, was missing those marking the track and most of the bikes lasted all five hours on a tank of petrol. Injuries, too, were thankfully rare, although we hope the two cracked arms, the bust wrist and the broken arms, bust wrists and cracked ribs are healing nicely out there. Most of the 250 riders stacked at least

once (I think the record was seven prangs in all and three on the one lap); they'll have had some technicolour lumps the next day, but no worse with any luck. Thanks here must go to the Red Cross mob who stood out like beacons for actually knowing what they were doing.

Back at the race the bloody little screamers were still at it hammer and tongs. We'd been convinced that most of the puny things would either blow up or crash out and that any still mobile at the end would be



The Almost Accurate Results . . .

2-Stroke Sports

1 Team Kawasaki Staff	58
2 Rambo Racing	13
3 Team Allbike	93
4 Team Bike	87
5 Team Dwarf	1
6 Metropolitan Police Motor Club	5
7 Team Rodent	20
8 Team Psyclo	9
9 Team Red Watch	11
10 Team Anthrax	15
11 R.O.D.T.	6
12 Team Special Delivery	4
13 Team Fiendish	83
14 Hot Stuff	16
15 Team Dictaphone	21
16 Team Motortyke	84
17 Team Centaur	14
18 Team Wimp	80
19 Team Mostostrada	3
20 Team Appollo	18
21 Team Bugle	8
22 Bike Techniques	19
23 Claybrook Pensioners	7
24 Team With No Name	10
25 Bikewise	48

14 Team Loon	35
15 Z.I.T. Racing	28
16 Team Kinnear-Shoestrings	27
17 Born Again NSU Turbo	12
18 The Kay Armes Team	30

4-Stroke Sports

1 Tokev	57
2 Team Spirit	61
3 Fissed Again Racing Team	44
4 Team Centaur	45
5 Team Bragan	52
6 Smile-on-impact	56
7 Greyhound Racing Team	55
8 Wigan Pie Eaters	55
9 Team Honka GB	50
10 Mess Racing	59
11 Don Lucchi	51
12 Alternative Bike Club	60
13 Team Wimp	43
14 Roys Get Along Gang	42
15 Copperfield Racing	49
16 A.R.S. Enders	46

4-Stroke Step Thru

1 Team Reds Racing	76
2 Chucks Discount Racing Team	65
3 Soundwell Tech Team	68
4 Higgs Motorcycles	86
5 Team Poverty Rat	73
6 Team Tennant Extra	66
7 White Line Racing	69
8 Team Frettons	79
9 Team Brian	67
10 Team Rat Bike	62
11 Team Ermintrude	63
12 Derby Phoenix Turbo	72
13 Team S.V.	70
14 Team Slub GB	77
15 B.O.F. Racing	64
16 Gunnersbury Groundhogs	78
17 Team Haemorroid	71

2-Stroke Step Thru

1 Team Nail	32
2 Horsell Head Cases	24
3 Team Cemetery Hotel	41
4 Mercian MC Training Assc.	38
5 Gordon Farley	37
6 Mad Maxi	54
7 Bury Bandits	31
8 Team BMG	23
9 The Juicy Lucies	40
10 Super Slug	34
11 Team 'Slug'	29
12 Team NAD Racing	39
13 Team Meantime (Time Out)	25



Team Kawasaki Staff rejoice while Willis mumbles drunker into his lager — just for a change.

too enfeebled to go for it. In fact this is how we hoped to get out of trying to count umpteen lap sheets and blowing what was left of our credibility. We couldn't have been more wrong. Not only was every conceivable bodge — and most of the surrounding metallic scenery — put into keeping the bikes going, but the riding actually got hairier. With every crash the survivors seemed to learn that it didn't hurt all that much, plunging themselves in pursuit of the next with even greater vigour. (The few who'd

learnt the opposite lesson were no longer around to influence events.)

Darkness fell and on came two of the floodlights, which could dimly be picked out between the ever-growing showers of sparks. The riders were too obsessed to notice but

it was getting bitterly cold and a plot was hatched to stop the race French-fashion with a track invasion. (The fact that the chequered flag was still in The Smoke had nothing to do with it). This reckoned without the unexpected survival instinct of the crowd, who refused such

madness point-blank. So someone dispensable (me) was banished into this whirling catherine wheel of riders with a red flag. The first half dozen saw it and the rest piled into 'em. It's hard to imagine a more fitting end.