

1944

John Carter was elected President for 1944 and the following 3 years. All the Vice-Presidents were re-elected. The Committee for the year were Frank Cleeve, Stan Butler, Jack Pearce, Eric Bonner, Vin Callanan, Don Chamberlain, Ken Lee and junior Fred Jones.

A small change was made in the definition of a Junior. The age limit was to be 18 to bring it in line with NCU practice. Also a Junior Championship was to be instituted with best average speed over 10 and 15 miles.

A devastating blow to the Club was the news of the death in action of two more Paragon members. Bill Hall had been reported missing in 1941 but confirmation of his death came in January. Even more devastating was the news that Fred Willett had been posted as presumed killed after failing to return from a raid over Germany.

Sid Orrell has just been 'called up' so that brings the number of members in the Forces to 97.

A news item from the January Bulletin was that Alan Gordon had been elected to the National Committee of the RTTC.

First into the Headlines for 1944 was Ron Tugwell. He was 2nd in the SCCU '25 on the 19th March in a time of 1.7.22 only 11" off a win. Don Chamberlain was 6th in 1.9.51 and 'A.N. Other' from the Paragon did 1.11.47 for the Club to take 2nd Team award.

The Club Events started with a 'Bang'. Ron Tugwell won the Medium Gear on the 26th March with a ride of 1.6.01. He won by over two minutes but there was a fair old scrap for the minor placings. Vin Callanan was 2nd in 1.8.13, John Cooke 3rd in 1.8.23, Eric Bonner finished in 1.8.35 and Don Chamberlain 5th in 1.8.37. Even so none of these won the Handicap! This went to Ron Jones with 5'30" allowance to give him a time of 1.5.11, Vin collected 2nd handicap with 1.5.43 with Ron Tugwell, Eric Bonner and Don Chamberlain very close behind with times of 1.6.01, 1.6.05 and 1.6.07. This was to prove Ron Tugwell's swan-song as he had to report to the Fleet Air Arm the next day!

John Cooke was the 'find' at the Easter Meeting at Paddington (April 10th). On his first Open Track Meeting he took 5 of the 10 laps in the Course des Primes including the final lap. Stan Harrison reached the semi-finals of the 1 mile handicap.

Stan Harrison had put up a 10/= prize for the first Paragon youngster to win a Heat of any race at Paddington. Just as soon as he had put down the money Cooke collected it and, to rub salt into the wound, he used Stan's bike to do it on!

On the Monday, Charlotteville '50' day, Vin Callanan was 17th in 2.17.14. It was an uncomfortable ride with a crosswind both ways. The following week Vin again improved his '25' time with a 1.6.12 on the Povey Cross Course for 5th fastest time.

Reg Harwood kept the Club to the fore in the Kentish Wheelers Novices '25' with a 2nd place in 1.10.52 only 12" behind the winner. It was a foul morning and on seeing Reg at the Finish someone remarked 'I didn't know you had coalminers in your Club!'

The Dragon RC held their '25' on the 23rd April. Whilst not fast enough for top awards Ron Jones (1.9.39) and Don Chamberlain (1.7.06) collected the 2nd and 3rd Handicap prizes. Other Paragon times were John Cooke 1.7.06, Eric Bonner 1.7.55 and Maurice Tugwell 1.13.11.

The second Club '25' on the 30th April was also very close. This time John Cooke came home with the fastest time of 1.6.14. Don Chamberlain continued to improve with 1.6.38 just beating Vin Callanan's 1.6.40 for 3rd place. Fred Jones won the handicap by just 1" from Don Chamberlain 1.5.07 to 1.5.08. Ron Jones was 3rd in 1.5.27, Eric Bonner 4th in 1.5.35 and Vin Callanan 5th in 1.5.40.

News had come through that Reg Ash had been awarded the DFC. Also that Ernie Hoare was back in 'Civvy Street'. He was discharged following his recovery from wounds.

A Junior '10' mile event was held on the 14th May. On a cold morning it resulted in a win for Len Gidden in 27.18 from Albert Blackshaw, 27.44, and Colin Brown 3rd in 28.30. All six riders managed to fall off at the Finish as the road was covered in wet mud and other farmyard produce. This showed their inexperience as they all braked after crossing the line. Apart from their pride no lasting hurts were sustained.

The following Saturday evening the Club held an Evening '30' with little success. Seven riders entered, six started and only 3 finished. Ron Jones recorded fastest time in 1.23.16 Fred Jones was 2nd in 1.23.44 and Maurice Tugwell 3rd in 1.26.43. The handicap result was also in that order.

We have found a number of results that are undated. These are:- Vin Callanan was 7th fastest in the Catford '50' in 2.21.21 on a morning that had a very heavy frost to make life on the roads rather tricky. Vin also led the Team to victory in the SCCU '25' on the Povey Cross Course. With excellent packing the times were 6th Vin Callanan in 1.5.48, 7th John Cooke 1.5.59 and 7th John Diplo 1.6.19 this aggregate beat the Addiscombe by 1.45. Don Chamberlain also rode and finished with a 1.6 but was too slow to get into the winning team.

Eric Bonner and John Cooke came 2nd in the University Tandem '30' in 1.10.29. Vin Callanan (4.51.15) made his debut at 100 miles with John Diplo (4.58.12) in the Highgate '100'.

Another evening event was held on the 18th June. This time 13 riders entered but only 8 managed to both start and finish the race. Vin Callanan was beginning to show his class winning in a personal best of 1.5.44 from John Cooke, 1.6.03, and Ron Jones 1.7.42. Ron Jones also took the handicap by over a minute from Fred Jones, 1.3.57 to 1.5.02, with Vin Callanan a few more seconds back in 1.5.14 for 3rd place.

Also on the 18th was the Catford Meeting at Paddington. The surprise of the day was the riding of John Cooke and Eric Bonner who won the 10 minutes Tandem pursuit. This caused quite a stir and set the tongues awagging.

At the South London Inter-Club Meeting at Paddington Track on the 25th June Stan Harrison was 2nd in the 1 lap scratch Sprint. John Cooke partnered by Eric Bonner won the 10 minutes Double Harness Pursuit and cleared the Track (i.e. they caught every other pair racing). Then, to show last week was no fluke, won the 10 minutes Tandem Pursuit race.

The 16th July was Club '50' day and Vin Callanan pulverised the field. His 2.12.32 was 14 minutes faster than 2nd man Don Chamberlain's 2.26.47 and 18' faster than Charlie Sapsford's 2.30.21. Not surprisingly Vin was fastest on handicap by nearly 9 minutes. However as one rider cannot take both prizes that went to Charlie Sapsford whose Handicap time of 2.21.21 was one minute too fast for Reg Harwood, 2.2.21 with Don Chamberlain 3rd with 2.25.47.

At the Poly Meeting Stan Harrison won the 880 yards Handicap.

The Club Open '50' was held on the 30th July. The 25 miles Champion J Simpson (Barnsley) was the winner in 2.5.51 to create a new Event Record. Albert Derbyshire (Calleva) tied for 2nd place in 2.6.16 with Arch Harding (Middlesex RC). 4th in 2.16.18 was Arthur Boutell (Barnet). Our man Vin Callanan came in with a 2.8.06 for 5th place and with it he also took 2nd Handicap. He also collected the Special Prize for the fastest Paragon rider. Other rides by Paragon members were a personal best by John Cooke in 2.19.08, John Diplo 2.22.49 and Reg Harwood 2.27.53, also a personal best.

Next on the calendar was the Bath Road '100' and for the first time since 1939 the Paragon had a rider and a worthy one at that. As a virtual novice at this level of competition Vin started steadily. He was 9th at the first turn (23 miles) in 1.3.40 some 1.56 behind Farebrother (Altringham) and had dropped back to 12th passing the 50 miles point on the Bath Road in 2.16.27 to the leader's 2.11.39 (Overton of the Kingston RC). Vin held this 12th place out to the far turn (73 miles) where his time was 3.21.32 to Overton's 3.13.36. Here Arch Harding comes into the picture. He came back from the last turn in 59.12 for those 27 miles to snatch victory from Overton by 45". Vin also came back strongly crossing the line in 4.38.12 for 9th place.

The following week Vin rode the Hampshire RC '25' and came 2nd in 1.1.08. This was the fastest '25' time by a Paragon rider since the days of Frank Southall!

On the 13th August the Club ran some 30 miles time trials for both singles and tandems. Fastest time by a Tandem was Eric Bonner and John Cooke with a very creditable 1.7.54. Fred Jones and Reg Harwood managed 1.13.31. Jack Pearce was the fastest single with 1.24.43 just 31" too good for Dave London, 1.25.14, and Bill Diplo, 1.29.16.

In the WLCA Meeting Stan Harrison was 3rd in the 5 miles Scratch race. About this time Eric Bonner won a 5 miles event at Bexley on grass.

Showing even better form than in the Bath Road '100' Vin Callanan turned out for the Westerley '100' on the 20th August. It could not have been a particularly nice day as only 80 of the 100 entrants started and only 48 made it to the Finish Timekeeper. Passing '50' miles Vin was in 3rd place with a time of 2.14.58. Albert Derbyshire (Calleva) led in 2.14.33 with Seath (Vegetarian) 2nd in 2.14.55. This was much closer

order than his first attempt at top class 100 miles events but probably a little too fast as he fell back over the second half of the race to finish in 6th place with a time of 4.35.08. The winner was Overton (Kingston RC) in 4.32.26 who was 3.33 slower than Vin at 50 miles.

Six Juniors got up for the Club Handicap '15' on 27th August John Cooke was fastest in 39.41 from Reg Harwood, 41.04, and B Brooke, 43.01. Reg Harwood and Ron Hart tied the Handicap both finishing with 38.34. Brooke was 3rd in 39.16.

The 'big boys' were riding the Addiscombe '30' and Vin was continuing to improve. This time he came in with the fastest time of 1.16.17 to win by 43" from Kay (Bath Road). Don Chamberlain was 6th in 1.18.44. Other Paragon times were John Cooke 1.18.58, Dave London 1.2.11, Charlie Sapsford 1.23.46, Fred Jones 1.25.30 and Bill Diplo 1.30.20. It is very pleasing to report that the Paragon won the Team race beating the Addiscombe by 3.09'.

Two other Team awards are listed in the Club records but with no further details. The Bristol South '25' with John Cooke, Don Chamberlain and Charlie Sapsford and the Avon Paragon '30' with Don Chamberlain, John Cooke and Vin Callanan.

Another Club '25' was held on the 3rd September and once again John Cooke was the winner with 1.5.00. 2nd place was claimed by Don Chamberlain in 1.6.35 with Dave London 3rd in 1.6.47 and a real 'blast from the past' Frank Cleeve 4th in 1.16.10. London took the Handicap with 1.6.02 although slower than John Cooke with Don Chamberlain 2nd in 1.6.35.

On the same day Stan Harrison won the 880 yards Handicap at the NCU Meeting and was 3rd in the 5 miles scratch. The following week he won the 550 yards first class handicap and repeated the win the week after that in the next NCU Meeting. On the Saturday he tied for 1st place in the London Centre Track Championships. And the following day at the AEC Sports ground at Southall won the London Centre Grass Sprint Championship. He also did a flying ¼ mile in 30.4 seconds. John Cooke was also in action on both days collecting 2nd place in the Junior 440 yards sprint, 2nd in the 880 yards handicap and 2nd in the 10 minutes Pursuit on the Saturday then accompanied Stan to the AEC ground to win the 1-mile handicap and the 2 miles Point to Point.

The effect that Vin Callanan was having on the time trial world is illustrated by his invitation to the Birchfield '50'. The entry was by invitation only to the best 20 riders available in the country. Simpson (Barnsley) who won our Open '50' was leading at 12½ miles in 30.26 Vin was 8th in 31.02. Out to the turn Simpson maintain his lead with 1.3.19 for the 25 miles with Vin dropping back to 13th in 1.4.46. Half way back it was Derbyshire (Calleva) who had taken the lead in 1.35.28 but only 2" covered the fastest four riders. Vin was still in 13th place in 1.38.13. Over the last 12½ miles Larkin (Hemsworth) and Miller (Cleveland) pulled away from the others to tie for the race in 2.7.14.8. Vin finished strongly to pull up to 11th spot in 2.10.34 – 5" faster and he would have been 9th!

On 17th September an Inter-Club 100 miles time trial was held. There were only two finishers from the four Paragon entrants. However Vin Callanan again gave a glimpse of his future power with a 4.38.15 ride. This was the fastest ride on the southern roads

course(s) since Frank Southall's effort in 1928! Vin started last and rode through the entire field. Dave London was the other finisher in 5.4.17.

At Rickmansworth on September 23rd Stan Harrison won the 5 miles event and collected the lap prize.

On a very nasty day when of the six entries only three elected to start in the Junior '10' on the 24th September. Ron Hart finished in 29.12 with B Brooke 2nd in 30.01 and P 'Haystack' Rogers 3rd in 30.20.

Vin Callanan was riding the Kingsbury Whs '25' and making a pretty good job of it. The winner was Arch Harding (Middlesex) in 1.3.18 with Vin 2nd in 1.4.03. John Cooke 1.11.04, Dave London 1.11.08 and Charlie Sapsford 1.11.28 were our only finishers

The 1st October was Mayne Cup day. The records state that there were 11 entries of whom 8 started and 7 finished. There then follows a list of eight names! Vin Callanan stormed around in 1.3.33 for fastest time. Youngster John Cooke was 90" adrift in 1.5.03 and Dave London was 3rd in 1.6.54. However 'Man of the Day' was indeed Dave London who had been given 6' by the Handicapper. Dave produced a personal best ride to give him a nett time of 1.0.54. John Cooke was 2nd with 1.2.03 and Charlie Sapsford 3rd with 1.3.03. Vin's time gave him 4th place on handicap with Ron Hart 5th in 1.3.56.

Some bad news in the September Bulletin – Vic Foreman had been killed in France after going over on D-Day.

Another Junior '15' was held the following week. This was an extremely close run event. Ron Hart won in 41.45 and Reg Harwood and P Blackman tied for 2nd place with 41.48! Hart was also fastest on handicap but as he had won the event the handicap prize went to P Rogers, 40.11, from Reg Harwood, 40.30, and B Brooke, 40.37. This ride also clinched the Junior Championship for Ron with an average speed of 21.053 mph. B Brooke was 2nd with 20.326 mph and P Rogers 3rd in 20.192 mph.

October 8th was the last SCCU '25 of the year and a great day for the Club. Vin Callanan won in 1.3.04 beating Jerry Waters (South London RC) by 1.50 on a typical raw October morning. With Dave London's 1.6.55 and Don Chamberlain's 1.7.59 the Paragon won the Team race. Dave London's effort was good enough for him to take 1st handicap. John Diplo recorded 1.10.39 and Bill Diplo 1.21.28

The end of season Hill Climb on White Hill, Caterham, was a win for John Cooke in 1.56. Vin Callanan rode up in 2.04 for 2nd place and Charlie Sapsford was 3rd a fifth of a second behind. It was a filthy day with rain coming down in torrents so the Club spent most of it in 'The Harrow' playing darts.

The number of Standard Medals won had also increased. Once again the Treasurer has to start to worry! 9 Gold Centres, 2 Silvers and 6 Bronze were to be collected at the Club Dinner.

The Bulletin also had news of Frank Sisley who had been awarded the M.M. on the Italian Front. He had stayed at his Mortar Unit Observation Post even though it was under fire from the Germans. He was wounded but was now in hospital convalescing.

After four years in the 'wilderness' the Club came back into the Cycling Record books. Our young Irish import Vin Callanan finished the season with 8th place in the BBAR at an average speed of 23.255 mph not too far back from the Calleva man Albert Derbyshire's 23.549. Vin's counting events were the Hampshire RC '25' – 1.1.08, Our Open '50' – 2.8.06 and the Westerley '100' - 4.35.08. John Diplo also finished in the published list of qualifiers with 21.473 mph.

Also good news was that it was hoped that Herne Hill would be ready and resurfaced in time for the Good Friday Meeting in 1945.

The Club Dinner at the Café Royal, Croydon wound up the Club's Season. This year there was more to celebrate. Vin Callanan had won two Open events on the Road and came 8th in the BBAR, Stan Harrison was London Centre 5 miles Champion. He also won another Open 5 Mile event. John Cooke and Eric Bonner won the South London Combine Tandem Pursuit. 5 Team races were won.

With the benefit of hindsight we know that the War was coming to an end. Next year was still not going to be a bed of roses. It would still be difficult to put on a full calendar of events as so many men were in uniform. There was trouble with the BLRC that was not going to go away. Many of the riders that were to hit the headlines in Peace Time were in the Club but serving in the Forces others were in the Junior Ranks. Herne Hill was due to be back in use again. Yet 1944 was a turning point as the Club had its Catalysts in Stan Harrison, Vin Callanan and George Ongley. The Club had had a few years in the Wilderness it was time to think about the 'Big Time' again.

Club Time Trial Results

	Scratch Result	25 h/c		Handicap Result		
		Medium Gear				
13	Entries	26.3.44				
12	Starters					
12	Finishers					
1	Tugwell R	1.06.01	1	Jones R	5.30	1.05.11
2	Callanan V	1.08.13	2	Callanan V	2.30	1.05.43
3	Cooke J	1.08.23	3	Tugwell R	Scratch	1.06.01
4	Bonner E	1.08.35	4	Bonner E	2.30	1.06.05
5	Chamberlain D	1.08.37	5	Chamberlain D	2.30	1.06.07
6	Riddle J	1.10.36	6	De Ville D	5.30	1.07.33
7	Jones R	1.10.41	7	Riddle J	3.00	1.07.36
8	Pearce J	1.12.24	8	Cooke J	0.30	1.07.53
9	Tugwell M	1.12.44	9	Pearce J	4.30	1.07.54
10	De Ville D	1.13.03	10	Jones FH	5.30	1.07.55
11	Jones FH	1.13.25	11	Tugwell M	4.30	1.08.14
12	Ramsey J	1.17.00	12	Ramsey J	2.00	1.12.16

	Scratch Result	25 h/c		Handicap Result		
		Medium Gear				
12	Entries	30.4.44				
10	Starters					
10	Finishers					
1	Cooke J	1.06.14	1	Jones FH	3.30	1.05.07
2	Chamberlain D	1.06.38	2	Chamberlain D	1.30	1.05.08
3	Callanan V	1.06.40	3	Jones R	3.30	1.05.27
4	Bonner E	1.07.05	4	Bonner E	1.30	1.05.35
5	Jones FH	1.08.37	5	Callanan V	1.00	1.05.40
6	Jones R	1.08.57	6	Cooke J	0.30	1.06.14
7	Tugwell M	1.12.32	7	Diplo W	7.00	1.08.26
8	Ramsey J	1.12.51	8	Tugwell M	3.30	1.09.02
9	Pearce J	1.14.23	9	Ramsey J	2.30	1.10.21
10	Diplo W	1.15.26	10	Pearce J	4.00	1.10.23
	Scratch Result	10 h/c		Handicap Result		
		Junior				
6	Entries	14.5.44				
5	Starters					
5	Finishers					
1	Gidden L	27.18	1	Blackshaw A	2.30	25.14
2	Blackshaw A	27.44	2	Gidden L	1.00	26.18
3	Brown CA	28.30	3	Brooke B	2.00	27.14
4	Brooke B	29.14	4	Brown CA	0.30	28.00
5	Johns D	31.39	5	Johns D	2.00	29.39
	Scratch Result	30 h/c		Handicap Result		
		20.5 44				
7	Entries	(Sat.)				
6	Starters					
3	Finishers					
1	Jones R	1.23.16		Jones R	4.30	1.18.46
2	Jones FH	1.23.44	1	Jones FH	4.30	1.19.19
3	Tugwell M	1.26.43	2	Tugwell M	5.30	1.21.13
	Scratch Result	25 h/c		Handicap Result		
		18.6.44				
13	Entries	(Sat)				
8	Starters					
8	Finishers					
1	Callanan V	1.05.44	1	Jones R	3.45	1.03.57
2	Cooke J	1.06.03	2	Jones FH	3.30	1.05.02
3	Jones R	1.07.42	3	Callanan V	0.30	1.05.14
4	Chamberlain D	1.08.12	4	Cooke J	Scratch	1.06.03
5	Jones FH	1.08.32	5	Chamberlain D	1.30	1.06.42
6	Diplo J	1.08.45	6	Diplo J	Scratch	1.08.45
7	Patterson FH	1.15.03	7	Patterson FH	6.00	1.09.03
8	Hart RW	1.17.17	8	Hart RW	4.00	1.13.17

	Scratch Result	50h/c		Handicap Result		
		16.7.44				
5	Entries					
5	Starters					
5	Finishers					
1	Callanan V	2.12.32		Callanan V	Scratch	2.12.32
2	Chamberlain D	2.26.47	1	Sapsford C	9.00	2.21.21
3	Sapsford C	2.30.21	2	Harwood R	11.00	2.22.21
4	Harwood R	2.33.21	3	Chamberlain D	1.00	2.25.47
5	Diplo W	2.41.40	4	Diplo W	14.00	2.27.40
4	Diplo W	2.35.40	3	Diplo W	10.00	2.25.40
5	Sharp D	2.44.58	4	Sharp D	14.00	2.30.58
	Scratch Result	30 Single & Tandem				
		13.8.44				
7	Entries					
7	Starters					
7	Finishers					
1	Bonner/Cooke	1.07.54				
2	Jones F/Harwood	1.13.31				
1	Pearce J	1.24.43				
2	London D	1.25.14				
3	Diplo W	1.29.16				
	Scratch Result	15 h/c Junior		Handicap Result		
		27.8.44				
8	Entries					
7	Starters					
6	Finishers					
1	Cooke J	39.41	1	Harwood R	2.30	38.34
2	Harwood R	41.04	1	Hart RW	4.30	38.34
3	Brooke B	43.01	3	Brooke B	3.45	39.16
4	Hart RW	43.04	4	Cooke J	Scratch	39.41
5	Brown CA	45.28	5	Brown CA	1.30	43.58
6	Butcher HT	49.16	6	Butcher HT	3.00	46.16
	Scratch Result	25 h/c		Handicap Result		
		3.9.44				
6	Entries					
4	Starters					
4	Finishers					
1	Cooke J	1.05.00		Cooke J	Scratch	1.05.00
2	Chamberlain D	1.06.35	1	London D	2.45	1.06.02
3	London D	1.08.47	2	Chamberlain D	Scratch	1.06.35
4	Cleeve F	1.16.10	3	Cleeve F	7.30	1.08.40
	Scratch Result	100 tt				
		17.9.44				
4	Entries					
2	Starters					
2	Finishers					
1	Callanan V	4.38.15				

2	London D	5.04.17				
	Scratch Result	10 h/c		Handicap Result		
		Junior				
6	Entries	24.9.44				
3	Starters					
3	Finishers					
1	Hart RW	29.12		Hart RW	0.30	28.42
2	Brooke B	30.01	1	Rogers P	1.00	29.20
3	Rogers P	30.20	2	Brooke B	0.30	29.31
	Scratch Result	25 h/c		Handicap Result		
		1.10.44		Mayne Cup		
11	Entries					
8	Starters					
7	Finishers					
1	Callanan V	1.03.33	1	London D	6.00	1.00.54
2	Cooke J	1.05.03	2	Cooke J	3.00	1.02.03
3	London D	1.06.54	3	Sapsford C	5.30	1.03.03
4	Sapsford C	1.08.33	4	Callanan V	Scratch	1.03.33
5	Bonner E	1.10.50	5	Hart RW	11.00	1.03.56
6	Hart RW	1.14.56	6	Bonner E	5.00	1.05.50
7	Cleeve F	1.15.33	7	Cleeve F	8.00	1.07.33
8	Bradfield D	1.12.37	8	Bradfield D	2.30	1.10.07
	Scratch Result	15 h/c		Handicap Result		
		Junior				
6	Entries	8.10.44				
6	Starters					
6	Finishers					
1	Hart RW	41.45		Hart RW	2.00	39.45
2	Harwood R	41.48	1	Rogers P	3.30	40.11
3	Blackman P	41.48	2	Harwood R	1.45	40.30
4	Brooke B	42.37	3	Brooke B	2.00	40.37
5	Rogers P	43.41	4	Blackman P	Scratch	41.48
6	Pocock JD	44.39	5	Pocock JD	1.45	42.54
	Scratch Result	Hill Climb				
		29.10.44				
5	Entries					
5	Starters					
5	Finishers					
1	Cooke J	1.56				
2	Callanan V	2.04				
3	Sapsford C	2.04				
4	Tugwell M	2.06				
5	Hart RW	2.18				