

1968

A new President for 1968 – Frank Burton and he was presented with his chain of office at the Club Dinner. Gordon Bennett was elected as a Vice-President

The Polo Secretary reported that the A Team had finished 2<sup>nd</sup> in the National League and were losing finalists in the Surrey Cup. Keith Ongley and Peter Durbin played for London whilst Alec Bird played for Surrey in an Inter-Counties match played at Smiths Lawn, Windsor. Afterwards the teams were presented to Her Majesty the Queen.

A bitter blow to the Club was the resignation of John Sargeant who in his letter of resignation said that he was joining a club that concentrated on the Road Racing side of the sport and where he could have more team support. The Blah Editor felt that he had been talked into this for more commercial reasons and that being a big man in a smaller team is far better than being a big man with 3 or 4 others of like ability. If work and rewards are shared it works but too often it does not.

The first race of the year and the first Team win. You cannot start a season much better than that. With patches of snow still on the ground and lots of Surrey hills to tear ones legs and lungs apart the Croydon and District Hardriders got the 1968 season on course. Derek Hull was a surprise 5<sup>th</sup> in 1.9.48 to John Froud (Festival) whose winning time was 1.8.11. Derek also collected the fastest CDCA rider prize of £1. The Club's riders and times were Rowan Vacher 1.11.42, Ian Murray 1.16.53, Andy Murray 1.17.39 (with a crash), Pete Fryer 1.20.11, Harry Corby 1.22.42, Dave Fryer 1.27.35, Mick Wilson 1.29.32 and L Clarke 1.39.26. Messrs Hull, Vacher and Murray I took the Team prize.

On the 24<sup>th</sup> February the Cycling published a list of Record breakers on the Track. Amongst the fast and famous were John Dennis who, in 1968 still held the Human paced flying start record for ¼ mile in 23.0. Harry Grant (then in the Imperial Whs but a Paragon man from the 1950s) still held the Motor Paced Class A Standing Start Record for 1 mile in 1.29.8. He also held the Flying Start Record for 1 mile in 1.17.6. Both of these Records were set in 1929. In 1930 he collected the Motor paced Class B Standing Start Record for 1 mile in 1.35.0. Monty Southall and Charlie Hallerback still held the Tandem bicycle Unpaced Flying Start record for ½ mile in 48.8 (established 1930). Harry Grant also holds the professional Motor Paced Class A Standing Start 1 mile Record of 1.35.8 established in 1933. It was very intriguing to note that under Tandem Bicycle Unpaced Standing Start it says '5 and 10 miles to be established. As John Fisher with Keith Butler held the 5 miles Record and with Mick Burren (East Surrey) held the 10 miles Record someone made a blunder. We do appreciate that since metrification of all distance these times are now superfluous. However these gentlemen will hold these Records in perpetuity until someone goes for them. They would not count as National records but they are still on many Clubs' books including ours.

More riders started their season in the Castlenau '25'. Barry Sturgess came in with a 1.6.17 and John Jennings a 1.5.31. (They were referred to, by the Blah Editor, as 'the holy terrors'). Harry Corby also finished in 1.9.13 and Doug Vacher 1.12.41.

On the 17<sup>th</sup> March Robin Buchan began his season with a win in the East Surrey Hardriders '33' annihilating the field on an extremely windy morning to win in 1.21.37. The 2<sup>nd</sup> man was at 2 minutes and the 3<sup>rd</sup> at 4 minutes! Our other riders were Bob Corby 1.29.34, John Jennings 1.29.48, Andy Murray 1.33.28 (13 minutes faster than last year) and Harry Corby 1.36.35. Rowan Vacher and Barry Sturgess rode the Twickenham 2up on the exposed Bath Road and were 11<sup>th</sup> in 1.1.32.

Robin Buchan came 2<sup>nd</sup> in the South Essex Spring Event losing in the sprint to John Sargeant. Derek Hull crashed during this event sustaining injuries that affected his form for some weeks.

The first Club Event for 1968 was the Jim Fox '25' on the 31<sup>st</sup> March. Barry Sturgess won the event to his great pleasure in 1.5.42. John Jennings came 2<sup>nd</sup> in 1.6.08 and Ian Murray was 3<sup>rd</sup> in 1.6.46. A young, gangling youth called Peter Hamilton put in a personal best of 1.10.31 to win the Handicap from Barry 2<sup>nd</sup> and John J 3<sup>rd</sup>. We will be reading more of this lad later. Robin Buchan and Derek Hull rode the Southern Velo Spring Criterium but found themselves marked men and finished in the bunch. Dave Fryer was 10<sup>th</sup> in the 3<sup>rd</sup> category event. Geoff Williams was 3<sup>rd</sup> in the Spring Road race at Eaton Bray.

In the SCCU '25' on April 7<sup>th</sup> Ian Murray produced his best ride of the year of 1.5.25, Graham Bristow finished in 1.8.46 and Harry Corby 1.9.30. On the Dorking Course Doug Vacher rode a '10' (no Club given) in cold wet conditions to finish in 26.44 whilst Gerrard Kellegher justified his purchase of a new bike with sprints to improve to 28.10. Barry Sturgess also put up a seasons best in the De Laune '25' with a 1.4.59.

Good Friday is Crawley Whs '25' day and we had four riders this year. Geoff Williams was the fastest in 1.5.00 followed by John Jennings 1.5.38, Barry Sturgess 1.7.02 and Harry Corby 1.9.25. On the Sunday in the Dulwich Hamlet '25' Geoff Williams was 7<sup>th</sup> with 1.6.56, Barry Sturgess 1.7.58, Graham Bristow 1.8.56 and Harry Corby 1.12.15. John McNee rode a '25' for the first time for some years and recorded 1.9.31.

Barry Sturgess and Graham Bristow tripped off to Coventry at Easter to ride the track. Barry won his heat in the 550 yards handicap and came 2<sup>nd</sup> in the 3 miles Point-to-point. Graham's best effort of the afternoon was when he got involved in a crash. His first action on leaving the track was to change his club jersey for a plain one. This left Barry to take all the flack as he had no change of raiment. The Blah Editor just wondered where Graham learnt this wheeze?

April 21<sup>st</sup> and Robin Buchan takes to the hills in the Bath Road Hilly '50'. Although Robin improved on last year's time when he was 2<sup>nd</sup> his 2.6.44 was only good enough for 4<sup>th</sup> place in 1968. Doug Vacher took advantage of riding a fast course on a good day to finish the Glendene Novices '25' in 1.6.27. The Juniors and Schoolboys were riding the Clarence Whs '10' at Dorking. Peter Hamilton was our fastest with a personal best of 25.40. Also producing personal bests were Alan MacKean, 27.18, and Tom Corby 34.04. The Seniors disported themselves in the Bec '25' and some seasons best times were recorded. Ian Murray was best with 1.4.29, then Andy Murray 1.7.26, Harry Corby 1.9.42 and Mick Wilson 1.13.00. Derek Hull won the 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Spring Circuit of the Medway Valley. In an attacking race Geoff Williams, John Jennings and Terry Slattery were extremely active in forcing the pace. Then Derek got clear with a small group before leaving them near the Finish to cross the line 15 seconds clear. Geoff Williams came in 5<sup>th</sup> about 1 minute behind.

Robin Buchan was at it again in the Hainault Hilly '40' with a 2<sup>nd</sup> place in a time of 1.40.25. John Jennings gave the Dave London '30' a miss to ride the Oxonian '25' and it paid off. John recorded a personal best by 18 seconds to finish in 1.3.27.

Rowan Vacher made fastest time in the Dave London '30' with 1.17.42 but he only beat Bob Corby by 13". Not counting in the result as he was riding as private time trial was Derek Hull who was only 12 seconds slower than Rowan with a 1.17.54. Vin Callanan was 3<sup>rd</sup> in 1.19.41 to collect the handicap prize. He seems to be making a habit of this. Rowan was 2<sup>nd</sup> on handicap and Graham Bristow was 3<sup>rd</sup>.

On the 5<sup>th</sup> May Robin Buchan was 2<sup>nd</sup> in the SCCU '50' to Dave Eldridge (Delta) 2.3.11 and Robin's 2.5.03. Harry Corby rode round in 2.22.28. On the Portsmouth Road the 34<sup>th</sup> Nomads held their '25'. Terry Slattery was our fastest with a 1.3.49, Barry Sturgess just held off John Jennings 1.6.05 to 1.6.10 whilst Doug Vacher came in with a 1.9.26. The Paragon won the Team race in the East Surrey RC road race won by Mick Burren of the promoting club. Geoff Williams and Derek Hull rode the Morden 2up Team time trial, which they completed in 1.8.36. Ian Murray went round with Dave Worsfold (Redmon) in 1.8.12. They were intending to ride their trikes but an accident to Ian's Chariot put pay to this idea much to the disappointment of the spectators.

Evening time trials started on the Polhill course and some improvements were noted in the Blah. Graham Bristow is now down to 24.34, Andy Murray to 24.57, Ian Murray 25.03, Pete Hamilton 25.34 and Simon Lansdowne 29.28.

Robin Buchan produced his season's best of 2.2.11 in the Catford '50' but had to be content with 2<sup>nd</sup> place. Ian Murray finished in 2.11.58, and Andy Murray 2.21.04 with time away from the correct course! On the Sunday he wasn't 2<sup>nd</sup> but 3<sup>rd</sup>. This was in the Folkestone and District '25' and he clocked 59.37 for a season's best time. John Jennings was our fastest finisher in the Kent RC'25' with a 1.3.53 followed by Ian Murray 1.4.14 and Harry Corby 1.8.51.

The Dave Cosson 2-day 3 stage road race was Robin Buchan's next objective. In the Time Trial Stage Robin was, yet again, in 2<sup>nd</sup> place with 32.58 some 25 seconds slower than Martin Roach (Hounslow). Derek Hull was 15<sup>th</sup> in 36.00, Terry Slattery was 18<sup>th</sup> and Geoff Williams also finished but no placing is given. In the afternoon Stage of 74 miles, run off in dreadful weather conditions, Robin was 8<sup>th</sup>, Derek 15<sup>th</sup> and Geoff 16<sup>th</sup>. Terry gave the conditions best and retired. On the Sunday 84 miles stage Robin was 7<sup>th</sup> after being away in a three-man break for over 40 miles. This gave Robin 3<sup>rd</sup> place on General Classification. Derek and Geoff both punctured.

On the 26<sup>th</sup> May Robin Buchan really started to move with a 1.57.11 in the Ross Whs '50', the second fastest of his career. Geoff Williams and Barry Sturgess also put up personal best rides that weekend. They were riding the Elite '25' and Geoff clocked 1.0.29 and Barry Sturgess 1.2.13. John Jennings was also 'doing a ride' but tangled with a car on a roundabout. This left him with a bike that was unrideable. The following day we had seven riders in the Surrey St Christophers '25' on the Pound Hill Course. John Jennings was our fastest rider in 1.4.33, Barry Sturgess did 1.6.22 and John McNee came in with a personal best of 1.6.54. This also won the Veterans prize. Our other men were Graham Bristow 1.7.01, Harry Corby 1.8.06 and George Walmsley 1.8.50. His first race since we don't know when!

The Schoolboys had a busy weekend. Doug Vacher came 9<sup>th</sup> in the Catford '10' with 25.47, Gerard Kellegher improved to 27.45, Simon Lansdowne to 29.08 and Tom Corby to 32.34. On the Sunday Doug finished in 26.27 and Tom 32.35 in an unknown event. The first Club '50' had only one finisher and that was Ian Murray with a 2.19.24. Geoff Williams came closer to his 1<sup>st</sup> Category licence with a 4<sup>th</sup> place in the Mephisto road race on the Higham Circuit.

Our Crystal Palace promotion was held on the 28<sup>th</sup> May and we had 10 riders. Graham Bristow managed to crash but remounted and caught his group – not an easy job at the Palace. Geoff Williams and Terry Slattery stirred the 2<sup>nd</sup> category bunch into action to such an extent that only five of the Scratch Group managed to catch them. Those that did connect dominated the prize list. Reg Barnett won the race. This Evening promotion was a first time effort by Barry Sturgess and he made a great job of it.

Another win for Robin Buchan was forthcoming on the 4<sup>th</sup> June. He showed his fast '50' was no fluke by completing the Farnham '25' in 57.32. Then on the Sunday he went to the Southend Road for the Basildon '25' but 'slowed' to a 57.44! The Club time triallists were out in force that weekend and, for once, had an excellent morning. Graham Bristow made good use of it with a personal best of 1.2.32 (and 1<sup>st</sup> Handicap) in front of Bob Corby 1.4.01, John Jennings 1.4.12, Harry Corby 1.6.38 and Graham Forster 1.10.45. On the Pound Hill Course John McNee improved again to make fastest time, 1.5.59, in the Balham Veterans '25'.

On the Whit Monday Terry Slattery was our fastest man in the West Croydon Whs '25' with a 1.2.47. Ian Murray came in with a 1.4.44 and John McNee a

1.6.54. In the Bromley RC '25' John Jennings improved to a 1.3.17 and Harry Corby completed the course in 1.7.12.

Ten riders pottered down to Farnborough (Kent) for the evening '10' and achieved the following times. Ian Murray 24.14, Barry Sturgess 35.04, Pete Hamilton 25.05, Graham Bristow 25.07, Andy Murray 25.17, Harry Corby 25.40, Doug Vacher 26.22, Gerrard Kellegher 27.58, Simon Landsown 29.12 and Graham Forster 29.53.

On the 12<sup>th</sup> June pride of place goes to our schoolboy riders. Competing as Fairchildes School they won the SE London Heat of the GH Stancer '10' to qualify for the Final. Their times were Doug Vacher 25.26, Gerrard Kellegher 27.23 and Simon Lansdowne 29.16. In the Addiscombe '50' we again collected Prizes and, again, produced personal bests to get them. Ian Murray collected 3<sup>rd</sup> on Handicap with a 2 minutes improvement to 2.9.00, John Jennings was 2<sup>nd</sup> with his 2.14.34 whilst Andy Murray took a minute from his previous best with a 2.18.43. Harry Corby came away without a prize with 2.23.41.

Robin Buchan rode the Archer '50' and had to be (dis)contented with a 2.0.48 for 10<sup>th</sup> place! Bob Corby did his best ride of the year with a 2.5.36 in the Brentwood '50'.

On June 16<sup>th</sup> Terry Slattery had a day to remember when those magic figures '59' were written against his name of the Result Board. This was a 13 second improvement to 59.54. Pete Ansell also came in with a personal best, by 3 minutes, taking his time down to 1.2.45. Les Black came out of retirement (again) to be just 2 seconds slower than Peter. He was so pleased he started training again! Two other Paragonians improved this weekend. John Jennings took nearly 4 minutes from his time when finishing the WLCA '50' in 2.10.50 but without getting a sniff of the handicap prize. Graham Bristow came in with 2 minutes of improvement for a 2.17.20. Graham took only 1.2.00 to reach the turn but the 'Man with the Hammer' hit him on the way back.

Pete Fryer came 5<sup>th</sup> in the 3<sup>rd</sup> category Criterium at Norman Park, Bromley, whilst Keith Butler came 8<sup>th</sup> in the Professional event later in the day.

June 23<sup>rd</sup> and Robin Buchan collected yet another 2<sup>nd</sup> place this time in the Wren Whs '50'. His 1.58.29 for the Bishops Stortford course was extremely good but not quite good enough. After his '59' Terry Slattery really got the bit between his teeth with 5<sup>th</sup> place in the Bath Road '25' in a personal best of 57.58. That was nearly 2 minutes quicker than he has ever gone before! Barry Sturgess also improved taking 2.30 of his 30 miles time with a 1.18.31 in the Roamer event. George Walmsley finished on a soft tyre but still recorded 1.20.54. Harry Corby did a season's best at Eastbourne with a 1.6.31 whilst cousin Bob went to Colchester for their '50' and got round in 2.6.34. Our Schoolboy section was in action on the Dorking Horsham road with Doug Vacher being the fastest of them with a 25.41. Next came Gerrard

Kellegher 27.33, Tom Corby 32.04 and Paul Williamson 33.22 after a 4 minutes late start and a stop to put his chain back on.

Rowan Vacher had his first ride after suffering a (non-cycling induced) knee injury on the Polhill course. He returned a very useful 23.15. Andy Murray finished in 24.47, Doug Vacher 25.21, Dave Fryer improved over 3 minutes to get down to 26.03 and Gerrard Kellegher did 26.34.

Robin Buchan came 3<sup>rd</sup> in the SCCU Senior road race over the Newtons Hill circuit. Derek Hull has been quite out of luck no beaks have worked but finishing his races in the bunch. Keith Butler came 4<sup>th</sup> in the Professional Sprint Championship and to complete a prize free day was caught inside the last 200m after being away for many laps in the 7½ miles scratch race. (It should have been a 10 miles race but too much time had been lost to rain showers).

During the month Robin has been enlivening the bunch races at Herne Hill. He has won one 5 miles Point to Point and paired with Brian Dacey lapped the field in a 70 lap Team Points race.

On a hard day Robin Buchan rode the Hillingdon '100' and finished in 5<sup>th</sup> place with his second best time of 4.18.01. However a good hard '100' usually pays off with increased race fitness and confidence. We shall see. The Vachers went to the Portsmouth Road for the Kingston Whs '25'. Rowan just missed the magic hour with a 1.0.37 but Doug improved over a minute to come in with a 1.5.06. The Corby's and Barry Sturgess went off to the wilds of Kent for the San Fairy Ann '50'. Bob was 5<sup>th</sup> with 2.6.39, Barry improved 6½ minutes to get down to 2.14.35 and Harry did his season's best with 2.19.03.

Terry Slattery won the Purley to Brighton yet again 8 minutes slower time than last year. We believe southerly winds made this rather a slog. His 1.38.05 beat Rowan Vacher by 1.44. This was Rowan's second ride back and shows he his very quickly regaining his form. Derek Hull was 3<sup>rd</sup> in 1.40.11. Dave Fryer won the Handicap with 18 minutes allowance to give him a nett 1.35.20. This was 24 seconds too good for Pete Ansell and 45 seconds better than Andy Murray. In the Inter-Club section we beat the Addiscombe by 14 minutes even though John Smith put up the fastest time of the day of 1.37.29.

The 5<sup>th</sup> July was our Evening Track Meeting. The wind blew, the rain clouds gathered, it was cold and England were playing Yugoslavia in a televised soccer match. With those handicaps it was a wonder that anyone came to watch but they did and enjoyed some excellent racing. It did not start to well as both Robin Buchan and Graham Bristow were eliminated in the Heats of the 550 yards Handicap. This event was won by Keast (Redmon). The first of the London Region 4000m Pursuit semi-finals proved to be victory by Cross (Clarence) from Ewing (Wembley Phoenix). Ian Alsop and Geoff Cooke had a crack at the National Flying Start ¼ mile tandem record of 23.0 and to their credit recorded 23.8. The wind in ones face down the back-straight more or less obliterated any chances of record breaking that evening.

Then in the second semi-final of the Pursuit Joe Mummery just beat Sean Bannister (both Poly) by 0.5 seconds. It was then Reg Barnett's turn to try for the ¼ mile solo record. To be fair to Reg he would not have considered an attempt that day if it were not on the programme. In spite of the crowd shouting themselves hoarse he was a full second adrift. Graham Bristow gave us some good cheer in the 'Devil' before being caught on the inside and nowhere to go. This event was won by Armour (Verulam).

Next was Beryl Burton turn to go for some Records. She had scheduled for the standing start 1000m and 3000m, ¼ mile, ½ mile and 1 mile, also the flying ¼ mile, ½ mile and 1 mile. All these were to be attempted on one ride. This is done to ensure that you can collect any record on the way to breaking the one you really want which in Beryl's case was the 3000m record of 4.14.9. If you do not put in a schedule you cannot claim the record afterwards. In spite of the conditions she held her schedule well but the wind in the back straight was just too strong and she just missed the record by 0.3 seconds in spite of all that the crowd could do. As consolation she did beat the flying mile record by 0.2 seconds that shows the sense in putting in for all possible records. It does make the Timekeepers hop about a bit too!

To end the Meeting came the Champagne '10' for the Harry Grant Cup. Robin was doing his bit to weed out the wheat from the chaff. The field went through the 5 miles point in 10.23.2 so there had been no waiting about and the effect could be seen as sundry individuals rode into the track centre with various excuses for being shot off the back. With the wind and the speed no one could stay out in front for long. Then came the bell and Reg Barnett shot off the front down the back straight and it was a question of who was to be second. In an extremely tight finish and much discussion amongst the Judges Ian Alsop was given 2<sup>nd</sup> place, Dave Rowe (Vulcan) 3<sup>rd</sup> and Dick Mulberry (Vulcan) 4<sup>th</sup>. Mick Devine (Poly) took the Lap Prize and B Breur (Holland) the Points Prize. Time for the race was 21.0.6. All in all it was an excellent evening's entertainment.

On the 7<sup>th</sup> July Robin Buchan rode the National Championship '50' and came 14<sup>th</sup>. However he had only taken 1.55.43 to cover the distance than beat his existing Club Record by 26 seconds. The suffering in the Hillingdon paid off as it usually does. Terry Slattery and Derek Hull rode in the Clarence Whs Star race at Chobham. They got clear in a group of eight riders that, close to the Finish, broke up. Eventually Terry crossed the line in 5<sup>th</sup> place with Derek 7<sup>th</sup>.

In the GH Stancer Schoolboy Championship '10' Doug Vacher got within 2 seconds of his best with a 25.13, Gerrard Kellegher improved to 27.05 and Simon Lansdowne came in with a 29.37. The previous Thursday on the Polhill course Doug had recorded the exact same time as he did in the GHS.event. Simon actually improved to 27.40 but Pete Hamilton was back in action after Examinations and clocked a promising 25.29. Alan MacKean rode the Clarence Junior '15' in heavy rain and clocked 40.54. Tom Corby who insisted on starting in spite of the weather did 50.28. Robin Buchan went

into Essex for the Goodmayes '100' hoping for a 'flyer' but got the same weather and finished in 4.22.08. Barry Sturgess did 1.5.01 and Graham Bristow 1.5.06 in the Dulwich Paragon '25'.

The Walter Moon Trophy race was held on the 21<sup>st</sup> July and had an excellent morning. Terry Slattery was the fastest rider with a 59.58 closely followed by Rowan Vacher 1.0.09. (That is a hat trick of under the hour rides for Terry). The Team race, based on handicap times, was lost as Pete Ansell managed to start 22 minutes late as did Derek Hull with some 7 minutes lost. Their actual racing times were Derek Hull 1.2.48 (that should have been a personal best) and Pete Ansell 1.2.55. Our counting riders on handicap times were Mick Wilson 58.10, George Walmsley and Rowan Vacher both with 58.39 and J McQuire 59.21. Robin Buchan went out west to the Bath Road and surprised himself with a 1.59.48 for 4<sup>th</sup> place in the Belle Vue '50'. After their rides in the Moon Trophy Derek Hull and Terry Slattery went across to Pirbright for the Weybridge Whs road race. Geoff Williams joined them. Derek and Geoff got into the winning break of 11 riders but were placed 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> in the final sprint. Terry, however, managed to win the bunch sprint for 12<sup>th</sup> spot and with these three placings the Paragon won the Team race.

More '10's on the Polhill course with Pete Hamilton getting back into the swing of things with a 24.24. Doug Vacher finished in 25.07, Simon Lansdown 28.04 but a promising 27.29 came from new recruit Brian Maxlow.

The ride of the day on the 28<sup>th</sup> July was Rowan Vacher's 2.5.15 in the Bon Amis '50'. Not only was this an 11-minute improvement but it took 1<sup>st</sup> on handicap as well. Rowan was surprised that 50 miles could be so hard! Robin Buchan also rode but had an 'off' day finishing in 2.4.20 as did Harry Corby with a 2.27.54. Nearer home Doug Vacher led the Paragon contingent in the St Christophers '25' in 1.6.37. Next came Mike Wilson, 1.9.28, Ian Forrest 1.9.46, and Ian Parsons 1.17.40. For both Ian's this was a first time at the distance. In the Division Championship Road race Terry Slattery and Derek Hull missed the vital break and were placed 17<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> respectively. Keith Butler rode the Professional Championship in Essex over 140 miles and came 21<sup>st</sup>. Pete Fryer has been having some success at Norman Park Bromley with a 4<sup>th</sup> and a 9<sup>th</sup> in the last two weeks.

A visitor from Canada was welcomed in the shape of Jocelyn Lovell. He had finished 4<sup>th</sup> in the 1000m time trial at the Pan-American Games and was sent over for experience by Bruce Smith and Maurice Jeffries. In his first event he came 2<sup>nd</sup> to Brian Dacey in the 880 yards scratch and a 3<sup>rd</sup> in the 'Devil'. The next evening he tried a time trial on the Polhill course and clocked a 23.06. Quite a promising start for an 18 year old. Robin Buchan has been riding well with a 3<sup>rd</sup> place and 2<sup>nd</sup> team (with Brian Dacey) in the De Laune 20 miles points race. Graham Bristow came 2<sup>nd</sup> in the 880 yards handicap at the WCRA Meeting

Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> August was the day for the FW Southall '50'. This year Terry Ewing (Wembley Phoenix) won the Trophy in 2.0.12 from Robin Buchan 2.2.24 and Ian Cross (Clarence) 2.2.59. Mick Wilson had the honour of



starting at No.1 and had 25 miles of loneliness until caught by Ron Shade (Addiscombe) for 5 minutes. Leading at 25 miles was John Gifford (Croydon RC) in 58.38 with Ewing at 39 seconds; Robin Buchan at 1.14 was in 3<sup>rd</sup> place. Our riders went through Rowan Vacher 6<sup>th</sup> in 1.0.18, Geoff Williams 1.1.44, Terry Slattery 1.2.56, Ian Murray 1.3.57, John Jennings 1.4.06, Barry Sturgess 1.5.45 and Mick Wilson 1.10.30. Somewhere in the second 25 miles Gifford punctured and retired leaving Ewing out on his own. Robin held on to 2<sup>nd</sup> place pulling away from Cross who he led at 25 miles by 8 seconds to finish 35 seconds faster. Geoff Williams came in 9<sup>th</sup> with a 2.5.53 and with a huge 12½ minutes handicap took that award by over 2½ minutes. Rowan Vacher 'died' a bit over the second half to come 10<sup>th</sup> with a 2.6.37. Other times were Terry Slattery 2.8.50, Ian Murray 2.10.51, John Jennings 2.11.40, Barry Sturgess 2.20.32 and Mick Wilson 2.26.31. The Paragon won the Team race and the special handicap team award as well. The Scratch counters were Buchan, Williams and Vacher whilst the Handicappers were Jennings, Vacher and Williams.

On the 10<sup>th</sup> August Geoff Williams came 10<sup>th</sup> in the Romford road race at Dunmow. Sunday he spent at Crystal Palace being pleased with a place in the front bunch as he had ridden a time trial that morning. In fact he was 4<sup>th</sup> in the Oval Middlemarkers '25' with a 1.1.54. 2<sup>nd</sup> in that event was Rowan Vacher with a 1.0.31 missing a win by just 5 seconds. These two with Barry Sturgess (1.4.13) won the Team race. Andy Murray also finished with a 1.8.14. Terry Slattery finished 14<sup>th</sup> in the Old Portlians '25' with a 1.0.30 whilst Doug Vacher and Simon Lansdowne rode the Addiscombe Junior '10' recording 26.19 and 29.40 respectively.

Our 3<sup>rd</sup> Category road race was held around the Ashdown Forest and it was the usual wearing down type of race. Of the 37 starters 15 finished and 13 of them were in the leading group. Such was the speed of the final climb toward Wych Cross that they were timed in over 26 seconds. Dave Watt (Medrcury) won from Colin Christie (34<sup>th</sup> Nomads) and Mick Bridges (Mercury). Les Black was 8<sup>th</sup> and Pete Fryer was 13<sup>th</sup>. Robin Buchan stuck to time trialling and came 2<sup>nd</sup> in the Mephisto '25' with 1.0.15. Mike Wilson tried the Chelmer middlemarkers '25' but was disappointed with his 1.10.12.

Ian Murray had another hollow victory in the Goss Green Cup as he, again, was the only finisher. He took 4.39.20 for the distance.

The Fryco Cup '50' was held on the 25<sup>th</sup> August and resulted in a win for Derek Hull in 2.12.32. He just kept ahead of Rowan Vacher who was 2<sup>nd</sup> in 2.13.10. Andy Murray came 3<sup>rd</sup> in 2.23.21. Keith Butler, who actually turned up to spectate, did a private time trial and finished in 2.6.54. After this feast of miles we all decamped to Herne Hill for the Club Track Championships.

Fourteen riders got up for the first event, which was the 4000m Individual Pursuit. Not surprisingly after his recent under the hour rides Terry Slattery was fastest in 5.38.5 putting 8 seconds into Rowan Vacher (5.46.5) and another into Graham Bristow (5.47.7). Both Rowan and Derek Hull (6<sup>th</sup> in 5.52.1) were complaining about their muscles after the Fryco Cup '50' earlier

in the morning. There may have been 14 for the 4000m pursuits but there were 20 for the remainder of the Meeting. The Handicap had to be run in three heats with fastest two to the Final. The Sprint had four heats, two semi-finals and a Final and the 5 miles had a field worthy of the name. In the Handicap Heats Pete Ansell just held off Graham Bristow, Pete Hamilton beat Derek Hull and Barry Sturgess just pipped Pete Fryer. The Final was a benefit for the Peters. Pete H came home a comfortable winner from Pete A and Pete F in 3<sup>rd</sup> place.

The Sprint had four heats of five riders the first two in each heat to go through to the semi-finals. In Heat 1 Pete Hamilton just held off Graham Bristow in 13.9. Heat 2 was a surprise win by Rowan Vacher from Derek Hull. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Heat saw experience beating speed with Les Black coming through to beat Terry Slattery and Barry Sturgess. Unfortunately Les had got up for the wrong heat so had to go straight back round to the Start line for Heat 4. Strange to relate he did not win but came 2<sup>nd</sup> to Wally Happy. The Semi-finals had Hamilton, Vacher, Sturgess and Black in one race and Bristow, Hull, Happy and Ansell in the other. Rowan Vacher surprised everyone in the first semi by piling on the speed down the home straight to win clearly. The other three were in line across the track. Eventually, after much heated discussion the verdict was given to Pete Hamilton. The second semi was much more clear-cut with Graham Bristow the winner from Derek Hull. In the Final there was no doubt as to the best man. Graham Bristow came home by 2 lengths with Derek Hull holding off Rowan Vacher and Pete Hamilton realising that there is more to sprinting than sheer speed.

Came the 5 miles and with the large number of relatively untried trackmen racing there were thoughts of the 'blood bath' this race can often be. Barry Sturgess ensured that there was not too much bunching as he went for the Points. A number of others also had the same idea so the pace was quite high. Then after 6 laps Terry Slattery attacked taking with him Les Black. Graham Bristow saw the danger and closed down the gap with a tremendous jump. Then there was a chase. The three in front ignored the points on offer at the end of each lap and kept the pace going the others chased and chased losing riders as they went. With 4 laps remaining the gap was closed and a group of 12 riders were left in front. With 1½ laps to go Barry Sturgess attacked again and opened up a gap. He was well into the lead as he took the bell so Graham Bristow took off in pursuit. Then Barry realised he had gone far too early and swung up the banking leaving Graham Bristow in front of the bunch with ¾ of a lap to go. This is the worst position for a sprinter to be in. As Bristow senior put it 'a bit of an illegitimate child!'. He did his best very efficiently as only Terry Slattery had the speed and strength to get by him. Result of the 5 miles was 1<sup>st</sup> Terry Slattery, 2<sup>nd</sup> Graham Bristow and 3<sup>rd</sup> Les Black. Les Black took the Points Cup from Terry Slattery and Graham Bristow who tied for 2<sup>nd</sup> place. Barry Sturgess was 4<sup>th</sup>.

The Track Championship then stood as a tie between Graham Bristow and Terry Slattery with 6 points each. Rowan Vacher was in 3<sup>rd</sup> spot with 3 points. Later in the year messrs Bristow and Slattery rode a 1000m time trial to

determine the Championship. In that contest Graham beat Terry 1.20.0 to 1.20.2 to become the Club Track Champion for 1968.

While the speed merchants were at Herne Hill Robin Buchan went of to darkest Essex for the ECCA 12 hours in which he hoped to improve on his 253 miles. Unfortunately a strong northerly breeze sprang up that scuppered many a hope of a decent ride. However our man did not call it a day but rode out time with 245.8 miles for 4<sup>th</sup> place. Ian Murray also finished his first 12 hours with a commendable 233.8 miles.

On August Bank Holiday (that in 1968 was in September!) Robin Buchan was 2<sup>nd</sup> in the East Kent '25' with 59.58. Rowan Vacher, still trying to 'beat the hour' came within a whisker with a 1.0.01 in the Morden Middlemarkers '25'. He did get 2<sup>nd</sup> place though. Geoff Williams finished in 1.1.47, Pete Ansell 1.3.35 and Barry Sturgess 1.4.47. The Paragon missed the Team race by 6 seconds.

Doug Vacher won the junior '10' on the 1<sup>st</sup> September with a 25.51 just ahead of A McKean, 26.01, and Dave Fryer 26.05. In fourth place was Pete Corry (Son of Don) having his first race and finishing 4<sup>th</sup> in 26.48. Robin Buchan was the sole entry for the Rotherham Cup and in winning the SCCU 12 hours for the 5<sup>th</sup> time he covered 254 miles. Thus Robin becomes the 1968 Open Road Champion. Bob Corby also won this weekend when he took the VTTA Kent '25' in 1.3.24. Rowan Vacher came 2<sup>nd</sup> in the SCCU '25' on the Portsmouth road with a 1.1.24 with Pete Ansell 1.5.51 and Mike Wilson 1.10.04. Geoff Williams came 3<sup>rd</sup> in the Kingston Phoenix road race to confirm his new 1<sup>st</sup> category rating.

Peter Hamilton won his first Club Event in the junior '15' on the 15<sup>th</sup> September. He beat A McKean with a 39.40 to McKean's 40.49. Apparently it rained rather heavily that day and these were the only two daft enough to race. Rowan Vacher – 58.55 said the Result Board and Rowan had, at last, achieved his ambition. This was an undisclosed Open '25' on the Bath Road.

Eight juniors got up for the '15' on the 22<sup>nd</sup> September and Pete Hamilton showed everyone a clean pair of heels as he won with a 38.12 ride. Pete Corry was 2<sup>nd</sup> with 40.44, A McKean 3<sup>rd</sup> in 41.25 and Doug Vacher 4<sup>th</sup> in 41.27. Pete Hamilton collected 1<sup>st</sup> handicap, McKean the 2<sup>nd</sup> and Brian Maxlow the 3<sup>rd</sup> prize.

The last junior event, a '10' was held in conjunction with the Clarence Whs event. Peter Hamilton won our event in 25.20 from Doug Vacher, 26.21, and Peter Corry, 26.29. Ian Forest took the handicap from Brian Maxlow and Pete Corry.

Twenty-two riders were down for the Mayne Cup but only seventeen managed to get to the Start Timekeeper and fifteen of them made it to the Finish. Rowan Vacher was really getting quick and he clocked the fastest time of the morning with a 1.1.45 ride. In 2<sup>nd</sup> place was Bob Corby with 1.3.03 and 3<sup>rd</sup> was Les Black in 1.3.11. The Man of the Day was Vin Callanan

whose handicap time of 59.37 was 39 seconds too good for Pete Corry (1.0.16), Ian Forrest (1.0.33) and Mike Wilson (1.0.34). There are very few men who have won this Trophy twice and Vin had won it twice in three years. Most of us spend our whole life in the club and never get a sniff at it!

With the SW London and Surrey Championships being rained off our lads were deprived of medals. Simon Lansdowne did manage to get a ride before the weather closed in and came 3<sup>rd</sup> in the Schoolboy Sprint Championship so it was left to Keith Butler to provide the Track interest when he rode the Australian Sultana Grand Prix on the Wembley 6 day track. This track is the one now found at Calshot but when it was put up the builders used the wrong type of paint in its decoration. The result was an 'ice track'. One kick back or hasty move and down you went to the bottom of the track! Keith Butler managed to fall off on the first bend after 20 yards and then broke the support bars beneath his saddle. That night after the evening session the organisers had to repaint the whole of the track surface with carborundum based paint to provide some grip. This works well for manoeuvring but can play havoc on ones clothing and skin in a fall.

There is no need to say who won the Hill Climb just that his time was 4.05.8. Barry Sturgess was again 2<sup>nd</sup> in 4.18.4 and Derek Hull was 3<sup>rd</sup> in 4.23.0. This was to be the last time Les Black rode the Club Hill Climb but he donated a Cup for annual Competition that is contested to this day.

Len's '10' finished the serious racing and to prove his hill climbing win was not a fluke Les Black was our fastest rider in 24.05. Next was Bob Corby with 24.09, John Jennings 24.31, Pete Hamilton 25.02, Peter Corry 26.00 (personal best), Doug Vacher 26.17, Graham Bristow 26.25, Brian Maxlow 26.38 (personal best), Simon Lansdown 28.16 (personal best) and Ken Cattermole 28.33.

The Champions for 1968 are

Open Road 1<sup>st</sup> Robin Buchan, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ian Murray

Junior Pete Hamilton

Track 1<sup>st</sup> Graham Bristow 2<sup>nd</sup> Terry Slattery

Massed Start 1<sup>st</sup> Robin Buchan, 2<sup>nd</sup> Geoff Willimas.