

1940

This is the first of the years when no Handbook was printed. A supplement was printed of 12 small pages for members to note any changes. Fred Lee is still Treasurer but as he, or rather his firm, had been evacuated from London Frank Cleeve collected all the day-to-day money. Ivor Cox had become the Path/Track Secretary. Ernie Tugwell had taken over the Social Secretary's job. The Committee was Stan Butler, Frank Cleeve, Jim Parkes, Doug Perry, George Saggors, Bill Saggors and Fred Willett. Frank Patterson printed the Bulletin.

At the Committee meeting on the 13th January 1940 it was decided that the Handbook would not be reprinted but an amendment slip would be provided. All Club Championships would be discontinued for the Duration and a number of items were put forward for the AGM. It was at this meeting that one Bernard Brown was elected to the Club. More will be read of this man later on.

Bill Kite one of the earliest members of the Club was elected President at the AGM on the 21st January. Also the Committee's decisions on the Monthly Bulletin, Forces Subscriptions, Club Championships and the (non)reprinting of the Handbook were agreed by the full membership.

Then on the other side – 'The Club should promote a 50 miles road handicap event'. That the Club would agree to do this in War-time when it had never promoted an Open Event before shows a determination to keep things going. Many Clubs ceased to operate during World War II (as the Paragon did in World War I) because far too many of their members were in the Forces. The number of races that could be held was also being reduced considerably as many Clubs did not have enough manpower. However looking on the bright side the Club chose to promote on the fastest course in the country, at that time, the Bath Road west of Theale.

Outside of the Paragon racing was still to continue. The SCCU and WLCA put together a programme of events and because the system they used which was for member clubs to provide one or two marshals only at each event where they had riders. A practice ideally suited to the conditions of war-time.

One interesting point was that during this war-time period the organisations would accept entries on the line to fill in gaps and to fill the available spaces if less than the permitted field had entered. Riders could not win prizes but would receive official recognition of their times that would appear on the Result Sheet. This was an eminently sensible idea as people were being moved about all over the country and often never knew where they would be from one day to the next.

When ones considers how long it took to get Reserves appointed in time trials and the worries about allowing people to enter on the line in the 1990s and onwards this sensible way out beggars belief of the present system.

Adolf Hitler or not the 1940 season started as it had for many years with the Balham Rough-riders '25'. Only 73 names on the Start Card this year and only 39 of these managed to reach the Timekeeper at the Finish. For once Stan Butler did not win, he had not entered either, but the Paragon did have four of those 39 riders. Albert Webb

2.1.59, Alec Smith 2.7.28, Jim Hayes 2.9.37 and Jack Mathner 2.19.41 were our men. No one won any prizes as Albert was 19' slower than the winner Richardson (Galena). However such is the nature of the event the Paragon did get 2nd Team albeit 30' slower than the Ealing Paragon.

Two weeks later the Kingsdale held their 'Hard Riders Time Trial' over approximately 25 miles north of London. R Goodley 1.18.18, Frank Patterson 1.25.11, were our only finishers. Bert Hockham and Albert Webb having come to grief around this twisting undulating course.

The Kentish Wheelers Novices '25' provided the first bit of good cheer for the Paragon in 1940. On a particularly foul day with lots of wind and rain our lads excelled. Ken Neale was best in 3rd place with a 1.10.37 ride, Vic Foreman did 1.13.53 and Jack Shepherd 1.14.07 and the Team race was ours! Such was the state of our youngsters that Foreman and Shepherd had no spares. However, the Road Secretary, Alan Gordon, arranged with club members to have bikes available at Povey Cross and the Angel, Woodhatch. Fortunately these bikes were not required but it does show the sort of support one gets in the Paragon.

Richardson won the Comet '25' in 1.7.46 with Bert Chapman just 20" slower. With this ride Bert actually collected 2nd in the Handicap section. The first Handicap he had ever won in Open Competition. The Paragon did not get the Team as Bert Hockham punctured but, then again, we do not know who the other Paragon riders were anyway!

The first Club event was the medium Gear '25'. On another foul windy day two newcomers to the Club were well clear of the rest. Ken Neale coming back with 1.11.20 beating Jack Pearce by 32". Jack Shepherd was 3rd in 1.13.26. The Handicap was taken by Jack Shepherd with a nett 1.6.41, Neale was 2nd, 1.7.35 and Pearce 3rd with 1.8.52.

Ivor Cox noted that NO Paragon riders rode at the Good Friday Meeting at Herne Hill. When did that last happen? Just to rub it in Herne Hill was then taken over by the Barrage Balloon units as part of the Defence of London. So H.H. was now out of bounds to all civilians!

14th April was SCCU day for Clubs A-N and a fine collection of Paragonians took part. Arthur Sharp was 2nd in 1.7.30 to Jerry Waters (Morgan CC) 1.6.33. Alec Smith collected 5th place in 1.8.45 and Stan Butler got into the frame with 1.8.59 for 6th place. Three men in the first six and the Paragon had collected their 2nd Team race of 1940! Other Club times were Albert Webb 1.10.37, John Schultheiss 1.13.10 and Frank Patterson 1.13.45.

We found an interesting little snippet from the Cycling of 24th April. In the result of the Western TTA '25' it was noted that 'HG Hill (the Timekeeper) returned 64 finishers including A Bristow formerly Norwood Paragon'. There's fame for you. Arthur did not even get into the top 8 finishers and gets a mention! Lower down the page there is the Result of the Red Cross Bicycle Polo League Final Table with the Paragon and the Wrens in a tie for 1st place.

The WLCA ran a '25' on the 28th April but it was not as successful for the Paragon as the SCCU '25'. Albert Webb 1.6.27, Alec Smith 1.6.48, John Schultheiss 1.10.08 were our only finishers in the event won by Jerry Waters (Morgan) in 1.4.49

The Catford ran their '50' on the 5th May. This was won by Ernie Mills (Adiiscombe) in 2.12.20 with Charlie Roberts (Addiscombe) 2nd in 2.15.11. Charlie was later to be the founder of the 'Roberts Frames' of (in 2004) International Repute. Arthur Sharp collected 3rd place in 2.18.43. Stan Butler 6th in 2.19.1, Albert Webb 7th in 2.19.28, Alec Smith 2.28.05 and Jack Pearce 2.34.34 were our other riders. Albert's effort with 10' allowance enabled him to come away with 2nd Handicap prize.

The Bath Road also held their Jubilee '50' and it was won, in a time of 2.14.35, by the aforesaid Charlie Roberts. Albert Webb was 8th in 2.19.14, Arthur Sharp 12th in 2.21.10 but these were our only finishers.

The unrestricted gear '25' received 20 entries of whom 17 started. Arthur Sharp produced an excellent 1.4.15 putting him way ahead of Albert Webb, 1.5.39, John Diplo, 1.6.42, and Alec Smith 1.6.45. With 9' Handicap John Diplo took the Handicap by 1.35 from a new Junior, Fred Sams, 57.42 to 59.17 with another youngster Ron Tugwell in 3rd place with 1.00.35.

There was a track meeting at Paddington on the 18th May that had been moved from the previous wet Monday. Stan Harrison was 2nd in the 550 yards Handicap for Trackmen, 2nd in the 440 sprint, and 2nd in the 5 miles. He also won the 10 laps double harness Point to Point and the Australian Pursuit paired with Len Thorpe (Barnet).

There was another Track Meeting at Paddington on the 1st June and Stan Harrison produced even better rides. He came 2nd in the 10 laps point to Point, won the 550 yards Handicap and the 5 miles Scratch. In the Polytechnic Meeting he came 3rd in the 440 Scratch Sprint.

Seven riders took part on the 30 miles event on 2nd June. This time Alec Smith provided fastest time with 1.19.59 from John Diplo 1.20.26 and Ken Neale 3rd in 1.22.24. Vic Foreman took the Handicap his 6' allowance giving him a nett 1.18.15. Jack Shepherd was 2nd in 1.19.41 and Alec Smith 3rd with 1.19.59.

The June Bulletin reports than 34 members were now in the Forces.

In July we held another '25' but only had 7 riders. Fred Willett (1.4.11) won by over 3' from Ken Dudley (1.7.17) and John Diplo (1.7.49). Ken took the Handicap by 48" from Fred Sams with Fred Willett collecting 3rd Handicap from Scratch.

The Open '50' presented the Club with a bit of a problem. How to get all the helpers out to the Bath Road? Staying overnight, as pre-war, was out of the question as many of the people that used to do B & B could not offer this service because of food rationing. They were not official hoteliers so could not claim extra food etc. they were merely families who made an extra few shillings putting up the racers. The solution was to hire a coach plus a lorry for those who wanted to take a bike with

them and either have a ride around Berkshire or ride back home. The Coach was to get back to Croydon at about 1pm for those that had to put in a Sunday shift.

The morning started very misty but once the sun got up it burnt off the mist and a beautiful day was had by one and all. The race itself was a win for Pape (Castlenau) in 2.8.24. Our Fred Willett came in with a 2.9.48 for 3rd place and such was his return to form he also collected 2nd in the handicap section. John Diplo 2.27.08 had the Honour of being No1 on the Card and the only other finisher from the Paragon. Ken Dudley punctured and failed to record a time.

Two points of interest are recorded from the morning. Firstly, the use of a telephone to get the results instantly from the Timekeeper to the Results Board (This even attracted notice in 'Cycling') and secondly, during the 'Regatta' that followed the '50' on the Thames at Pangbourne the Road Secretary, one Alan Gordon, was seen disporting himself in the water in his birthday suit. Mother Nature, however, struck back after this fright as on the Monday Alan was carted off to Redhill Hospital with Appendicitis.

The Ealing CC put on a 100 miles event on 3rd August in place of the more normal Bath Road 100. Fred Willett was going well but was desperately unlucky. At the 23 miles turn he was leading in 59.15. In 2nd place 1.15 behind, was Pape (Castlenau) who won our Open '50'. At 33 miles Fred punctured and 5 miles later collected his 2nd puncture. This really put him back as at the 51 miles point he passed the Timekeeper in 2.17.08 against Pape's 2.14.27 but still in 4th place. (Times were at 51 miles all the signposts and most of the milestones had been removed and the timekeepers missed their proper mark!)

Out to the Savernake Turn and the lead had moved to Gawman (13th Whs) who turned in 3.14.10. He had really moved on this stretch for although Willett (3.19.51) had closed on Pape (now 3rd in 3.17.50) he had lost over 3' to Gawman. However as those who have ridden the last 27 miles of the Bath Road course know anything can happen and generally does if you don't want it to. Gawman pulled a few more seconds out of Willett but Fred had the legs of everyone else. Gawman finished in 4.33.21 and Fred Willett in 4.39.14. Not a bad ride for this was Fred's third race of the year!

The August Bulletin gives the news that Charlie Armstrong had been killed in France.

The Committee Meeting held on the Sunday 6th October was at the Joliffe Arms. What an excellent idea after a day awheel!

The Hill Climb was the only other Club promotion in 1940 and this again proved an easy win for Fred Willett his 1.37 being far too good for Geoff Dore (2.12) and Ken Dudley (2.16).

The Bulletin's contain addresses to contact members in the Forces. The also seem to be recording a Marriage Mart. The numbers of our members getting or becoming engage to marry over the last year is amazing. Before the War this would have been scarcely worth a mention in a Magazine but then everyone would have known. It was

this aspect of keeping all our riders in touch with such ‘ordinary’ things that made the Bulletin so welcome during the War.

Arthur Bristow got ‘bombed out’. They missed the bike shed but destroyed the Club Watch!

On the 27th October the Catford held, once again, the 46th Annual Hill Climb Championship of England on the fierce some Yorks Hill. We have never seen a Result Sheet like this one. Fifty-eight names were on the Start List. There were twelve non-starters. Forty-six riders were pushed off at the bottom but only FOUR got to the top! The winner was our own Fred Willett in 2.32. What the conditions were we do not know but Fred’s time is about 25 – 30” slower than expected.

A further Committee Meeting was held at the Joliffe Arms on 17th November. One important point was that the NCU London Centre had not produced the Medals for Stan Harrison’s and Jim Hampshire’s Tandem Sprint Championship. This had to be pursued.

Only two Standard Medals were awarded in 1940.

At the end of the year 44 members were serving in the Forces. One, E Fox, was a Prisoner of War, Cliff Dore had been discharged as medically unfit after his smash by a car and two members had lost their lives.

Club Time Trial Results

	Scratch Result	25 h/c		Handicap Result		
		31.3.40				
12	Entries					
11	Starters					
9	Finishers					
1	Neale K	1.11.20	1	Sheppherd J	6.45	1.06.41
2	Pearce J	1.11.52	2	Neale K	3.45	1.07.35
3	Sheppherd J	1.13.26	3	Pearce J	3.00	1.08.52
4	Smith AC	1.13.40	4	Foreman V	6.30	1.09.12
5	Goring J	1.14.57	5	Goring J	3.00	1.11.57
6	Foreman V	1.15.42	6	Diplo W	3.30	1.13.06
7	Diplo W	1.16.36	7	Smith AC	Scratch	1.13.20
8	Thompson	1.17.41	8	Tugwell R	4.00	1.15.25
9	Tugwell R	1.19.25	9	Thompson	2.00	1.15.41
	Scratch Result	25 h/c		Handicap Result		
		12.5.40				
20	Entries					
17	Starters					
17	Finishers					
1	Sharp A	1.04.15	1	Diplo J	9.00	0.57.42
2	Webb A	1.05.39	2	Sams F	10.30	0.59.17
3	Diplo J	1.06.42	3	Tugwell R	8.30	1.00.35
4	Smith AC	1.06.45	4	Shepherd J	8.00	1.02.05
5	Neale K	1.08.05	5	Kent-Smith C	11.00	1.02.29
6	Tugwell R	1.09.05	6	Hoy R	8.30	1.03..24

7	Dudley K	1.09.38	7	Neale K	5.00	1.03.05
8	Cox I	1.09.46	8	Webb A	1.30	1.04.09
9	Sams F	1.09.47	9	Sharp A	Scratch	1.04.15
10	Shepherd J	1.10.05	10	Foreman V	8.30	1.04.15
11	Pearce J	1.10.19	11	Pearce J	6.00	1.04.19
12	Thompson F	1.11.51	12	Smith AC	2.15	1.04.30
13	Hoy R	1.11.54	13	Dudley K	5.00	1.04.38
14	Goring J	1.12.44	14	Goring J	7.30	1.05.14
15	Foreman V	1.12.45	15	Cox I	4.30	1.05.16
16	Schultheiss J	1.13.11	16	Schultheiss J	5.00	1.06.11
17	Kent-Smith C	1.13.24	17	Thompson F	4.30	1.07.21
	Scratch Result	30 h/c		Handicap Result		
		2.6.40				
7	Entries					
7	Starters					
7	Finishers					
1	Smith AC	1.19.59	1	Foreman V	6.00	1.18.15
2	Diplo J	1.20.26	2	Shepherd J	3.30	1.19.41
3	Neale K	1.22.24	3	Smith AC	Scratch	1.19.59
4	Shepherd J	1.23.11	4	Neale K	2.00	1.20.24
5	Sams F	1.23.46	5	Diplo J	Scratch	1.20.26
6	Foreman V	1.24.15	6	Sams F	3.00	1.20.46
7	Tugwell R	1.27.06	7	Tugwell R	3.00	1.24.06
	Scratch Result	25 h/c		Handicap Result		
		23.6.40				
7	Entries					
7	Starters					
6	Finishers					
1	Willett F	1.04.11	1	Dudley K	4.30	1.02.49
2	Dudley K	1.07.17	2	Sams F	5.30	1.03.37
3	Diplo J	1.07.49	3	Willett F	Scratch	1.04.11
4	Neale K	1.08.31	4	Neale K	4.00	1.04.31
5	Sams F	1.09.07	5	Shepherd J	5.45	1.04.47
6	Shepherd J	1.10.32	6	Diplo J	2.30	1.05.19
	Scratch Result	Hill Climb				
		21.10.40				
6	Entries					
6	Starters					
6	Finishers					
1	Willett F	1.37				
2	Dore G	2.12				
3	Dudley K	2.16				
4	Diplo J	2.27				
5	Neale K	2.29				
6	Pearce J	2.34				