

1979

The AGM re-elected Alan Gordon as President of the Club for 1979. The Vice Presidents were Ching Allin, Gordon Bennett, Arthur Bristow, Vin Callanan, John Dennis, Harry Grant, Tony Kerss, Len Niel, John Parsonson, Frank Patterson, Bob Reddin, George Saggars, Arthur Sharp and Den Pearson.

The January 'Blah' reported the result of the Freewheel Contest that was held, as usual, before the Christmas Lunch. George Clare beat Ray Runham with Pete Corry in 3<sup>rd</sup> place.

The first Open race for the Paragon riders was in the East Surrey Hardriders on the 5<sup>th</sup> March when Graham Watson was our best rider in 10<sup>th</sup> place in 1.25.06 having been slowed with a new chain and set of cogs that did not want to mesh smoothly. Pete Smith finished in 1.33.06 and John McNee 1.35.27.

The following weekend Jack Platts chalked up the first Paragon success with 1<sup>st</sup> Veteran's prize in the Clarence Whs '72 inch' 25 miles event. The howling westerly wind slowed everyone to the turn to 20 mph or slower but gave a tremendous boost on the return with speeds of over 30 mph possible. Unfortunately on gears of 72" this can be extremely uncomfortable. Jack finished in 1.12.44, Charlie Rodgers on 1.14.41 and Graham Bristow 1.15.09. Only 5 riders managed to finish in 1.10 or faster. Nearer home Graham Watson led the team in the Croydon and District Hardriders that due to road works and a subsequent diversion proved to be nearer 30 miles. Graham finished in 8<sup>th</sup> spot with a 1.30.57, Pete Smith 1.36.27 and Les Black 1.40.37.

The first Club event took place on the 19<sup>th</sup> March and included a name not unknown to this history. Keith Butler had turned 40 and was riding to and from his job by bicycle so he thought he would have a go. The Handicapping Committee took one look at his entry form and put him on Scratch even though he had not raced or ridden much since 1968. He did not think much of that! Came the day and he was proved right. Pete Smith produced the fastest time of the day with a 26.07 in front of Gordon Button 26.35 and Graham Bristow 26.40. The Handicap went to Charlie Rodgers his 2.15 deduction giving him a 24.25. In 2<sup>nd</sup> place came Pete Smith, 25.22 and in 3<sup>rd</sup> place was John McNee with a 25.54. Keith Butler went round in 27.48 as he, if no one else, expected.

On the 26<sup>th</sup> March Gordon Button was our fastest rider in the Kentish Whs '25' on a windy Portsmouth road. His 1.7.05 was 9 seconds too good for Jack Platts, 1.7.14. With our more experienced men out of action through sickness or an unwillingness to brave the elements the team was made up by Terry Rowe with a steady 1.21.10 for his first 25 miles event. Graham Watson went north of the river for the Highgate road race over 60 hilly Hertfordshire miles. He took flight with one other companion and held a 1 minute advantage for some time. Eventually they were pulled back with Graham having to settle for 7<sup>th</sup> place in the final sprint.

The Jim Fox '25' was run on the 1<sup>st</sup> April and had a surprise winner in Charlie Rodgers who put 8 seconds into Gordon Button with a 1.6.44 to 1.6.52. Back a little further was Pete Smith on 1.7.01. John McNee took the handicap with a 4 minutes allowance to bring him down to 1.4.40 and 4 seconds quicker than Charlike Rodgers. Dave Fneron produced a personal best of 1.20.05 to collect 3<sup>rd</sup> on handicap. Keith Butler also rode and found that 10 miles per day going to work and back was no substitute for hard training miles. He did not realise how 'hilly' the Portsmouth road really was. (No comment required!) He produced his slowest ever '25' time of 1.11.27.

At Easter the Paragon had a team in the West Kent RC '25' on Good Friday. Jack Platts was our quickest rider with a 1.4.58 and surprised himself by beating Graham Watson who had an 'off' day with his 1.5.04. Pete Smith came in with a personal best of 1.5.33 and so did Charlie Rodgers with his 1.6.07. Charlie and Pete went up to the 32<sup>nd</sup> Course to ride the Eagle Middlemarkers event on the Sunday. Pete excelled himself by producing a personal best by 3½ minutes to bring his time down to 1.1.58. This enabled him to take 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the race and to win the Handicap as well. Charlie couldn't match all of this but did come in with his personal best of 1.5.09 to round of a great weekend for the pair of them.

Charlie Rodgers took in the 34<sup>th</sup> Nomads '25' on the following Saturday finishing in 1.6.48. In the De Laune event on the Sunday he slowed to a 1.7.20 whilst the fresher Jack Platts came in with a 1.5.56.

On the 28<sup>th</sup> April the Club held a 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary ride from Crystal Palace to Epsom Downs and then on to Forge Tea Rooms at Headley to celebrate in comfort. President Alan Gordon provided an iced cake decorated in Green, Black and Gold. Seventeen assorted members including Past President Frank Burton, Vice Presidents Vin Callanan, Bob Reddin and Arthur Sharp attended the run.

Pete Smith's ride in the Eagle RC event backfired at the Dartford Whs 1.2.0 limit event. He was now faster than the limit so could only ride a private time trial. To add insult to injury his 1.5.52 on this hard course would have given him 4<sup>th</sup> place. Charlie Rodgers went back a little to 1.7.31 whilst Keith Butler improved on his comeback '25' by 3 minutes with a 1.8.28. Dave Feneron finished in 1.22.37.

On Saturday Pete Smith continued his run of improvements with a 24.35 in the Addiscombe event. Jack Platts also put up a personal best of 24.14 whilst Keith Butler recorded a 26.58 to reduce his best since he re-started his racing career. Then on the Sunday Pete Smith did his second fastest ever with a 1.3.00 in the Marlboro '25' but slowed to a 1.4.39 on the Monday in the Wandsworth & District '25'. Keith Bowman also returned to the fray with a 1.15. in the South Western '25'.

Graham Watson produced the fastest '25' of the year for the Paragon in the Becontree event with a 1.0.40 on Saturday afternoon. Pete Smith continued his progress with a personal best of 24.15 in the Catford '10'. The following

day, 13<sup>th</sup> May, on a cold, mist shrouded Holmwood course Pete won the Club '25' with a 1.5.16 to Graham Watson's 1.6.04. Charlie Rodgers was 3<sup>rd</sup> with a 1.9.03. The Handicap section was taken by Rick Tyson with an allowance of 6 minutes to take him down to 1.3.04, Pete Smith had two minutes to take him to a 1.3.16 and Keith Butler had seven to bring him down to 1.3.17. Pretty good handicapping!

The following Saturday we had a Club 10 miles event on the Portsmouth Road course. Jack Platts produced the fastest time of 24.44 whilst Charlie Rodgers did a personal best of 24.52 Rick Tyson came 3<sup>rd</sup> in 25.04 with Keith Butler continuing to improve on 25.08 in 4<sup>th</sup> place. The handicap went to Keith Bowman with a net 22.36 from Keith Butler 22.38 and Charlie Rodgers 3<sup>rd</sup> with 22.52. Charlie Rodgers continued his good fortune on the Sunday May 27<sup>th</sup> with a 2.20.57 in the Essex Roads '50'. He had to contend with driving rain but with a personal best and a 27 minutes handicap allowance he took 1<sup>st</sup> Handicap, 1<sup>st</sup> Veteran on handicap and 3<sup>rd</sup> Veteran on age standard. Jack Platts came 7<sup>th</sup> in the Redhill '25' with a 1.4.49 that was also good enough to take the Veteran's prize. Graham Watson rode the SECA '25' and finished in 1.2.04. Eddie Wakow took part in the BCF SW London & Surrey Junior road race Championship and came 10<sup>th</sup>.

The SCCU '50' had four Paragon finishers with Jack Platts putting up a personal best as our fastest man. He finished in 2.15.09. Charlie Rodgers also produced a personal best of 2.18.32 just beating Les Black's 2.18.44. Keith Butler, riding his first '50' since the mid 60s, did 2.19.54 and found a lot more hills than he remembered on the Worthing road.

Jack Platts also improved his '25' time in the VTTA (Kent) event with a 1.2.24. Charlie Rodgers clocked a 1.6.44. In a Croydon CDA '50' Jack was again fastest Paragon rider in 2.15.14. Following Jack were Charlie Rodgers, 2.18.53 and Charlie Shipwright who also did a personal best of 2.34.09 to win 1<sup>st</sup> handicap.

Graham Watson improved his season's best '25' in the Southend & County event with a 59.17 and followed this with a 1.17.41 in the Redmon '30'. Graham Bristow and Les Black took part in the Tandem section and they clocked a 1.8.53 for 5<sup>th</sup> place. The previous week they did a 55.56 for 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the Lea Valley Tandem '25' but the choice of a 112" fixed gear was a bit too lumpy for Surrey roads. Charlie Shipwright and Keith Bowman rode the Surrey Road '25' and both did their best rides of the year with 1.12.45 and 1.16.09 respectively.

Club Secretary Frank Payce-Dury shook everyone by entering, riding and finishing the National Championship 24 hours. His 322 miles looks rather down on Robin Buchan's record but considering Frank's lack of preparation and fitness it was a noteworthy ride. He finished in 31<sup>st</sup> position and was not last! Pete Smith returned to racing after dealing with a broken collarbone with a 1.3.00 in the Chelmer 1.1.0 limit '25'. Keith Butler continues to improve this time with a 1.6.25 in the South Eastern '25' on the Portsmouth Road. Graham Bristow and Les Black came 3<sup>rd</sup> in the Archer tandem '25' with a 55.48.

Jim Walker (Bec) won the Frank Southall Open '50' with a 2.1.58 to beat Ray Palin (London Fire Brigade), 2.3.36, with Brian Phillips (East Grinstead) 3<sup>rd</sup> in 2.5.54. Barry Coomber, (VC Etoile) took the handicap with a first ever 50 miles ride of 2.6.57 for 5<sup>th</sup> place that was subject to an eleven minutes deduction. The Paragon were hoping for the Team race with rides of 2.10.24 from Graham Watson, 2.10.34 from Les Black and 2.11.45 from Jack Platts but the Epsom were just 2 minutes quicker. Other Paragon times were by Keith Butler, 2.17.16, a further improvement, Pete Smith 2.17.37 and a personal best of 2.29.27 from Charlie Shipwright.

At the Evening Track Meeting the first Winner of the Stan Harrison Salver for the Open 500m Handicap was Terry Tinsley (Kirkby). The Pro/Amateur Derny race had to be run with two qualifying heats. The Final was between Ian Hallam, Steve Heffernan, Paul Fennell, Tony James, Glen Mitchell Ron Keeble, Mick Bennett, John Shand and Pete Corry and they finished in that order. The 9 laps Pursuit went to Dave Akam (Gemini) from Ian Fagan and Tony James. Dave Akam was also in action in the Champagne '10' as he went clear with Robin Coker. Coker had the better sprint and took the Salamazar of Champagne but Dave Akam took 2<sup>nd</sup> place ahead of Ian Hallam and Mick Bennett. Prizes were presented by Arthur Lowe of Dad's Army fame.

The Open '25' was held on the 1<sup>st</sup> July and Margaret Buchan was at the Finish to present the Robin Buchan Memorial Silver Salver to the winner of the Event. This proved to be Ron Keeble (34<sup>th</sup> Nomads) with a 59.27 and the only rider to beat 'the hour'. In 2<sup>nd</sup> place was John Withey (Wandsworth & District with a 1.0.14 and S Ziaja (London St Christophers) came 3<sup>rd</sup> with a 1.0.44. Gary Moore (Crawley Whs) took the handicap with a nett 55.26 from Colin Pine (East Surrey), 56.04, and Brendan Heaslip (Kenton) 56.27. The Catford took the Team race in 3.8.08. The Paragon performances were by Graham Watson 1.2.53, Les Black 1.3.11, Pete Ansell 1.4.13, Pete Smith 1.7.18, Keith Butler 1.7.40, Rick Tyson 1.7.47, Charlie Shipwright 1.12.51 and Paul Dennison 1.17.29. The previous day Graham Watson and Pete Smith rode the Redhill '10' and recorded 24.21 and 24.50 respectively.

On Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> July Graham Bristow promoted for the Paragon the evening Handicap race at Crystal Palace. The race was won by Steve White (Gemini) from Ian Kitchen (Redmon) and John Withey (Wandsworth). The Schoolboy race went to A Appleby (CC Bexley) from J Mitchell and P Andrews (Gemini).

July 8<sup>th</sup> was the day for the Moon Trophy '25'. Steve Clinch (South Eastern) was the fastest on the day with a 1.0.00 from Phil Headen 1.0.59 and Tony Lewis 1.1.51. Both of these are from the East Surrey RC. Les Black was our fastest man with a 1.2.39 with Graham Watson 1.3.03 and Pete Ansell 3<sup>rd</sup> with a 1.3.30. In the Handicap section Charlie Shipwright was 3<sup>rd</sup> overall, Pete Ansell was 6<sup>th</sup> and Keith Butler 8<sup>th</sup>. This gave us 2<sup>nd</sup> in the Team Race, 2.52.34, behind the South Eastern 2.51.29. The following day in the Monday Competition Pete Smith was 3<sup>rd</sup> in the Junior Devil behind Steve Gowar.

A Club '25' was held on the 16<sup>th</sup> July with Pete Ansell winning in 1.4.13 and taking 1<sup>st</sup> handicap as well. In 2<sup>nd</sup> place was Les Black on 1.4.25 and in 3<sup>rd</sup> place was Jack Platts with a 1.6.08. Keith Butler continued to improve with a 1.2.58 in the South Eastern CA '25' on the Saturday and a 1.5.04 in the Farnborough '25' on the Sunday morning. Pete Smith clocked a 1.5.26 in the Southampton Whs '25' and a 1.6.03 in the South West London Ladies Open '25'.

The Inter Club '10' against the Addiscombe resulted in a defeat for the Paragon by nearly 3 minutes. The counting team of Les Black, 23.54, Pete Smith 24.47, Rick Tyson 24.48, Jack Platts 24.49, Keith Butler 24.54 and Graham Bristow 25.13 certainly packed well but were just not fast enough. Team times were – Addiscombe 2.25.29; Paragon 2.28.25. Keith Butler won the Club Handicap; with a further improvement on his comeback best to 24.54, 2<sup>nd</sup> was Rick Tyson and 3<sup>rd</sup> Les Black.

Les Black had a disappointment in the SCCU '100' that incorporated the Club Goss Green Cup event. Whilst likely to get into the top three riders on the day Les, unaccustomed to the 100 miles course, went the wrong way and lost at least 10 minutes before being brought back to the correct route. Nevertheless he persevered and finished his first 100 in 4.48.14 to take the Bill Saggars Novice prize. Keith Butler went round steadily in 4.45.59 that, with 32 minutes allowance, gave him 3<sup>rd</sup> place on handicap. Pete Ansell recorded a 23.57 in the 34<sup>th</sup> Nomads event.

Thunder, lightening and pouring rain was the lot of those that raced on the 30<sup>th</sup> July. Les Black showed no ill effect from his 100 miles and produced a 1.2.58 in the Bec '25' whilst Jack Platts was equally pleased with his 1.3.47 in the conditions. Keith Butler went down to Farnham for their Open '50' and produced his best comeback time of 2.10.50

The Club '10' on the 6<sup>th</sup> August went to Les Black with a personal best of 22.58. This also gave him 1<sup>st</sup> on handicap even with only 15 seconds allowance. In 2<sup>nd</sup> place came Graham Watson, 23.41 and 3<sup>rd</sup> was Steve Hackett whose first race this was after missing most of the season with knee problems. Second on handicap went to Charlie Shipwright who came in with a personal best of 26.10 and third was Rick Tyson. In the afternoon Graham Watson was in action again in the West Kent '25' and he pulled out the fastest '25' of the year for the Paragon with a 58.10.

On the Sunday Pete Ansell came 3<sup>rd</sup> and took 1<sup>st</sup> handicap in the Balham Middlemarkers '25' with a 1.1.45. Just behind him was Les Black 4<sup>th</sup> in 1.2.00. Jack Platts was, under protest, put into the Veterans Section in which he came 4<sup>th</sup> with a 1.2.24. If he had been placed in the Open section the Paragon would have won the Team race!

Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> August was the Track Championships held in conjunction with the Old Portlians, South Eastern and Addiscombe Clubs. Our first event was the 4000m for the Bert Chapman Cup. In this Steve Hackett proved fastest with a 5.49, Les Black was 2<sup>nd</sup> in 5.55, followed by Graham Watson 6.02, Rick

Tyson 6.06, Graham Bristow 6.07 and Pete Smith 6.11. Two heats were raced for the AEU 500m Sprint. Graham Bristow won the first from Les Black and Pete Smith and Steve Hackett took the second from Rick Tyson and Graham Watson. In the Final Graham Bristow just held off Steve Hackett to take the Cup for the 8<sup>th</sup> time. Les Black came 3<sup>rd</sup>. Graham also took the 500m Handicap and this too was a close call as he just got by Pete Smith on the line with Steve Hackett in 3<sup>rd</sup> place.

This left us with the 5 miles scratch and points race. At that point Hackett was in the lead for the Championship with 5 points and Black and Bristow had 3 each. Graham Watson and Les Black took off and held the rest at bay whilst collecting points for the George Colget Cup. Les Black collecting the most but he then had the misfortune to puncture in the finishing straight giving the race to Watson. Steve Hackett finished 3<sup>rd</sup> in both points and scratch race. If Les Black had not punctured he would have tied with Steve Hackett for the Championship with 6 points each. Thus Steve Hackett kept his lead; Les Black came 2<sup>nd</sup> and Graham Bristow 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Other results from the weekend include a 23.07 from Les Black in the Old Portlians '10', Pete Ansell a 23.08 in the De Laune '10' and Keith Bowman a 1.16.58 in the Kingston '25'. Graham Watson's comparatively poor results in the Club Track Championships were very easily explained. He had ridden the North London '50' in the morning and had produced a personal best of 2.5.08. This sort of ride does blunt ones track speed a little.

Not surprisingly Graham Watson made fastest time in the Fryco Cup '50' but on our local and much slower course but he was pushed all the way by Les Black who was only 12 seconds slower at the Finish. Les took the handicap with this ride. Jack Platts came in 3<sup>rd</sup> fastest with a 2.10.36 that was only a few seconds slower than his best. Keith Butler punctured at Findon with 5 miles to go and toured back for a 2.18.26.

Frank Payce-Drury assayed the Mersey Roads 24 hours and improved some 15 miles to 338 that could have been far more but for a crash at night after hitting a pothole. This smashed his lamp and a pedal. The worst damage was done to his gears so that he was left with just one cog to use. This is not pleasant when trying to pedal over the lumps and bumps of the so-called Cheshire and Shropshire Plain. Graham Watson went to a road race and came 10<sup>th</sup> in the Glade Summer road race.

On Bank Holiday Monday we had a team in the Bath Road '100'. The first occasion for some years. Les Black and Graham Watson both finished with personal best rides. Les with a 4.30.08 and Graham with 4.31.00. Graham Bristow punctured early on then his rear wheel gave up the ghost so he called it a day. Nearer home Pete Ansell finished with a 1.2.00 in the Croydon & District '25' with Jack Platts on 1.4.19 and Keith Bowman on 1.16.14.

Two personal best were put up by Steve Hackett and Graham Watson in the Sydenham Whs '10'. Steve did a 23.16 and Graham a 23.36. In the 29<sup>th</sup> Whs '25' Les Black was our fastest with a 1.2.20 in front of Steve Hackett 1.3.13,

Keith Butler 1.4.50 and Keith Bowman 1.19.11 including time off the bike with a puncture. Graham Watson had a break from time trialling to ride the Brighton to London Classic. Unfortunately he missed the vital break and finished in 20<sup>th</sup> place.

Les Black put up a great performance in the Luton Whs 12 hours event when he finished with a total of 250.26 miles for 3<sup>rd</sup> place and 3<sup>rd</sup> on handicap. Graham Watson also beat 'evens' with 241.80 miles. This put an interesting look to the Club Open Time Trial Championship. Les has counting rides of 1.0 for the 25 miles, 2.8 for the 50, 4.30 for 100 miles and 250 for the 12 hours. This equate very closely to Graham's 58.0, 2.5, 4.31 and 241 miles. This works out as approximately 23.04 mph for Graham and 22.87 mph for Les with just 4 weekends to go before the end of the season to make further improvements.

Steve Hackett went to France to ride the Palme D'or Merlin Plage time trial (won by National road race Champion Robert Miller). He came 33<sup>rd</sup> with a time of 1.18.00 for the 33 miles. Graham Watson finished 6<sup>th</sup> in the SCCU '25' with a 1.2.29.

Les Black showed his 12 hours ride worked well for him when he won the South Western '50' by over two minutes with a 2.7.35. More importantly it improved his Club Championship qualification ride by just over a minute. Graham Watson chose to ride two 25mile events. On the Saturday he clocked a 58.58 but that was not an improvement on his qualifying 58.10. Then on the Sunday he picked a hard windy morning for the ECCA '25' and could only manage a 1.4.21. Keith Butler tried another 100 miles in the WLCA event and getting the same conditions as Graham he improved his season's best by finishing in 4.40.05.

The 1<sup>st</sup> October was Mayne Cup day. Fastest on the morning was Les Black with a 1.1.39 just 4 seconds too good for Steve Hackett's 1.1.43. In 3<sup>rd</sup> place came Keith Butler on 1.2.52. This ride of Keith's with a deduction of 4 minutes handicap gave him a net 58.52 that was 39 seconds too fast for Graham Bristow's 59.31 and 51 seconds in front of Steve Hackett. So the Man of the Day was Keith Butler and he was very pleased to win this trophy that he first contested in 1956. Later he realised that he was actually 44 seconds faster than his 1956 time.

Les Black is still trying to improve his 25 miles time for the Club Championship. This weekend he travelled to the Midlands to ride the Oldbury '25' on the Stonebridge course. As usual with these last minute efforts Mother Nature was uncooperative and on a windy morning Les managed 16<sup>th</sup> place with a 1.0.03 that though a season's best was not good enough to give him the Championship.

Steve Hackett finished his season by taking the Club Hill Climb on Ranmore Common. He crossed the line in 4.21. In 2<sup>nd</sup> place was Ray Puttick on 4.29 and 3<sup>rd</sup> was Graham Watson on 4.33. Les Black, still trying, went to the New

Forest for the Southampton '25' but his 1.0.43 for 3<sup>rd</sup> place, while excellent for the course and morning, did not improve his Championship qualifying times. Owing to a change in dates only four riders managed to start 'Len's 10'. Rick Tyson was our fastest with a 25.34 in front of Howard Chadburn 26.16, (who took 1<sup>st</sup> Junior prize) Charlie Shipwright on 27.19 and an unnamed rider who rode the whole course with his rear wheel pulled over in 38.08.

In a truly last gasp effort Les Black took the Club Open Time Trials Championship with a superb 57.44 in the ECCA event on the 29<sup>th</sup> October. This was a personal best by Les and it takes the EE Cleeve Trophy for the fastest 25 miles ride of the year. Graham Watson also rode but although inside the hour, 59.48, he could not improve on his 58.10.

The Inter-Club Map Reading was won by Keith Butler (1.31.00) with Pete Smith (1.40.53) in 2<sup>nd</sup> place. Unfortunately the foggy morning and unfamiliar country did not encourage riding and there were many non-finishers. Stan Butler (12.41.30) was our 3<sup>rd</sup> man and we only managed 3<sup>rd</sup> in the Team race and will have to pay for the medals!

As mentioned above Les Black took the Open Road Time Trial Championship from Graham Watson. He also took the Club Events Championship but this time with Keith Butler as runner-up. Steve Hackett took the Track Championship.